

The Bride of Abydos
A Turkish Tale.

George Byron

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*“Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met — or never parted,
We had ne’er been broken-hearted.”*

—BURNS [FAREWELL TO NANCY].

INTRODUCTION TO THE *THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS.*

Many poets — Wordsworth, for instance — have been conscious in their old age that an interest attaches to the circumstances of the composition of their poems, and have furnished their friends and admirers with explanatory notes. Byron recorded the *motif* and occasion of the *Bride of Abydos* while the poem was still in the press. It was written, he says, to divert his mind, “to wring his thoughts from reality to imagination — from selfish regrets to vivid recollections” (*Diary*, December 5, 1813, *Letters*, ii. 361), “to distract his dreams from . . .” (*Diary*, November 16) “for the sake of *employment*” (Letter to Moore, November 30, 1813). He had been staying during part of October and November at Aston Hall, Rotherham, with his friend James Wedderburn Webster, and had fallen in love with his friend’s wife, Lady Frances. From a brief note to his sister, dated November 5, we learn that he was in a scrape, but in “no immediate peril,” and from the lines, “Remember him, whom Passion’s power” (*vide ante*, p. 67), we may infer that he had sought safety in flight. The *Bride of Abydos*, or *Zuleika*, as it was first entitled, was written early in November, “in four nights” (*Diary*, November 16), or in a week (Letter to Gifford, November 12) — the reckoning goes for little — as a counter-irritant to the pain and distress of *amour interrompu*.

The confession or apology is eminently characteristic. Whilst the *Giaour* was still in process of evolution, still “lengthening its rattles,” another Turkish poem is offered to the public, and the natural explanation, that the author is in vein, and can score another trick, is felt to be inadequate and dishonouring — “To withdraw *myself* from *myself*,” he confides to his *Diary* (November 27), “has ever been my sole, my entire, my sincere motive for scribbling at all.”

It is more than probable that in his twenty-sixth year Byron had not attained to perfect self-knowledge, but there is no reason to question his sincerity. That Byron loved to surround himself with mystery, and to dissociate himself from “the general,” is true enough; but it does not follow that at all times and under all circumstances he was insincere. “Once a *poseur* always a *poseur*” is a rough-and-ready formula not invariably applicable even to a poet.

But the *Bride of Abydos* was a tonic as well as a styptic. Like the *Giaour*, it embodied a personal experience, and recalled “a country replete with the *darkest*

and *brightest*, but always the most *lively* colours of my memory” (*Diary*, December 5, 1813).

In a letter to Galt (December 11, 1813, Letters, 1898, ii. 304, reprinted from *Life of Byron*, pp. 181, 182) Byron maintains that the first part of the *Bride* was drawn from “observations” of his own, “from existence.” He had, it would appear, intended to make the story turn on the guilty love of a brother for a sister, a tragic incident of life in a Harem, which had come under his notice during his travels in the East, but “on second thoughts” had reflected that he lived “two centuries at least too late for the subject,” and that not even the authority of the “finest works of the Greeks,” or of Schiller (in the *Bride of Messina*), or of Alfieri (in *Mirra*), “in modern times,” would sanction the intrusion of the μισητόν [misêto\ n] into English literature. The early drafts and variants of the MS. do not afford any evidence of this alteration of the plot which, as Byron thought, was detrimental to the poem as a work of art, but the undoubted fact that the *Bride of Abydos*, as well as the *Giaour*, embody recollections of actual scenes and incidents which had burnt themselves into the memory of an eye-witness, accounts not only for the fervent heat at which these Turkish tales were written, but for the extraordinary glamour which they threw over contemporary readers, to whom the local colouring was new and attractive, and who were not out of conceit with “good Monsieur Melancholy.”

Byron was less dissatisfied with his second Turkish tale than he had been with the *Giaour*. He apologizes for the rapidity with which it had been composed — *stans pede in uno* — but he announced to Murray (November 20) that “he was doing his best to beat the *Giaour*,” and (November 29) he appraises the *Bride* as “my first entire composition of any length.”

Moreover, he records (November 15), with evident gratification, the approval of his friend Hodgson, “a very sincere and by no means (at times) a flattering critic of mine,” and modestly accepts the praise of such masters of letters as “Mr. Canning,” Hookham Frere, Heber, Lord Holland, and of the traveller Edward Daniel Clarke.

The *Bride of Abydos* was advertised in the *Morning Chronicle*, among “Books published this day,” on November 29, 1813. It was reviewed by George Agar Ellis in the *Quarterly Review* of January, 1814 (vol. x. p. 331), and, together with the *Corsair*, by Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review* of April, 1814 (vol. xxiii. p. 198).

to
the right honourable
LORD HOLLAND,
this tale
is inscribed, with
every sentiment of regard
and respect,
by his gratefully obliged
and sincere friend,
BYRON.

The Bride of Abydos.²

² {157} ["Murray tells me that Croker asked him why the thing was called the *Bride* of Abydos? It is a cursed awkward question, being unanswerable. *She* is not a *bride*, only about to become one. I don't wonder at his finding out the *Bull*; but the detection . . . is too late to do any good. I was a great fool to make it, and am ashamed of not being an Irishman." — *Journal*, December 6, 1813; *Letters*, 1898, ii. 365.

Byron need not have been dismayed. "The term is particularly applied on the day of marriage and during the 'honeymoon,' but is frequently used from the proclamation of the banns. . . . In the debate on Prince Leopold's allowance, Mr. Gladstone, being criticized for speaking of the Princess Helena as the 'bride,' said he believed that colloquially a lady when engaged was often called a 'bride.' This was met with 'Hear! Hear!' from some, and 'No! No!' from others." — *N. Engl. Dict.*, art. "Bride."]

CANTO THE FIRST.

I.

Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle³
Are emblems of deeds that are done in their clime?
Where the rage of the vulture, the love of the turtle,
Now melt into sorrow, now madden to crime?
Know ye the land of the cedar and vine,
Where the flowers ever blossom, the beams ever shine;
Where the light wings of Zephyr, oppressed with
perfume,
Wax faint o'er the gardens of Gúl⁴ in her bloom;
Where the citron and olive are fairest of fruit,
And the voice of the nightingale never is mute;⁵
Where the tints of the earth, and the hues of the sky,
In colour though varied, in beauty may vie,
And the purple of Ocean is deepest in dye;
Where the virgins are soft as the roses they twine,
And all, save the spirit of man, is divine —
Tis the clime of the East — 'tis the land of the Sun —
Can he smile on such deeds as his children have done?⁶
Oh! wild as the accents of lovers' farewell⁷
Are the hearts which they bear, and the tales which they
tell.

II.⁸

Begirt with many a gallant slave,

Apparelled as becomes the brave,
Awaiting each his Lord's behest
To guide his steps, or guard his rest,
Old Giaffir sate in his Divan:
Deep thought was in his aged eye;
And though the face of Mussulman
Not oft betrays to standers by
The mind within, well skilled to hide
All but unconquerable pride,
His pensive cheek and pondering brow⁹
Did more than he was wont avow.

III.

“Let the chamber be cleared.” — The train disappeared —

“Now call me the chief of the Haram guard” —

With Giaffir is none but his only son,

And the Nubian awaiting the sire's award.

“Haroun — when all the crowd that wait

Are passed beyond the outer gate,

(Woe to the head whose eye beheld

My child Zuleika's face unveiled!)

Hence, lead my daughter from her tower — ¹⁰

Her fate is fixed this very hour;

Yet not to her repeat my thought —

By me alone be duty taught!”

“Pacha! to hear is to obey.” —

No more must slave to despot say —

Then to the tower had ta'en his way:
But here young Selim silence brake,
First lowly rendering reverence meet;
And downcast looked, and gently spake,
Still standing at the Pacha's feet:
For son of Moslem must expire,
Ere dare to sit before his sire!
"Father! for fear that thou shouldst chide
My sister, or her sable guide —
Know — for the fault, if fault there be,
Was mine — then fall thy frowns on me!
So lovelily the morning shone,
That — let the old and weary sleep —
I could not; and to view alone
The fairest scenes of land and deep,
With none to listen and reply
To thoughts with which my heart beat high
Were irksome — for whate'er my mood,
In sooth I love not solitude;
I on Zuleika's slumber broke,
And, as thou knowest that for me
Soon turns the Haram's grating key,
Before the guardian slaves awoke
We to the cypress groves had flown,
And made earth, main, and heaven our own!
There lingered we, beguiled too long
With Mejnoun's tale, or Sadi's song;¹¹¹²

Till I, who heard the deep tambour¹³
Beat thy Divan's approaching hour,
To thee, and to my duty true,
Warned by the sound, to greet thee flew:
But there Zuleika wanders yet —
Nay, Father, rage not — nor forget
That none can pierce that secret bower
But those who watch the women's tower.”

IV.

“Son of a slave” — the Pacha said —
“From unbelieving mother bred,
Vain were a father's hope to see
Aught that beseems a man in thee.
Thou, when thine arm should bend the bow,
 And hurl the dart, and curb the steed,
 Thou, Greek in soul if not in creed,
Must pore where babbling waters flow,¹⁴
And watch unfolding roses blow.
Would that yon Orb, whose matin glow
Thy listless eyes so much admire,
Would lend thee something of his fire!
Thou, who would's't see this battlement
By Christian cannon piecemeal rent;
Nay, tamely view old Stambol's wall
Before the dogs of Moscow fall,
Nor strike one stroke for life and death

Against the curs of Nazareth!
Go — let thy less than woman's hand
Assume the distaff — not the brand.
But, Haroun! — to my daughter speed:
And hark — of thine own head take heed —
If thus Zuleika oft takes wing —
Thou see'st yon bow — it hath a string!”

V.

No sound from Selim's lip was heard,
At least that met old Giaffir's ear,
But every frown and every word
Pierced keener than a Christian's sword.
“Son of a slave! — reproached with fear!
Those gibes had cost another dear.
Son of a slave! — and *who* my Sire?”
Thus held his thoughts their dark career;
And glances ev'n of more than ire¹⁵
Flash forth, then faintly disappear.
Old Giaffir gazed upon his son
And started; for within his eye
He read how much his wrath had done;
He saw rebellion there begun:
“Come hither, boy — what, no reply?
I mark thee — and I know thee too;
But there be deeds thou dar'st not do:
But if thy beard had manlier length,

And if thy hand had skill and strength,
I'd joy to see thee break a lance,
Albeit against my own perchance."

As sneeringly these accents fell,
On Selim's eye he fiercely gazed:

That eye returned him glance for glance,
And proudly to his Sire's was raised¹⁶,

Till Giaffir's quailed and shrunk askance —
And why — he felt, but durst not tell.

"Much I misdoubt this wayward boy
Will one day work me more annoy:

I never loved him from his birth,
And — but his arm is little worth,
And scarcely in the chase could cope
With timid fawn or antelope,

Far less would venture into strife
Where man contends for fame and life —

I would not trust that look or tone:
No — nor the blood so near my own.¹⁷
That blood — he hath not heard — no more —
I'll watch him closer than before.

He is an Arab¹⁸ to my sight,
Or Christian crouching in the fight — ¹⁹

But hark! — I hear Zuleika's voice;

Like Houris' hymn it meets mine ear:
She is the offspring of my choice;

Oh! more than ev'n her mother dear,

With all to hope, and nought to fear —
My Peri! ever welcome here!²⁰
Sweet, as the desert fountain's wave
To lips just cooled in time to save —
 Such to my longing sight art thou;
Nor can they waft to Mecca's shrine
More thanks for life, than I for thine,
 Who blest thy birth and bless thee now."²¹

VI.

Fair, as the first that fell of womankind,
 When on that dread yet lovely serpent smiling,
Whose Image then was stamped upon her mind —
 But once beguiled — and ever more beguiling;
Dazzling, as that, oh! too transcendent vision
 To Sorrow's phantom-peopled slumber given,
When heart meets heart again in dreams Elysian,
 And paints the lost on Earth revived in Heaven;
Soft, as the memory of buried love;
Pure, as the prayer which Childhood wafts above;
Was she — the daughter of that rude old Chief,
Who met the maid with tears — but not of grief.
Who hath not proved how feebly words essay²²
To fix one spark of Beauty's heavenly ray?
Who doth not feel, until his failing sight²³
Faints into dimness with its own delight,
His changing cheek, his sinking heart confess

The might — the majesty of Loveliness?
Such was Zuleika — such around her shone
The nameless charms unmarked by her alone —
The light of Love, the purity of Grace,²⁴
The mind, the Music²⁵ breathing from her face,
The heart whose softness harmonized the whole,
And oh! that eye was in itself a Soul!
Her graceful arms in meekness bending
 Across her gently-budding breast;
At one kind word those arms extending
 To clasp the neck of him who blest
 His child caressing and carest,
 Zuleika came — and Giaffir felt
 His purpose half within him melt:
 Not that against her fancied weal
 His heart though stern could ever feel;
 Affection chained her to that heart;
 Ambition tore the links apart.

VII.

“Zuleika! child of Gentleness!
 How dear this very day must tell,
When I forget my own distress,
 In losing what I love so well,
To bid thee with another dwell:
Another! and a braver man
Was never seen in battle’s van.

We Moslem reck not much of blood:

But yet the line of Carasman²⁶

Unchanged, unchangeable hath stood

First of the bold Timariot bands

That won and well can keep their lands.²⁷

Enough that he who comes to woo²⁸

Is kinsman of the Bey Oglou:²⁹

His years need scarce a thought employ;

I would not have thee wed a boy.

And thou shalt have a noble dower:

And his and my united power

Will laugh to scorn the death-firman,

Which others tremble but to scan,

And teach the messenger³⁰ what fate

The bearer of such boon may wait.

And now thou know'st thy father's will;

All that thy sex hath need to know:

'Twas mine to teach obedience still —

The way to love, thy Lord may show.”

VIII.

In silence bowed the virgin's head;

And if her eye was filled with tears

That stifled feeling dare not shed,

And changed her cheek from pale to red,

And red to pale, as through her ears

Those wingéd words like arrows sped,

What could such be but maiden fears?
So bright the tear in Beauty's eye,
Love half regrets to kiss it dry;
So sweet the blush of Bashfulness,
Even Pity scarce can wish it less!
Whate'er it was the sire forgot:
Or if remembered, marked it not;
Thrice clapped his hands, and called his steed,³¹
Resigned his gem-adorned chibouque,³²
And mounting featly for the mead,
With Maugrabeel³³ and Mamaluke,
His way amid his Delis took,³⁴
To witness many an active deed
With sabre keen, or blunt jerreed.
The Kislar only and his Moors³⁵
Watch well the Haram's massy doors.

IX.

His head was leant upon his hand,
His eye looked o'er the dark blue water
That swiftly glides and gently swells
Between the winding Dardanelles;
But yet he saw nor sea nor strand,
Nor even his Pacha's turbaned band
Mix in the game of mimic slaughter,
Careering cleave the folded felt³⁶
With sabre stroke right sharply dealt;

Nor marked the javelin-darting crowd,
Nor heard their Ollahs³⁷ wild and loud —
He thought but of old Giaffir's daughter!

X.

No word from Selim's bosom broke;
One sigh Zuleika's thought bespoke:
Still gazed he through the lattice grate,
Pale, mute, and mournfully sedate.
To him Zuleika's eye was turned,
But little from his aspect learned:
Equal her grief, yet not the same;
Her heart confessed a gentler flame:³⁸
But yet that heart, alarmed or weak,
She knew not why, forbade to speak.
Yet speak she must — but when essay?
“How strange he thus should turn away!
Not thus we e'er before have met;
Not thus shall be our parting yet.”
Thrice paced she slowly through the room,
And watched his eye — it still was fixed:
She snatched the urn wherein was mixed
The Persian Atar-gul's perfume,³⁹
And sprinkled all its odours o'er
The pictured roof⁴⁰ and marble floor:
The drops, that through his glittering vest⁴¹
The playful girl's appeal addressed,

Unheeded o'er his bosom flew,
As if that breast were marble too.
"What, sullen yet? it must not be —
Oh! gentle Selim, this from thee!"

She saw in curious order set

The fairest flowers of Eastern land —

"He loved them once; may touch them yet,
If offered by Zuleika's hand."

The childish thought was hardly breathed
Before the rose was plucked and wreathed;
The next fond moment saw her seat
Her fairy form at Selim's feet:

"This rose to calm my brother's cares
A message from the Bulbul⁴² bears;

It says to-night he will prolong
For Selim's ear his sweetest song;
And though his note is somewhat sad,
He'll try for once a strain more glad,
With some faint hope his altered lay
May sing these gloomy thoughts away.

XI.

"What! not receive my foolish flower?
Nay then I am indeed unblest:
On me can thus thy forehead lower?
And know'st thou not who loves thee best?⁴³
Oh, Selim dear! oh, more than dearest!

Say, is it me thou hat'st or fearest?
Come, lay thy head upon my breast,
And I will kiss thee into rest,
Since words of mine, and songs must fail,
Ev'n from my fabled nightingale.
I knew our sire at times was stern,
But this from thee had yet to learn:
Too well I know he loves thee not;
But is Zuleika's love forgot?
Ah! deem I right? the Pacha's plan —
This kinsman Bey of Carasman
Perhaps may prove some foe of thine.
If so, I swear by Mecca's shrine, — ⁴⁴
If shrines that ne'er approach allow
To woman's step admit her vow, —
Without thy free consent — command —
The Sultan should not have my hand!
Think'st thou that I could bear to part
With thee, and learn to halve my heart?
Ah! were I severed from thy side,
Where were thy friend — and who my guide?
Years have not seen, Time shall not see,
The hour that tears my soul from thee:⁴⁵
Ev'n Azrael,⁴⁶ from his deadly quiver
When flies that shaft, and fly it must,⁴⁷
That parts all else, shall doom for ever
Our hearts to undivided dust!"

XII.

He lived — he breathed — he moved — he felt;
He raised the maid from where she knelt;
His trance was gone, his keen eye shone
With thoughts that long in darkness dwelt;
With thoughts that burn — in rays that melt.

As the stream late concealed

By the fringe of its willows,

When it rushes reveal'd

In the light of its billows;

As the bolt bursts on high

From the black cloud that bound it,

Flashed the soul of that eye

Through the long lashes round it.

A war-horse at the trumpet's sound,

A lion roused by heedless hound,

A tyrant waked to sudden strife

By graze of ill-directed knife,⁴⁸

Starts not to more convulsive life

Than he, who heard that vow, displayed,

And all, before repressed, betrayed:

“Now thou art mine, for ever mine,

With life to keep, and scarce with life resign;⁴⁹

Now thou art mine, that sacred oath,

Though sworn by one, hath bound us both.

Yes, fondly, wisely hast thou done;

That vow hath saved more heads than one:

But blench not thou — thy simplest tress

Claims more from me than tenderness;

I would not wrong the slenderest hair

That clusters round thy forehead fair,⁵⁰

For all the treasures buried far

Within the caves of Istakar.⁵¹

This morning clouds upon me lowered,

Reproaches on my head were showered,

And Giaffir almost called me coward!

Now I have motive to be brave;

The son of his neglected slave,

Nay, start not, 'twas the term he gave,

May show, though little apt to vaunt,

A heart his words nor deeds can daunt.

His son, indeed! — yet, thanks to thee,

Perchance I am, at least shall be;

But let our plighted secret vow

Be only known to us as now.

I know the wretch who dares demand

From Giaffir thy reluctant hand;

More ill-got wealth, a meaner soul

Holds not a Musselim's⁵² control;

Was he not bred in Egrippo?⁵³

A viler race let Israel show!

But let that pass — to none be told

Our oath; the rest shall time unfold.

To me and mine leave Osman Bey!
I've partisans for Peril's day:
Think not I am what I appear;
I've arms — and friends — and vengeance near.”

XIII.

“Think not thou art what thou appearest!
My Selim, thou art sadly changed:
This morn I saw thee gentlest — dearest —
But now thou'rt from thyself estranged.
My love thou surely knew'st before,
It ne'er was less — nor can be more.
To see thee — hear thee — near thee stay —
And hate the night — I know not why,
Save that we meet not but by day;
With thee to live, with thee to die,
I dare not to my hope deny:
Thy cheek — thine eyes — thy lips to kiss —
Like this — and this — no more than this;⁵⁴
For, Allah! sure thy lips are flame:
What fever in thy veins is flushing?
My own have nearly caught the same,
At least I feel my cheek, too, blushing.
To soothe thy sickness, watch thy health,
Partake, but never waste thy wealth,
Or stand with smiles un murmuring by,
And lighten half thy poverty;

Do all but close thy dying eye,
For that I could not live to try;
To these alone my thoughts aspire:
More can I do? or thou require?
But, Selim, thou must answer why⁵⁵
We need so much of mystery?
The cause I cannot dream nor tell,
But be it, since thou say'st 'tis well;
Yet what thou mean'st by 'arms' and 'friends,'
Beyond my weaker sense extends.
I meant that Giaffir should have heard
 The very vow I plighted thee;
His wrath would not revoke my word:
 But surely he would leave me free.
 Can this fond wish seem strange in me,
To be what I have ever been?
What other hath Zuleika seen
From simple childhood's earliest hour?
 What other can she seek to see
Than thee, companion of her bower,
 The partner of her infancy?
These cherished thoughts with life begun,
 Say, why must I no more avow?
What change is wrought to make me shun
 The truth — my pride, and thine till now?
To meet the gaze of stranger's eyes
Our law — our creed — our God denies;

Nor shall one wandering thought of mine

At such, our Prophet's will, repine:

No! happier made by that decree,

He left me all in leaving thee.

Deep were my anguish, thus compelled⁵⁶

To wed with one I ne'er beheld:

This wherefore should I not reveal?

Why wilt thou urge me to conceal?⁵⁷

I know the Pacha's haughty mood

To thee hath never boded good;

And he so often storms at nought,

Allah! forbid that e'er he ought!

And why I know not, but within

My heart concealment weighs like sin.⁵⁸

If then such secrecy be crime,

And such it feels while lurking here;

Oh, Selim! tell me yet in time,

Nor leave me thus to thoughts of fear.

Ah! yonder see the Tchocadar,⁵⁹

My father leaves the mimic war;

I tremble now to meet his eye —

Say, Selim, canst thou tell me why?"

XIV.

"Zuleika — to thy tower's retreat

Betake thee — Giaffir I can greet:

And now with him I fain must prate

Of firmans, imposts, levies, state.
There's fearful news from Danube's banks,
Our Vizier nobly thins his ranks
For which the Giaour may give him thanks!
Our Sultan hath a shorter way
Such costly triumph to repay.
But, mark me, when the twilight drum
 Hath warned the troops to food and sleep,
Unto thy cell with Selim come;
 Then softly from the Haram creep
 Where we may wander by the deep:
 Our garden battlements are steep;
Nor these will rash intruder climb
To list our words, or stint our time;
And if he doth, I want not steel
Which some have felt, and more may feel.
Then shalt thou learn of Selim more
Than thou hast heard or thought before:
Trust me, Zuleika — fear not me!
Thou know'st I hold a Haram key.”
“Fear thee, my Selim! ne'er till now
Did words like this —— ”
 “Delay not thou;⁶⁰
I keep the key — and Haroun's guard
Have *some*, and hope of *more* reward.
To-night, Zuleika, thou shalt hear
My tale, my purpose, and my fear:

I am not, love! what I appear.”

³ [The opening lines were probably suggested by Goethe’s —

“Kennst du das Land wo die citronen blühn?”]

⁴ “Gúl,” the rose.

⁵ {158} [“Where the Citron,” etc. These lines are in the MS., and *omitted* by the *Printer*, whom I *again* request to look over it, and see that no others are *omitted*. — B.” (Revise No. 1, November 13, 1813.)

“I ought and do apologise to Mr. — the Printer for charging him with an omission of the lines which I find was my own — but I also wish *he* would not print such a stupid word as *finest* for fairest.” (Revise, November 15, 1813.)

The lines, “Where the Citron,” etc., are absent from a fair copy dated November 11, but are inserted as an addition in an earlier draft.]

⁶

“Souls made of fire, and children of the Sun,
With whom revenge is virtue.”

YOUNG’S *REVENGE*, ACT V. SC. 2 (*BRITISH THEATRE*, 1792, p. 84).

⁷ *For wild as the moment of lovers’ farewell.* — [MS.]

⁸ *Canto 1st The Bride of Abydos. Nov. 1st 1813.* — [MS.]

⁹ {159} *The changing cheek and knitting brow.* — [MS. i.]

¹⁰

Hence — bid my daughter hither come

This hour decides her future doom —

Yet not to her these words express

But lead her from the tower’s recess. — [MSS. i., ii.]

[These lines must have been altered in proof, for all the revises accord with the text.]

¹¹ {160} *With many a tale and mutual song.* — [ms]

¹² Mejnoun and Leila, the Romeo and Juliet of the East. Sadi, the moral poet of Persia. [For the “story of Leila and Mujnoon,” see *The Gulistan, or Rose Garden* of . . . Saadi, translated by Francis Gladwin, Boston, 1865, Tale xix. pp. 288, 289; and *Gulistan* . . . du Cheikh Sa’di . . . Traduit par W. Semelet, Paris, 1834, Notes on Chapitre V. p. 304. Sa’di “moralizes” the tale, to the effect that love dwells in the eye of the beholder. See, too, Jāmī’s *Medjnoun et Leila*, translated by A. L. Chezy, Paris, 1807.]

¹³ Tambour. Turkish drum, which sounds at sunrise, noon, and twilight. [The “tambour” is a kind of mandoline. It is the large kettle-drum (*nagaré*) which sounds the hours.]

¹⁴ {161}

Must walk forsooth where waters flow

And pore on every flower below. — [MS. erased.]

15 {162} *For looks of peace and hearts of ire.* — [MS.]

16 *And calmly to his Sire's was raised.* — [MS.]

17 {163} *No — nor the blood I call my own.* — [MS.]

18 The Turks abhor the Arabs (who return the compliment a hundredfold) even more than they hate the Christians.

19 *Or Christian flying from the fight.* — [MS.]

20 *Zuleika! ever welcome here.* — [MS.]

21 *Who never was more blest than now.* — [MS.]

22 {164} [Lines 170–181 were added in the course of printing. They were received by the publisher on November 22, 1813.]

23

Who hath not felt his very power of sight

Faint with the languid dimness of delight? — [MS.]

24

The light of life — the purity of grace

The mind of Music breathing in her face

or, Mind on her lip and music in her face.

A heart where softness harmonized the whole

And oh! her eye was in itself a Soul! — [MS.]

25 This expression has met with objections. I will not refer to "Him who hath not Music in his soul," but merely request the reader to recollect, for ten seconds, the features of the woman whom he believes to be the most beautiful; and, if he then does not comprehend fully what is feebly expressed in the above line, I shall be sorry for us both. For an eloquent passage in the latest work of the first female writer of this, perhaps of any, age, on the analogy (and the immediate comparison excited by that analogy) between "painting and music," see vol. iii. cap. 10, *De l'Allemagne*. And is not this connection still stronger with the original than the copy? with the colouring of Nature than of Art? After all, this is rather to be felt than described; still I think there are some who will understand it, at least they would have done had they beheld the countenance whose speaking harmony suggested the idea; for this passage is not drawn from imagination but memory, {A} that mirror which Affliction dashes to the earth, and looking down upon the fragments, only beholds the reflection multiplied!

[For the simile of the broken mirror, compare *Childe Harold*, Canto III. stanza xxxiii. line 1 (*Poetical Works*, ii. 236, note 2); and for "the expression," "music breathing from her face," compare Sir Thomas Browne's *Religio Medici*, Part II. sect. ix., *Works*, 1835, ii. 106, "And sure there is musick, even in the beauty and the silent note which Cupid strikes, far sweeter than the sound of any instrument;" and Lovelace's "Song," *Orpheus to Beasts* —

"Oh could you view the melody

Of ev'ry grace,

And music of her face!"

The effect of the appeal to Madame de Staël is thus recorded in Byron's *Journal* of December 7, 1813 (*Letters*, 1898, ii. 369): "This morning, a very pretty billet from the Staël," (for passage in *De L'Allemagne*, Part III. chap, x., and the "billet," see *Letters*, ii. 354, note 1) . . . "She has been pleased to be pleased with my slight eulogy in the note annexed to *The Bride*."]

{A} *In this line I have not drawn from fiction but memory — that mirror of regret memory — the too faithful mirror of affliction the long vista through which we gaze. Someone has said that the perfection of Architecture is frozen music — the perfection of Beauty to my mind always presented the idea of living Music. — [MS. erased.]*

²⁶ {166} Carasman Oglou, or Kara Osman Oglou, is the principal landholder in Turkey; he governs Magnesia: those who, by a kind of feudal tenure, possess land on condition of service, are called Timariots: they serve as Spahis, according to the extent of territory, and bring a certain number into the field, generally cavalry.

[The "line of Carasman" dates back to Kara Youlouk, the founder of the dynasty of the "White Sheep," at the close of the fourteenth century. Hammer-Purgstall (*Hist. de l'Emp. Ottoman*, iii. 151) gives *sang-sue*, "blood-sucker," as the equivalent of Youlouk, which should, however, be interpreted "smooth-face." Of the Magnesian Kara Osman Oglou ("Black Osman-son"), Dallaway (*Constantinople Ancient and Modern*, 1797, p. 190) writes, "He is the most powerful and opulent derè bey ('lord of the valley'), or feudal tenant, in the empire, and, though inferior to the pashas in rank, possesses more wealth and influence, and offers them an example of administration and patriotic government which they have rarely the virtue to follow." For the Timariots, who formed the third class of the feudal cavalry of the Ottoman Empire, see Finlay's *Greece under Othoman* . . . *Domination*, 1856, pp. 50, 51.]

²⁷ *Who won of yore paternal lands. — [MS.]*

²⁸ *Enough if that thy bridesman true. — [MS. erased.]*

²⁹ [The Bey Oglou (Begzāde) is "the nobleman," "the high-born chief."]

³⁰ {167} When a Pacha is sufficiently strong to resist, the single messenger, who is always the first bearer of the order for his death, is strangled instead, and sometimes five or six, one after the other, on the same errand, by command of the refractory patient; if, on the contrary, he is weak or loyal, he bows, kisses the Sultan's respectable signature, and is bowstrung with great complacency. In 1810, several of these presents were exhibited in the niche of the Seraglio gate; among others, the head of the Pacha of Bagdat, a brave young man, cut off by treachery, after a desperate resistance.

³¹ Clapping of the hands calls the servants. The Turks hate a superfluous expenditure of voice, and they have no bells.

³² "Chibouque," the Turkish pipe, of which the amber mouthpiece, and sometimes the ball which contains the leaf, is adorned with precious stones, if in possession of the wealthier orders.

³³ {168} "Maugrabee" [*Maghrabī*, Moors], Moorish mercenaries.

³⁴ "Delis," bravos who form the forlorn hope of the cavalry, and always begin the action. [See *Childe Harold*, Canto II., *Poetical Works*, 1899, ii. 149, note 1.]

³⁵ [The Kizlar aghasi was the head of the black eunuchs; kizlar, by itself, is Turkish for "girls," "virgins."]

³⁶ A twisted fold of *felt* is used for scimitar practice by the Turks, and few but Mussulman arms can cut through it at a single stroke: sometimes a tough turban is used for the same purpose. The *jerreed* [jarīd] is a game of blunt javelins, animated and graceful.

³⁷ "Ollahs," Alla il Allah [La ilāh ill 'llāh], the "Leilies," as the Spanish poets call them, the sound is Ollah: a cry of which the Turks, for a silent people, are somewhat profuse, particularly during the *jerreed* [jarīd], or in the chase, but mostly in battle. Their animation in the field, and gravity in the chamber, with their pipes and comboloios [*vide post*, p. 181, note 4], form an amusing contrast.

³⁸ {169} *Her heart confessed no cause of shame.* — [MS.]

³⁹ "Atar-gul," ottar of roses. The Persian is the finest.

⁴⁰ The ceiling and wainscots, or rather walls, of the Mussulman apartments are generally painted, in great houses, with one eternal and highly-coloured view of Constantinople, wherein the principal feature is a noble contempt of perspective; below, arms, scimitars, etc., are, in general, fancifully and not inelegantly disposed.

⁴¹

The drops that flow upon his vest

Unheeded fell upon his breast. — [MS.]

⁴² {170} It has been much doubted whether the notes of this "Lover of the rose" are sad or merry; and Mr. Fox's remarks on the subject have provoked some learned controversy as to the opinions of the ancients on the subject. I dare not venture a conjecture on the point, though a little inclined to the "errare malle," etc., *if Mr. Fox was mistaken.*

[Fox, writing to Grey (see Lord Holland's Preface (p. xii.) to the *History . . . of James the Second*, by . . . C. J. Fox, London, 1808), remarks, "In defence of my opinion about the nightingale, I find Chaucer, who of all poets seems to have been the fondest of the singing of birds, calls it a 'merry note,'" etc. Fox's contention was attacked and disproved by Martin Davy (1763–1839, physician and Master of Caius College, Cambridge), in an interesting and scholarly pamphlet entitled, *Observations upon Mr. Fox's Letter to Mr. Grey*, 1809.]

⁴³

Would I had never seen this hour

What knowest thou not who loves thee best. — [MS.]

⁴⁴ {171} *If so by Mecca's hidden shrine.* — [MS.]

⁴⁵ *The day that teareth thee from me.* — [MS.]

⁴⁶ "Azrael," the angel of death.

⁴⁷ *When comes that hour and come it must.* — [MS. erased.]

⁴⁸ {172}

Which thanks to terror and the dark

Hath missed a trifle of its mark. — [MS.]

[The couplet was expunged in a revise dated November 19.]

⁴⁹ *With life to keep but not with life resign.* — [MS.]

50 {173}

That strays along that head so fair. — [MS.]

or, *That strays along that neck so fair.* — [MS.]

51 The treasures of the Pre-Adamite Sultans. See D'Herbelot [1781, ii. 405], article *Istakar* [Estekhar ou Istekhar].

52 "Musselim," a governor, the next in rank after a Pacha; a Waywode is the third; and then come the Agas.

[This table of precedence applies to Ottoman officials in Greece and other dependencies. The Musselim [Mutaselline] is the governor or commander of a city (e.g. Hobhouse, *Travels in Albania*, ii. 41, speaks of the "Musselim of Smyrna"); Aghas, i.e. heads of departments in the army or civil service, or the Sultan's household, here denote mayors of small towns, or local magnates.]

53 "Egripo," the Negropont. According to the proverb, the Turks of Egripo, the Jews of Salonica, and the Greeks of Athens, are the worst of their respective races.

[See Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, 1855, viii. 386.]

54 *Like this — and more than this.* — [MS.]

55 {175}

But — Selim why my heart's reply

Should need so much of mystery

Is more than I can guess or tell,

But since thou say'st 'tis so — 'tis well. — [MS.]

[The fourth line erased.]

56

He blest me more in leaving thee.

Much should I suffer thus compelled. — [MS.]

57 {176}

This vow I should no more conceal

And wherefore should I not reveal? — [MS.]

58

My breast is consciousness of sin

But when and where and what the crime

I almost feel is lurking here. — [MS.]

59 "Tchocadar" — one of the attendants who precedes a man of authority.

[See D'Ohsson's *Tableau Générale, etc.*, 1787, ii. 159, and *Plates* 87, 88. The Turks seem to have used the Persian word *chawki-dār*, an officer of the guard-house, a policeman (whence our slang word "chokey"), for a "valet de pied," or, in the case of the Sultan, for an apparitor. The French spelling points to D'Ohsson as Byron's authority.]

60 {177} *Be silent thou.* — [MS.]

CANTO THE SECOND.⁶¹

I.

The winds are high on Helle's wave,
 As on that night of stormy water
When Love, who sent, forgot to save
The young — the beautiful — the brave —
 The lonely hope of Sestos' daughter.
Oh! when alone along the sky
Her turret-torch was blazing high,
Though rising gale, and breaking foam,
And shrieking sea-birds warned him home;
And clouds aloft and tides below,
With signs and sounds, forbade to go,
He could not see, he would not hear,
Or sound or sign foreboding fear;
His eye but saw that light of Love,
The only star it hailed above;
His ear but rang with Hero's song,
"Ye waves, divide not lovers long!" —
That tale is old, but Love anew⁶²
May nerve young hearts to prove as true.

II.

The winds are high and Helle's tide
 Rolls darkly heaving to the main;

And Night's descending shadows hide
That field with blood bedewed in vain,
The desert of old Priam's pride;
The tombs, sole relics of his reign,
All — save immortal dreams that could beguile
The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle!

III.

Oh! yet — for there my steps have been;
These feet have pressed the sacred shore,
These limbs that buoyant wave hath borne —
Minstrel! with thee to muse, to mourn,
To trace again those fields of yore,
Believing every hillock green
Contains no fabled hero's ashes,
And that around the undoubted scene
Thine own "broad Hellespont"⁶³ still dashes,
Be long my lot! and cold were he
Who there could gaze denying thee!

IV.

The Night hath closed on Helle's stream,
Nor yet hath risen on Ida's hill
That Moon, which shone on his high theme:
No warrior chides her peaceful beam,
But conscious shepherds bless it still.
Their flocks are grazing on the Mound

Of him who felt the Dardan's arrow:
That mighty heap of gathered ground
Which Ammon's son ran proudly round,⁶⁴
By nations raised, by monarchs crowned,
Is now a lone and nameless barrow!
Within — thy dwelling-place how narrow!⁶⁵
Without — can only strangers breathe
The name of him that *was* beneath:
Dust long outlasts the storied stone;
But Thou — thy very dust is gone!

V.

Late, late to-night will Dian cheer
The swain, and chase the boatman's fear;
Till then — no beacon on the cliff
May shape the course of struggling skiff;
The scattered lights that skirt the bay,
All, one by one, have died away;
The only lamp of this lone hour
Is glimmering in Zuleika's tower.
Yes! there is light in that lone chamber,
And o'er her silken ottoman
Are thrown the fragrant beads of amber,
O'er which her fairy fingers ran;⁶⁶
Near these, with emerald rays beset,⁶⁷
(How could she thus that gem forget?)
Her mother's sainted amulet,⁶⁸

Whereon engraved the Koorsee text,
Could smooth this life, and win the next;
And by her Comboloio⁶⁹ lies
A Koran of illumined dyes;
And many a bright emblazoned rhyme
By Persian scribes redeemed from Time;
And o'er those scrolls, not oft so mute,
Reclines her now neglected lute;
And round her lamp of fretted gold
Bloom flowers in urns of China's mould;
The richest work of Iran's loom,
And Sheeraz⁷⁰ tribute of perfume;
All that can eye or sense delight
 Are gathered in that gorgeous room:
 But yet it hath an air of gloom.
She, of this Peri cell the sprite,
What doth she hence, and on so rude a night?

VI.

Wrapt in the darkest sable vest,
 Which none save noblest Moslem wear,
To guard from winds of Heaven the breast
 As Heaven itself to Selim dear,
With cautious steps the thicket threading,
 And starting oft, as through the glade
 The gust its hollow moanings made,
Till on the smoother pathway treading,

More free her timid bosom beat,

The maid pursued her silent guide;

And though her terror urged retreat,

How could she quit her Selim's side?

How teach her tender lips to chide?

VII.

They reached at length a grotto, hewn

By nature, but enlarged by art,

Where oft her lute she wont to tune,

And oft her Koran conned apart;

And oft in youthful reverie

She dreamed what Paradise might be:

Where Woman's parted soul shall go

Her Prophet had disdained to show;⁷¹⁷²

But Selim's mansion was secure,

Nor deemed she, could he long endure

His bower in other worlds of bliss

Without *her*, most beloved in this!

Oh! who so dear with him could dwell?

What Houri soothe him half so well?

VIII.

Since last she visited the spot

Some change seemed wrought within the grot:

It might be only that the night

Disguised things seen by better light:

That brazen lamp but dimly threw
A ray of no celestial hue;
But in a nook within the cell
Her eye on stranger objects fell.
There arms were piled, not such as wield
The turbaned Delis in the field;
But brands of foreign blade and hilt,
And one was red — perchance with guilt!⁷³
Ah! how without can blood be spilt?
A cup too on the board was set
That did not seem to hold sherbet.
What may this mean? she turned to see
Her Selim — “Oh! can this be he?”⁷⁴

IX.

His robe of pride was thrown aside,
His brow no high-crowned turban bore,
But in its stead a shawl of red,
Wreathed lightly round, his temples wore:
That dagger, on whose hilt the gem
Were worthy of a diadem,
No longer glittered at his waist,
Where pistols unadorned were braced;
And from his belt a sabre swung,
And from his shoulder loosely hung
The cloak of white, the thin capote
That decks the wandering Candiote;

Beneath — his golden plated vest
Clung like a cuirass to his breast;
The greaves below his knee that wound
With silvery scales were sheathed and bound.
But were it not that high command
Spake in his eye, and tone, and hand,
All that a careless eye could see
In him was some young Galiongée.⁷⁵

X.

“I said I was not what I seemed;
 And now thou see'st my words were true:
I have a tale thou hast not dreamed,
 If sooth — its truth must others rue.
My story now 'twere vain to hide,
I must not see thee Osman's bride:
But had not thine own lips declared
How much of that young heart I shared,
I could not, must not, yet have shown
The darker secret of my own.
In this I speak not now of love;
That — let Time — Truth — and Peril prove:
But first — Oh! never wed another —
Zuleika! I am not thy brother!”

XI.

“Oh! not my brother! — yet unsay —

God! am I left alone on earth
To mourn — I dare not curse — the day⁷⁶
That saw my solitary birth?
Oh! thou wilt love me now no more!
My sinking heart foreboded ill;
But know *me* all I was before,
Thy sister — friend — Zuleika still.
Thou led'st me here perchance to kill;
If thou hast cause for vengeance, see!
My breast is offered — take thy fill!
Far better with the dead to be
Than live thus nothing now to thee:
Perhaps far worse, for now I know
Why Giaffir always seemed thy foe;
And I, alas! am Giaffir's child,
For whom thou wert contemned, reviled.
If not thy sister — would'st thou save
My life — Oh! bid me be thy slave!”

XII.

“My slave, Zuleika! — nay, I'm thine:
But, gentle love, this transport calm,
Thy lot shall yet be linked with mine;
I swear it by our Prophet's shrine,⁷⁷
And be that thought thy sorrow's balm.
So may the Koran⁷⁸ verse displayed
Upon its steel direct my blade,

In danger's hour to guard us both,
As I preserve that awful oath!
The name in which thy heart hath prided
 Must change; but, my Zuleika, know,
That tie is widened, not divided,
 Although thy Sire's my deadliest foe.
My father was to Giaffir all
 That Selim late was deemed to thee;
That brother wrought a brother's fall,
 But spared, at least, my infancy!
And lulled me with a vain deceit
That yet a like return may meet.
He reared me, not with tender help,
 But like the nephew of a Cain;⁷⁹
He watched me like a lion's whelp,
 That gnaws and yet may break his chain.
My father's blood in every vein
Is boiling! but for thy dear sake
No present vengeance will I take;
 Though here I must no more remain.
But first, beloved Zuleika! hear
How Giaffir wrought this deed of fear.

XIII.

“How first their strife to rancour grew,
 If Love or Envy made them foes,
It matters little if I knew;

In fiery spirits, slights, though few
 And thoughtless, will disturb repose.
In war Abdallah's arm was strong,
 Remembered yet in Bosniac song,⁸⁰
And Paswan's⁸¹ rebel hordes attest
How little love they bore such guest:
His death is all I need relate,
The stern effect of Giaffir's hate;
And how my birth disclosed to me,⁸²
Whate'er beside it makes, hath made me free.

XIV.

“When Paswan, after years of strife,
At last for power, but first for life,
In Widdin's walls too proudly sate,
Our Pachas rallied round the state;
Not last nor least in high command,
Each brother led a separate band;
They gave their Horse-tails⁸³ to the wind,
 And mustering in Sophia's plain
Their tents were pitched, their post assigned;
 To one, alas! assigned in vain!
What need of words? the deadly bowl,
 By Giaffir's order drugged and given,
With venom subtle as his soul,⁸⁴
 Dismissed Abdallah's hence to heaven.
Reclined and feverish in the bath,

He, when the hunter's sport was up,
But little deemed a brother's wrath
 To quench his thirst had such a cup:
The bowl a bribed attendant bore;
He drank one draught,⁸⁵ nor needed more!
If thou my tale, Zuleika, doubt,
Call Haroun — he can tell it out.

XV.

“The deed once done, and Paswan's feud
In part suppressed, though ne'er subdued,
 Abdallah's Pachalick was gained:—
Thou know'st not what in our Divan
Can wealth procure for worse than man —
 Abdallah's honours were obtained
By him a brother's murder stained;
'Tis true, the purchase nearly drained
His ill-got treasure, soon replaced.
Would'st question whence? Survey the waste,
And ask the squalid peasant how
His gains repay his broiling brow! —
Why me the stern Usurper spared,
Why thus with me his palace spared,
I know not. Shame — regret — remorse —
And little fear from infant's force —
Besides, adoption as a son
By him whom Heaven accorded none,

Or some unknown cabal, caprice,
Preserved me thus:— but not in peace:
He cannot curb his haughty mood,⁸⁶
Nor I forgive a father's blood.

XVI.

“Within thy Father's house are foes;
Not all who break his bread are true:
To these should I my birth disclose,
His days-his very hours were few:
They only want a heart to lead,
A hand to point them to the deed.
But Haroun only knows, or knew
This tale, whose close is almost nigh:
He in Abdallah's palace grew,
And held that post in his Serai
Which holds he here — he saw him die;
But what could single slavery do?
Avenge his lord? alas! too late;
Or save his son from such a fate?
He chose the last, and when elate
With foes subdued, or friends betrayed,
Proud Giaffir in high triumph sate,
He led me helpless to his gate,
And not in vain it seems essayed
To save the life for which he prayed.
The knowledge of my birth secured

From all and each, but most from me;
Thus Giaffir's safety was ensured.

Removed he too from Roumelie
To this our Asiatic side,
Far from our seats by Danube's tide,
With none but Haroun, who retains
Such knowledge — and that Nubian feels
A Tyrant's secrets are but chains,
From which the captive gladly steals,
And this and more to me reveals:
Such still to guilt just Allah sends —
Slaves, tools, accomplices — no friends!

XVII.

“All this, Zuleika, harshly sounds;
But harsher still my tale must be:
Howe'er my tongue thy softness wounds,
Yet I must prove all truth to thee.”⁸⁷
I saw thee start this garb to see,
Yet is it one I oft have worn,
And long must wear: this Galiongée,
To whom thy plighted vow is sworn,
Is leader of those pirate hordes,
Whose laws and lives are on their swords;
To hear whose desolating tale
Would make thy waning cheek more pale:
Those arms thou see'st my band have brought,

The hands that wield are not remote;
This cup too for the rugged knaves
 Is filled — once quaffed, they ne'er repine:
Our Prophet might forgive the slaves;
 They're only infidels in wine.

XVIII.

“What could I be? Proscribed at home,
And taunted to a wish to roam;
And listless left — for Giaffir's fear
Denied the courser and the spear —
Though oft — Oh, Mahomet! how oft! —
In full Divan the despot scoffed,
As if *my* weak unwilling hand
Refused the bridle or the brand:
He ever went to war alone,
And pent me here untried — unknown;
To Haroun's care with women left,⁸⁸
By hope unblest, of fame bereft,
While thou — whose softness long endeared,
Though it unmanned me, still had cheered —
To Brusa's walls for safety sent,
Awaited'st there the field's event.
Haroun who saw my spirit pining⁸⁹
 Beneath inaction's sluggish yoke,
His captive, though with dread resigning,
 My thraldom for a season broke,

On promise to return before
The day when Giaffir's charge was o'er.
'Tis vain — my tongue can not impart⁹⁰
My almost drunkenness of heart,⁹¹
When first this liberated eye
Surveyed Earth — Ocean — Sun — and Sky —
As if my Spirit pierced them through,
And all their inmost wonders knew!
One word alone can paint to thee
That more than feeling — I was Free!
E'en for thy presence ceased to pine;
The World — nay, Heaven itself was mine!

XIX.

“The shallop of a trusty Moor
Conveyed me from this idle shore;
I longed to see the isles that gem
Old Ocean's purple diadem:
I sought by turns, and saw them all;⁹²
 But when and where I joined the crew,
With whom I'm pledged to rise or fall,
 When all that we design to do
Is done, 'twill then be time more meet
To tell thee, when the tale's complete.

XX.

“'Tis true, they are a lawless brood,

But rough in form, nor mild in mood;
And every creed, and every race,
With them hath found — may find a place:
But open speech, and ready hand,
Obedience to their Chief's command;
A soul for every enterprise,
That never sees with Terror's eyes;
Friendship for each, and faith to all,
And vengeance vowed for those who fall,
Have made them fitting instruments
For more than e'en my own intents.
And some — and I have studied all
 Distinguished from the vulgar rank,
But chiefly to my council call
 The wisdom of the cautious Frank:—
And some to higher thoughts aspire.
 The last of Lambro's⁹³ patriots there
 Anticipated freedom share;
And oft around the cavern fire
On visionary schemes debate,
To snatch the Rayahs⁹⁴ from their fate.
So let them ease their hearts with prate
Of equal rights, which man ne'er knew;
I have a love for freedom too.
Aye! let me like the ocean-Patriarch⁹⁵ roam,
Or only know on land the Tartar's home!⁹⁶
My tent on shore, my galley on the sea,

Are more than cities and Serais to me:⁹⁷
Borne by my steed, or wafted by my sail,
Across the desert, or before the gale,
Bound where thou wilt, my barb! or glide, my prow!
But be the Star that guides the wanderer, Thou!
Thou, my Zuleika, share and bless my bark;
The Dove of peace and promise to mine ark!⁹⁸
Or, since that hope denied in worlds of strife,
Be thou the rainbow to the storms of life!
The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,
And tints to-morrow with prophetic ray!⁹⁹
Blest — as the Muezzin's strain from Mecca's wall
To pilgrims pure and prostrate at his call;
Soft — as the melody of youthful days,
That steals the trembling tear of speechless praise;
Dear — as his native song to Exile's ears,¹⁰⁰
Shall sound each tone thy long-loved voice endears.
For thee in those bright isles is built a bower
Blooming as Aden¹⁰¹ in its earliest hour.
A thousand swords, with Selim's heart and hand,
Wait — wave — defend — destroy — at thy command!¹⁰²
Girt by my band, Zuleika at my side,
The spoil of nations shall bedeck my bride.
The Haram's languid years of listless ease
Are well resigned for cares — for joys like these:
Not blind to Fate, I see, where'er I rove,
Unnumbered perils, — but one only love!

Yet well my toils shall that fond breast repay,
Though Fortune frown, or falser friends betray.
How dear the dream in darkest hours of ill,
Should all be changed, to find thee faithful still!
Be but thy soul, like Selim's firmly shown;
To thee be Selim's tender as thine own;
To soothe each sorrow, share in each delight,¹⁰³
Blend every thought, do all — but disunite!
Once free, 'tis mine our horde again to guide;
Friends to each other, foes to aught beside:¹⁰⁴
Yet there we follow but the bent assigned
By fatal Nature to man's warring kind:¹⁰⁵
Mark! where his carnage and his conquests cease!
He makes a solitude, and calls it — peace!¹⁰⁶¹⁰⁷
I like the rest must use my skill or strength,
But ask no land beyond my sabre's length:
Power sways but by division — her resource¹⁰⁸
The blest alternative of fraud or force!
Ours be the last; in time Deceit may come
When cities cage us in a social home:
There ev'n thy soul might err — how oft the heart
Corruption shakes which Peril could not part!
And Woman, more than Man, when Death or Woe,
Or even Disgrace, would lay her lover low,
Sunk in the lap of Luxury will shame —
Away suspicion! — *not* Zuleika's name!
But life is hazard at the best; and here

No more remains to win, and much to fear:
Yes, fear! — the doubt, the dread of losing thee,
By Osman's power, and Giaffir's stern decree.
That dread shall vanish with the favouring gale,
Which Love to-night hath promised to my sail:¹⁰⁹
No danger daunts the pair his smile hath blest,
Their steps still roving, but their hearts at rest.
With thee all toils are sweet, each clime hath charms;
Earth — sea alike — our world within our arms!
Aye — let the loud winds whistle o'er the deck,¹¹⁰
So that those arms cling closer round my neck:
The deepest murmur of this lip shall be,¹¹¹¹¹²
No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!
The war of elements no fears impart
To Love, whose deadliest bane is human Art:
There lie the only rocks our course can check;
Here moments menace — *there* are years of wreck!
But hence ye thoughts that rise in Horror's shape!
This hour bestows, or ever bars escape.¹¹³
Few words remain of mine my tale to close;
Of thine but *one* to waft us from our foes;
Yea — foes — to me will Giaffir's hate decline?
And is not Osman, who would part us, thine?

XXI.

“His head and faith from doubt and death
Returned in time my guard to save;

Few heard, none told, that o'er the wave
From isle to isle I roved the while:
And since, though parted from my band
Too seldom now I leave the land,
No deed they've done, nor deed shall do,
Ere I have heard and doomed it too:
I form the plan — decree the spoil —
Tis fit I oftener share the toil.
But now too long I've held thine ear;
Time presses — floats my bark — and here
We leave behind but hate and fear.
To-morrow Osman with his train
Arrives — to-night must break thy chain:
And would'st thou save that haughty Bey, —
 Perchance *his* life who gave thee thine, —
With me this hour away — away!
 But yet, though thou art plighted mine,
Would'st thou recall thy willing vow,
Appalled by truths imparted now,
Here rest I— not to see thee wed:
But be that peril on *my* head!"

XXII.

Zuleika, mute and motionless,
Stood like that Statue of Distress,
When, her last hope for ever gone,
The Mother hardened into stone;

All in the maid that eye could see
Was but a younger Niobé.
But ere her lip, or even her eye,
Essayed to speak, or look reply,
Beneath the garden's wicket porch
Far flashed on high a blazing torch!
Another — and another — and another — 114
“Oh! fly — no more — yet now my more than brother!”
Far, wide, through every thicket spread
The fearful lights are gleaming red;
Nor these alone — for each right hand
Is ready with a sheathless brand.
They part — pursue — return, and wheel
With searching flambeau, shining steel;
And last of all, his sabre waving,
Stern Giaffir in his fury raving:
And now almost they touch the cave —
Oh! must that grot be Selim's grave?

XXIII.

Dauntless he stood — ”’Tis come — soon past —
One kiss, Zuleika — ’tis my last:
 But yet my band not far from shore
May hear this signal, see the flash;
Yet now too few — the attempt were rash:
 No matter — yet one effort more.”
Forth to the cavern mouth he stept;

His pistol's echo rang on high,
Zuleika started not, nor wept,
Despair benumbed her breast and eye! —
“They hear me not, or if they ply
Their oars, 'tis but to see me die;
That sound hath drawn my foes more nigh.
Then forth my father's scimitar,
Thou ne'er hast seen less equal war!
Farewell, Zuleika! — Sweet! retire:
Yet stay within — here linger safe,
At thee his rage will only chafe.
Stir not — lest even to thee perchance
Some erring blade or ball should glance.
Fear'st them for him? — may I expire
If in this strife I seek thy sire!
No — though by him that poison poured;
No — though again he call me coward!
But tamely shall I meet their steel?
No — as each crest save *his* may feel!”

XXIV.

One bound he made, and gained the sand:
Already at his feet hath sunk
The foremost of the prying band,
A gasping head, a quivering trunk:
Another falls — but round him close
A swarming circle of his foes;

From right to left his path he cleft,
 And almost met the meeting wave:
His boat appears — not five oars' length —
His comrades strain with desperate strength —
 Oh! are they yet in time to save?
 His feet the foremost breakers lave;
His band are plunging in the bay,
Their sabres glitter through the spray;
Wet — wild — unwearied to the strand
They struggle — now they touch the land!
They come — 'tis but to add to slaughter —
His heart's best blood is on the water.

XXV.

Escaped from shot, unharmed by steel,
Or scarcely grazed its force to feel,¹¹⁵
Had Selim won, betrayed, beset,
To where the strand and billows met;
There as his last step left the land,
And the last death-blow dealt his hand —
Ah! wherefore did he turn to look¹¹⁶
 For her his eye but sought in vain?
That pause, that fatal gaze he took,
 Hath doomed his death, or fixed his chain.
Sad proof, in peril and in pain,
How late will Lover's hope remain!
His back was to the dashing spray;

Behind, but close, his comrades lay,
When, at the instant, hissed the ball —
“So may the foes of Giaffir fall!”
Whose voice is heard? whose carbine rang?
Whose bullet through the night-air sang,
Too nearly, deadly aimed to err?
'Tis thine — Abdallah's Murderer!
The father slowly rued thy hate,
The son hath found a quicker fate:
Fast from his breast the blood is bubbling,
The whiteness of the sea-foam troubling —
If aught his lips essayed to groan,
The rushing billows choked the tone!

XXVI.

Morn slowly rolls the clouds away;
 Few trophies of the fight are there:
The shouts that shook the midnight-bay
Are silent; but some signs of fray
 That strand of strife may bear,
And fragments of each shivered brand;
Steps stamped; and dashed into the sand
The print of many a struggling hand
 May there be marked; nor far remote
 A broken torch, an oarless boat;
And tangled on the weeds that heap
The beach where shelving to the deep

There lies a white capote!

'Tis rent in twain — one dark-red stain

The wave yet ripples o'er in vain:

But where is he who wore?

Ye! who would o'er his relics weep,

Go, seek them where the surges sweep

Their burthen round Sigæum's steep

And cast on Lemnos' shore:

The sea-birds shriek above the prey,

O'er which their hungry beaks delay,¹¹⁷

As shaken on his restless pillow,

His head heaves with the heaving billow;

That hand, whose motion is not life,¹¹⁸

Yet feebly seems to menace strife,

Flung by the tossing tide on high,

Then levelled with the wave — ¹¹⁹

What recks it, though that corse shall lie

Within a living grave?

The bird that tears that prostrate form

Hath only robbed the meaner worm;

The only heart, the only eye

Had bled or wept to see him die,

Had seen those scattered limbs composed,

And mourned above his turban-stone,¹²⁰

That heart hath burst — that eye was closed —

Yea — closed before his own!

XXVII.

By Helle's stream there is a voice of wail!

And Woman's eye is wet — Man's cheek is pale:

Zuleika! last of Giaffir's race,

Thy destined lord is come too late:

He sees not — ne'er shall see thy face!

Can he not hear

The loud Wul-wulleh¹²¹ warn his distant ear?

Thy handmaids weeping at the gate,

The Koran-chanters of the Hymn of Fate,¹²²¹²³

The silent slaves with folded arms that wait,

Sighs in the hall, and shrieks upon the gale,

Tell him thy tale!

Thou didst not view thy Selim fall!

That fearful moment when he left the cave

Thy heart grew chill:

He was thy hope — thy joy — thy love — thine all,

And that last thought on him thou could'st not save

Sufficed to kill;

Burst forth in one wild cry — and all was still.

Peace to thy broken heart — and virgin grave!

Ah! happy! but of life to lose the worst!

That grief — though deep — though fatal — was thy first!

Thrice happy! ne'er to feel nor fear the force

Of absence — shame — pride — hate — revenge —
remorse!

And, oh! that pang where more than Madness lies

The Worm that will not sleep — and never dies;
Thought of the gloomy day and ghastly night,
That dreads the darkness, and yet loathes the light,
That winds around, and tears the quivering heart!
Ah! wherefore not consume it — and depart!
Woe to thee, rash and unrelenting Chief!

Vainly thou heap'st the dust upon thy head,
Vainly the sackcloth o'er thy limbs dost spread:¹²⁴
By that same hand Abdallah — Selim bled.

Now let it tear thy beard in idle grief:
Thy pride of heart, thy bride for Osman's bed,
She, whom thy Sultan had but seen to wed,¹²⁵

Thy Daughter's dead!

Hope of thine age, thy twilight's lonely beam,
The Star hath set that shone on Helle's stream.

What quenched its ray? — the blood that thou hast shed!
Hark! to the hurried question of Despair:¹²⁶
“Where is my child?” — an Echo answers — “Where?”¹²⁷

XXVIII.

Within the place of thousand tombs
That shine beneath, while dark above
The sad but living cypress glooms¹²⁸
And withers not, though branch and leaf
Are stamped with an eternal grief,
Like early unrequited Love,
One spot exists, which ever blooms,

Ev'n in that deadly grove —
A single rose is shedding there
Its lonely lustre, meek and pale:
It looks as planted by Despair —
So white — so faint — the slightest gale
Might whirl the leaves on high;
And yet, though storms and blight assail,
And hands more rude than wintry sky
May wring it from the stem — in vain —
To-morrow sees it bloom again!
The stalk some Spirit gently rears,
And waters with celestial tears;
For well may maids of Helle deem
That this can be no earthly flower,
Which mocks the tempest's withering hour,
And buds unsheltered by a bower;
Nor droops, though Spring refuse her shower,
Nor woos the Summer beam:
To it the livelong night there sings
A Bird unseen — but not remote:
Invisible his airy wings,
But soft as harp that Houri strings
His long entrancing note!
It were the Bulbul; but his throat,
Though mournful, pours not such a strain:
For they who listen cannot leave
The spot, but linger there and grieve,

As if they loved in vain!
And yet so sweet the tears they shed,
'Tis sorrow so unmixed with dread,
They scarce can bear the morn to break
That melancholy spell,
And longer yet would weep and wake,
He sings so wild and well!
But when the day-blush bursts from high¹²⁹
Expires that magic melody.
And some have been who could believe,¹³⁰
(So fondly youthful dreams deceive,
Yet harsh be they that blame,)
That note so piercing and profound
Will shape and syllable¹³¹ its sound
Into Zuleika's name.
'Tis from her cypress summit heard,
That melts in air the liquid word:
'Tis from her lowly virgin earth
That white rose takes its tender birth.
There late was laid a marble stone;
Eve saw it placed — the Morrow gone!
It was no mortal arm that bore
That deep fixed pillar to the shore;
For there, as Helle's legends tell,
Next morn 'twas found where Selim fell;
Lashed by the tumbling tide, whose wave
Denied his bones a holier grave:

And there by night, reclined, 'tis said.

Is seen a ghastly turbaned head:¹³²

And hence extended by the billow,

'Tis named the "Pirate-phantom's pillow!"

Where first it lay that mourning flower

Hath flourished; flourisheth this hour,

Alone and dewy — coldly pure and pale;

As weeping Beauty's cheek at Sorrow's tale!¹³³¹³⁴

⁶¹ {178} Nov. 9th 1813. — [MS.]

⁶² [*Vide* Ovid, *Heroides*, Ep. xix.; and the *De Herone atque Leandro* of Musæus.]

⁶³ {179} The wrangling about this epithet, "the broad Hellespont" or the "boundless Hellespont," whether it means one or the other, or what it means at all, has been beyond all possibility of detail. I have even heard it disputed on the spot; and not foreseeing a speedy conclusion to the controversy, amused myself with swimming across it in the mean time; and probably may again, before the point is settled. Indeed, the question as to the truth of "the tale of Troy divine" still continues, much of it resting upon the talismanic word "ἄπειρος:" ["apeiros"] probably Homer had the same notion of distance that a coquette has of time; and when he talks of boundless, means half a mile; as the latter, by a like figure, when she says *eternal* attachment, simply specifies three weeks.

[For a defence of the Homeric ἀπειρῶν [apeirôn], and for a *résumé* of the "wrangling" of the topographers, Jean Baptiste Le Chevalier (1752–1836) and Jacob Bryant (1715–1804), etc., see *Travels in Albania*, 1858, ii. 179–185.]

⁶⁴ {180} Before his Persian invasion, and crowned the altar with laurel, etc. He was afterwards imitated by Caracalla in his race. It is believed that the last also poisoned a friend, named Festus, for the sake of new Patroclan games. I have seen the sheep feeding on the tombs of Æyietes and Antiochus: the first is in the centre of the plain.

[Alexander placed a garland on the tomb of Achilles, and "went through the ceremony of anointing himself with oil, and running naked up to it." — Plut. *Vitæ*, "Alexander M.," cap. xv. line 25, Lipsiæ, 1814, vi. 187. For the tombs of Æsyetes, etc., see *Travels in Albania*, ii. 149–151.]

⁶⁵ [Compare —

"Or narrow if needs must be,

Outside are the storms and the strangers."

Never the Time, etc., lines 19, 20, by Robert Browning.]

⁶⁶ {181} When rubbed, the amber is susceptible of a perfume, which is slight, but *not* disagreeable. [Letter to Murray, December 6, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 300.]

⁶⁷ ["Coeterum castitatis hieroglyphicum gemma est." — Hoffmann, *Lexic. Univ.*, art.

"Smaragdus." Compare, too, *Lalla Rookh* ("Chandos Classics," p. 406), "The emerald's virgin blaze."]

⁶⁸ The belief in amulets engraved on gems, or enclosed in gold boxes, containing scraps from the Koran, worn round the neck, wrist, or arm, is still universal in the East. The Koorsee (throne) verse in the second cap. of the Koran describes the attributes of the Most High, and is engraved in this manner, and worn by the pious, as the most esteemed and sublime of all sentences.

[The âyatu 'l kursîy, or verse of the throne (Sura II. "Chapter of the Heifer," v. 257), runs thus: "God, there is no God but He, the living and self-subsistent. Slumber takes Him not, nor sleep. His is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. Who is it that intercedes with Him, save by His permission? He knows what is before them, and what behind them, and they comprehend not aught of His knowledge but of what He pleases. His throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and it tires Him not to guard them both, for He is high and grand." — The *Qur'ân*, translated by E. H. Palmer, 1880, Part I., *Sacred Books of the East*, vi. 40.]

⁶⁹ "Comboloio" — a Turkish rosary. The MSS., particularly those of the Persians, are richly adorned and illuminated. The Greek females are kept in utter ignorance; but many of the Turkish girls are highly accomplished, though not actually qualified for a Christian coterie. Perhaps some of our own "blues" might not be the worse for *bleaching*.

[The comboloio consists of ninety-nine beads. Compare *Lalla Rookh* ("Chandos Classics," p. 420), "Her ruby rosary," etc., and note on "Le Tespih." *Lord Byron's Comboloio* is the title of a metrical *jeu d'esprit*, a rhymed catalogue of the *Poetical Works*, beginning with *Hours of Idleness*, and ending with *Cain, a Mystery*. — *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1822, xi. 162–165.]

⁷⁰ {182} [Shiraz, capital of the Persian province of Fars, is celebrated for the attar-gûl, or attar of roses.]

⁷¹ {183}

Her Prophet did not clearly show

But Selim's place was quite secure. — [MS.]

⁷² [Compare *The Giaour*, line 490, note 1, *vide ante*, p. 110.]

⁷³ *And one seemed red with recent guilt.* — [MS.]

⁷⁴ {184} *Her Selim* — "Alla — is it he?" — [MS.]

⁷⁵ "Galiongée" or Galiongi [i.e. a Galleon-er], a sailor, that is, a Turkish sailor; the Greeks navigate, the Turks work the guns. Their dress is picturesque; and I have seen the Capitan Pacha, more than once, wearing it as a kind of *incog*. Their legs, however, are generally naked. The buskins described in the text as sheathed behind with silver are those of an Arnaut robber, who was my host (he had quitted the profession) at his Pyrgo, near Gastouni in the Morea; they were plated in scales one over the other, like the back of an armadillo.

[Gastuni lies some eight miles S.W. of Palæopolis, the site of the ancient Elis. The "Pyrgo" must be the Castle of Chlemutzi (Castel Tornese), built by Geoffrey II. of Villehuardin, circ. A.D. 1218.]

⁷⁶ {185}

What — have I lived to curse the day? — [MS. M.]

To curse — if I could curse — the day. — [MS., ed. 1892.]

⁷⁷ {186} *I swear it by Medina's shrine.* — [MS. erased.]

⁷⁸ The characters on all Turkish scimitars contain sometimes the name of the place of their manufacture, but more generally a text from the Koran, in letters of gold. Amongst those in my possession is one with a blade of singular construction: it is very broad, and the edge notched into serpentine curves like the ripple of water, or the wavering of flame. I asked the Armenian who sold it, what possible use such a figure could add: he said, in Italian, that he did not know; but the Mussulmans had an idea that those of this form gave a severer wound; and liked it because it was "piu feroce." I did not much admire the reason, but bought it for its peculiarity.

[Compare *Lalla Rookh* ("Chandos Classics," p. 373) — "The flashing of their swords' rich marquetry."]

⁷⁹ {187} It is to be observed, that every allusion to any thing or personage in the Old Testament, such as the Ark, or Cain, is equally the privilege of Mussulman and Jew: indeed, the former profess to be much better acquainted with the lives, true and fabulous, of the patriarchs, than is warranted by our own sacred writ; and not content with Adam, they have a biography of Pre-Adamites. Solomon is the monarch of all necromancy, and Moses a prophet inferior only to Christ and Mahomet. Zuleika is the Persian name of Potiphar's wife; and her amour with Joseph constitutes one of the finest poems in their language. It is, therefore, no violation of costume to put the names of Cain, or Noah, into the mouth of a Moslem.

[À propos of this note "for the ignorant," Byron writes to Murray (November 13, 1813), "Do you suppose that no one but the Galileans are acquainted with Adam, and Eve, and Cain, and Noah? — *Zuleika* is the Persian *poetical name* for Potiphar's wife;" and, again, November 14, "I don't care one lump of sugar for my *poetry*; but for my *costume*, and my correctness on these points . . . I will combat lustily." — *Letters*, 1898, ii. 282, 283.]

⁸⁰ {188} [Karajić (Vuk Stefanović, born 1787), secretary to Kara George, published *Narodne Srpske Pjesme*, at Vienna, 1814, 1815. See, too, *Languages and Literature of the Slavic Nations*, by Talvi, New York, 1850, pp. 366–382; *Volkslieder der Serben*, von Talvi, Leipzig, 1835, ii. 245, etc., and *Chants Populaires des Servics*, Recueillis par Wuk Stephanowitsch, et Traduits d'après Talvy, par Madame Élise Voïart, Paris, 1834, ii. 183, etc.]

⁸¹ Paswan Oglou, the rebel of Widdin; who, for the last years of his life, set the whole power of the Porte at defiance.

[Passwan Oglou (1758–1807) [Passewend's, or the Watchman's son, according to Hobhouse] was born and died at Widdin. He first came into notice in 1788, in alliance with certain disbanded Turkish levies, named *Krdschalies*. "It was their pride to ride along on stately horses, with trappings of gold and silver, and bearing costly arms. In their train were female slaves, Giuvendi, in male attire, who not only served to amuse them in their hours of ease with singing and dancing, but also followed them to battle (as Kaled followed Lara, see *Lara*, Canto II. stanza xv., etc.), for the purpose of holding their horses when they fought." On one occasion he is reported to have addressed these "rebel hordes" much in the spirit of the "Corsair," "The booty be yours, and mine the glory." "After having for some time suffered a Pacha to be associated with him, he at length expelled his

superior, and demanded 'the three horse-tails' for himself." In 1798 the Porte despatched another army, but Passwan was completely victorious, and "at length the Porte resolved to make peace, and actually sent him the 'three horse-tails'" (i.e. made him commander-in-chief of the Janissaries at Widdin). (See *History of Servia*, by Leopold von Ranke, Bohn, 1853, pp. 68–71. See, too, *Voyage dans l'Empire Othoman*, par G. A. Olivier, an. 9 (1801), i. 108–125; and Madame Voïart's "Abrégé de l'histoire du royaume de Servie," prefixed to *Chants Populaires, etc.*, Paris, 1834.)]

82

And how that death made known to me

Hath made me what thou now shalt see. — [MS.]

83 {189} "Horse-tail," — the standard of a Pacha.

84 *With venom blacker than his soul.* — [MS.]

85 Giaffir, Pacha of Argyro Castro, or Scutari, I am not sure which, was actually taken off by the Albanian Ali, in the manner described in the text. Ali Pacha, while I was in the country, married the daughter of his victim, some years after the event had taken place at a bath in Sophia or Adrianople. The poison was mixed in the cup of coffee, which is presented before the sherbet by the bath keeper, after dressing.

86 {190}

Nor, if his sullen spirit could,

Can I forgive a parent's blood. — [MS.]

87 {191} *Yet I must be all truth to thee.* — [MS.]

88 {192}

To Haroun's care in idlesse left,

In spirit bound, of fame bereft. — [MS. erased.]

89 {193}

That slave who saw my spirit pining

Beneath Inaction's heavy yoke,

Compassionate his charge resigning. — [MS.]

90

Oh could my tongue to thee impart

That liberation of my heart. — [MS. erased.]

91 I must here shelter myself with the Psalmist — is it not David that makes the "Earth reel to and fro like a Drunkard"? If the Globe can be thus lively on seeing its Creator, a liberated captive can hardly feel less on a first view of his work. — [Note, MS. erased.]

92 The Turkish notions of almost all islands are confined to the Archipelago, the sea alluded to.

93 {194} Lambro Canzani, a Greek, famous for his efforts, in 1789–90, for the independence of his country. Abandoned by the Russians, he became a pirate, and the Archipelago was the scene of his enterprises. He is said to be still alive at Petersburg. He

and Riga are the two most celebrated of the Greek revolutionists.

[For Lambros Katzones (Hobhouse, *Travels in Albania*, ii. 5, calls him Canziani), see Finlay's *Greece under Othoman . . . Domination*, 1856, pp. 330–334. Finlay dwells on his piracies rather than his patriotism.]

⁹⁴ {195} "Rayahs," — all who pay the capitation tax, called the "Haratch."

["This tax was levied on the whole male unbelieving population," except children under ten, old men, Christian and Jewish priests. — Finlay, *Greece under Ottoman . . . Domination*, 1856, p. 26. See, too, the *Qur'ân*, cap. ix., "The Declaration of Immunity."]

⁹⁵ This first of voyages is one of the few with which the Mussulmans profess much acquaintance.

⁹⁶ The wandering life of the Arabs, Tartars, and Turkomans, will be found well detailed in any book of Eastern travels. That it possesses a charm peculiar to itself, cannot be denied. A young French renegado confessed to Châteaubriand, that he never found himself alone, galloping in the desert, without a sensation approaching to rapture which was indescribable.

⁹⁷ [Inns, caravanserais. From *sarāy*, a palace or inn.]

⁹⁸ [The remaining seventy lines of stanza xx. were not included in the original MS., but were sent to the publisher in successive instalments while the poem was passing through the press.]

⁹⁹ [In the first draft of a supplementary fragment, line 883 ran thus —

"and tints tomorrow with ^{a fancied}
an airy ray."

A note was appended —

"Mr. M^r. Choose which of the 2 epithets 'fancied' or 'airy' may be best — or if neither will do — tell me and I will dream another —

"Yours,

"B"

The epithet ("prophetic") which stands in the text was inserted in a revise dated December 3, 1813. Two other versions were also sent, that Gifford might select that which was "best, or rather *not worst*" —

"And ^{gilds}
tints *the hope of morning with its ray.*"

"*And gilds to-morrow's hope with heavenly ray.*"

(*Letters*, 1898, ii. 282.)

On the same date, December 3rd, two additional lines were affixed to the quatrain (lines 886–889) —

"Soft as the Mecca Muezzin's strains invite

Him who hath journeyed far to join the rite."

And in a later revise, as "a last alteration" —

"Blest as the call which from Medina's dome
Invites devotion to her Prophet's tomb."

An erased version of this "last alteration" ran thus —

"Blest as the Muezzin's strain from Mecca's dome
Which welcomes Faith to view her Prophet's tomb."{A}

{A} [It is probable that Byron, who did not trouble himself to distinguish between "lie" and "lay," and who, as the MS. of *English Bards, and Scotch Reviewers* (see line 732, *Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 355) reveals, pronounced "petit maître" *anglicé* in four syllables, regarded "dome" (*vide supra*) as a true and exact rhyme to "tomb," but, with his wonted compliance, was persuaded to make yet another alteration.]]

¹⁰⁰ {196} Of lines 886–889, two, if not three, variants were sent to the publisher —

(1) *Dear as the Melody of better days*
That steals the trembling tear of speechless praise —
Sweet as his native song to Exile's ears
Shall sound each tone thy long-loved voice endears. —

[December 2, 1813.]

(2)

*Dear as the melody of ^{better}
youthful days*
*That steals ^{a silent}
the trembling tear of speechless praise —*

¹⁰¹ {197} "Jannat-al-Aden," the perpetual abode, the Mussulman paradise. [See Sale's *Koran*, "Preliminary Discourse," sect. i.; and *Journal*, November 17, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 326.]

¹⁰² *Wait on thy voice and bow at thy command. —* [MS.]

¹⁰³

Oh turn and mingle every thought with his,
And all our future days unite in this. — [MS.]

¹⁰⁴ ["You wanted some reflections, and I send you *per Selim*, eighteen lines in decent couplets, of a pensive, if not an *ethical* tendency. . . . Mr. Canning's approbation (*if* he did approve) I need not say makes me proud." — Letter to Murray, November 23, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 286.]

¹⁰⁵

Man I may lead but trust not — I may fall
By those now friends to me, yet foes to all —
In this they follow but the bent assigned,

By fatal Nature to our warring kind. — [MS.]

¹⁰⁶ {198}

Behold a wilderness and call it peace, — [MS. erased.]

Look round our earth and lo! where battles cease,

“Behold a Solitude and call it” peace. — [MS.]

or,

Mark even where Conquest’s deeds of carnage cease

She leaves a solitude and calls it peace. — [November 21,
1813].

[For the final alteration to the present text, see letter to Murray of November 24, 1813.]

¹⁰⁷ [Compare Tacitus, *Agricola*, cap. 30 —

“Solitudinem faciun — pacem appellant.”

See letter to Murray, November 24, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 287.]

¹⁰⁸ *Power sways but by distrust — her sole source.* — [MS. erased.]

¹⁰⁹ *Which Love to-night hath lent by swelling sail.* — [MS.]

¹¹⁰ {199} [Compare —

“Quam juvat immites ventos audire cubantem,

Et dominam tenero detinuisse sinu.”

TIBULLUS, *ELEG.*, LIB. I. I. 45, 46.]

¹¹¹ *Then if my lip once murmurs, it must be.* — [MS.]

¹¹² [The omission of lines 938, 939 drew from Byron an admission (Letter to Murray, November 29, 1813) that “the passage is an imitation altogether from Medea in Ovid” (*Metamorph.*, vii. 66–69) —

“My love possess, in Jason’s bosom laid,

Let seas swell high; — I cannot be dismay’d

While I infold my husband in my arms:

Or should I fear, I should but fear his harms.”

ENGLISHED BY SANDYS, 1632.]

¹¹³ *This hour decides my doom or thy escape.* — [MS.]

¹¹⁴ {200} [Compare —

“That thought has more of hell than had the former.

Another, and another, and another!”

THE REVENGE, BY EDWARD YOUNG, ACT IV.

(*MODERN BRITISH DRAMA*, 1811, II. 17).]

¹¹⁵ {202} *Or grazed by wounds he scorned to feel.* — [MS.]

¹¹⁶ {203} Three MS. variants of these lines were rejected in turn before the text was

finally adopted —

(1) {*Ah! wherefore did he turn to look*
{I know not why he turned to look
Since fatal was the gaze he took?
So far escaped from death or chain,
To search for her and search in vain:
Sad proof in peril and in pain
How late will Lover's hope remain.

(2) *Thus far escaped from death or chain*
Ah! wherefore did he turn to look?
For her his eye must seek in vain,
Since fatal was the gaze he took.
Sad proof, etc. —

(3) *Ah! wherefore did he turn to look*
So far escaped from death or chain?
Since fatal was the gaze he took
For her his eye but sought in vain,
Sad proof, etc. —

A fourth variant of lines 1046, 1047 was inserted in a revise dated November 16 —

That glance he paused to send again
To her for whom he dies in vain.

¹¹⁷ {204} *O'er which their talons yet delay.* — [MS. erased.]

¹¹⁸ {205}

And that changed hand whose only life

Is motion-seems to menace strife. — [MS.]

¹¹⁹ ["While the *Salsette* lay off the Dardanelles, Lord Byron saw the body of a man who had been executed by being cast into the sea, floating on the stream, moving to and fro with the tumbling of the water, which gave to his arms the effect of scaring away several sea-fowl that were hovering to devour. This incident he has strikingly depicted in the *Bride of Abydos*." — *Life of Lord Byron*, by John Galt, 1830, p. 144.]

¹²⁰ A turban is carved in stone above the graves of *men* only.

¹²¹ The death-song of the Turkish women. The "silent slaves" are the men, whose notions of decorum forbid complaint in *public*.

¹²² {206} *The Koran-chapter chaunts thy fate.* — [MS.]

¹²³ [At a Turkish funeral, after the interment has taken place, the Imâm "assis sur les genoux à côté de la tombe," offers the prayer *Telkin*, and at the conclusion of the prayer recites the *Fathah*, or "opening chapter" of the Korân. ("In the name of the merciful and

compassionate God. Praise belongs to God, the Lord of the worlds, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Ruler of the day of judgment. Thee we serve, and Thee we ask for aid. Guide us in the right path, the path of those Thou art gracious to; not of those Thou art wroth with; nor of those who err." — *The Qur'ân*, p. 1, translated by E. H. Palmer, Oxford, 1880): *Tableau Générale de l'Empire Ottoman*, par Mouradja D'Ohsson, Paris, 1787, i. 235–248. Writing to Murray, November 14, 1813, Byron instances the funeral (in the *Bride of Abydos*) as proof of his correctness with regard to local colouring. — *Letters*, 1898, ii. 283.]

¹²⁴ {207} ["I one evening witnessed a funeral in the vast cemetery of Scutari. An old man, with a venerable beard, threw himself by the side of the narrow grave, and strewing the earth on his head, cried aloud, 'He was my son! my only son!'" — *Constantinople in 1828*, by Charles Macfarlane, 1829, p. 233, note.]

¹²⁵ *She whom thy Sultan had been fain to wed.* — [MS.]

¹²⁶ ["The body of a Moslemin is ordered to be carried to the grave in haste, with hurried steps." — *Ibid.*, p. 233, note.]

¹²⁷ "I came to the place of my birth, and cried, 'The friends of my Youth, where are they?' and an Echo answered, 'Where are they?'" — *From an Arabic MS.* The above quotation (from which the idea in the text is taken) must be already familiar to every reader: it is given in the second annotation, p. 67, of *The Pleasures of Memory* [note to Part I. line 103]; a poem so well known as to render a reference almost superfluous: but to whose pages all will be delighted to recur [*Poems*, by Samuel Rogers, 1852, i. 48].

¹²⁸ *There the sad cypress ever glooms.* — [MS.]

¹²⁹ {209} *But with the day blush of the sky.* — [MS.]

¹³⁰ *And some there be who could believe.* — [MS.]

¹³¹

"And airy tongues that syllable men's names."

MILTON, *COMUS*, LINE 208.

For a belief that the souls of the dead inhabit the form of birds, we need not travel to the East. Lord Lyttleton's ghost story, the belief of the Duchess of Kendal, that George I. flew into her window in the shape of a raven (see *Orford's Reminiscences, Lord Orford's Works*, 1798, iv. 283), and many other instances, bring this superstition nearer home. The most singular was the whim of a Worcester lady, who, believing her daughter to exist in the shape of a singing bird, literally furnished her pew in the cathedral with cages full of the kind; and as she was rich, and a benefactress in beautifying the church, no objection was made to her harmless folly. For this anecdote, see *Orford's Letters*.

"But here (at Gloucester) is a *modernity*, which beats all antiquities for curiosity. Just by the high altar is a small pew hung with green damask, with curtains of the same; a small corner-cupboard, painted, carved, and gilt, for books, in one corner, and two troughs of a bird-cage, with seeds and water. If any mayoress on earth was small enough to inclose herself in this tabernacle, or abstemious enough to feed on rape and canary, I should have sworn that it was the shrine of the queen of the aldermen. It belongs to a Mrs. Cotton, who, having lost a favourite daughter, is convinced her soul is transmigrated into a robin redbreast, for which reason she passes her life in making an aviary of the cathedral of Gloucester." — Letter to Richard Bentley, September, 1753 (*Lord Orford's Works*, 1798, v.

279).]

¹³² {210} [According to J. B. Le Chevalier (*Voyage de La Propontide, etc.*, an. viii. (1800), p. 17), the Turkish name for a small bay which formed the ancient port of Sestos, is *Ak-Bachi-Liman* (Port de la Tête blanche).]

¹³³

*And in its stead that mourning flower
Hath flourished — flourisheth this hour,
Alone and coldly pure and pale
As the young cheek that saddens to the tale.
And withers not, though branch and leaf
Are stamped with an eternal grief. — [MS.]*

An earlier version of the final text reads —

As weeping Childhood's cheek at Sorrow's tale!

¹³⁴ [*"The Bride, such as it is is my first entire composition of any length (except the Satire, and be damned to it), for The Giaour is but a string of passages, and Childe Harold is, and I rather think always will be, unconcluded"* (Letter to Murray, November 29, 1813). It (the *Bride*) "was published on Thursday the second of December; but how it is liked or disliked, I know not. Whether it succeeds or not is no fault of the public, against whom I can have no complaint. But I am much more indebted to the tale than I can ever be to the most partial reader; as it wrung my thoughts from reality to imagination — from selfish regrets to vivid recollections — and recalled me to a country replete with the *brightest* and *darkest*, but always most *lively* colours of my memory" (*Journal*, December 5, 1813, *Letters*, 1898, ii. 291, 361).]

NOTE TO THE MSS. OF *THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS*.

The Mss. of the *Bride of Abydos* are contained in a bound volume, and in two packets of loose sheets, numbering thirty-two in all, of which eighteen represent additions, etc., to the First Canto; and fourteen additions, etc., to the Second Canto.

The bound volume consists of a rough copy and a fair copy of the first draft of the *Bride*; the fair copy beginning with the sixth stanza of Canto I.

The "additions" in the bound volume consist of —

1. Stanza xxviii. of Canto II. — here called "Conclusion" (fifty-eight lines). And note on "Sir Orford's Letters."
2. Eight lines beginning, "Eve saw it placed," at the end of stanza xxviii.
3. An emendation of six lines to stanza v. of Canto II., with reference to the comboloio, the Turkish rosary.
4. Forty additional lines to stanza xx. of Canto II., beginning, "For thee in those bright isles," and being the first draft of the addition as printed in the Revises of November 13, etc.
5. Stanza xxvii. of Canto II., twenty-eight lines.
6. Ten additional lines to stanza xxvii., "Ah! happy!" — "depart."
7. Affixed to the rough Copy in stanza xxviii., fifty-eight lines, here called "Continuation." This is the rough Copy of No. 1.

The eighteen loose sheets of additions to Canto I. consist of —

1. The Dedication.
2. Two revisions of "Know ye the land."
3. Seven sheets, Canto I. stanzas i.-v., being the commencement of the Fair Copy in the bound volume.
4. Two sheets of the additional twelve lines to Canto I. stanza vi., "Who hath not proved," — "Soul."
5. Four sheets of notes to Canto I. stanza vi., dated November 20, November 22, 1813.
6. Two sheets of notes to stanza xvi.
7. Sixteen additional lines to stanza xiii.

The fourteen additional sheets to Canto II. consist of —

1. Ten lines of stanza iv., and four lines of stanza xvii.
2. Two lines and note of stanza v.
3. Sheets of additions, etc., to stanza xx. (eight sheets).
 - (a) Eight lines, "Or, since that hope," — "thy command."
 - (β) "For thee in those bright isles" (twenty-four lines).
 - (γ) "For thee," etc. (thirty-six lines).

(δ) "Blest as the call" (three variants).

(ε) "For thee in those bright isles" (seven lines).

(ζ) Fourteen lines, "There ev'n thy soul," — "Zuleika's name," "Aye — let the loud winds," — "bars escape," additional to stanza xx.

4. Two sheets of five variants of "Ah! wherefore did he turn to look?" being six additional lines to stanza xxv.

5. Thirty-five lines of stanza xxvi.

6. Ten lines, "Ah! happy! but," — "depart." And eleven lines, "Woe to thee, rash," — "hast shed," being a continuous addition to stanza xxvii.

Revises.

Endorsed —

- i. November 13, 1813.
- ii. November 15, 1813.
- iii. November 16, 1813.
- iv. November 18, 1813.
- v. November 19, 1813.
- vi. November 21, 1813.
- vii. November 23, 1813.
- viii. November 24, 1813. A wrong date,
- ix. November 25, 1813.
- x. An imperfect revise = Nos. i.-v.

NOTE TO *THE BRIDE OF ABYDOS*. CANTO II. STANZA XX.

After the completion of the fair copy of the Ms. of the *Bride of Abydos*, seventy lines were added to stanza xx. of Canto II. In both Mss. the rough and fair copies, the stanza ends with the line, "The Dove of peace and promise to mine ark!"

Seven MS. sheets are extant, which make up the greater portion of these additional lines.

The *First Addition* amounts to eight lines, and takes the narrative from line 880 to line 893, "Wait — wave — defend — destroy — at thy command!"

Lines 884–889 do not appear in the first MS. Fragment, but are given in three variants on separate sheets. Two of these are dated December 2 and December 3, 1813.

The *Second Fragment* begins with line 890, "For thee in those bright isles is built a bower," and, numbering twenty-two lines, ends with a variant of line 907, "Blend every thought, do all — but disunite!" Two lines of this addition, "With thee all toils are sweet," find a place in the text as lines 934, 935.

The *Third Fragment* amounts to thirty-six lines, and may be taken as the first draft of the whole additions — lines 880–949.

Lines 908–925 and 936–945 of the text are still later additions, but a fourth MS. fragment supplies lines 920–925 and lines 936–945. (A fair copy of this fragment gives text for Revise of November 13.) Between November 13 and November 25 no less than ten revises of the *Bride* were submitted to Lord Byron. In the earliest of these, dated November 13, the thirty-six lines of the Third Fragment have been expanded into forty lines — four lines of the MS. being omitted, and twelve lines, 908–919, "Once free," — "social home," being inserted. The text passed through five revises and remained unaltered till November 21, when eighteen lines were added to the forty, viz.: (4) "Mark! where his carnage," — "sabre's length;" (6) "There ev'n thy soul," — "Zuleika's name;" and (8) "Aye — let the loud winds," — "bars escape." Of these the two latter additions belong to the *Fourth Fragment*. The text in this state passed through three more revises, but before the first edition was issued two more lines were added — lines 938, 939,

"The deepest murmur of this lip shall be,

No sigh for safety, but a prayer for thee!"

Even then the six lines, "Blest — as the Muezzin's," — "endears," are wanting in the text; but the four lines, "Soft — as the melody," — "endears," are inserted in MS. in the margin. The text as it stands first appears in the Seventh Edition.

[*First Draft of 880, sq., of Canto II. Stanz xx. of the Bride of Abydos.*]

For thee in those bright isles is built a bower

Blooming as {-Aden, in its earliest hour | Eden — guarded like a
tower-}

A thousand swords — thy Selim's soul and hand

Wait on thy voice, and bow to thy command

No Danger daunts — the {-pair | souls-} that Love hath blest

With {-steps still roving | feet long-wandering-} — but with hearts
at rest.

{-For thee my blade shall shine — my hand shall toil-}

With thee all toils were sweet — each clime hath charms {line
934}

Earth — sea — alike — one World within our arms {line 935}

Girt by my hand — Zuleika at my side —

The Spoil of nations shall bedeck my bride

The Haram's { slumbring | sluggish } life of listless ease

Is well exchanged for cares and joys like these

{-Mine be the lot to know where'er I rove-}

{-A thousand perils wait where-er I rove,-}

Not blind to fate I view where-er I rove

A thousand perils — but one only love —

Yet well my labor shall fond breast repay

When Fortune frowns or falser friends betray

How dear the thought in darkest hours of ill

Should all be changed to find thee faithful still

Be but thy soul like Selim's firmly shown

{-mine in firmness-}

{-Firm as my own I deem thy tender heart-}

To thee be Selim's tender as thine own

Exchange, or mingle every thought with his

And all our future days unite in this.

Man I may lead — but trust not — I may fall

By those now friends to me — yet foes to all —

In this they follow but the bent assigned

fatal Nature

By {-savage Nature-} to our warning kind

But there — oh, far be every thought of fear

Life is but peril at the best — and here

No more remains to win and much to fear

Yes fear — the doubt the dread of losing thee —

That dread must vanish.

[*Proof and Revise.* — See *Letters to Murray*, November
13, 17, 1813.]

