LORD BYRON
The Complete Poetical Works
EDITED BY
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Byron's holograph MS of the Latin poem 'Edleston', no. 173
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To Thyrza

Without a stone to mark the spot,
And say, what Truth might well have said,
By all, save one, perchance forgot,
Ah, wherefore art thou lowly laid?
By many a shore and many a sea
Divided, yet belov'd in vain;
The past, the future fled to thee
To bid us meet—no ne'er again!
Could this have been—a word—a look
That softly said, 'We part in peace',
Had taught my bosom how to brook,
With fainter sighs, thy soul's release.
And didst thou not, since Death for thee
Prepar'd a light and pangless dart,
Once long for him thou ne'er shalt see,
Who held, and holds thee in his heart?

The world befits a busy brain,—
I'll hie me to its haunts again.
But if in some succeeding year,
When Britain's 'May is in the sere',
Thou hear'st of one, whose deepening crimes
Suit with the sadlest of the times,
Of one, whom love nor pity sways,
Nor hope of fame, nor good men's praise,
One, who in stern ambition's pride
Perchance not blood shall turn aside,
One rank'd in some recording page
With the worst anarchists of the Age,
Him wilt thou know—and knowing pause;
Nor with the effect forget the cause.

11 Oct. 1811
If rest alone be in the tomb,
    I would not wish thee here again;
But if in worlds more blest than this
Thy virtues seek a fitter sphere,
Impart some portion of thy bliss,
    To wean me from mine anguish here.
Teach me—too early taught by thee!—
To bear, forgiving and forgiv'n:
On earth thy love was such to me,
    It fain would form my hope in heav'n!

167  [What News, What News Queen Orraca]

What news, what news Queen Orraca?
What news of the Scribblers five?
Southey, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lloyd and Lambe
All damned, though yet Alive!

168  The Composite Merits of Hervey's Fish Sauce
and Hervey's Meditations

Two Herveys had a mutual wish
    To shine in separate stations;
The one converted sauce for fish,
The other meditations.
Each has his different powers applied
    To aid the dead and dying;
This relishes a sole when fried,
    That saves a soul from frying.
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[Lucietta. A Fragment]

Lucietta my dear,
That fairest of faces!
Is made up of kisses;
But, in love, oft the case is—
Even stranger than this is—
There's another, that's slyer,
Who touches me nigher,—
A Witch, an intriguer,
Whose manner and figure
Now piques me, excites me,
Torments and delights me—

[1811]

170

Stanzas

1.
Away, away, ye notes of woe!
Be silent thou once soothing strain,
Or I must flee from hence, for, oh!
I dare not trust those sounds again.
To me they speak of brighter days:
But lull the chords, for now, alas!
I must not think, I may not gaze
On what I am, on what I was.

2.
The voice that made those sounds more sweet
Is hush'd, and all their charms are fled;
And now their softest notes repeat
A dirge, an anthem o'er the dead!

169. Copy text: C, collated with MS. M
1 dear] deary C 11 [The poem breaks off after B began the next line with 'And']
170. Copy text: CHP(9), collated with MSS. H, T, B, proof, CHP(4)--CHP(6) and
CHP(8) CHP(10)
title thus all forms except MS. T, where the poem is untitled; and in C and More, where the
first line is the title
3 flee] fly H 4 trust] hear H 6 lull] hush H 7 may] dare H
9 those sounds] that song H 10 charms are] power in H 11 And... notes
(Their softest notes to me) H

'Thurza.' (poem no. 170), lines 9-10
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Yes, Thyrza! yes, they breathe of thee,
Beloved dust! since dust thou art;
And all that once was harmony
Is worse than discord to my heart!

'Tis silent all!—but on my ear
The well-remember'd echoes thrill;
I hear a voice I would not hear,
A voice that now might well be still.
Yet oft my doubting soul 'twill shake:
Ev'n slumber owns its gentle tone,
Till consciousness will vainly wake
To listen, though the dream be flown.

Sweet Thyrza! waking as in sleep,
Thou art but now a lovely dream;
A star that trembled o'er the deep,
Then turn'd from earth its tender beam.
But he, who through life's dreary way
Must pass, when heav'n is veil'd in wrath,
Will long lament the vanish'd ray
That scatter'd gladness o'er his path.

To Thyrza

1.
One struggle more, and I am free
From pangs that rend my heart in twain;
One last long sigh to love and thee,
Then back to busy life again.

2. To Thyrza I title is the first line in G, More 2 From... pangs that tear H 16 worse than discord] hideous discord H, T 17 all] now H, cor. in T 24 flown] gone T, cor. in B 27 star that trembled] beam that gilded H 28 (As bright and transient in thy gleam] Celestial yet a shadowy gleam) H 29 who through] (that treads)
H 30 (When darkness veils the skies in wrath) H

171. Copy text: CHP(2), collated with MSS. H, BM, Proof M, Proof H, CHP(r)-CHP(b) and CHP(2)-CHP(30)

25 It suits me well to mingle now
With things that never pleas'd before:
Though every joy is fled below,
What future grief can touch me more?

2.
Then bring me wine, the banquet bring;
Man was not form'd to live alone:
I'll be that light unmeaning thing
That smiles with all, and weeps with none.
It was not thus in days more dear,
It never would have been, but thou
Hast fled, and left me lonely here;
Thou'rt nothing, all are nothing now.

3.
In vain my lyre would lightly breathe!
The smile that sorrow fain would wear
But mocks the woe that lurks beneath,
Like roses o'er a sepulchre.
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel awhile the sense of ill;
Though pleasure fires the madding soul,
The heart—the heart is lonely still!

4.
On many a lone and lovely night
It sooth'd to gaze upon the sky;
For then I deem'd the heav'nly light
Shone sweetly on thy pensive eye:
And oft I thought at Cynthia's noon,
When sailing o'er the Aegean wave,
"Now Thyrza gazes on that moon—"
Alas, it gleam'd upon her grave!

6 never pleas'd] (moved me not) H 8 What... can] (Yet Sorrow cannot) H 13 thus]... dear] (to in dearer days) H 14. It (could not be so hast'd not thou]) (never would have been till] but) would not be so hast'd not thou H 15 (Art gone)] (With drew so soon and left) H 17 Withdrew and left me lonely here H 18 when... rain) H 19 (And such is sure the lonely heart ] That holds the wreath of all it loved] (The last, the dearest till it break) H 25 For well] I knew the rolling light H 28 Shone... on] (Would oft arrest) H 29 And oft... in (Me) Cynthia's noon H 31 Now... gazes on] (Doth... gaze upon) H
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5.
When stretch'd on fever's sleepless bed,
And sickness shrunk my throbbing veins,
'Tis comfort still,' I faintly said,
'That Thyrza cannot know my pains':
Like freedom to the time-worn slave,
A boon 'tis idle then to give;
Relenting nature vainly gave
My life, when Thyrza ceas'd to live.

6.
My Thyrza's pledge in better days,
When love and life alike were new!
How different now thou meet'st my gaze!
How ting'd by time with sorrow's hue!
The heart that gave itself with thee
Is silent—ah, were mine as still!
Though cold as e'en the dead can be,
It feels, it sickens with the chill.

7.
Thou bitter pledge! thou mournful token!
Though painful, welcome to my breast!
Still, still, preserve that love unbroken,
Or break the heart to which thou'rt prest!
Time tempers love, but not removes,
More hallow'd when its hope is fled:
Oh! what are thousand living loves
To that which cannot quit the dead?

Euthanasia

1.
When Time, or soon or late, shall bring
The dreamless sleep that lulls the dead,
33 fever's] (Sickness') H 34 And (Fever) fired my throbbing veins H 35 I faintly] (how oft) H; I sadly H, BM 36 cannot know] knows not of H 37-9 (But Health and Life returning gave] A boon twas idle then to give] Like Freedom to a] H 39 Relenting Health and Nature gave H, cor. in BM; (Relenting Health in mockery gave) BM 40 My life] (To live) H 41 My... pledge] (Dear simple gift) H 172. Copy text: CHP(7), collated with Byron's draft of lines 33-6 (from printed version in American Art Assoc. Catalogue), Augusta's MS. copy (fragment), Huntington proof, Clarke printed copy, CHP(8)-CHP(6) and CHP(8)-CHP(10)

Oblivion! may thy languid wing
Wave gently o'er my dying bed!

2.
No band of friends or heirs be there,
To weep, or wish, the coming blow:
No maiden, with dishevell'd hair,
To feel, or feign, decorous woe.

3.
But silent let me sink to Earth,
With no officious mourners near:
I would not mar one hour of mirth,
Nor startle friendship with a fear.

4.
Yet Love, if Love in such an hour
Could nobly check its useless sighs,
Might then exert its latest power
In her who lives and him who dies.

5.
'Twere sweet, my Psyche! to the last
Thy features still serene to see:
Forgetful of its struggles past,
E'en Pain itself should smile on thee.

6.
But vain the wish—for Beauty still
Will shrink, as shrinks the ebbing breath:
And woman's tears, produc'd at will,
Deceive in life, unman in death.

7.
Then lonely be my latest hour,
Without regret, without a groan!
For thousands Death hath ceas'd to lower,
And pain been transient or unknown.
8.
'Ay, but to die, and go? alas!
Where all have gone, and all must go!
To be the nothing that I was
Ere born to life and living woe!

9.
Count o'er the joys thine hours have seen,
Count o'er thy days from anguish free,
And know, whatever thou hast been,
'Tis something better not to be.

[1811 or 1812]

Edleston

Te, te, care puer! veteris si nomen amoris
iam valeat, socium semper amare voco.
Te, fatumque tuum, quoties carissime! plango,
Et toties haeret fortior ipse dolor.
Dulcis at ipse dolor, quam dulcis! dulcior ardet
Vanus amor, credens te tenuisses sinu.
Me miserum! frustra pro te vixissse precatum,
Cur frustra volui te moriente mori?—
Heu quanto minus est iam sarta, unguenta, puellas
Carpere cum reliquis quam meminisse tuis?
Quae mihi nunc maneant? gemitus, vasta somnia fratris,
Aut sine te lacrymis pervigilare toro.
Ah Libitina veni, invisae mihi parce Parcae!
Mortua amicitia Mors sit amica mihi.

[1811 or 1812]

Here's my translation. —M.C.

EDLESTON

Precious boy! Do you treasure still our ancient Love?
I hope you will forever love your friend.
How incessantly I bewail your fate, dearest!
And always my anguish grows and deepens.
And yet how sweet this anguish is! My love blazes
Whene'er I think of having held you close.
Oh woe! if only I'd lived more truly for you.
My vain wish: that I had died when you died.
How meager the garlands and maidens I've gathered
When compared with remembrances of you.
What's left now? To sigh, or dream of sweet brotherhood,
Or weep the nights away without you near.
Libitina,* spare me from my enemies the Fates!
Since friendship is dead, let Death be my friend.

* Italian goddess of the dead. Registers of the dead were kept at her temple in Rome.