

THE
LIBERAL.

No. I.

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT,
By QUEVEDO¹ REDIVIVUS.

SUGGESTED BY THE COMPOSITION SO ENTITLED BY THE AUTHOR OF
“WAT TYLER.”²

“A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.”³

PREFACE.

It hath been wisely said, that “One fool makes many;”⁴
and it hath been poetically observed,

“That fools rush in where angels fear to tread.” — *Pope*.⁵

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

form the sublime of himself—containing the quintessence of his own attributes.

So much for his poem—a word on his preface. In this preface it has pleased the magnanimous Laureate to draw the picture of a supposed “Satanic School,” the which he doth recommend to the notice of the legislature, thereby adding to his other laurels the ambition of those of an informer. If there exists anywhere, excepting in his imagination, such a school, is he not sufficiently armed against it by his own intense vanity? The truth is, that there are certain writers whom Mr. S. imagines, like Scrub, to have “talked of *him*; for they laughed consumedly.”⁶

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

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

2ndly. Was he not refused a remedy at law by the highest Judge of his beloved England, because it was a blasphemous and seditious publication?

3dly. Was he not entitled by William Smith, in full Parliament, “a rancorous Renegado?”⁷

4thly. Is he not Poet Laureate, with his own lines on Martin the Regicide staring him in the face?⁸

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

I say nothing of the cowardice of such a proceeding; its meanness speaks for itself; but I wish to touch upon the *motive*, which is neither more nor less, than that Mr. S. has

been laughed at a little in some recent publications,⁹ as he was of yore in the "Anti-jacobin" by his present patrons.¹⁰ Hence all this "skimble scramble stuff" about "Satanic," and so forth. However, it is worthy of him—"Qualis ab incepto."

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

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

QUEVEDO REDIVIVUS.

P.S.—It is possible that some readers may object, in these objectionable times, to the freedom with which saints,

angels, and spiritual persons, discourse in this "Vision." But for precedents upon such points I must refer him to Fielding's "Journey from this World to the next,"¹¹ and to the Visions of myself, the said Quevedo, in Spanish or translated.¹² The reader is also requested to observe, that no doctrinal tenets are insisted upon or discussed; that the person of the Deity is carefully withheld from sight, which is more than can be said for the Laureate, who hath thought proper to make him talk, not "like a school divine," but like the unscholarlike Mr. Southey. The whole action passes on the outside of Heaven; and Chaucer's Wife of Bath, Pulci's Morgante Maggiore, Swift's Tale of a Tub, and the other works above referred to, are cases in point of the freedom with which saints, &c. may be permitted to converse in works not intended to be serious.

Q. R.

[*.* Mr. Southey, being, as he says, a good Christian and vindictive, threatens, I understand, a reply to this our answer.¹³ It is to be hoped that his visionary faculties will in the mean time have acquired a little more judgment, properly so called: otherwise he will get himself into new dilemmas. These apostate jacobins furnish rich rejoinders. Let him take a specimen. Mr. Southey laudeth grievously "one Mr. Landor," who cultivates much private renown in the shape of Latin verses; and not long ago, the Poet Laureate dedicated to him, it appeareth, one of his fugitive lyrics, upon the strength of a poem called *Gebir*.¹⁴ Who would suppose, that in this same Gebir, the aforesaid Savage Landor (for such is his grim cognomen) putteth into the infernal regions no less a person than the hero of his friend Mr. Southey's heaven,—yea, even George the Third! See also how personal Savage becometh, when he hath a mind. The following is his portrait of our late gracious Sovereign:—

Prince Gebir having descended into¹⁵ the infernal regions, the shades of his royal ancestors are, at his request, called up to his view, and he exclaims to his ghostly guide)—

“Aroar, what wretch that nearest us? what wretch
 Is that with eyebrows white and slanting brow?
 Listen! him yonder, who, bound down supine,
 Shrinks yelling from that sword there, engine-hung.
 He too among my ancestors! I hate
 The despot, but the dastard I despise.
 Was he our countryman?”

“Alas, O King!

Iberia bore him, but the breed accurst
 Inclement winds blew blighting from north-east.”
 “He was a warrior then, nor fear’d the gods?”
 “Gebir, he fear’d the Demons, not the Gods,
 Though them indeed his daily face ador’d;
 And was no warrior, yet the thousand lives
 Squander’d, as stones to exercise a sling!
 And the tame cruelty and cold caprice—
 Oh madness of mankind! address, adored!”—*Gebir*, p. 28.¹⁶

I omit noticing some edifying Ithyphallics¹⁷ of Savagius, wishing to keep the proper veil over them, if his grave but somewhat indiscreet worshipper will suffer it; but certainly these teachers of “great moral lessons” are apt to be found in strange company.]

THE VISION OF JUDGMENT.

I.

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

II.

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

III.

The guardian seraphs had retired on high,
Finding their charges past all care below;
Terrestrial business fill'd nought in the sky
Save the recording angel's black bureau;
Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply
With such rapidity of vice and woe,
That he had stripped off both his wings in quills,
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

IV.

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

V.

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

VI.

This by the way; 'tis not mine to record
 What angels shrink from: even the very devil
 On this occasion his own work abhor'd,
 So surfeited with the infernal revel;
 Though he himself had sharpen'd every sword,
 It almost quench'd his innate thirst of evil.
 (Here Satan's sole good work deserves insertion—
 'Tis, that he has both generals¹⁸ in reversion.)

VII.

Let's skip a few short years of hollow peace,
 Which peopled earth no better, hell as wont,
 And heaven none—they form the tyrant's lease
 With nothing but new names subscribed upon 't;
 'Twill one day finish: meantime they increase,
 "With seven heads and ten horns,"¹⁹ and all in front,
 Like Saint John's foretold beast; but ours are born
 Less formidable in the head than horn.

B

VIII.

In the first year of freedom's second dawn²⁰
Died George the Third; although no tyrant, one
Who shielded tyrants, till each sense withdrawn
Left him nor mental nor external sun:
A better farmer²¹ ne'er brush'd dew from lawn,
A worse king never left a realm undone!²²
He died—but left his subjects still behind,
One half as mad—and t'other no less blind.

IX.

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

X.

Form'd a sepulchral melo-drame. Of all
The fools who flock'd to swell or see the show,
Who cared about the corpse? The funeral
Made the attraction, and the black the woe.
There throbb'd not there a thought which pierced the pall;
And when the gorgeous coffin was laid low,
It seem'd the mockery of hell to fold
The rottenness of eighty years in gold.

XI.

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

XII.

He's dead—and upper earth with him has done:
He's buried; save the undertaker's bill,
Or lapidary scrawl, the world is gone
For him, unless he left a German will;²³
But where's the proctor who will ask his son?
In whom his qualities are reigning still,
Except that household virtue, most uncommon,
Of constancy to a bad, ugly woman.²⁴

XIII.

“God save the king!” It is a large economy
In God to save the like; but if he will
Be saving, all the better; for not one am I
Of those who think damnation better still:
I hardly know too if not quite alone am I
In this small hope of bettering future ill
By circumscribing, with some slight restriction,
The eternity of hell's hot jurisdiction.

XIV.

I know this is unpopular; I know
 'Tis blasphemous; I know one may be damn'd
For hoping no one else may e'er be so;
 I know my catechism; I know we are cram'd
With the best doctrines till we quite o'erflow;
 I know that all save England's church have sham'd,
And that the other twice two hundred churches
And synagogues have made a *damn'd* bad purchase.

XV.

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

XVI.

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

XVII.

But ere he could return to his repose,
 A cherub flapp'd his right wing o'er his eyes—
 At which Saint Peter yawn'd, and rubb'd his nose:
 "Saint porter," said the Angel, "prithee rise!"
 Waving a goodly wing, which glow'd, as glows
 An earthly peacock's tail, with heavenly dyes;
 To which the Saint replied, "Well, what's the matter?
 "Is Lucifer come back with all this clatter?"

XVIII.

"No," quoth the Cherub; "George the Third is dead."
 "And who *is* George the Third?" replied the Apostle;
 "*What* George? *what* Third?" "The King of England," said
 The Angel. "Well! he wont²⁵ find kings to jostle
 "Him on his way; but does he wear his head?²⁶
 "Because the last we saw here had a tussle,
 "And ne'er would have got into heaven's good graces,
 "Had he not flung his head in all our faces.

XIX.

"He was, if I remember, king of France;
 "That head of his, which could not keep a crown
 "On earth, yet ventured in my face to advance
 "A claim to those of martyrs—like my own:
 "If I had had my sword, as I had once
 "When I cut ears off,²⁷ I had cut him down;
 "But having but my *keys*, and not my brand,
 "I only knock'd his head from out his hand.

XX.

“And then he set up such a headless howl,
“That all the saints came out, and took him in;
“And there he sits by St Paul, cheek by jowl;
“That fellow Paul—the parvenu!²⁸ The skin
“Of Saint Bartholomew,²⁹ which makes his cowl
“In heaven, and upon earth redeem’d his sin
“So as to make a martyr, never sped
“Better than did this weak and wooden head.

XXI.

“But had it come up here upon its shoulders,
“There would have been a different tale to tell:
“The fellow feeling in the saints beholders
“Seems to have acted on them like a spell,
“And so this very foolish head heaven solders
“Back on its trunk: it may be very well,
“And seems the custom here to overthrow
“Whatever has been wisely done below.”

XXII.

The Angel answer’d, “Peter! do not pout;
“The king who comes has head and all entire,
“And never knew much what it was about—
“He did as doth the puppet—by its wire,
“And will be judged like all the rest, no doubt:
“My business and your own is not to inquire
“Into such matters, but to mind our cue—
“Which is to act as we are bid to do.”

XXIII.

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

XXIV.

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

XXV.

As he drew near, he gazed upon the gate
Ne'er to be enter'd more by him or sin,
With such a glance of supernatural hate,
As made Saint Peter wish himself within;
He potter'd with his keys at a great rate,
And sweated through his apostolic skin:³⁰
Of course his perspiration was but ichor,³¹
Or some such other spiritual liquor.

XXVI.

The very cherubs huddled altogether,
Like birds when soars the falcon; and they felt
A tingling to the tip of every feather,
And form'd a circle like Orion's belt
Around their poor old charge; who scarce knew whither
His guards had led him, though they gently dealt
With royal manes³² (for by many stories,
And true, we learn the angels all are Tories.)

XXVII.

As things were in this posture, the gate flew
Asunder, and the flashing of its hinges
Flung over space an universal hue
Of many-coloured flame, until its tinges
Reach'd even our speck of earth, and made a new
Aurora borealis spread its fringes
O'er the North Pole; the same seen, when ice-bound,
By Captain Parry's crews, in "Melville's Sound."³³

XXVIII.

And from the gate thrown open issued beaming
A beautiful and mighty Thing of Light,
Radiant with glory, like a banner streaming
Victorious from some world-o'erthrowing fight:
My poor comparisons must needs be teeming
With earthly likenesses, for here the night
Of clay obscures our best conceptions, saving
Johanna Southcote,³⁴ or Bob Southey raving.

XXIX.

'Twas the archangel Michael: all men know
 The make of angels and archangels, since
 There's scarce a scribbler has not one to show,
 From the fiends' leader to the angels' prince.
 There also are some altar-pieces, though
 I really can't say that they much evince
 One's inner notions of immortal spirits;
 But let the connoisseurs explain *their* merits.

XXX.

Michael flew forth in glory and in good;
 A goodly work of him from whom all glory
 And good arise; the portal past—he stood;
 Before him the young cherubs and saint hoary,
 (I say *young*, begging to be understood
 By looks, not years; and should be very sorry
 To state, they were not older than Saint Peter,
 But merely that they seem'd a little sweeter.)

XXXI.

The cherubs and the saints bow'd down before
 That arch-angelic Hierarch, the first
 Of Essences angelical, who wore
 The aspect of a god; but this ne'er nurst
 Pride in his heavenly bosom, in whose core
 No thought, save for his Maker's service, durst
 Intrude, however glorified and high;
 He knew him but the viceroy of the sky.

XXXII.

He and the sombre silent Spirit met—
They knew each other both for good and ill;
Such was their power, that neither could forget
His former friend and future foe; but still
There was a high, immortal, proud regret
In either's eye, as if 'twere less their will
Than destiny to make the eternal years
Their date of war, and their "Champ Clos"³⁵ the spheres.

XXXIII.

But here they were in neutral space: we know
From Job,³⁶ that Sathan hath the power to pay
A heavenly visit thrice a year or so;
And that "the Sons of God,"³⁷ like those of clay,
Must keep him company; and we might show,
From the same book, in how polite a way
The dialogue is held between the Powers
Of Good and Evil—but 'twould take up hours.

XXXIV.

And this is not a theologic tract,
To prove with Hebrew and with Arabic
If Job be allegory or a fact,³⁸
But a true narrative; and thus I pick
From out the whole but such and such an act
As sets aside the slightest thought of trick.
'Tis every tittle true, beyond suspicion,
And accurate as any other vision.

XXXV.

The spirits were in neutral space, before
 The gate of heaven; like eastern thresholds³⁹ is
 The place where Death's grand cause is argued o'er,
 And souls despatched to that world or to this;
 And therefore Michael and the other wore
 A civil aspect: though they did not kiss,
 Yet still between his Darkness and his Brightness
 There passed a mutual glance of great politeness.

XXXVI.

The Archangel bowed, not like a modern beau,
 But with a graceful Oriental bend,
 Pressing one radiant arm just where below
 The heart in good men is supposed to tend.⁴⁰
 He turned as to an equal, not too low,
 But kindly; Sathan met his ancient friend
 With more hauteur, as might an old Castilian
 Poor noble meet a mushroom rich civilian.

XXXVII.

He merely bent his diabolic brow
 An instant; and then raising it, he stood
 In act to assert his right or wrong, and show
 Cause why King George by no means could or should
 Make out a case to be exempt from woe
 Eternal, more than other kings endued
 With better sense and hearts, whom history mentions,
 Who long have "paved hell with their good intentions."⁴¹

XXXVIII.

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

XXXIX.

"Michael!" replied the Prince of Air,⁴² "even here,
"Before the gate of him thou servest, must
"I claim my subject; and will make appear
"That as he was my worshipper in dust,
"So shall he be in spirit, although dear
"To thee and thine, because nor wine nor lust
"Were of his weaknesses; yet on the throne
"He reign'd o'er millions to serve me alone.

XL.

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

XLI.

"And these but as a kind of quit-rent,⁴³ to
 "Assert my right as lord; and even had
 "I such an inclination, 'twere (as you
 "Well know) superfluous; they are grown so bad,
 "That hell has nothing better left to do
 "Than leave them to themselves: so much more mad
 "And evil by their own internal curse,
 "Heaven cannot make them better, nor I worse.

XLII.

"Look to the earth, I said, and say again:
 "When this old, blind, mad, helpless, weak, poor worm,
 "Began in youth's first bloom and flush to reign,
 "The world and he both wore a different form,
 "And much of earth and all the watery plain
 "Of ocean call'd him king: through many a storm
 "His isles had floated on the abyss of Time;
 "For the rough virtues chose them for their clime.

LXIII.⁴⁴

"He came to his sceptre, young; he leaves it, old:
 "Look to the state in which he found his realm,
 "And left it; and his annals too behold,
 "How to a minion first he gave the helm;⁴⁵
 "How grew upon his heart a thirst for gold,
 "The beggar's vice, which can but overwhelm
 "The meanest hearts; and for the rest, but glance
 "Thine eye along America and France!

XLIV.

"Tis true, he was a tool from first to last;
 "(I have the workmen safe);⁴⁶ but as a tool
 "So let him be consumed! From out the past
 "Of ages, since mankind have known the rule
 "Of monarchs—from the bloody rolls amass'd
 "Of sin and slaughter—from the Cæsar's school,
 "Take the worst pupil; and produce a reign
 "More drench'd with gore, more cumber'd with the slain!

LXV.⁴⁷

"He ever warr'd with freedom and the free:
 "Nations as men, home subjects, foreign foes,
 "So that they utter'd the word 'Liberty!'
 "Found George the Third their first opponent. Whose
 "History was ever stain'd as his will be
 "With national and individual woes?
 "I grant his household abstinence; I grant
 "His neutral virtues, which most monarchs want;

XLVI.

"I know he was a constant consort; own
 "He was a decent sire, and middling lord.
 "All this is much, and most upon a throne;
 "As temperance, if at Apicius' board,⁴⁸
 "Is more than at an anchorite's supper⁴⁹ shown.
 "I grant him all the kindest can accord;
 "And this was well for him, but not for those
 "Millions who found him what oppression chose.

XLVII.

“The new world shook him off; the old yet groans
 “Beneath what he and his prepared, if not
 “Completed: he leaves heirs on many thrones
 “To all his vices, without what begot
 “Compassion for him—his tame virtues; drones
 “Who sleep, or despots who have now forgot
 “A lesson which shall be re-taught them, wake
 “Upon the throne of Earth; but let them quake!

XLVIII.

“Five millions of the primitive, who hold
 “The faith which makes ye great on earth, implored
 “A *part* of that vast *all* they held of old,—
 “Freedom to worship—not alone your Lord,
 “Michael, but you, and you, Saint Peter! Cold
 “Must be your souls, if you have not abhorr’d
 “The foe to Catholic participation
 “In all the licence of a Christian nation.⁵⁰

XLIX.

“True! he allow’d them to pray God; but as
 “A consequence of prayer, refused the law
 “Which would have placed them upon the same base
 “With those who did not hold the saints in awe.”
 But here Saint Peter started from his place,
 And cried, “You may the prisoner withdraw:
 “Ere Heaven shall ope her portals to this Guelf,⁵¹
 “While I am guard, may I be damn’d myself!

L.

“Sooner will I with Cerberus⁵² exchange
 “My office (and *his* is no sinecure)
 “Than see this royal Bedlam⁵³ bigot range
 “The azure fields of heaven, of that be sure!”
 “Saint!” replied Sathan, “you do dwell to avenge⁵⁴
 “The wrongs he made your satellites endure;
 “And if to this exchange you should be given,
 “I’ll try to coax *our* Cerberus up to heaven.”

LI.

Here Michael interposed: “Good saint! and devil!
 “Pray not so fast; you both out-run discretion.
 “Saint Peter! you were want⁵⁵ to be more civil:
 “Sathan! excuse this warmth of his expression,
 “And condescension to the vulgar’s level:
 “Even saints sometimes forget themselves in session.
 “Have you got more to say?” — “No!” — “If you please,
 “I’ll trouble you to call your witnesses.”

LII.

Then Sathan turn’d and wav’d his swarthy hand,
 Which stirr’d with its electric qualities
 Clouds farther off than we can understand,
 Although we find him sometimes in our skies;
 Infernal thunder shook both sea and land
 In all the planets, and hell’s batteries
 Let off the artillery, which Milton mentions
 As one of Sathan’s most sublime inventions.

LIII.

This was a signal unto such damn'd souls
 As have the privilege of their damnation
 Extended far beyond the mere controls
 Of worlds past, present, or to come; no station
 Is theirs particularly in the rolls
 Of hell assigned; but where their inclination
 Or business carries them in search of game,
 They may range freely—being damn'd the same.

LIV.

They are proud of this—as very well they may,
 It being a sort of knighthood, or gilt key
 Stuck in their loins;⁵⁶ or like to an “entré”
 Up the back stairs, or such free-masonry:
 I borrow my comparisons from clay,
 Being clay myself. Let not those spirits be
 Offended with such base low likenesses;
 We know their posts are nobler far than these.

LV.

When the great signal ran from heaven to hell,—
 About ten million times the distance reckon'd
 From our sun to its earth, as we can tell
 How much time it takes up, even to a second,
 For every ray that travels to dispel
 The fogs of London; through which, dimly beacon'd,
 The weathercocks are gilt, some thrice a year,
 If that the *summer* is not too severe:—

LVI.

I say that I can tell—'twas half a minute;
 I know the solar beams take up more time
 Ere, pack'd up for their journey, they begin it;
 But then their telegraph⁵⁷ is less sublime,
 And if they ran a race, they would not win it
 Gainst Sathan's couriers bound for their own clime.
 The sun takes up some years for every ray
 To reach its goal—the devil not half a day.

LVII.

Upon the verge of space, about the size
 Of half-a-crown,⁵⁸ a little speck appear'd,
 (I've seen a something like it in the skies
 In the Ægean, ere a squall;) it near'd,
 And, growing bigger, took another guise;
 Like an aërial ship it tack'd, and steer'd
 Or *was* steer'd (I am doubtful of the grammar
 Of the last phrase, which makes the stanza stammer;—

LVIII.

But take your choice;) and then it grew a cloud,
 And so it was—a cloud of witnesses.⁵⁹
 But such a cloud! No land ere saw a crowd
 Of locusts numerous as the heavens saw these;
 They shadow'd with their myriads space; their loud
 And varied cries were like those of wild-geese,
 (If nations may be liken'd to a goose)
 And realized the phrase of "hell broke loose."

LVIX.⁶⁰

Here crash'd a sturdy oath of stout John Bull,⁶¹
 Who damn'd away his eyes as heretofore:
 There Paddy⁶² brogued "by Jasus!"—"What's your wull?"⁶³
 The temperate Scot exclaim'd: the French ghost swore
 In certain terms I sha'n't translate in full,
 As the first coachman will; and midst the war⁶⁴
 The voice of Jonathan⁶⁵ was heard to express,
 "*Our* President is going to war, I guess."⁶⁶

XL.⁶⁷

Besides there were the Spaniard, Dutch, and Dane;
 In short, an universal shoal of shades
 From Otaheite's Isle⁶⁸ to Salisbury Plain,
 Of all climes and professions, years and trades,
 Ready to swear against the good king's reign,
 Bitter as clubs in cards are against spades:⁶⁹
 All summon'd by this grand "subpœna,"⁷⁰ to
 Try if kings mayn't be damn'd, like me or you.

LXI.

When Michael saw this host, he first grew pale,
 As angels can; next, like Italian twilight,
 He turned all colours—as a peacock's tail,
 Or sunset streaming through a Gothic skylight
 In some old abbey, or a trout not stale,
 Or distant lightning on the horizon *by* night,
 Or a fresh rainbow, or a grand review
 Of thirty regiments in red, green, and blue.

LXII.

Then he address'd himself to Sathan: "Why—
"My good old friend, for such I deem you, though
"Our different parties make us fight so shy,
"I ne'er mistake you for a *personal* foe;
"Our difference is *political*, and I
"Trust that, whatever may occur below,
"You know my great respect for you; and this
"Makes me regret whatever you do amiss—

LXIII.

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

LXIV.

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

LXV.

Thus spoke the Demon (late call'd "multifaced"
By multo-scribbling Southey.) "Then we'll call
"One or two persons of the myriads placed
"Around our congress, and dispense with all
"The rest," quoth Michael: "Who may be so graced
"As to speak first? there's choice enough—who shall
"It be?" Then Sathan answered, "There are many;
"But you may choose Jack Wilkes⁷¹ as well as any."

LXVI.

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

LXVII.

The Spirit look'd around upon the crowds
Assembled, and exclaim'd, "My friends of all
"The spheres, we shall catch cold amongst these clouds;
"So let's to business: why this general call?
"If those are freeholders⁷² I see in shrouds,
"And 'tis for an election that they bawl,
"Behold a candidate with unturn'd-coat!
"Saint Peter, may I count upon your vote?"

LXVIII.

"Sir," replied Michael, "you mistake: these things
"Are of a former life, and what we do
"Above is more august; to judge of kings
"Is the tribunal met; so now you know."
"Then I presume those gentlemen with wings,"
Said Wilkes, "are cherubs; and that soul below
"Looks much like George the Third; but to my mind
"A good deal older—Bless me! is he blind?"

LXIX.

"He is what you behold him, and his doom
"Depends upon his deeds," the Angel said.
"If you have ought to arraign in him, the tomb
"Gives licence to the humblest beggar's head
"To lift itself against the loftiest."—"Some,"
Said Wilkes, "don't wait to see them laid in lead,
"For such a liberty—and I, for one,
"Have told them what I thought beneath the sun."

LXX.

"*Above* the sun repeat, then, what thou hast
"To urge against him," said the Archangel. "Why,"
Replied the Spirit, "since old scores are past,
"Must I turn evidence? In faith, not I.
"Besides, I beat him hollow at the last,
"With all his Lords and Commons: in the sky
"I don't like ripping up old stories, since
"His conduct was but natural in a prince.

LXXI.

“Foolish, no doubt, and wicked, to oppress
“A poor unlucky devil without a shilling;
“But then I blame the man himself much less
“Than Bute and Grafton,⁷³ and shall be unwilling
“To see him punish’d here for their excess,
“Since they were both damn’d long ago, and still in
“Their place below; for me, I have forgiven,
“And vote his ‘habeas corpus’⁷⁴ into heaven.”

LXXII.

“Wilkes,” said the Devil, “I understand all this;
“You turn’d to half a courtier ere you died,
“And seem to think it would not be amiss
“To grow a whole one on the other side
“Of Charon’s ferry;⁷⁵ you forget that *his*
“Reign is concluded; whatsoever betide,
“He won’t be sovereign more: you’ve lost your labour,
“For at the best he will but be your neighbour.

LXXIII.

“However, I knew what to think of it,
“When I beheld you in your jesting way
“Flitting and whispering round about the spit
“Where Belial,⁷⁶ upon duty for the day,
“With Fox’s lard was basting William Pitt,⁷⁷
“His pupil; I knew what to think, I say:
“That fellow even in hell breeds farther ills;
“I’ll have him *gagg’d*—’twas one of his own bills.

LXXIV.

“Call Junius!”⁷⁸ From the crowd a Shadow stalk’d,
And at the name there was a general squeeze,
So that the very ghosts no longer walk’d
In comfort, at their own aërial ease,
But were all ramm’d, and jamm’d (but to be balk’d,
As we shall see) and jostled hands and knees,
Like wind compress’d and pent within a bladder,
Or like a human cholic, which is sadder.

LXXV.

The Shadow came! a tall, thin, gray-hair’d figure,
That look’d as it had been a shade on earth;
Quick in its motions, with an air of vigour,
But nought to mark its breeding or its birth:
Now it wax’d little, then again grew bigger,
With now an air of gloom, or savage mirth;
But as you gazed upon its features, they
Changed every instant—to *what*, none could say.

LXXVI.

The more intently the ghosts gazed, the less
Could they distinguish whose the features were;
The Devil himself seem’d puzzled even to guess;
They varied like a dream—now here, now there;
And several people swore from out the press,
They knew him perfectly; and one could swear
He was his father; upon which another
Was sure he was his mother’s cousin’s brother:

LXXVII.

Another, that he was a duke, or knight,
 An orator, a lawyer, or a priest,
 A nabob,⁷⁹ a man-midwife; but the wight
 Mysterious changed his countenance at least
 As oft as they their minds: though in full sight
 He stood, the puzzle only was increased;
 The man was a phantasmagoria⁸⁰ in
 Himself—he was so volatile and thin!

LXXVIII.

The moment that you had pronounced him *one*,
 Presto! his face changed, and he was another;
 And when that change was hardly well put on,
 It varied, till I don't think his own mother
 (If that he had a mother) would her son
 Have known, he shifted so from one to t'other,
 Till guessing from a pleasure grew a task,
 At this epistolary "iron mask."⁸¹

LXXIX.

For sometimes he like Cerberus would seem—
 "Three gentlemen at once," (as sagely says
 Good Mrs. Malaprop;)⁸² then you might deem
 That he was not even *one*; now many rays
 Were flashing round him; and now a thick steam
 Hid him from sight—like fogs on London days:
 Now Burke,⁸³ now Tooke,⁸⁴ he grew to people's fancies,
 And certes often like Sir Philip Francis.⁸⁵

LXXX.

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

LXXXI.

I don't see wherefore letters should not be
 Written without hands, since we daily view
 Them written without heads; and books we see
 Are fill'd as well without the latter too:
 And really till we fix on somebody
 For certain sure to claim them as his due,
 Their author, like the Niger's mouth,⁸⁶ will bother
 The world to say if *there* be mouth or author.

LXXXII.

"And who and what art thou?" the Archangel said.
 "For *that*, you may consult my title-page,"
 Replied this mighty Shadow of a Shade:
 "If I have kept my secret half an age,
 "I scarce shall tell it now."—"Canst thou upbraid,"
 Continued Michael, "George Rex, or allege
 "Aught further?" Junius answer'd, "You had better
 "First ask him for *his* answer to my letter:⁸⁷

LXXXIII.

“My charges upon record will outlast
 “The brass of both his epitaph and tomb.”
 “Repent’st thou not,” said Michael, “of some past
 “Exaggeration? something which may doom
 “Thyself, if false, as him if true? Thou wast
 “Too bitter—is it not so? in thy gloom
 “Of passion?” “Passion!” cried the Phantom dim,
 “I loved my country, and I hated him.”⁸⁸

LXXXIV.

“What I have written, I have written: let
 “The rest be on his head or mine!” So spoke
 Old “Nominis Umbra;”⁸⁹ and while speaking yet,
 Away he melted in celestial smoke.
 Then Sathan said to Michael, “Don’t forget
 “To call George Washington,⁹⁰ and John Horne Tooke,⁹¹
 “And Franklin:”⁹²—but at this time there was heard
 A cry for room, though not a phantom stirr’d.

LXXXV.

At length with jostling, elbowing, and the aid
 Of cherubim appointed to that post,
 The devil Asmodeus⁹³ to the circle made
 His way, and look’d as if his journey cost
 Some trouble. When his burden down he laid,
 “What’s this?” cried Michael; “why, ’tis not a ghost?”⁹⁴
 “I know it,” quoth the incubus;⁹⁵ “but he
 “Shall be one, if you leave the affair to me.

LXXXVI.

"Confound the Renegado! I have sprain'd
 "My left wing, he's so heavy; one would think
 "Some of his works about his neck were chain'd.
 "But to the point: while hovering o'er the brink
 "Of Skiddaw⁹⁶ (where as usual it still rain'd),
 "I saw a taper, far below me, wink,
 "And stooping, caught this fellow at a libel—
 "No less on History than the Holy Bible.

LXXXVII.

"The former is the devil's scripture, and
 "The latter yours, good Michael; so the affair
 "Belongs to all of us, you understand.
 "I snatch'd him up just as you see him there,
 "And brought him off for sentence out of hand:
 "I've scarcely been ten minutes in the air—
 "At least a quarter it can hardly be:
 "I dare say that his wife is still at tea."

LXXXVIII.

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

LXXXIX.

"But since he's here, let's see what he has done."
 "Done!" cried Asmodeus, "he anticipates
 "The very business you are now upon,
 "And scribbles as if head clerk to the Fates.
 "Who knows to what his ribaldry may run,
 "When such an ass as this, like Balaam's, prates?"⁹⁷
 "Let's hear," quoth Michael, "what he has to say;
 "You know we're bound to that in every way."

XC.

Now the Bard, glad to get an audience, which
 By no means often was his case below,
 Began to cough, and hawk, and hem, and pitch
 His voice into that awful note of woe
 To all unhappy hearers within reach
 Of poets when the tide of rhyme's in flow;
 But stuck fast with his first hexameter,
 Not one of all whose gouty feet would stir.

XCI.

But ere the spavin'd dactyls could be spurr'd
 Into recitative, in great dismay
 Both cherubim and seraphim were heard
 To murmur loudly through their long array;
 And Michael rose ere he could get a word
 Of all his founder'd verses under way,
 And cried, "For God's sake stop, my friend! 'twere best—
 "*Non Di, non homines*—" ⁹⁸ you know the rest."

XCII.

A general bustle spread throughout the throng,
 Which seem'd to hold all verse in detestation;
 The angels had of course enough of song
 When upon service; and the generation
 Of ghosts had heard too much in life, not long
 Before, to profit by a new occasion;
 The Monarch, mute till then, exclaim'd, "What! what!
 "Pye come again?"⁹⁹ No more—no more of that!"

XCIII.

The tumult grew, an universal cough
 Convulsed the skies, as during a debate,
 When Castlereagh¹⁰⁰ has been up long enough,
 (Before he was first minister of state,
 I mean—the *slaves hear now*;) some cried "off, off,"
 As at a farce; till grown quite desperate,
 The Bard Saint Peter pray'd to interpose
 (Himself an author)¹⁰¹ only for his prose.

XCIV.

The varlet was not an ill-favour'd knave;
 A good deal like a vulture in the face,
 With a hook nose and a hawk's eye, which gave
 A smart and sharper looking sort of grace
 To his whole aspect, which, though rather grave,
 Was by no means so ugly as his case;
 But that indeed was hopeless as can be,
 Quite a poetic felony "*de se*."¹⁰²

XCV.

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

XCVI.

He said—(I only give the heads)—he said,
 He meant no harm in scribbling; 'twas his way
 Upon all topics; 'twas, besides, his bread,
 Of which he butter'd both sides; 'twould delay
 Too long the assembly (he was pleased to dread)
 And take up rather more time than a day,
 To name his works—he would but cite a few—
 Wat Tyler—Rhymes on Blenheim—Waterloo.¹⁰³

XCVII.

He had written praises of a regicide;¹⁰⁴
 He had written praises of all kings whatever;
 He had written for republics far and wide,
 And then against them bitterer than ever;
 For pantisocracy¹⁰⁵ he once had cried
 Aloud, a scheme less moral than 'twas clever;¹⁰⁶
 Then grew a hearty antijacobin—
 Had turn'd his coat—and would have turn'd his skin.

XCVIII.

He had sung against all battles, and again
 In their high praise and glory; he had call'd
 Reviewing* "the ungentle craft," and then
 Become as base a critic as ere¹⁰⁷ crawl'd—
 Fed, paid, and pamper'd by the very men
 By whom his muse and morals had been maul'd:
 He had written much blank verse, and blanker prose,
 And more of both than any body knows.

XCIX.

He had written Wesley's life:¹⁰⁸—here, turning round
 To Sathan, "Sir, I'm ready to write yours,
 "In two octavo volumes, nicely bound,
 "With notes and preface, all that most allures
 "The pious purchaser; and there's no ground
 "For fear, for I can choose my own reviewers:
 "So let me have the proper documents,
 "That I may add you to my other saints."

C.

Sathan bow'd, and was silent. "Well, if you,
 "With amiable modesty, decline
 "My offer, what says Michael? There are few
 "Whose memoirs could be render'd more divine.
 "Mine is a pen of all work; not so new
 "As it was once, but I would make you shine
 "Like your own trumpet; by the way, my own
 "Has more of brass in it, and is as well blown.

* See "Life of H. Kirke White."¹⁰⁹

CI.

“But talking about trumpets, here’s my Vision!
 “Now you shall judge, all people; yes, you shall
 “Judge with my judgment! and by my decision
 “Be guided who shall enter heaven or fall!
 “I settle all these things by intuition,
 “Times present, past, to come, heaven, hell, and all,
 “Like King Alfonso!^{*110} When I thus see double,
 “I save the Deity some worlds of trouble.”

CII.

He ceased, and drew forth an MS.; and no
 Persuasion on the part of devils, or saints,
 Or angels, now could stop the torrent; so
 He read the first three lines of the contents;
 But at the fourth, the whole spiritual show
 Had vanish’d, with variety of scents,
 Ambrosial and sulphureous, as they sprang,
 Like lightning, off from his “melodious twang.”^{†111}

CIII.

Those grand heroics acted as a spell:
 The angels stopp’d their ears and plied their pinions;

* King Alfonso, speaking of the Ptolomean system, said, that “had he been consulted at the creation of the world, he would have spared the Maker some absurdities.”

† See Aubrey’s account of the apparition which disappeared “with a curious perfume and a melodious twang;” or see the Antiquary, Vol. I.

The devils ran howling, deafen'd, down to hell;
 The ghosts fled, gibbering, for their own dominions—
 (For 'tis not yet decided where they dwell,
 And I leave every man to his opinions;)
 Michael took refuge in his trump—but lo!
 His teeth were set on edge, he could not blow!

CIV.

Saint Peter, who has hitherto been known
 For an impetuous saint, upraised his keys,
 And at the fifth line knock'd the Poet down;
 Who fell like Phaeton, but more at ease,
 Into his lake, for there he did not drown,
 A different web being by the Destinies
 Woven for the Laureate's final wreath, whene'er
 Reform shall happen either here or there.

CV.

He first sunk to the bottom—like his works,
 But soon rose to the surface—like himself;
 For all corrupted things are buoy'd, like corks*,
 By their own rottenness, light as an elf,
 Or wisp that flits o'er a morass: he lurks,
 It may be, still, like dull books on a shelf,
 In his own den, to scrawl some "Life" or "Vision,"
 As Wellborn says—"the devil turn'd precisian."¹¹²

* A drowned body lies at the bottom till rotten; it then floats, as most people know.¹¹³

CVI.

As for the rest, to come to the conclusion
Of this true dream, the telescope is gone
Which kept my optics free from all delusion,
And show'd me what I in my turn have shown:
All I saw farther in the last confusion,
Was, that King George slipp'd into heaven for one;
And when the tumult dwindled to a calm,
I left him practising the hundredth psalm.

[BLANK PAGE]

EDITORIAL NOTES

¹ Francisco de Quevedo y Villegas (1580-1645), one of the major protagonists of seventeenth-century Spanish literature, author of a series of satirical prose sketches entitled *Sueños y discursos de verdades descubridoras de abusos, vicios y engaños* ("Dreams and discourses of truths discovering abuses, vices and deceptions", published in 1627) and aimed at denouncing all forms of corruption during the reign of Philip III (1598-1621). The first *Sueño*, "El juicio final" ("The Last Judgment"), was written in 1607. Sir Roger L'Estrange's translation, entitled *The Visions of Dom Francisco de Quevedo Villegas*, appeared in 1667.

² Robert Southey's play *Wat Tyler* (written in 1794), about Walter Tyler, a leader of the 1381 Peasants' Revolt, was published in 1817 by the poet's enemies in order to denounce his apostasy from radicalism to support for the Tory establishment.

³ William Shakespeare, *The Merchant of Venice* IV.i.342.

⁴ Proverbial expression.

⁵ Alexander Pope, *Essay on Criticism* l. 625.

⁶ George Farquhar's *The Beaux' Stratagem* (1707), III.66-67. Byron also mentions the character of Scrub in the *Ravenna Journal* (25 February 1821).

⁷ On 14 March 1817 the MP William Smith delivered a scathing attack on Southey in the House of Commons, attributing to him the "determined malignity of the renegade", during a debate on the Seditious Assemblies Bill. See also the Dedication to Byron's *Don Juan* (stanza 5).

⁸ Reference to Southey's poem "Inscription for an Apartment in Chepstow Castle where Henry Marten, the Regicide, Was Imprisoned Thirty Years". Henry Marten (1602-80) was one of the signatories of the death warrant of Charles II. See also *Vision of Judgment* stanza XCVII.

⁹ Byron's *Don Juan* was one of these recent publications.

¹⁰ In the *Anti-Jacobin* (1797-98), George Canning and John Hookham Frere parodied Southey's "The Widow" in "Sapphics: The Friend of Humanity and the Knife-Grinder", and Canning parodied Southey's "Inscription for an Apartment in Chepstow Castle" in "Inscription for the Door of the Cell in Newgate".

¹¹ Published in 1743.

¹² Byron may have known Sir Roger L'Estrange's *The Visions of Dom Francisco de Quevedo Villegas* (1667).

¹³ Southey did not produce a reply.

¹⁴ Walter Savage Landor (1775-1864) published his anti-monarchic epic poem *Gebir* in 1798. A revised version appeared in 1803, and a Latin translation, *Gebirus*, was published in the same year. Southey's comments on his friend Landor appear in the preface to his *A Vision of Judgement*.

¹⁵ Corrected from *nto* in the transcribed original.

¹⁶ *Gebir* III.185-200.

¹⁷ *Ithyphallics*: poems having the metre or tone of Bacchic hymns. Byron intimates that Landor is the author of indecent poetic compositions. Algernon Charles Swinburne identified the poem in question as Landor's "Ad Mulum in Hispania" published in *Idyllia Heroica* (1820).

¹⁸ The Duke of Wellington and Napoleon (who died on 5 March 1821).

¹⁹ Biblical reference. See *Book of Revelation* 12.3, 13.1 and 17.3.

²⁰ In January 1820, the *pronunciamiento* of General Rafael del Riego at Cabezas de San Juan started a liberal revolution that brought about the temporary transformation of Spain into a constitutional monarchy through the reinstatement of the 1812 Constitution of Cadiz. These events inspired several constitutional and liberal uprisings in 1820-21, including the failed Carbonari revolt in the Romagna, to which Byron had lent his support.

²¹ George III was well known for his agricultural interests that earned him the nickname of "Farmer George".

²² The list of errata reads: "Page 6, line 6, instead of 'a worse king never left a realm undone,' read 'a weaker king ne'er left a realm undone'".

²³ George III was also King of Hanover. Byron alludes to the fact that George II had hidden – and never acted upon – the will of his father George I.

²⁴ The list of errata reads: "Page 7, line 16, instead of 'a bad ugly woman,' read 'an unhandsome woman'".

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ²⁵ Misprint for *won't*.
- ²⁶ Reference to King Louis XVI of France, guillotined in 1793.
- ²⁷ Evangelical reference: see *Matthew* 26.51, *Mark* 14.47, *Luke* 22.51, and *John* 18.10.
- ²⁸ *Parvenu*: an upstart. Byron depicts St Peter as resentful of St Paul, who, although not among the original apostles, now sits inside the gates of Heaven, whereas Peter sits without.
- ²⁹ St Bartholomew was skinned alive.
- ³⁰ See Luigi Pulci, *Morgante Maggiore* XXVI.91. Byron's translation of the first canto of *Morgante* appeared in the fourth instalment of *The Liberal* (published 30 July 1823).
- ³¹ In Greek mythology, the fluid flowing in the veins of gods and other immortals.
- ³² (Latin) The souls or spirits of departed ancestors.
- ³³ Reference to Sir William Edward Parry's third polar expedition (1820-21). Viscount Melville's Sound is in northern Canada, to the south of what are now called Parry Islands. Parry's *Journal of a Voyage for the Discovery of the North-West Passage*, published by John Murray in 1821, records a sighting of the Northern Lights on 15 January 1820.
- ³⁴ Joanna Southcott (1750-1814), preacher, visionary and prophetess who gathered numerous followers from 1792 until her death. Famous for her millenarianist prophecies, in 1813 (at the age of 63) she announced that she was pregnant and that she would give birth to Shiloh, the new Prince of Peace (Shiloh was one of Byron's nicknames for Percy Bysshe Shelley).
- ³⁵ (French) Field enclosed for a duel or a tournament.
- ³⁶ Biblical reference: see *Book of Job*.
- ³⁷ Biblical reference: see *Genesis* 6.2 and *Book of Job* 1.6.
- ³⁸ Byron is thinking of such works as John Mason Good's 1812 translation of the *Book of Job*, which features a discussion of the historicity of the Biblical text and figure.
- ³⁹ Reference to the Near and Middle Eastern custom of holding trials at or near a city's gates.
- ⁴⁰ Reference to a customary form of Eastern salutation.
- ⁴¹ Proverbial expression.
- ⁴² Biblical reference: see *Ephesians* 2.2.
- ⁴³ Rent of little value paid by a freeholder in lieu of services that could be expected from them.
- ⁴⁴ Misprint for *XLIII*.
- ⁴⁵ George III's first Prime Minister was John Stuart, third Earl of Bute (1713-92), his tutor and close friend.
- ⁴⁶ Byron refers to the fact that George III outlived his ministers, who are now, therefore, in Hell with Satan.
- ⁴⁷ Misprint for *XLV*.
- ⁴⁸ Ancient Roman gourmet, to whom the ancient cookery book *De re culinaria* or *De re coquinaria* ("On the Subject of Cooking") is ascribed.
- ⁴⁹ *Anchorite*: hermit, ascetic.
- ⁵⁰ In 1795, William Pitt and other politicians proposed legislation for the emancipation of Catholics, which George III strongly opposed. He did so again in 1801.
- ⁵¹ George III belonged to the House of Hanover that descended from the medieval House of Welf or Guelph.
- ⁵² Many-headed dog guarding the entrance to the Underworld in Greek and Roman mythology.
- ⁵³ Lunatic.
- ⁵⁴ The list of errata reads: "Page 20, line 5, for 'dwell,' read 'well'".
- ⁵⁵ Misprint for *wont*.
- ⁵⁶ A gold key is among the insignia of several court official, including the Lord Chamberlain.
- ⁵⁷ A mechanical signalling instrument also known as a semphore.
- ⁵⁸ Coin worth two shillings and sixpence.
- ⁵⁹ Biblical reference: see *Hebrews* 12.1.
- ⁶⁰ Misprint for *LIX*.
- ⁶¹ Short, stocky character traditionally representing an average Englishman or Briton.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ⁶² Stereotypical name for an Irishman (from Patrick).
⁶³ (Scots) “What’s your will?”.
⁶⁴ The list of errata reads: “Page 23, line 6, instead of ‘amidst the *war*,’ read ‘amidst the *roar*’”.
⁶⁵ Stereotypical name for an American (similar to John Bull for the English and British, and Paddy for the Irish).
⁶⁶ Byron believed that this phrase was commonly used in American conversation. See *BLJ* III:256 and *HVSV*:299.
⁶⁷ Misprint for *LX*.
⁶⁸ Tahiti.
⁶⁹ In card games, spades conventionally rank above clubs.
⁷⁰ (Latin) An official order to appear in court at a specified time.
⁷¹ John Wilkes (1725-97), whom George III called “that Devil Wilkes”, was an opposition politician famous for his opportunism and corruption. In his years as an active political figure, he was an antagonist of George III, but later reneged and in later life often appeared at the king’s levees.
⁷² In the Middlesex, or Westminster, constituency, men with freeholds of 40 shillings (£2) a year or more were allowed to vote. Thus, it had a broader electorate than the rest of English constituencies, and polls had a more popular tenor, something of which Wilkes took full advantage.
⁷³ The Earl of Bute (1713-92), George III’s first Prime Minister, and the Earl of Grafton (1735-1811), Prime Minister during the early years of the War of American Independence. The former was Wilkes’s antagonist, whereas the latter first sympathized with Wilkes then opposed him.
⁷⁴ (Latin) A writ requiring that a person under arrest be tried in court, especially to ascertain the lawfulness of their detention.
⁷⁵ In Greek mythology, the ferryman carrying souls over the river of death, the Lethe.
⁷⁶ A devil. Biblical reference: see I *Samuel* 2.12.
⁷⁷ Charles James Fox (1749-1806) and William Pitt the Younger (1759-1806) were political antagonists – the former a Whig, the latter a Tory.
⁷⁸ The pseudonymous author of a famous series of epistles published between 1769 and 1772, which criticized George III’s policies over civil liberties, America and Ireland. The true identity of ‘Junius’ was never discovered.
⁷⁹ A British man who had become rich in the Asian colonies controlled by the East India Company.
⁸⁰ A type of magic lantern show popular between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when it was used to produce frightening images in keeping with the ‘Gothic’ taste for horror and terror.
⁸¹ Reference to the prisoner, who died in 1703, mysteriously masked and incarcerated on the orders of King Louis XIV of France.
⁸² See Act IV, sc. ii in Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s *The Rivals* (1775).
⁸³ Edmund Burke (1729-97), politician and aesthetics theorist.
⁸⁴ The writer John Horne Tooke (1736-1812), who wrote against Junius.
⁸⁵ The politician Sir Philip Francis (1740-1818), who made his fortune in India as a gambler (see the reference to *nabob*, above).
⁸⁶ In the early nineteenth century the river Niger in Africa was still enveloped in mystery: the locations of its source and mouth were unknown, and it was unclear if it was the same as the Nile and whether it flowed east, west, north or south.
⁸⁷ Erroneously indented.
⁸⁸ Erroneously indented.
⁸⁹ The title page of the original edition of the Letters of Junius bore the Latin inscription “Stat nominis umbra”.
⁹⁰ First President of the United States (1732-99).
⁹¹ The writer John Horne Tooke (1729-97) supported the Americans’ cause during the War of Independence.
⁹² Benjamin Franklin (1706-90), American politician and writer.

EDITORIAL NOTES

- ⁹³ A devil. See the Book of Tobit in the Old Testament and Alain René Lesage's *Le Diable boiteux* (1707).
- ⁹⁴ Erroneously not indented.
- ⁹⁵ A demonic presence haunting asleep humans.
- ⁹⁶ Mountain in the Lake District, visible from Greta Hall, Robert Southey's house in Keswick.
- ⁹⁷ Biblical reference: see *Numbers* 22.22-31.
- ⁹⁸ See Horace, *Ars Poetica*, ll. 372-3.
- ⁹⁹ Henry James Pye (1745-1813), Robert Southey's predecessor as Poet Laureate.
- ¹⁰⁰ Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh (1769-1822), Foreign Secretary who represented Britain at the Congress of Vienna. Byron hated him above all other political figures.
- ¹⁰¹ St Peter allegedly wrote the Letters known as *Peter I* and *II* in the New Testament.
- ¹⁰² *Felony* "de se": Suicide.
- ¹⁰³ *Wat Tyler*: pro-revolutionary tragedy written by Robert Southey in 1794 and pirated in 1817; "Rhymes on Blenheim" refers to "The Battle of Blenheim" (1798), one of Southey's most popular poems; and "Waterloo" to *The Poet's Pilgrimage to Waterloo* (1816).
- ¹⁰⁴ Reference to Robert Southey's "Lines on Marten the Regicide" (1797), which commemorates the imprisonment in Chepstow Castle of Henry Marten, a lawyer and politician who had sat in judgment over King Charles I.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Pantisocracy* was the name given by Southey and Samuel Taylor Coleridge to the utopian community they planned to set up on the banks of the Susquehannah river in North America.
- ¹⁰⁶ Erroneously not indented.
- ¹⁰⁷ Misprint for *e'er*.
- ¹⁰⁸ Robert Southey's *The Life of Wesley and the Rise and Progress of Methodism* was published in 1820.
- ¹⁰⁹ See Robert Southey's *Remains of Henry Kirke White, with an Account of his Life* (1807).
- ¹¹⁰ Reference to the alleged scepticism of King Alfonso X of Castile (1221-84), which Byron found in Pierre Bayle's *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique* (1697).
- ¹¹¹ See chapter 9 in Walter Scott's *The Antiquary* (1816).
- ¹¹² I.i.9 in Philip Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts* (c. 1625).
- ¹¹³ Misprint of "at the body" for "at the bottom", which appears correctly in Byron's MS. (The list of errata reads: "Page 38, in the note, for 'body,' read 'bottom'").