

THE  
LIBERAL.

No. III.

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THE BLUES,<sup>1</sup>  
A LITERARY ECLOGUE.\*

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“Nimium nè crede colori.”—VIRGIL.<sup>2</sup>

O trust not, ye beautiful creatures, to hue,  
Though your *hair* were *as red* as your *stockings* *are blue*.

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ECLOGUE FIRST.

LONDON.—*Before the Door of a Lecture Room.*

*Enter* TRACY,<sup>3</sup> *meeting* INKEL.<sup>4</sup>

INKEL.

YOU'RE too late.

TRACY.

Is it over?

INKEL.

Nor will be this hour.

But the benches are crammed, like a garden in flower,  
With the pride of our Belles, who have made it the fashion;  
So instead of “beaux arts,” we may say “*la belle passion*”

VOL. II.

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\* Author: Lord Byron / Transcribed by Ilaria Natali; Annotated by Gicomo Ferrari.

For learning, which lately has taken the lead in  
The world, and set all the fine gentlemen reading.

TRACY.

I know it too well, and have worn out my patience  
With studying to study your new publications.  
There's Vamp,<sup>5</sup> Scamp,<sup>6</sup> and Mouthy,<sup>7</sup> and Wordswords and Co.<sup>8</sup>  
With their damnable—

INKEL.

Hold, my good friend, do you know  
Whom you speak to?

TRACY.

Right well, boy, and so does "the Row."<sup>9</sup>  
You're an author—a poet—

INKEL.

And think you that I  
Can stand tamely in silence, to hear you decry  
The Muses?

TRACY.

Excuse me; I meant no offence  
To the Nine; though the number who make some pretence  
To their favours is such——but the subject to drop,  
I am just piping hot from a publisher's shop  
(Next door to the pastry-cook's; so that when I  
Cannot find the new volume I wanted to buy  
On the bibliopole's shelves, it is only two paces,  
As one finds every author in one of those places)<sup>10</sup>  
Where I just had been skimming a charming critique,  
So studded with wit, and so sprinkled with Greek!  
Where your friend—you know who—has just got such a  
threshing,  
That it is, as the phrase goes, extremely "*refreshing*."  
What a beautiful word!

INKEL.

Very true; 'tis so soft  
And so cooling—they use it a little too oft;  
And the papers have got it at last—but no matter.  
So they've cut up our friend then?<sup>11</sup>

TRACY.

Not left him a tatter—  
Not a rag of his present or past reputation,  
Which they call a disgrace to the age and the nation.

INKEL.

I'm sorry to hear this; for friendship, you know—  
Our poor friend!—but I thought it would terminate so.  
Our friendship is such, I'll read nothing to shock it.  
You don't happen to have the Review<sup>12</sup> in your pocket?

TRACY.

No; I left a round dozen of authors and others  
(Very sorry, no doubt, since the cause is a brother's)  
All scrambling and jostling, like so many imps,  
And on fire with impatience to get the next glimpse.

INKEL.

Let us join them.

TRACY.

What, won't you return to the lecture?

INKEL.

Why, the place is so crammed, there's not room for a spectre.  
Besides, our friend Scamp is to-day so absurd—

TRACY.

How can you know that till you hear him?

INKEL.

I heard  
Quite enough; and to tell you the truth, my retreat  
Was from his vile nonsense, no less than the heat.

TRACY.

I have had no great loss then?

INKEL.

Loss!—such a palaver!<sup>113</sup>

I'd inoculate sooner my wife with the slaver  
Of a dog when gone rabid, than listen two hours  
To the torrent of trash which around him he pours,  
Pumped up with such effort, disgorged with such labour,  
That—come—do not make me speak ill of one's neighbour.

TRACY.

*I make you!*

INKEL.

Yes, you! I said nothing until  
You compelled me, by speaking the truth—

TRACY.

*To speak ill?*

Is that your deduction?

INKEL.

When speaking of Scamp ill,  
I certainly *follow, not set* an example.  
The fellow's a fool, an impostor, a zany.

TRACY.

And the crowd of to-day shows that one fool makes many.  
But we two will be wise.

INKEL.

Pray, then, let us retire.

TRACY.

I would, but—

INKEL.

There must be attraction much higher  
Than Scamp, or the Jews'-harp he nicknames his lyre,  
To call *you* to this hot-bed.

TRACY.

I own it—'tis true—

A fair lady—

INKEL.

A spinster?

TRACY.

Miss Lilac!<sup>14</sup>

INKEL.

The Blue!

The heiress?

TRACY.

The angel!

INKEL.

The devil! why, man!

Pray, get out of this hobble as fast as you can.

*You* wed with Miss Lilac! 'twould be your perdition:

She's a poet, a chemist, a mathematician.

TRACY.

I say she's an angel.

INKEL.

Say rather an *angle*.

If you and she marry, you'll certainly wrangle.

I say she's a Blue, man, as blue as the ether.

TRACY.

And is that any cause for not coming together?

INKEL.

Humph! I can't say I know any happy alliance

Which has lately sprung up from a wedlock with science.

She's so learned in all things, and fond of concerning

Herself in all matters connected with learning,

That—

TRACY.

What?

INKEL.

I perhaps may as well hold my tongue;  
But there's five hundred people can tell you you're wrong.

TRACY.

You forget Lady Lilac's as rich as a Jew.<sup>15</sup>

INKEL.

Is it Miss, or the cash of mamma, you pursue?

TRACY.

Why, Jack, I'll be frank with you—something of both.  
The girl's a fine girl.

INKEL.

And you feel nothing loth  
To her good lady mother's reversion;<sup>16</sup> and yet  
Her life is as good as your own, I will bet.

TRACY.

Let her live; and, as long as she likes, I demand  
Nothing more than the heart of her daughter and hand.

INKEL.  
Why, that heart's in the inkstand—that hand on the pen.

TRACY.

Apropos—Will you write me a song now and then?

INKEL.  
To what purpose?

TRACY.

You know, my dear friend, that in prose  
My talent is decent, as far as it goes;  
But in rhyme—

INKEL.

You're a terrible stick, to be sure.

TRACY.

I own it; and yet, in these times, there's no lure  
For the heart of the fair like a stanza or two;  
And so, as I can't, will you furnish a few?

INKEL.

In your name?

TRACY.

In my name. I will copy them out,  
To slip into her hand at the very next rout.

INKEL.

Are you so far advanced as to hazard this?

TRACY.

Why,

Do you think me subdued by a Blue-stockin's eye,  
So far as to tremble to tell her in rhyme  
What I've told her in prose, at the least, as sublime?

INKEL.

As *sublime*! If it be so, no need of my Muse.

TRACY.

But consider, dear Inkel, she's one of the "Blues."

INKEL.

As *sublime*!—Mr. Tracy—I've nothing to say.  
Stick to prose—As *sublime*!!—but I wish you good day.

TRACY.

Nay, stay, my dear fellow—consider—I'm wrong;  
I own it; but, prithee, compose me the song.

INKEL.

As *sublime*!!

TRACY.

I but used the expression in haste.

INKEL.

That may be, Mr. Tracy, but shows damned bad taste,

TRACY.

I own it—I know it—acknowledge it—what  
Can I say to you more?

INKEL.

I see what you'd be at:

You disparage my parts with insidious abuse,  
Till you think you can turn them best to your own use.

TRACY.

And is that not a sign I respect them?

INKEL.

Why that

To be sure makes a difference.

TRACY.

I know what is what:

And you, who're a man of the gay world, no less  
Than a poet of 't other, may easily guess  
That I never could mean, by a word, to offend  
A genius like you, and moreover my friend.

INKEL.

No doubt; you by this time should know what is due  
To a man of——but come—let us shake hands.

TRACY.

You knew,

And you *know*, my dear fellow, how heartily I,  
Whatever you publish, am ready to buy.

INKEL.

That's my bookseller's business; I care not for sale;  
Indeed the best poems at first rather fail.  
There were Renegade's epics,<sup>17</sup> and Botherby's plays,<sup>18</sup>  
And my own grand romance——

TRACY.

Had its full share of praise.

I myself saw it puffed in the "Old Girl's Review."<sup>19</sup>

INKEL.

What Review?

TRACY.

'Tis the English "Journal de Trevoux,"<sup>20</sup>

A clerical work of our Jesuits at home.<sup>21</sup>  
Have you never yet seen it?

INKEL.

That pleasure's to come.

TRACY.

Make haste then.

INKEL.

Why so?

TRACY.

I have heard people say,  
That it threatened to give up the *ghost* t'other day.

INKEL.

Well, that is a sign of some *spirit*.

TRACY.

No doubt.

Shall you be at the Countess of Fiddlecome's rout?<sup>22</sup>

INKEL.

I've a card, and shall go; but at present, as soon  
As friend Scamp shall be pleased to step down from the  
moon

(Where he seems to be soaring in search of his wits)  
And an interval grants from his lecturing fits,  
I'm engaged to the Lady Bluebottle's<sup>23</sup> collation,  
To partake of a luncheon and learn'd conversation:  
'Tis a sort of re-union for Scamp, on the days  
Of his lecture, to treat him with cold tongue and praise.  
And I own, for my own part, that 'tis not unpleasant.  
Will you go? There's Miss Lilac will also be present.

TRACY.

That "metal's attractive."<sup>24</sup>

INKEL.

No doubt—to the pocket.

TRACY.

You should rather encourage my passion than shock it.  
But let us proceed; for I think, by the hum—

INKEL.

Very true; let us go, then, before they can come,  
Or else we'll be kept here an hour at their levy,  
On the rack of cross questions, by all the blue bevy.<sup>25</sup>  
Hark! Zounds, they'll be on us; I know by the drone  
Of old Botherby's spouting, ex-cathedrâ tone.  
Aye! there he is at it. Poor Scamp! better join  
Your friends, or he'll pay you back in your own coin.

TRACY.

All fair; 'tis but lecture for lecture.

INKEL.

That's clear.

But for God's sake let's go, or the bore will be here.

Come, come: nay, I'm off.

[Exit INKEL.]

TRACY.

You are right, and I'll follow;

'Tis high time for a "*Sic me servavit Apollo.*"<sup>26</sup>

And yet we shall have the whole crew on our kibes,<sup>27</sup>  
Blues, dandies, and dowagers, and second-hand scribes,  
All flocking to moisten their exquisite throttles  
With a glass of Madeira<sup>28</sup> at Lady Bluebottle's.

[Exit TRACY.]

*End of Eclogue First.*

## ECLOGUE SECOND.

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*An Apartment in the House of LADY BLUEBOTTLE.—A Table prepared.*

SIR RICHARD BLUEBOTTLE<sup>29</sup> *solus.*

Was there ever a man who was married so sorry?  
Like a fool, I must needs do the thing in a hurry.  
My life is reversed, and my quiet destroyed;  
My days, which once pass'd in so gentle a void,  
Must now, every hour of the twelve, be employed;  
The twelve, do I say? of the whole twenty-four,  
Is there one which I dare call my own any more?  
What with driving, and visiting, dancing, and dining,  
What with learning, and teaching, and scribbling, and  
shining,  
In science and art, I'll be curst if I know  
Myself from my wife; for although we are two,  
Yet she somehow contrives that all things shall be done  
In a style which proclaims us eternally one.  
But the thing of all things which distresses me more  
Than the bills of the week (though they trouble me sore)  
Is the numerous, humourous, back-biting crew  
Of scribblers, wits, lecturers, white, black, and blue,  
Who are brought to my house as an inn, to my cost  
(For the bill here, it seems, is defrayed by the host)  
No pleasure! no leisure! no thought for my pains,  
But to hear a vile jargon which addles my brains;

A smatter and chatter, gleaned out of reviews,  
 By the rag, tag, and bobtail, of those they call “Blues;”  
 A rabble who know not—But soft, here they come!  
 Would to God I were deaf! as I’m not, I’ll be dumb.

*Enter LADY BLUEBOTTLE,<sup>30</sup> MISS LILAC, LADY BLUE-MOUNT,<sup>31</sup> MR. BOTHERBY, INKEL, TRACY, MISS MАЗARINE,<sup>32</sup> and others, with SCAMP the Lecturer, &c. &c.*

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Ah! Sir Richard, good morning; I’ve brought you some friends.

SIR RICHARD *bows, and afterwards aside.*  
 If friends, they’re the first.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

But the luncheon attends.

I pray ye be seated, “*sans ceremonie*.”  
 Mr. Scamp, you’re fatigued; take your chair there, next me.  
 [They all sit.

SIR RICHARD, *aside.*

If he does, his fatigue is to come.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Mr. Tracy—

Lady Bluemount—Miss Lilac—be pleased, pray, to place ye;  
 And you, Mr. Botherby—

BOTHERBY.

Oh, my dear Lady,

I obey.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Mr. Inkel, I ought to upbraid ye;  
 You were not at the lecture.

INKEL.

Excuse me, I was;

But the heat forced me out in the best part—alas!  
And when—

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

To be sure it was broiling; but then  
You have lost such a lecture!

BOTHERBY.

The best of the ten.

TRACY.

How can you know that? there are two more.

BOTHERBY.

Because  
I defy him to beat this day's wondrous applause.  
The very walls shook.

INKEL.

Oh, if that be the test,  
I allow our friend Scamp has this day done his best.  
Miss Lilac, permit me to help you?—a wing?

MISS LILAC.

No more, Sir, I thank you. Who lectures next Spring?

BOTHERBY.

Dick Dunder.<sup>33</sup>

INKEL.

That is, if he lives.

MISS LILAC.

And why not?

INKEL.

No reason whatever, save that he's a sot.  
Lady Bluemount! a glass of Madeira?

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

With pleasure.

INKEL.

How does your friend Wordswords, that Windermere<sup>34</sup> treasure?

Does he stick to his lakes, like the leeches he sings,  
And their gatherers, as Homer<sup>35</sup> sung warriors and kings?

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He has just got a place.

INKEL.

As a footman?

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

For shame!

Nor profane with your sneers so poetic a name.

INKEL.

Nay, I meant him no evil, but pitied his master;  
For the poet of pedlars 'twere, sure, no disaster  
To wear a new livery; the more, as 'tis not  
The first time he has turned both his creed and his coat.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

For shame! I repeat. If Sir George<sup>36</sup> could but hear—

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Never mind our friend Inkel; we all know, my dear,  
'Tis his way.

SIR RICHARD.

But this place—

INKEL.

Is perhaps like friend Scamp's,

A lecturer's.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Excuse me—'tis one in "the Stamps:"

He is made a Collector.<sup>37</sup>

TRACY.

Collector!

SIR RICHARD.

How?

MISS LILAC.

What?

INKEL.

I shall think of him oft when I buy a new hat;  
There his works will appear—<sup>38</sup>

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir, they reach to the Ganges.

INKEL.

I shan't go so far—I can have them at Grange's.\*

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Oh fie!

MISS LILAC.

And for shame!

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

You're too bad.

BOTHERBY.

Very good!

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

How good?

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He means nought—'tis his phrase.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

He grows rude.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

He means nothing; nay, ask him.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Pray, Sir! did you mean

What you say?

INKEL.

Never mind if he did; 'twill be seen  
That whatever he means won't alloy what he says.

BOTHERBY.

Sir!

\*Grange is or was a famous pastry-cook and fruiterer in Piccadilly.<sup>39</sup>

INKEL.

Pray be content with your portion of praise;  
'Twas in your defence.

BOTHERBY.

If you please, with submission,  
I can make out my own.

INKEL.

It would be your perdition.  
While you live, my dear Botherby, never defend  
Yourself or your works; but leave both to a friend.  
Apropos—Is your play then accepted at last?<sup>40</sup>

BOTHERBY.

At last?

INKEL.

Why I thought—that's to say—there had past  
A few Green-room<sup>41</sup> whispers, which hinted—you know  
That the taste of the actors at best is so so.

BOTHERBY.

Sir, the Green-room's in raptures, and so's the Committee.<sup>42</sup>

INKEL.

Aye—yours are the plays for exciting our “pity  
And fear,” as the Greek says: for “purging the mind,”<sup>43</sup>  
I doubt if you’ll leave us an equal behind.

BOTHERBY.

I have written the prologue, and meant to have prayed  
For a spice of your wit in an epilogue’s aid.

INKEL.

Well, time enough yet, when the play’s to be played.  
Is it cast yet?

BOTHERBY.

The actors are fighting for parts,  
As is usual in that most litigious of arts.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

We'll all make a party, and go the *first* night.

TRACY.

And you promised the epilogue, Inkel.

INKEL.

Not quite.

However, to save my friend, Botherby, trouble,  
I'll do what I can, though my pains must be double,

TRACY.

Why so?

INKEL.

To do justice to what goes before.

BOTHERBY.

Sir, I'm happy to say, I've no fears on that score.  
Your parts, Mr. Inkel, are—

INKEL.

Never mind *mine*;

Stick to those of your play, which is quite your own line.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

You're a fugitive writer, I think, Sir, of rhymes?<sup>44</sup>

INKEL.

Yes, Ma'am; and a fugitive reader sometimes.  
On Wordswords, for instance, I seldom alight,  
Or on Mouthey,<sup>45</sup> his friend, without taking to flight.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir, your taste is too common; but time and posterity  
Will right these great men, and this age's severity  
Become its reproach.

INKEL.

I've no sort of objection,  
So I am not of the party to take the infection.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Perhaps you have doubts that they ever will *take*?

INKEL.

Not at all; on the contrary, those of the lake<sup>46</sup>  
 Have taken already, and still will continue  
 To take—what they can, from a groat to a guinea,<sup>47</sup>  
 Of pension or place;—but the subject's a bore.

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Well, Sir, the time's coming.

INKEL.

Scamp! don't you feel sore?  
 What say you to this?

SCAMP.

They have merit, I own;  
 Though their system's absurdity keeps it unknown.

INKEL.

Then why not unearth it in one of your lectures!

SCAMP.

It is only time past which comes under my strictures.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Come, a truce with all tartness:—the joy of my heart  
 Is to see Nature's triumph o'er all that is art.  
 Wild Nature!—Grand Shakspeare!

BOTHERBY.

And down Aristotle!<sup>48</sup>

LADY BLUEMOUNT.

Sir George thinks exactly with Lady Bluebottle;  
 And my Lord Seventy-four,<sup>49</sup> who protects our dear Bard,<sup>50</sup>  
 And who gave him his place, has the greatest regard  
 For the poet, who, singing of pedlars and asses,  
 Has found out the way to dispense with Parnassus.<sup>51</sup>

TRACY.

And you, Scamp!—

SCAMP.

I needs must confess, I'm embarrassed.

INKEL.

Don't call upon Scamp, who's already so harassed  
With old *schools*, and new *schools*, and no *schools*, and all *schools*.

TRACY.

Well, one thing is certain, that *some* must be fools.  
I should like to know who.

INKEL.

And I should not be sorry  
To know who are *not*:—it would save us some worry.

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

A truce with remark, and let nothing controul  
This “feast of our reason, and flow of the soul.”<sup>52</sup>  
Oh, my dear Mr. Botherby! sympathise!—I  
Now feel such a rapture, I’m ready to fly,  
I feel so elastic,—“so buoyant—so buoyant!”\*

INKEL.

Tracy! open the window.

TRACY.

I wish her much joy on’t.

BOTHERBY.

For God’s sake, my Lady Bluebottle, check not  
This gentle emotion, so seldom our lot  
Upon earth. Give it way; ’tis an impulse which lifts  
Our spirits from earth; the sublimest of gifts;  
For which poor Prometheus was chain’d to his mountain.<sup>53</sup>  
’Tis the source of all sentiment—feeling’s true fountain:  
’Tis the Vision of Heaven upon Earth: ’tis the gas  
Of the soul: ’tis the seizing of shades as they pass,  
And making them substance: ’tis something divine:—

INKEL.

Shall I help you, my friend, to a little more wine?

\* Fact from life, with the *words*.

BOTHERBY.

I thank you. Not any more, Sir, till I dine.

INKEL.

Apropos!—Do you dine with Sir Humphrey<sup>54</sup> to day?

TRACY.

I should think with *Duke Humphrey*<sup>55</sup> was more in your way.

INKEL.

It might be of yore; but we authors now look  
To the knight, as a landlord, much more than the Duke.  
The truth is—each writer now quite at his ease is,  
And (except with his publisher) dines where he pleases.  
But 'tis now nearly five, and I must to the Park.

TRACY.

And I'll take a turn with you there till 'tis dark.  
And you, Scamp—

SCAMP.

Excuse me; I must to my notes,  
For my lecture next week.

INKEL.

He must mind whom he quotes  
Out of “Elegant Extracts.”<sup>56</sup>

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Well, now we break up;  
But remember Miss Diddle<sup>57</sup> invites us to sup.

INKEL.

Then at two hours past midnight we all meet again,  
For the sciences, sandwiches, hock and champaigne!

TRACY.

And the sweet lobster sallad!

BOTHERBY.

I honour that meal;  
For 'tis then that our feelings most genuinely—feel.

INKEL.

True; feeling is truest *then*, far beyond question;  
I wish to the gods 'twas the same with digestion!

LADY BLUEBOTTLE.

Pshaw!—never mind that; for one moment of feeling  
Is worth—God knows what.

INKEL.

'Tis at least worth concealing  
For itself, or what follows—But here comes your carriage.

SIR RICHARD (*aside*).

I wish all these people were d—d<sup>58</sup> with *my* marriage!

[*Exeunt*.]

*End of Eclogue the Second.*

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## EDITORIAL NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Short for “bluestocking”, a derogatory term for educated, intellectual women, originally the Bluestocking Ladies led by Elizabeth Montagu (1718-1800), the “Queen of the Blues”. Although the motive or occasion of this dramatic satire is unknown, here Byron mocks his female readers of the Regency period and their intellectual coterie: Tracy’s “Blues, dandies, and dowagers, and second-hand scribes”. The title, the following quotation and the epigram play on the same theme.

<sup>2</sup> Quotation from *The Eclogues* (2:17) by the Latin poet Virgil, Publius Vergilius Maro (70-19 BC). In translation, “Trust not too much to complexion”, or colour.

<sup>3</sup> The characters of *The Blues* stand for real people. Tracy is possibly Thomas Moore (1779-1852), poet and Byron’s friend, editor and biographer.

<sup>4</sup> Inkel is a mask for Lord Byron.

<sup>5</sup> Vamp is unidentified; he might be a dishonest editor from Thomas Love Peacock’s novel *Melincourt* (1817), where he tampers with political pamphlets against corruption.

<sup>6</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834, see n. 8 below), or William Hazlitt (1778-1830), essayist, literary critic and philosopher.

<sup>7</sup> Mouthy is the poet laureate Robert Southey (1774-1843).

<sup>8</sup> Wordswords is William Wordsworth (1770-1850), English Romantic poet, author, with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, of the *Lyrical Ballads* (first ed. 1798).

<sup>9</sup> The “Row” is Paternoster Row in the City of London, a hotspot of the publishing trade.

<sup>10</sup> Unsold books were facetiously said to end up as wrapping for pies or as stuffing for hat-boxes.

<sup>11</sup> The identity of “our friend” is unclear.

<sup>12</sup> *The Quarterly Review* (see n. 16 “Advertisement to the Second Volume”).

<sup>13</sup> A tedious or unnecessarily drawn-out process.

<sup>14</sup> Anne Isabella Noel Byron, Lady Byron (1792-1860).

<sup>15</sup> Lady Lilac is Byron’s detested mother-in-law, Lady Noel (1751-1822).

<sup>16</sup> A sum payable upon a person’s death, a life insurance payment.

<sup>17</sup> Robert Southey’s long poems, such as *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801) and *Madoc* (1805).

<sup>18</sup> Botherby is William Sotheby’s (1757-1833). His tragedies, such as *Orestes* (1801) and *Ivan* (1816), did not enjoy much success.

<sup>19</sup> Reference to the *British Review and London Critical Journal* (1811-25). See *Don Juan* I.209 (1819), where Byron called *The British Review* “My Grandmother’s Review”. See also Byron’s “Letter to the Editor Of ‘My Grandmother’s Review’ ” in *The Liberal*, issue 1, 41-50.

<sup>20</sup> The *Journal de Trévoux* was a diffused and influential literary periodical published monthly in France from 1701 to 1782.

<sup>21</sup> The *Journal de Trévoux* was edited by the members of the Society of Jesus, hence the dig aimed at the *British Review*.

<sup>22</sup> Unidentified reference. “Fiddlecome” is archaic for “nonsensical” or “silly”.

<sup>23</sup> Lady Bluebottle and Sir Richard Bluebottles are Elizabeth Vassall Fox, Baroness Holland (1771-1845) and Henry Richard Vassall-Fox, 3rd Baron Holland (1773-1840).

<sup>24</sup> Reference to *Hamlet*, “No, good mother. Here’s metal more attractive” (3.2.116), where Hamlet would rather watch the play sitting next to Ophelia than to Queen Gertrude. The lineation adopted in this and the following notes refer to the Folger open-source texts (<https://www.folger.edu/explore/shakespeares-works/>).

<sup>25</sup> “The proper term for a company of maidens or ladies, of roes, of quails, or of larks”, *OED*, “bevy (n.)”. “Blue bevy” exacerbates the sexism intrinsic in the definition-group.

<sup>26</sup> Quotation from *Satires* (1:9, 78) by the Latin poet Horace (Quintus Horatius Flaccus, 65-8 BC). In translation, “Thus saved me Apollo”, the guardian deity of poets.

<sup>27</sup> “A chapped or ulcerated chilblain, esp. one on the heel”, *OED*, “kibe (n.)”; mistaken – or used as metonym – for “heel”, is probably a reference to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*: “the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe” (V.i.145).

<sup>28</sup> The Madeira is a fortified wine produced on the island of Madeira, occupied by British troops during the Peninsular War (1807-14).

<sup>29</sup> See n. 23 above.

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<sup>30</sup> See n. 23 above.

<sup>31</sup> Lady Bluemount is Lady Margaret Beaumont (1756-1829).

<sup>32</sup> Byron names the character after the adjective “mazarine”, *i.e.*, of a rich deep blue colour, to mock the bluestockings.

<sup>33</sup> Dick Dunder is Sir James Mackintosh (1765-1832), political writer and politician. See *Don Juan* XIII, 87, 1, where he is “Dick Dubious, the Metaphysician”.

<sup>34</sup> William “Wordswords” Wordsworth mentions Windermere, one of the lakes in the Lake District, in *The Prelude* (1850). In 1813 he moved permanently to the Rydal Mount house, near Grasmere and with a view over Windermere.

<sup>35</sup> Ancient Greek poet (8th century BC), credited as the author of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

<sup>36</sup> Sir George Howland Beaumont (1753-1827), art patron and painter.

<sup>37</sup> Forced by financial worries, in 1813 William Wordsworth accepted an official position as distributor of stamps for Westmorland and the Penrith area of Cumberland.

<sup>38</sup> See n. 10 above.

<sup>39</sup> Piccadilly is one of the main roads in London. Around the years of “The Blues”, ironically, Piccadilly was a favoured place for both booksellers, and inns and bars. “Grange’s” was James Grange’s confectionery, No. 178, Piccadilly.

<sup>40</sup> In 1816 Byron persuaded the management of Drury Lane to accept Sotheby’s *Ivan*, but after three or four rehearsals it was withdrawn. At the time of “The Blues”, the friendship between the two had ended.

<sup>41</sup> “A room in a theatre or studio in which performers can relax when they are off stage. Also in extended use: the people who use such a room”, *OED*, “green room (n.)”.

<sup>42</sup> The Management Committee of Drury Lane, of which Byron was part.

<sup>43</sup> References to Aristotle’s discussion of catharsis in his *Poetics*.

<sup>44</sup> Reference to Byron’s first volume of poems, *Fugitive Pieces*, published when he was seventeen and soon suppressed.

<sup>45</sup> Different spelling of Mouthy, see n. 7 above.

<sup>46</sup> The Lakist poets, Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey.

<sup>47</sup> The groat, or fourpence, was a denomination of coin worth 1/60 of one pound; figuratively, a very small amount; the Guinea was a gold coin, last coined in 1813.

<sup>48</sup> Commonplace juxtaposition of William Shakespeare’s unorthodoxy and Aristotle’s dramatic theory exposed in the aforementioned *Poetics*.

<sup>49</sup> “Lord Seventy-four” is not William Lord Lowther, earl of Lonsdale (1757-1844), landowner and Wordsworth’s patron, but Sir James Lowther, earl of Lonsdale (1736-1802). In 1782, Sir James offered to build and present to the Government a 74-gun ship to continue the war against France. The project failed due to the troubles that Sir James caused the shipbuilders, and he barely escaped with his life when he ventured to raise men in his estate to man the ship. The story appeared on *Gentleman’s Magazine* (June 1802), where Byron must have read it (see Hugh Owen, *The Lowther Family*, Chichester: Phillimore, 1990, 288).

<sup>50</sup> William Shakespeare’s identification with the Bard dates back to 1769, when the actor David Garrick praised Stratford upon Avon as the birthplace of the “matchless Bard”.

<sup>51</sup> The mythological Mount Parnassus where Apollo dwells, surrounded by the Muses.

<sup>52</sup> Alexander Pope, “The feast of reason and the flow of soul” (1733-38, *Imitations of Horace*, “First Satire”, 128).

<sup>53</sup> In Greek mythology, Zeus chained Prometheus to a rock on the Caucasus for stealing fire from the Olympus and giving it to man.

<sup>54</sup> Sir Humphrey Davy (1778-1829), chemist and inventor, friend to the Lake poets.

<sup>55</sup> “To dine with Duke Humphrey” means to go without dinner. The phrase refers to the story of a man who, while visiting the tomb of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester, was locked in the abbey—and thus missed dinner (*The Free Dictionary*).

<sup>56</sup> A popular anthology of prose writings by well-known authors, first published in 1783.

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<sup>57</sup> Possibly Lydia White (1760-1827), a woman of wit and talent and a social celebrity in her day, famous for hosting dinners and events.

<sup>58</sup> “damned”.