

Classic Poetry Series

George Canning
- poems -

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George Canning(11 April 1770 – 8 August 1827)

George Canning PC, FRS was a British statesman and politician who served as Foreign Secretary and briefly Prime Minister.

Early life: 1770–1793

Canning was born into an Anglo-Irish family at his parents' home in Queen Anne Street, Marylebone, London. Canning described himself as "an Irishman born in London". His father, George Canning, Sr., of Garvagh, County Londonderry, Ireland, was a gentleman of limited means, a failed wine merchant and lawyer, who renounced his right to inherit the family estate in exchange for payment of his substantial debts. George Sr. eventually abandoned the family and died in poverty on 11 April 1771, his son's first birthday, in London. Canning's mother, Mary Anne Costello, took work as a stage actress, a profession not considered respectable at the time. Indeed when in 1827 it looked as if Canning would become Prime Minister, Lord Grey remarked that "the son of an actress is, ipso facto, disqualified from becoming Prime Minister".

Because Canning showed unusual intelligence and promise at an early age, family friends persuaded his uncle, London merchant Stratford Canning (father to the diplomat Stratford Canning), to become his nephew's guardian. George Canning grew up with his cousins at the home of his uncle, who provided him with an income and an education. Stratford Canning's financial support allowed the young Canning to study at Eton College and Christ Church, Oxford. Canning came out top of the school at Eton and left at the age of seventeen. His time at Eton has been described as "a triumph almost without parallel. He proved a brilliant classic, came top of the school, and excelled at public orations".

Canning struck up friendships with the then-future Lord Liverpool as well as with Granville Leveson-Gower and John Hookham Frere. In 1789 he won a prize for his Latin poem *The Pilgrimage to Mecca* which he recited in Oxford Theatre. Canning began practising law after receiving his BA from Oxford in the summer of 1791, but he wished to enter politics.

Entry into politics: 1793–1795

Stratford Canning was a Whig and would introduce his nephew in the 1780s to prominent Whigs such as Charles James Fox, Edmund Burke, and Richard Brinsley Sheridan. George Canning's friendship with Sheridan would last for the remainder of Sheridan's life.

George Canning's impoverished background and limited financial resources, however, made unlikely a bright political future in a Whig party whose political ranks were led mostly by members of the wealthy landed aristocracy in league with the newly rich industrialist classes. Regardless, along with Whigs such as Burke, Canning himself would become considerably more conservative in the early 1790s after witnessing the excessive radicalism of the French Revolution. "The political reaction which then followed swept the young man to the opposite extreme; and his vehemence for monarchy and the Tories gave point to a Whig sarcasm,—that men had often turned their coats, but this was the first time a boy had turned his jacket."

So when Canning decided to enter politics he sought and received the patronage of the leader of the "Tory" group, William Pitt the Younger. In 1793, thanks to the help of Pitt, Canning became a Member of Parliament for Newtown on the Isle of Wight, a rotten borough. In 1796, he changed seats to a different rotten borough, Wendover in Buckinghamshire. He was elected to represent several constituencies during his parliamentary career.

Canning rose quickly in British politics as an effective orator and writer. His speeches in Parliament as well as his essays gave the followers of Pitt a rhetorical power they had previously lacked. Canning's skills saw him gain leverage within the Pittite faction that allowed him influence over its policies along with repeated promotions in the Cabinet. Over time, Canning became a prominent public speaker as well, and was one of the first politicians to campaign heavily in the country.

As a result of his charisma and promise, Canning early on drew to himself a circle of supporters who would become known as the Canningites. Conversely though, Canning had a reputation as a divisive man who alienated many.

He was a dominant personality and often risked losing political allies for personal reasons. He once reduced Lord Liverpool to tears with a long satirical poem mocking Liverpool's attachment to his time as a colonel in the militia. He then forced Liverpool to apologise for being upset.

Foreign Office: 1796–1799

On 2 November 1795, Canning received his first ministerial post: Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. In this post he proved a strong supporter of Pitt, often taking his side in disputes with the Foreign Secretary, Lord Grenville. At the end of 1798 Canning responded to a resolution by George

Tierney MP for peace negotiations with France:

I for my part still conceive it to be the paramount duty of a British member of parliament to consider what is good for Great Britain...I do not envy that man's feelings, who can behold the sufferings of Switzerland, and who derives from that sight no idea of what is meant by the deliverance of Europe. I do not envy the feelings of that man, who can look without emotion at Italy – plundered, insulted, trampled upon, exhausted, covered with ridicule, and horror, and devastation – who can look at all this, and be at a loss to guess what is meant by the deliverance of Europe? As little do I envy the feelings of that man, who can view the peoples of the Netherlands driven into insurrection, and struggling for their freedom against the heavy hand of a merciless tyranny, without entertaining any suspicion of what may be the sense of the word deliverance. Does such a man contemplate Holland groaning under arbitrary oppressions and exactions? Does he turn his eyes to Spain trembling at the nod of a foreign master? And does the word deliverance still sound unintelligibly in his ear? Has he heard of the rescue and salvation of Naples, by the appearance and the triumphs of the British fleet? Does he know that the monarchy of Naples maintains its existence at the sword's point? And is his understanding, and his heart, still impenetrable to the sense and meaning of the deliverance of Europe? Pitt called this speech "one of the best ever heard on any occasion".

During his early period in the Foreign Office (1807–9) Canning became deeply involved in the affairs of Spain, Portugal and Latin America. He was responsible for a number of decisions that greatly affected the future course of Latin American history.

Great Britain had a strong interest in ensuring the demise of Spanish colonialism, and to open the newly-independent Latin American colonies to British trade. The Latin Americans received a certain amount of unofficial aid – arms and volunteers – from outside, but no outside official help at any stage from Britain or any other power. Britain also refused to aid Spain and opposed any outside intervention on behalf of Spain by other powers. Britain, and especially British sea power, was a decisive factor in the struggle for independence of certain Latin American countries.

In 1825 Mexico, Argentina and Colombia were recognised by means of the ratification of commercial treaties with Britain. In November 1825 the first minister from a Latin American state, Colombia, was officially received in London. "Spanish America is free," Canning declared, "and if we do not mismanage our affairs she is English ... the New World established and if we do not throw it away, ours." Also in 1825, Portugal recognised Brazil (thanks to Canning's

efforts, and in return for a preferential commercial treaty), less than three years after Brazil's declaration of independence.

On 12 December 1826, in the House of Commons, Canning was given an opportunity to defend the policies he had adopted towards France, Spain and Spanish America, and declared: "I resolved that if France had Spain it should not be Spain with the Indies. I called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old."

Canning pushed through, against great opposition, British recognition of Argentina, Colombia, Mexico and Brazil. In a sense, therefore, he brought part of the New World into political existence. The United States had recognised these states earlier, but recognition by the leading world power was to be decisive. Recognition by Britain was greeted with enthusiasm throughout Latin America.

Canning, who was naturally and rightly more concerned with Britain's political and economic interests in Latin America than with Latin American independence, did a great deal to enhance Britain's prestige throughout Latin America. He was esteemed as a great liberal statesman who understood and sympathised with the cause of Latin American independence and who did more than any other foreign statesman to make it a reality. George Canning deserves credit as the first British Foreign Secretary to devote a large proportion of his time and energies to the affairs of Latin America (as well as to those of Spain and Portugal) and to foresee the important political and economic role the Latin American states would one day play in the world. It is appropriate that the home of the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Council in London should be called Canning House. He resigned as Foreign Minister on 1 April 1799.

The Anti-Jacobin

Canning was involved in the founding of the Anti-Jacobin, a newspaper which was published on every Monday from 20 November 1797 to 9 July 1798. Its purpose was to support the government and condemn revolutionary doctrines through news and poetry, much of it written by Canning. Canning's poetry satired and ridiculed Jacobin poetry. Before the appearance of the Anti-Jacobin all the eloquence (except for Burke's) and all the wit and ridicule had been on the side of Fox and Sheridan. Canning and his friends changed this. A young Whig, William Lamb (the future Lord Melbourne, Prime Minister) wrote an 'Epistle to the Editors of the Anti-Jacobin', which attacked Canning.

Office: 1799–1800

In 1799 Canning became a Commissioner of the Board of Control for India.

Canning wrote on 16 April: "Here I am immersed in papers, of which I do not yet comprehend three words in succession; but I shall get at their meaning by degrees and at my leisure. No such hard work here as at my former office. No attendance but when I like it, when there are interesting letters received from India (as is now the case) or to be sent out there".

Paymaster of the Forces: 1800–1801

Canning was appointed Paymaster of the Forces (and therefore to the Privy Council as well) in 1800. In February 1801 Pitt resigned as Prime Minister due to the King's opposition to Catholic Emancipation. Canning, despite Pitt's advice to stay in office, loyally followed him into opposition. The day after Canning wrote Lady Malmesbury: "I resign because Pitt resigns. And that is all".

Backbenches: 1801–1804

Canning disliked being out of office, and wrote on to John Hookham Frere in summer 1801: "But the thought will obtrude itself now and then that I am not where I should be – non hoc pollicitus." He also claimed that Pitt had done "scrupulously and magnanimously right by everyone but me". At the end of September 1801 Canning wrote to Frere, saying of Pitt: "I do love him, and reverence him as I should a Father – but a Father should not sacrifice me, with my good will. Most heartily I forgive him, But he has to answer to himself, and to the country for much mischief that he has done and much that is still to do." Pitt wished for Canning to enter Addington's government, a move which Canning looked on as a horrible dilemma but in the end he turned the offer down.

Canning opposed the preliminaries of the Peace of Amiens signed on 1 October. He did not vote against it due to his personal devotion to Pitt. He wrote on 22 November: "I would risk my life to be assured of being able to act always with P in a manner satisfactory to my own feelings and sense of what is right, rather than have to seek that object in separation from him." On 27 May 1802 in the Commons Canning requested that all grants of land in Trinidad (captured by Britain from Spain) should be rejected until Parliament had decided what to do with the island. The threat that it could be populated by slaves like other West Indian islands was real. Canning instead wanted it to have a military post and that it should be settled with ex-soldiers, free blacks and creoles, with the native American population protected and helped. He also asserted that the island should be used to test the theory that better methods of cultivation in land would lessen the need for slaves. Addington conceded to Canning's demands and the Reverend William Leigh believed Canning had saved 750,000 lives.

At a dinner to celebrate Pitt's birthday in 1802, Canning wrote the song 'The Pilot that Weathered the Storm', performed by a tenor from Drury Lane, Charles Dignum:

And oh! if again the rude whirlwind should rise,
The dawns of peace should fresh darkness deform,
The regrets of the good and the fears of the wise
Shall turn to the Pilot that weathered the Storm.

In November Canning spoke out openly in support of Pitt in the Commons. One observer thought that Canning made incomparably the best speech and that his defence of Pitt's administration "one of the best things, either argumentatively as to matter, or critically and to manner and style" that he could ever remember. On 8 December Sheridan spoke out in defence of Addington and denied that Pitt was the only man who could save the country. Canning replied by criticising the Addington government's foreign policy and claimed that the House should recognise the greatness of the country and Pitt, who ought to be its leader. He argued against those, such as Wilberforce, who held that Britain could safely maintain a policy of isolation: "Let us consider the state of the world as it is, not as we fancy it ought to be. Let us not seek to hide from our own eyes...the real, imminent and awful danger which threatens us." Also, he objected to the notion that Britain could choose between greatness and happiness: "The choice is not in our power. We have...no refuge in littleness. We must maintain ourselves what we are, or cease to have a political existence worth preserving." Furthermore, he openly declared for Pitt and said: "Away with the cant of "measures, not men", the idle supposition that it is the harness and not the horses that draw the chariot along." Kingdoms rise and fall due to what degree they are upheld "not by well-meaning endeavours...but by commanding, over-awing talents...retreat and withdraw as much as he will, he must not hope to efface the memory of his past services from the gratitude of his country; he cannot withdraw himself from the following of a nation; he must endure the attachment of a people whom he has saved." In private Canning was fearful that if Pitt did not return to power, Fox would: "Sooner or later he must act or the country is gone."

Canning approved of the declaration of war against France on 18 May 1803. Canning was angered by Pitt's desire not to proactively work to turn out the ministry but support the ministry when it adopted sound policies. However in 1804, to Canning's delight, Pitt began to work against the Addington government. After Pitt delivered a stinging attack on the government's defence measures on 25 April, Canning launched his own attack on Addington, which made Addington furious. On 30 April Lord Eldon, the Lord Chancellor, asked Pitt to submit a new administration to the King.

Treasurer of the Navy: 1804–1806

Canning returned to office in 1804 with Pitt, becoming Treasurer of the Navy. In 1805 he offered Pitt his resignation after Addington was given a seat in the Cabinet. He wrote to Lady Hester to say he felt humiliated that Addington was a minister "and I am – nothing. I cannot help it, I cannot face the House of Commons or walk the streets in this state of things, as I am". After reading this letter Pitt summoned Canning to London for a meeting, where he told him that if he resigned it would open a permanent breach between the two of them as it would cast a slur on his conduct. He offered Canning the office of Secretary of State for Ireland but he refused on the grounds that this would look like he was being got out of the way. Canning eventually decided not to resign and wrote that "I am resolved to "sink or swim" with Pitt, though he has tied himself to such sinking company. God forgive him".

Backbenches: 1806–1807

Canning left office with the death of Pitt; he was not offered a place in Lord Grenville's administration.

Foreign Secretary: 1807–1809

Canning was appointed Foreign Secretary in the new government of the Duke of Portland in 1807. Given key responsibilities for the country's diplomacy in the Napoleonic Wars, he was responsible for planning the attack on Copenhagen in September 1807, much of which he undertook at his country estate, South Hill Park at Easthampstead in Berkshire.

After the defeat of Prussia by the French, the neutrality of Denmark looked increasingly fragile. Canning was worried that Denmark might, under French pressure, become hostile to Britain. On the night of 21/22 July 1807 Canning received intelligence directly from Tilsit (where Napoleon and Tsar Alexander I of Russia were negotiating a treaty) which appeared "to rest on good authority" that Napoleon had proposed to the Tsar a great naval combination against Britain, of which Denmark and Portugal would be members.

On 30 July a military force 25,000 strong set sail for Denmark, with Francis Jackson travelling the day after. Canning instructed Jackson that his overriding aim was to secure the possession of the Danish navy by offering the Danes a treaty of alliance and mutual defence and whereby they would be given back their fleet at the end of the war. On 31 July Canning wrote to his wife: "The

anxious interval between this day and the hearing the result of his [Jackson's] expedition will be long and painful indeed. Long, I mean, in feeling. In fact it will be about a fortnight or three weeks...I think we have made success almost certain. But the measure is a bold one and if it fails – why we must be impeached I suppose – and dearest dear will have a box at the trial". The day after he wrote that he had received a letter the previous night which provided an "account of the French being actually about to do that act of hostility, the possibility of which formed the groundwork of my Baltic plan. My fear was that the French might not be the aggressors – and then ours would have appeared a strong measure, fully justifiable I think and absolutely necessary, but without apparent necessity or justification. Now the aggression will justify us fully...I am therefore quite easy as to the morality and political wisdom of our plan". Napoleon had on 31 July instructed his Foreign Minister, Talleyrand, to inform the Danes that if they did not wish for Holstein to be invaded and occupied by Jean Bernadotte they must prepare for war against Britain. Canning wrote to his wife on 1 August: "Now for the execution and I confess to my own love, I wake an hour or two earlier than I ought to, thinking of this execution. I could not sleep after asses' milk today, thought I was not in bed till 1/2 p.2". On 25 August he wrote to Granville Leveson-Gower: "The suspense is, as you may well imagine, agitating and painful in the extreme; but I have an undiminished confidence as to the result, either by force or by treaty. The latter however is so infinitely preferable to the former that the doubt whether it has been successful is of itself almost as anxious as if the whole depended on it alone".

On 2 September, after Jackson's negotiations proved unsuccessful, the British fleet began bombarding Copenhagen until when on 7pm 5 September the Danes requested a truce. On 7 September the Danes agreed to hand over their navy (18 ships of the line, 15 frigates and 31 smaller ships) and naval stores and the British agreed to evacuate Zealand within six weeks. On 16 September Canning received the news with relief and excitement: "Did I not tell you we would save Plumstead from bombardment?" he wrote to Reverend William Leigh. On 24 September he wrote to George Rose: "Nothing was ever more brilliant, more salutary or more effectual than the success [at Copenhagen]". On 30 September he wrote Lord Boringdon that he hoped Copenhagen would "stun Russia into her sense again". Canning wrote to Gower on 2 October 1807: "We are hated throughout Europe and that hate must be cured by fear". After the news of Russia's declaration of war against Britain reached London on 2 December, Canning wrote to Lord Boringdon two days later: "The Peace of Tilsit you see is come out. We did not want any more case for Copenhagen; but if we had, this gives it us".

On 3 February 1808 the opposition leader George Ponsonby requested the publication of all information on the strength and battle-worthiness of the Danish

fleet sent by the British envoy at Copenhagen. Canning replied with a speech nearly three hours long, described by Lord Palmerston as "so powerful that it gave a decisive turn to the debate". Lord Grey said his speech was "eloquent and powerful" but that he had never heard such "audacious misrepresentation" and "positive falsehood". On 2 March the opposition moved a vote of censure over Copenhagen, defeated by 224 votes to 64 after Canning gave a speech, in the words of Lord Glenbervie, so "very witty, very eloquent and very able". In November 1807, Canning oversaw the Portuguese royal family's flight from Portugal to Brazil.

Duel with Castlereagh

In 1809 Canning entered into a series of disputes within the government that were to become famous. He argued with the Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, Lord Castlereagh, over the deployment of troops that Canning had promised would be sent to Portugal but which Castlereagh sent to the Netherlands. The government became increasingly paralysed in disputes between the two men. Portland was in deteriorating health and gave no lead, until Canning threatened resignation unless Castlereagh were removed and replaced by Lord Wellesley. Portland secretly agreed to make this change when it would be possible.

Castlereagh discovered the deal in September 1809 and challenged Canning to a duel. Canning accepted the challenge and it was fought on 21 September 1809 on Putney Heath. Canning, who had never before fired a pistol, widely missed his mark. Castlereagh, who was regarded as one of the best shots of his day, wounded his opponent in the thigh. There was much outrage that two cabinet ministers had resorted to such a method. Shortly afterwards the ailing Portland resigned as Prime Minister, and Canning offered himself to George III as a potential successor. However, the King appointed Spencer Perceval instead, and Canning left office once more. He did take consolation, though, in the fact that Castlereagh also stood down.

Backbenches: 1809–1814

Upon Perceval's assassination in 1812, the new Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, offered Canning the position of Foreign Secretary once more. Canning refused, as he also wished to be Leader of the House of Commons and was reluctant to serve in any government with Castlereagh.

Ambassador to Lisbon: 1814–1816

In 1814 he became the British Ambassador to Portugal, returning the following year. He received several further offers of office from Liverpool.

President of the Board of Control: 1816–1820

In 1816 he became President of the Board of Control.

Canning resigned from office once more in 1820, in opposition to the treatment of Queen Caroline, estranged wife of the new King George IV. Canning and Caroline were close friends and may have had a brief sexual affair. This would have been regarded as unacceptable.

Backbenches: 1821–1822

On 16 March 1821 Canning spoke in favour of William Plunket's Catholic Emancipation Bill. Liverpool wished to have Canning back in the Cabinet but the King was strongly hostile to him due to his actions over the Caroline affair. The King would only allow Canning back into the Cabinet if he did not have to deal personally with him. This required the office of Governor-General of India. After deliberating on whether to accept, Canning initially declined the offer but then accepted it. On 25 April he spoke in the Commons against Lord John Russell's motion for parliamentary reform and a few days later Canning moved for leave to introduce a measure of Catholic Emancipation (for lifting the exclusion of Catholics from the House of Lords). This passed the Commons but was rejected by the Lords.

Foreign Secretary and Leader of the House: 1822–1827

In August 1822, Castlereagh, now Marquess of Londonderry, committed suicide. Instead of going to India, Canning succeeded him as both Foreign Secretary and Leader of the House of Commons. In his second term of office he sought to prevent South America from coming into the French sphere of influence, and in this he was successful. He also gave support to the growing campaign for the abolition of slavery. Despite personal issues with Castlereagh, he continued many of his foreign policies, such as the view that the powers of Europe (Russia, France, etc.) should not be allowed to meddle in the affairs of other states. This policy enhanced public opinion of Canning as a liberal. He also prevented the United States from opening trade with the West Indies.

Prime Minister: 1827

In 1827, Liverpool suffered a severe stroke and was to die the following year. Canning, as Liverpool's right-hand man, was then chosen by George IV to

succeed him, in preference to both the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel. Neither man agreed to serve under Canning, and they were followed by five other members of Liverpool's Cabinet as well as 40 junior members of the government. The Tory party was now heavily split between the "High Tories" (or "Ultras", nicknamed after the contemporary party in France) and the moderates supporting Canning, often called "Canningites". As a result Canning found it difficult to form a government and chose to invite a number of Whigs to join his Cabinet, including Lord Lansdowne. The government agreed not to discuss the difficult question of parliamentary reform, which Canning opposed but the Whigs supported.

However, Canning's health by this time was in steep decline. He died on 8 August 1827, in the very same room where Charles James Fox met his own end, 21 years earlier. To this day Canning's total period in office remains the shortest of any Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, a mere 119 days. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Legacy

Canning has come to be regarded as a "lost leader", with much speculation about what his legacy could have been had he lived. His government of Tories and Whigs continued for a few months under Lord Goderich but fell apart in early 1828. It was succeeded by a government under the Duke of Wellington, which initially included some Canningites but soon became mostly "High Tory" when many of the Canningites drifted over to the Whigs. Wellington's administration would soon go down in defeat as well. Some historians have seen the revival of the Tories from the 1830s onwards, in the form of the Conservative Party, as the overcoming of the divisions of 1827. What would have been the course of events had Canning lived is highly speculative.

Rory Muir has described Canning as "the most brilliant and colourful minister, and certainly the greatest orator in the government at a time when oratory was still politically important. He was a man of biting wit and invective, with immense confidence in his own ability, who often inspired either great friendship or deep dislike and distrust...he was a passionate, active, committed man who poured his energy into whatever he undertook. This was his strength and also his weakness...the government's ablest minister".

Places named after Canning

The Canning River in Western Australia is named after George Canning. It flows into the Swan River south of Perth and has a number of districts named similarly (after the river, rather than Canning himself) on its banks, for example

Cannington and Canning Vale.

The village of Canning in the Annapolis Valley of Nova Scotia is named after Canning.

A square in downtown Athens, Greece, is named after Canning (???????, ????????, Plateía Kánningos, Canning Square), in appreciation of his supportive stance toward the Greek War of Independence (1821–1830).

The seat of the Hispanic and Luso Brazilian Council in the Belgravia neighbourhood of London is named Canning House. It houses a research library and is used for a range of cultural and educational events.

A street in the city of Buenos Aires has been on-and-off named after Canning since 1893, changing away from the name in 1985. There is also a street in the Uruguayan capital of Montevideo named Jorge Canning, which is coincidentally the location of the British Residence.

A Brixton public house on the corner of Effra Road and Brixton Water Lane was called the George Canning until renamed the Hobgoblin in the late 1990s. A Camberwell public house on Denmark Hill is called the George Canning.

There is a street in Melbourne, Australia named after him.

There is also a street named after him in the district of Copacabana, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Canning Street in Liverpool is named after George Canning; the surrounding Canning neighbourhood, also known as the "Georgian Quarter," derives its name from the street. Canning Town in London is often thought of as being named after George Canning, but was in fact named after his son Charles Canning, 1st Earl Canning, Governor-General of India during the Indian Mutiny.

Canning Circus is an area at the top of Zion Hill in Nottingham. Canning Terrace was erected as a gatehouse to the cemetery and almshouses in his memory.

Family

Canning married Joan Scott (later 1st Viscountess Canning) (1776–1837) on 8 July 1800, with John Hookham Frere and William Pitt the Younger as witnesses. George and Joan Canning had four children:
George Charles Canning (1801–1820), died from consumption

William Pitt Canning (1802–1828), died from drowning in Madeira, Portugal
Harriet Canning (1804–1876), married the 1st Marquess of Clanricarde
Charles John Canning (later 2nd Viscount Canning and 1st Earl Canning)
(1812–1862)

In January 1827, Canning had been at the funeral of the Duke of York where he caught a severe cold which ultimately resulted in inflammation of the lungs and liver. He never recovered and on 8 August 1827 he died.

His poetical publications included *The Poetical Works* published in 1825 and *The pilgrimage to Mecca* published in 1829.

All The Talents

When the broad-bottom
'd Junto, with reason at strife,
Resign'd, with a sigh, its political life;
When converted to Rome, and of honesty tired,
They gave back to the Devil the soul he inspired.

The Demon of Faction, that over them hung,
In accents of horror their epitaph sung;
While Pride and Venality join'd in the stave,
And canting Democracy wept at the grave.

'Here lies in the tomb that we hollow'd for Pitt,
'Consistence
of Grenville, of Temple the wit;
'Of Sidmouth the firmness, the temper of Grey,
'And Treasurer Sheridan's promise to pay.

'Here Petty's finance, from the evils to come,
'With Fitzpatrick'
s sobriety creeps to the tomb;
'And Chancellor Ego, now left in the lurch,
'Neither dines with the Jordan, nor whines for the church.

'Then huzza for the Party that here is at rest,
'By the fools of a faction regretted and blest;
'Though they sleep with the Devil, yet theirs is the 'hope,
'On the downfall of Britain to rise with the Pope.'

George Canning

Blue And Buff

Come, sportive Muse, with plume satiric,
Describe each lawless, bold empiric,
Who, with the Blue and Buffs' sad crew,
Now stripp'd in buff, shall look so blue.

First paint L---d H---w---k, boisterous, rough,
Dealer in wholesale quack'ry stuff,
Who, far beyond famed Katterfelt,
Prescribed what ne'er was seen or felt;
Left Law and Reason in the lurch,
To mould the Senate, twist the Church:
But wand'ring once from Downing street,
Great Buckingham's old dome to greet,
With grand Catholiconian pill,
Was lost--on Constitution-hill.

Next W---dh---m, metaphysic elf,
Who all things knows--except himself;
Three tedious hours who raves and talks
Of all that in his cranium stalks;
Whose regular ideas fear
Militia much, more Volunteer,
A wild inapplicable genius,
Scarce versed in policy's quæ genus;
In syntax yet more scanty read,
Without one concord in his head.

Now, Muse, direct the shaft of wit,
Where little P---tty apes great Pitt;
This year in woe-begone oration,
To Britons paints a bankrupt nation:
Resources all dilapidate,
Taxation at extremest fate;
Whilst next this little, great, small man,
Heigh! presto! pass! by one bold plan,
Restores you all to peace and plenty;

The deuce is in't! won't this content ye?
With necromantic rod of Moses
(A twig cut from a bush of roses),
To ease at once your ev'ry fear,
Turns bear to bull, and bull to bear.

Nor miss, dear Muse, to gild my tale,
The gallant E---rl of L---d---e,
Who late to Paris post was sent, to
Become the dupe of Benevento;
Hush'd to soft sleep like "Baby Bunting,"
Whilst Fap the Great went out "a-hunting."
Or was it, say, thou bonny chiel,
Thy ardent love for Britain's weal,
That led thy steps, a peep to take
At thy great territorial[1] stake;
The purchase of thine assignats,
Thy Corso-Gallican contrats:
At once th' opprobrium and solution,
Of all thy love for revolution.

The Muse recoils, as something shock'd her,
To charge with harm the harmless D---ct---r;
When, una voce, all allow,
He would do right--if he knew how.

But if, amongst this motely crew
One man of real parts we view:
With mind for highest station fit;
The colleague, friend, yet foe of Pitt;
He, to whose merits all men granted,
That Pitt's last list, one great name wanted;
He, who with every talent shone,
Except consistency alone;
"We smile, if such a man there be,
"But weep, if Grenville should be he."

George Canning

Elijah's Mantle

A TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF THE RIGHT HON. WILLIAM PITT.

When, by th' Almighty's dread command
Elijah, call'd from Israel's land,
Rose in the sacred flame,
His Mantle good Elisha caught,
And, with the Prophet's spirit fraught,
Her second hope became.

In Pitt our Israel saw combined
The Patriot's heart--the Prophet's mind,
Elijah's spirit here:
Now, sad reverse!--that spirit reft,
No confidence, no hope is left;
For no Elijah's near.

Is there, among the greedy band
Who've seized on power, with harpy hand,
And Patriot, worth assume,
One on whom public faith can rest--
One fit to wear Elijah's vest,
And cheer a Nation's gloom?

Grenville!--to aid thy Treasury fame,
A portion of Pitt's Mantle claim,
His gen'rous ardour feel;
Resolve, 'bove sordid self, to soar,
Amidst Exchequer gold be poor!
Thy wealth--the public weal.

Fox!--if on thee some remnant fall,
The shred may to thy mind recall,
Those hours of loud debate,
When thy unhallow'd lips be-praised
"The glorious fabric" traitors raised
An Bourbon's fallen state.

Thy soul let Pitt's example fire,
With patriot zeal thy tongue inspire,
Spite of thy Gallic leaven;
And teach thee in thy latest day,
His form of prayer, (if thou canst pray)
"O save my country, Heaven!

Windham,--if e'er thy sorrows flow
For private loss or public woe,
Thy rigid bow unbend:
Tears over Cæsar Brutus shed,
His hatred warr'd not with the dead--
And Pitt was once thy friend.

Does Envy bid thee not to mourn?
Hold then his Mantle up to scorn,
His well-earn'd fame assail:
Of funeral honors stript his corse,
And at his virtues till thou'rt hoarse,
Like curst Thersites rail!

Illustrious Roscius of the State!
New-breech'd and harness'd for debate,
Thou wonder of thy age!
Petty or Betty art thou height,
By Granta sent to strut thy night
On Stephen's bustling stage.

Pitt's 'Chequer robe 'tis thine to wear;
Take of his Mantle too a share,
'Twill aid thy Ways and Means;
And should Fat Jack, and his Cabal;
Cry "Rob us the Exchequer, Hal!"
'Twill charm away the fiends.

Sage Palinurus of the realm!
By Vincent call'd to take the helm!
And play his proxy's part;
Dost thou or star or compass know?
Canst reef aloft--or hand below?
Past conn'd the shipman's chart?

No!--From Pitt's Mantle tear a rag,
Enough to serve thee for a flag,
And hoist it on thy mast:
Beneath that sign (our prosperous star)
Shall future Nelsons rush to war,
And rival victories past.

Sidmouth--though low his head is laid
Who call'd thee from thy native shade,
An gave thee second birth;
Gave thee the sweets of Power and Place,
The tufted gown--the gilded mace,
And rear'd thy puny worth:

Think how his Mantle wrapp'd thee round:
Is one of equal virtue found
Among thy new compeers?
Or can thy cloak of Amiens stuff,
Once laugh'd to scorn by Blue and Buff,
Screen thee from Windham's jeers?

When Faction threaten'd Britain's land
Thy new-made friends--a desperate band,
Like Ahab--stood reprov'd:
Pitt's powerful tongue their rage could check;
His counsel saved, 'midst General wreck,
The Israel that he loved.

Yes, honor'd shade! whilst near thy grave
The letter'd sage, and chieftain brave,

The votive marble claim;
O'er thy cold corse--the public tear
Congeal'd, a crystal shrine shall rear,
Unsullied as thy fame!

George Canning

Epigram

What mean ye by this print so rare?
Ye wits, of Eton jealous:
Behold! your rivals soar in air,
And ye are heavy-fellows!

George Canning

Moderate Men And Moderate Measures

Praise to placeless proud ability,
Let the prudent muse disclaim;
And sing the Statesman--all civility--
Whom moderate talents raise to fame.
He, no random projects urging,
Make us wild alarms to feel;
With moderate measures, gently purging
Ills that prey on Britain's weal.

CHORUS.

Gently purging,
Gently purging,
Gently purging Britain's weal.[1]

Addington, with measured motion,
Keep the tenor of thy way;
To glory yield no rash devotion,
Led by luring lights astray;
Splendid talents are deceiving;
Tend to councils much too bold;
Moderate men we prize, believing,
All that glitters is not gold.

GRAND CHORUS.

All that Glisters,
All that Glisters,
All that Glisters is not gold![2]

George Canning

New Morality

From mental mists to purge a nation's eyes;
To animate the weak, unite the wise;
To trace the deep infection, that prevades
The crowded town, and taints the rural shades;
To mark how wide extends the mighty waste
O'er the fair realms of Science, Learning, Taste;
To drive and scatter all the brood of lies,
And chase the varying falsehood as it flies;
The long arrears of ridicule to pay,
To drag reluctant Dulness back to day;
Much yet remains.--To you these themes belong,
Ye favor'd sons of virtue and of song!
Say, is the field too narrow? Are the times
Barren of folly, and devoid of crimes?

Yet, venial vices, in a milder age,
Could rouse the warmth of Pope's satiric rage;
The doting miser, and the lavish heir,
The follies, and the foibles of the fair,
Sir Job, Sir Balaam, and old Euclio's thrift,
And Sappho's diamonds, with her dirty shift,
Blunt, Charteris, Hopkins;--meaner subjects fired
The keen-eyed Poet;--while the Muse inspired
Her ardent child--entwining as he sate,
His laurell'd chaplet with the thorns of hate.

But say,--indignant does the Muse retire,
Her shrine deserted, and extinct its fire?
No pious hand to feed the sacred flame,
No raptured soul a Poet's charge to claim.

Bethink thee (Gifford); when some future age
Shall trace the promise of thy playful page;--
"[1]The hand which brush'd a swarm of fools away,
"Should rouse to grasp a more reluctant prey!"--
Think then, will pleaded indolence excuse

The tame secession of thy languid Muse?

Ah! where is now that promise? Why so long
Sleep the keen shafts of satire and of song?
Oh! come with Taste and Virtue at thy side,
With ardent zeal inflamed, and patriot pride;
With keen poetic glance direct the blow,
And empty all thy quiver on the foe:
No pause--no rest--till weltering on the ground
The poisonous hydra lies, and pierced with many a wound.

Thou too!--the nameless Bard[2],--whose honest zeal
For law, for morals, for the public weal,
Pours down impetuous on thy country's foes
The stream of verse, and many-linguaged prose;
Thou too!--though oft thy ill-advised dislike
The guiltless head with random censure strike,--
Though quaint allusions, vague and undefined,
Play faintly round the ear, but mock the mind;
Through the mix'd mass yet taste and learning shine,
And manly vigour stamps the nervous line;
And patriot warmth the generous rage inspires;
And wakes and points the desultory fires!

Yet more remain unknown: for who can tell
What bashful genius, in some rural cell,
As year to year, and day succeeds to day,
In joyless leisure wastes his life away?
In him the flame of early fancy shone;
His genuine worth his old companions own;
In childhood and in youth their chief confess'd,
His master's pride, his pattern to the rest.
Now far aloof retiring from the strife
Of busy talents and of active life,
As from the loop-holes of retreat, he views
Our stage, verse, pamphlets, politics, and news,
He loathes the world,--or, with reflection sad,
Concludes it irrecoverably mad;
Of taste, of learning, morals, all bereft,

No hope, no prospect to redeem it, left.

Awake! for shame! or ere thy nobler sense
Sink in the oblivious pool of indolence!
Must wit be found alone on falsehood's side,
Unknown to truth, to virtue unallied?
Arise! nor scorn thy country's just alarms;
Wield in her cause thy long neglected arms;
Of lofty satire pour the indignant strain,
Leagued with her friends, and ardent to maintain
'Gainst Learning's, Virtue's, Truth's, Religion's foes,
A kingdom's safety, and the world's repose.

If Vice appal thee,--if thou view with awe
Insults that brave, and crimes that 'scape the law;--
Yet may the specious bastard brood, which claim
A spurious homage under Virtue's name,
Sprung from that parent of ten thousand crimes,
The new Philosophy of modern times,--
Yet, these may rouse thee!--With unsparing hand,
Oh, lash the vile impostors from the land!

First, stern Philanthropy:--not she, who dries
The orphan's tears, and wipes the widow's eyes;
Not she, who sainted Charity her guide,
Of British bounty pours the annual tide:--
But French Philanthropy;--whose boundless mind
Glow with the general love of all mankind;--
Philanthropy,--beneath whose baneful sway
Each patriot passion sinks, and dies away.

Taught in her school t'imbibe thy mawkish strain
Condorcet filter'd through the dregs of Paine,
Each pert adept disowns a Briton's part,
And plucks the name of England from his heart.

What, shall, a name, a word, a sound controul

The aspiring thought, and cramp the expansive soul?
Shall one half-peopled Island's rocky round
A love, that glows for all Creation, bound?
And social charities contract the plan
Framed for thy Freedom, universal man?
--No--through the extended globe his feelings run
As broad and general as the unbounded sun!
No narrow bigot he;--his reason'd view
Thy interests, England, rank with thine, Peru!
France at our doors, he sees no danger nigh,
But heaves for Turkey's woes the impartial sigh;
A steady Patriot of the World alone,
The Friend of every Country--but his own.

Next comes a gentler Virtue.--Ah! beware
Lest the harsh verse her shrinking softness scare,
Visit her not too roughly;--the warm sigh
Breathes on her lips;--the tear-drop gems her eye.
Sweet Sensibility, who dwells enshrined
In the fine foldings of the feeling mind;
With delicate Mimosa's sense endued,
Who shrinks instinctive from a hand too rude;
Or, like the Anagallis, prescient flower,
Shuts her soft petals at the approaching shower.
Sweet child of sickly Fancy!--her of yore
From her loved France Rousseau to exile bore;
And while midst lakes and mountains wild he ran,
Full of himself, and shunn'd the haunts of man,
Taught her o'er each lone vale and alpine steep
To lisp the story of his wrongs, and weep;
Taught her to cherish still in either eye,
Of tender tears a plentiful supply,
And pour them in her brooks that babbled by;--
--Taught by nice scale to meet her feelings strong,
False by degrees, and exquisitely wrong;--
--For the crush'd beetle first,--the widow'd dove,
And all the warbled sorrows of the grove;--
Next for poor suffering guilt;--and last of all,
For Parents, Friends, a king and Country's fall.

Mark her fair votaries, prodigal of grief,
With cureless pangs, and woes that mock relief,
Droop in soft sorrow[3] o'er a faded flower
O'er a dead jack-ass pour the pearly shower;--
But hear, unmoved, of Loire's ensanguined flood,
Choked up with slain;--of Lyons drench'd in blood;
Of crimes that blot the age, the world with shame,
Foul crimes, but sicklied o'er with Freedom's name;
Altars and thrones subverted, social life
Trampled to earth,--the husband from the wife,
Parent from child, with ruthless fury torn;--
Of talents, honour, virtue, wit, forlorn,
In friendless exile,--of the wise and good
Staining the daily scaffold with their blood.--
Of savage cruelties, that scare the mind,
The rage of madness with hell's lust combin'd--
Of hearts torn reeking from the mangled breast,--
They hear--and hope, that all is for the best.

Fond hope!--but Justice sanctifies the prayer--
Justice!--here, Satire, strike! 'twere sin to spare!
Not she in British Courts that takes her stand,
The dawdling balance dangling in her hand,
Adjusting punishments to fraud and vice,
With scrupulous quirks, and disquisition nice--
But firm, erect, with keen reverted glance,
The avenging angel of regenerate France,
Who visits ancient sins on modern times,
And punishes the Pope for Cæsar's crimes.[4]

Such is the liberal Justice which presides
In these our days, and modern patriot's guides;
Justice, whose blood-stain'd book one sole decree,
One statute fills--"The People shall be free."
Free by what means?--by folly, madness, guilt,
By bounteous rapines, blood in oceans spilt;
By confiscation, in whose sweeping toils
The poor man's pittance with the rich man's spoils,
Mix'd in one common mass, are swept away,
To glut the short liv'd tyrant of the day:--

By laws, religion, morals, all o'erthrown;
Rouse then, ye sovereign people, claim your own:
The licence that enthrals, the truth that blinds,
The wealth that starves you, and the power that grinds.
So Justice bids.--'Twas her enlighten'd doom,
Louis, thy holy head devoted to the tomb!
'Twas Justice claim'd, in that accursed hour,
The fatal forfeit of too lenient power.
Mourn for the Man we may; but for the King,--
Freedom, oh! Freedom's such a charming thing!

"Much may be said on both sides."--Hark! I hear
A well known voice that murmurs in my ear,--
The voice of Candour.--Hail! most solemn sage,
Thou drivelling virtue of this moral age,
Candour, which softens party's headlong rage.
Candour,--which spares its foes;--nor e'er descends
With bigot zeal to combat for its friends.
Candour,--which loves in see-saw strain to tell
Of acting foolishly, but meaning well;
Too nice to praise by wholesale, or to blame,
Convinced that all men's motives are the same;
And finds, with keen discriminating sight,
Black's not so black; nor white so very white.

"Fox, to be sure, was vehement and wrong;
But then Pitt's words you'll own were rather strong
Both must be blamed, both pardon'd;--'twas just so
With Fox and Pitt full forty years ago;
So Walpole, Pulteney;--factions in all times,
Have had their follies, ministers their crimes."

Give me the avow'd, the erect, the manly foe,
Bold I can meet--perhaps may turn his blow;
But of all plagues, good heaven, thy wrath can send,
Save, save, oh! save me from the Candid Friend!

"Barras loves plunder,--Merlin takes a bride,--

What then?--shall Candour these good men proscribe.
No! ere we join the loud-accusing throng,
Prove--not the facts--but that they thought them wrong.

"Why hang O'Quigley?--he, misguided man,
In sober thought his country's weal might plan.
And, while his deep-wrought treason sapp'd the throne,
Might act from taste in morals all his own."

Peace to such Reasoners!--let them have their way
Shut their dull eyes against the blaze of day.
Priestley's a Saint, and Stone a patriot still!
And La Fayette a Hero, if they will.

I love the bold uncompromising mind,
Whose principles are fix'd, whose views defined:
Who scouts and scorns, in canting Candour's spite,
All taste in morals, innate sense of right,
And Nature's impulse, all uncheck'd by art,
And feelings fine, that float about the heart;
Content, for good men's guidance, bad men's awe,
On moral truth to rest, and Gospel law.
Who owns, when Traitor's feel the avenging rod,
Just retribution, and the hand of God;
Who hears the groans through Olmutz' roofs that ring,
Of him who mock'd, misled, betray'd his King--
Hears unappall'd:--though Faction's zealots preach--
Unmov'd, unsoften'd by Ftzptrck's speech.
--That speech[5] on which the melting Commons hung,
"While truths divine came mended from his tongue."
How loving husband clings to duteous wife,--
How pure religion soothes the ills of life,--
How Popish ladies trust their pious fears
And naughty actions in their chaplain's ears.
Half novel and half sermon on it flow'd;
With pious zeal the Opposition glow'd;
And as o'er each the soft infection crept,
Sigh'd as he whined, and as he whisper'd wept;
E'en Cwn[6] dropt a sentimental tear,

And stout St. Adrw yelp'd a softer "Hear!"

O! nurse of crimes and fashions! which in vain
Our colder servile spirits would attain,
How do we ape thee, France! but blundering still
Disgrace the pattern by our want of skill.
The borrow'd step our awkward gait reveals:
(As clumsy Crtny[7] mars the verse he steals
How do we ape thee, France!--nor claim alone
Thy arts, thy tastes, thy morals for our own,
But to thy Worthies render homage due,
Their[8] "hair-breadth 'scapes" with anxious interest view;
Statesmen and heroines whom this age adores,
Tho' plainer terms would call them rogues and ws.

See Louvet, patriot, pamphleteer, and sage,
Tempering with amorous fire his virtuous rage,
Form'd for all tasks, his various talents see,--
The luscious novel, the severe decree.
Then mark him weltering in his nasty sty,
Bare his lewd transports to the public eye.
Not his the love in silent groves that strays,
Quits the rude world, and shuns the vulgar gaze.
In Lodoiska's full possession blest,
One craving void still aches within his breast;
Plunged in the filth and fondness of her arms,
Not to himself alone he stints her charms;
Clasp'd in each other's fond embrace they lie,
But know no joy, unless the world stands by.
--The fool of vanity, for her alone
He lives, loves, writes, and dies but to be known.

His widow'd mourner flies to poison's aid
Eager to join her Louvet's parted shade
In those bright realms where sainted lovers stray,
But harsh emetics tear that hope away.[9]
--Yet hapless Louvet! where thy bones are laid,
The easy nymphs shall consecrate the shade.[10]
There, in the laughing morn of genial spring,

Unwedded pairs shall tender couplets sing;
Eringoes, o'er the hallow'd spot shall bloom,
And flies of Spain buzz softly round the tomb.[11]

But hold, severer virtue claims the Muse--
Roland the just, with ribbands in his shoes[12]--
And Roland's spouse who paints with chaste delight
The doubtful conflict of her nuptial night;--
Her virgin charms what fierce attacks assail'd,
And how the rigid Minister[13] prevail'd.

And ah! what verse can grace thy stately mien,
Guide of the world, preferment's golden queen,
Neckar's fair daughter,--Stael, the Epicene!
Bright o'er whose flaming cheek and purple[14] nose
The bloom of young desire unceasing glows!
Fain would the Muse--but ah! she dares no more,
A mournful voice from lone Guyana's shore.[15]
--Sad Quatremer--the bold presumption checks,
Forbid to question thy ambitious sex.

To thee, proud Barras bows;--thy charms controul
Rewbell's brute rage, and Merlin's subtle soul;
Raised by thy hands, and fashion'd to thy will,
Thy power, thy guiding influence, governs still,
Where at the blood-stain'd board expert he plies,
The lame artificer of fraud and lies
He with the mitred head and cloven heel;
Doom'd the coarse edge of Rewbell's jests to feel[16];
To stand the playful buffet, and to hear
The frequent ink-stand whizzing past his ear;
While all the five directors laugh to see
"The limping priest so deft at his new ministry."[17]

Last of the Anointed five behold, and least,
The Directorial Lama, Sovereign Priest,--
Lepaux: whom athiests worship; at whose nod
Bow their meek heads the men without a God.[18]

Ere long, perhaps, to this astonish'd Isle,
Fresh from the shores of subjugated Nile,
Shall Buonaparte's victor fleet protect
The genuine Theo-philanthropic sect,--
The sect of Marat, Mirabeau, Voltaire,--
Led by their pontiff, good La Reveillere.
--Rejoiced our Clubs shall greet him, and install
The holy Hunch-back in thy dome, St. Paul!
While countless votaries thronging in his train
Wave their Red Caps, and hymn this jocund strain:

"Courier's and Stars, Seditious Evening Host,
"Thou Morning Chronicle, and Morning Post,
"Whether ye make the Rights of man your theme,
"Your Country Libel, and your God blaspheme,
"Or dirt on private worth and virtue throw,
"Still blasphemous or blackguard, praise Lepaux!

"And ye five other wandering Birds, that move
"In sweet accord of harmony and love,
"C---dge and S---th---y, L---d, and L---be and Co.
"Tune all your mystic harps to praise Lepaux!

"Pr---tl---y and W---f---ld, humble holy men,
"Give praises to his name with tongue and pen!
"T---lw---l, and ye that lecture as ye go,
"And for your pains get pelted, praise Lepaux!
"Praise him each Jacobin, or fool, or knave,
"And your cropp'd heads in sign of worship wave!

"All creeping creatures, venomous and low,
"Paine, Wllms, Gdwn, Hlcrft, praise Lepaux!
"----- and ----- with ----- join'd,
"And every other beast after his kind.

"And thou, Leviathan! on ocean's brim
"Hugest of living things that sleep and swim;
"Thou, in whose nose by Burke's gigantic hand
"The hook was fix'd to drag thee to the land
"With, -----, and -----[19] in thy train,
"And ----- wallowing in the yeasty main,[20]
"Still as ye snort, and puff, and spout, and blow,
"In puffing, and in spouting, praise Lepaux!"

Britain, beware; nor let the insidious foe,
Of force despairing, aim a deadlier blow.
Thy peace, thy strength, with devilish wiles assail,
And when her arms are vain, by arts prevail.
True, thou art rich, art powerful! through thine Isle
Industrious skill, contented labour smile;
Far seas are studded with thy countless sails;
What wind but wafts them, and what shore but hails!
True, thou art brave!--o'er all the busy land
In patriot ranks embattled myriads stand;
Thy foes behold with impotent amaze,
And drop the lifted weapon as they gaze!

But what avails to guard each outward part,
If subtlest poison, circling at thy heart,
Spite of thy courage, of thy power, and wealth
Mine the sound fabric of thy vital health?

So thine own Oak, by some fair streamlet's side
Waves its broad arms, and spreads its leafy pride,
Towers from the earth, and rearing to the skies
Its conscious strength, the tempest's wrath defies:
Its ample branches shield the fowls of air,
To its cool shades the panting herds repair.
The treacherous current work its noiseless way,
The fibres loosen and the roots decay;
Prostrate the beauteous ruin lies; and all
That shared its shelter, perish in its fall.

O thou!--lamented Sage!--whose prescient scan
Pierced through foul Anarchy's gigantic plan,
Prompt to incredulous hearers to disclose
The guilt of France, and Europe's world of woes:
The mighty sea-mark of these troubled days!
Thou, on whose name each distant age shall gaze,
O large of soul, of genius unconfined,
Born to delight, instruct, and mend mankind;
Burke! in whose breast a Roman ardour glow'd;
Whose copious tone with Grecian richness flow'd;
Well hast thou found (if such thy Country's doom)
A timely refuge in the sheltering tomb!

As far as realms, where Eastern kings are laid,
In pomp of death, beneath the cypress shade,
The perfumed lamp with unextinguish'd light
Flames thro' the vault, and cheers the gloom of night.
So, mighty Burke! in thy sepulchral urn,
To fancy's view, the lamp of Truth shall burn.
Thither late times shall turn their reverent eyes,
Led by thy light, and by thy wisdom wise.

There are, to whom (their taste such pleasures cloy)
No light thy wisdom yields, thy wit no joy.
Peace to their heavy heads, and callous hearts,
Peace--such as sloth, as ignorance imparts!--
Pleased may they live to plan their Country's good,
And crop, with calm content, their flow'ry food!

What though thy venturous spirit loved to urge
The labouring theme to Reason's utmost verge,
Kindling and mounting from the enraptured sight;--
Still anxious wonder watch'd thy darling flight!
While vulgar minds, with mean malignant stare,
Gazed up, the triumph of thy fall to share!
Poor triumph! price of that extorted praise,
Which still to daring Genius Envy pays.

Oh! for thy playful smile,--thy potent frown,--
To abash bold Vice, and laugh pert folly down!
So should the Muse in Humour's happiest vein,
With verse that flow'd in metaphoric strain,
And apt allusions to the rural trade,
Tell of what wood young Jacobins are made;
How the skill'd Gardener grafts with nicest rule
The slip of Coxcomb, on the stock of fool;
Forth in bright blossom bursts the tender sprig,
A thing to wonder at,[21] perhaps a Whig,
Should tell, how wise each half-fledged pedant prates
Of weightiest matter, grave distinctions, states--
That rules of policy, and public good,
In Saxon times were rightly understood;
That Kings are proper, may be useful things,
But then some Gentlemen object to Kings;
That in all times the Minister's to blame;
That British Liberty's an empty name,
Till each fair burgh, numerically free,
Shall choose its Members by the Rule of Three.

So should the Muse, with verse in thunder clothed,
Proclaim the crimes by God and Nature loathed.
Which--(when fell poison revels in the veins--
That poison fell, which frantic Gallia drains
From the crude fruit of Freedom's blasted tree)
Blots the fair records of Humanity.

To feebler nations let proud France afford
Her damning choice,--the chalice or the sword,--
To drink or die; oh fraud! oh specious lie!
Delusive choice! for if they drink, they die.

The sword we dread not: of ourselves secure,
Firm were our strength, our Peace and Freedom sure,
Let all the world confederate all its powers,
"Be they not back'd by those that should be ours,"
High on his rock shall Britain's Genius stand,
Scatter the crowded hosts, and vindicate the land.

Guard we but our own hearts: with constant view
To ancient morals, ancient manners true,
True to their manlier virtues, such as nerved
Our father's breasts, and this proud Isle preserved
For many a rugged age:--and scorn the while,--
Each philosophic atheist's specious guile--
The soft seductions, the refinements nice,
Of gay morality, and easy vice:
So shall we brave the storm: our 'stablish'd power
Thy refuge, Europe, in some happier hour.
But, French in heart--tho' victory crowns our brow,
Low at our feet though prostrate nations bow,
Wealth gild our cities, commerce crown our shore
London may shine, but England is no more.

George Canning

Ode To The

How blest, how firm the Statesman stands,
(Him no low intrigue shall move),
Circled by faithful kindred bands,
And propp'd by fond fraternal love.

When his speeches hobble vilely,
What! "Hear him" burst from brother Hiley,
When the faltering periods lag,
Hark to the cheers of brother Bragge.

When the faltering periods lag,
Or his yawning audience flag,
When his speeches hobble vilely,
Or the House receives him drily,
Cheer, O! cheer him brother Bragge!
Cheer, O! cheer him brother Hiley!

Each a gentleman at large,
Lodg'd and fed at public charge.
Paying (with a grace to charm ye)
This the fleet, and that the army.

Brother Bragge and brother Hiley,
Cheer him! when he speaks so vilely,
Cheer him! when his audience flag,
Brother Hiley, brother Bragge.

George Canning

On The Death Of His Eldest Son

Though short thy space, God's unimpeach'd decrees
Which made that shorten'd space one long disease;
Yet, merciful in chast'ning, gave thee scope
For mild redeeming virtues, faith and hope,
Meek resignation, pious charity;
And, since this world was not the world for thee,
Far from thy path removed, with partial care,
Strife, glory, gain, and pleasure's flowery snare,
Bade earth's temptation's pass thee harmless by.
And fix'd on heaven thine unreverted eye!
Oh! mark'd from birth, and nurtured for the skies!
In youth with more than learning's wisdom wise!
As sainted martyrs, patient to endure!
Simple as unwean'd infancy, and pure!
Pure from all stain (save that of human clay,
Which Christ's suff'rings now no more oppress'd,
Mount, sinless spirit, to thy destined rest!
While I - reversed our nature's kindlier doom -
Pour forth a father's sorrows on thy tomb.

George Canning

Parody

For one long term, or e'er her trial came,
Here Brownrigg linger'd. Often have these cells
Echoed her blasphemies, as with shrill voice
She scream'd for fresh Geneva. Not to her
Did the blithe fields of Tothill, or thy street
St. Giles, its fair varieties expand;
Till at the last in slow drawn cart she went
To execution. Dost thou ask her crime?
She whipp'd two female 'prentices to death,
And hid them in the coal-hole. For her mind
Shap'd strictest plans of discipline. Sage schemes!
Such as Lycurgus taught, when at the shrine
Of the Orthyan Goddess he bade flog
The little Spartans; such as erst chastised
Our Milton when at College. For this act
Did Brownrigg swing. Harsh laws; but time shall come,
When France shall reign, and laws be all repeal'd!

George Canning

Song

Whene'er with haggard eyes I view
This dungeon that I'm rotting in,
I think of those companions true
Who studied with me at the U—
—niversity of Gottingen —
—niversity of Gottingen.

Sweet kerchief, checked with heavenly blue,
Which once my love sat knotting in! —
Alas! Matilda then was true!
At least I thought so at the U
—niversity of Gottingen —
—niversity of Gottingen.

Barbs! barbs! alas! how swift you flew
Her neat post-wagon trotting in!
Ye bore Matilda from my view;
Eorloni I languished at the U—
—niversity of Gottiiigen—
—niversity of Gottingen.

This faded form! this pallid hue!
This blood my veins is clotting in,
My years are many, —they were few
When first I entered at the U
—niversity of Gottingen —
—niversity of Gottingen.

There first for thee my passion grew,
Sweet! sweet Matilda Pottingen!
Thou wast the daughter of my tu—
—tor, law professor at the U
—niversity of Gottingen —
—niversity of Gottingen.

Sun, moon, and thou vain world, adieu.
That kings and priests are plotting in:
Here doomed to starve on water gru—
—el, never shall I see the U—

—niversity of Gottingen —
—niversity of Gottingen.

George Canning

The Friend Of Humanity And The Knife-Grinder

Friend of Humanity

1'Needy Knife-grinder! whither are you going?
2Rough is the road, your wheel is out of order-
3Bleak blows the blast;-your hat has got a hole in't,
4 So have your breeches!

5'Wearied Knife-grinder! little think the proud ones,
6Who in their coaches roll along the turnpike{\-}
7-road, what hard work 'tis crying all day 'knives and
8 'scissors to grind O!

9'Tell me, Knife-grinder, how you came to grind knives?
10Did some rich man tyrannically use you?
11Was it the squire? or parson of the parish?
12 Or the attorney?

13'Was it the squire, for the killing of his game? or
14Covetous parson, for his tithes distraining?
15Or roguish lawyer, made you lose your little
16 All in a lawsuit?

17'(Have you not read the Rights of Man, by Tom Paine?)
18Drops of compassion tremble on my eyelids,
19Ready to fall, as soon as you have told your
20 Pitiful story.'

Knife-grinder

21'Story! God bless you! I have none to tell, sir,
22Only last night a-drinking at the Chequers,
23This poor old hat and breeches, as you see, were
24 Torn in a scuffle.

25'Constables came up for to take me into
26Custody; they took me before the justice;
27Justice Oldmixon put me in the parish{\-}
28 Stocks for a vagrant.

29'I should be glad to drink your Honour's health in
30A pot of beer, if you will give me sixpence;
31But for my part, I never love to meddle
32 With politics, sir.'

Friend of Humanity

33'I give thee sixpence! I will see thee damn'd first-
34Wretch! whom no sense of wrongs can rouse to vengeance-
35Sordid, unfeeling, reprobate, degraded,
36 Spiritless outcast!'

[Kicks the Knife-grinder, overturns his wheel, and exit in a transport of Republican enthusiasm and universal philanthropy.]

George Canning

The Grand Consulation

"Ambubaiarum Collegia Pharmacopeiæ."

--Horace.

If the health and the strength, and the pure vital breath
Of old England, at last must be doctor'd to death,
Oh! why must we die of one doctor alone?
And why must that doctor be just such a one
As Doctor Henry Addington?

Oh! where is the great Doctor Dominicetti,
With his stews and his flues, and his vapours to sweat ye?
O! where is that Prince of all Mountebank fame,
With his baths of hot earth, and his beds of hot name.
Oh! where is Doctor Graham?

Where are Sonmambule Mesmer's convulsions magnetic?
Where is Myersbach, renown'd for his skills diuretic
Where is Perkins, with tractors of magical skill?
Where's the anodyne necklace of Basil Burchell?
Oh! where is the great Van Butchell?

Where's Sangrado Rush, so notorious for bleedings;
Where's Rumford, so famed for his writings and readings;
Where's that Count of the Kettle, that friend to the belly,
So renown'd for transforming old bones into jelly--
Where, too, is the great Doctor Kelly?

While Sam Solomon's lotion the public absterges,
He gives them his gold[1] as well as his purges;
But our frugal doctor this practice to shun,
Gives his pills to the public, the Pells to his Son
Oh! fie! fie! Doctor Addington!
Oh! where is Doctor Solomon?

Where are all the great Doctors? No longer we want
This farrago of cowardice, cunning and cant,
These braggarts! that one moment know not what fear is,
And the next moment, trembling, no longer know where is--
Lord Hawkesbury's[2] march to Paris?

Then for Hobart and Sullivan, Hawkey and Hervey,
For Wallace and Castlereagh, Bleeke and Glenbervie,
For Sergeant, Vansittart, Monkhouse, and Lee,
Gives us Velno and Anderson, Locke, Spilsbury,
Doctor Ball, Doctors Brodum and Bree.

And instead of the jack-pudding bluster of Sherry,
With his "dagger of lath," and his speeches so merry![3]
Let us bring to the field--every foe to appal--
Aldini's galvanic deceptions--and all
The slight of hand tricks of Conjuror Val.

So shall Golding and Bond, the Doctor's tall yeomen,
Dame Hiley, Dame Bragge, and the other old Women,
For new mountebanks changed, their old tricks bid farewell to,
And to the famed D'Ivernois his arithmetic sell to,
That wonderful wonder, the great Katterfelto!

So shall England, escaped from her "safe politicians,"
Such an army array of her quacks and physicians,
Such lotions and potions, pills, lancets, and leeches,
That Massena shall tremble our coasts when he reaches,
And the Consul himself--his breeches.

George Canning

The New-Old Opposition

It is said, the Great Men, who are seized with the pouts,
At their suddenly alter'd condition;
Who so late were the Ins, and so soon were the Outs,
Have decreed a severe Opposition.

Nor will it be wonder'd at, greatly, if those
Who're deprived of unmerited treasures,
As of old, should determine the Men to oppose,
Though their consciences sanction the Measures.

Such threats are, by Britons, too well understood
To create any just apprehensions;
Nor can they, who, in power, accomplish no good,
Now appal us by evil intentions.

George Canning

The Pilgrimage To Mecca

What holy rites Mohammed's laws ordain,
What various duties bind his faithful train,--
What pious zeal his scatter'd tribes unites
In fix'd observance of these holy rites,--
At Mecca's shrine what votive crowds surround
With annual pomp the consecrated ground,--
The muse shall tell:--revolving years succeed,
And Time still venerates Mohammed's creed.

Nor faint the glory shed o'er Mecca's brow:
Land of the Prophet! known to fame art thou.
Here first in peace his infant hopes were known,
Here fix'd the Chief his Temple and his Throne:
Though from thy gates opposing factions here
With stern defiance drove the gifted Seer;
Yet, sacred City of his love! 'twas thine
To heap the earliest incense on his shrine;
To own the terrors of his conq'ring blade,
And hail with joy the Exile thou hadst made.
Yes--thou art known to fame! to thee, 'tis said,
A voice divine the wand'ring Abram led:
Within thy courts, at his command restor'd,
Blaz'd the pure altars of Creation's Lord.
And hence thy race, for ancient faith renown'd,
Surpassing favour with Mohammed found;
His seat of Empire hence thy walls became,
And shar'd, for sanctity, Mohammed's fame,
Nor strange that hence, with pious gifts array'd,
Thy shrine rever'd the Moslem tribes invade;
Such duteous zeal the Prophet's laws demand,
And fabled raptures of his promis'd land.
For woe to him, who ne'er with awe profound,
At Mecca's shrine, hath kiss'd the holy ground:
For him, denied celestial joys to share,
No blooming Houris shall his couch prepare;
But his the doom, where countless horrors reign,
To feel a dark eternity of pain;
Of deep remorse the bitter tear to shed,

Each hope of Paradise for ever fled.

Behold! one impulse every heart enthalls;
Wide spreads the fervour 'mid Byzantium's walls:--
Where, proudly soaring, frown from Europe's coast
Her regal tow'rs o'er Asia's subject host,
With mingling crowds behold the darken'd lands,
And the wild tumult of assembling bands;
So vast the force, 'twould seem, with ire renew'd,
His warrior train Byzantium's Lord review'd;
From Catharine's sway his captur'd forts to claim,
And dare to vindicate his tarnish'd fame.
Nor less the force, on sandy plains array'd,
Where Memphis once her native kings obey'd;
Where still, in mournful grandeur o'er the waste,
Gigantic Ruin tells of glory past,
And, 'mid the relics of her brighter day,
The haughty Satrap holds despotic sway.
How dense the mass!--from Afric's sultry shore,
Their zealot tribes unpeopled Cities pour;
From Nile's green banks, where fruitful harvests teem,
From Barca's land, unblest by culture's beam,
From barren fields that nature's smiles forsake,
Where Mareotis spreads its stagnant lake,
From plains that once Cyrene's splendour crown'd,
From Acre's walls in glory's page renown'd,--
They come,--Mohammed's flock;--from shores survey'd
By Albion's flag on Calpe's rock display'd,
From Tunis, rais'd on Byrsa's wreck, they come,
And leave in Tripoli their native home.

Slow moves the phalanx deeply-wedg'd; and loud
Exulting sounds proclaim the pious crowd.
And now Arsinoe's stately tow'rs are seen,
Belov'd resort of Egypt's peerless Queen;
Now lofty Moriah's sacred hill they tread;
Now pause awhile by Sinai's mountain led:
Here, as with Israel's woes he sank deprest,
Here Amram's Son th'Almighty presence blest;
Here, while to Jethro's herds his care was giv'n,

Th'afflicted Pastor knew the voice of heav'n;
Saw, as the holy ground with awe he trod,
Reveal'd in flame the glory of his God;
Yet, while the radiance Horeb's brow illum'd,
No eye beheld the burning bush consum'd.

Onward the phalanx moves;--yet fear demands
Augmented force 'mid Egypt's trackless sands;
Forbids a scatter'd and defenceless train
Too boldly haste the holy Land to gain,
'Till, to their view in martial pride display'd,
The Sultan's troops confirm securer aid.
They come;--their course along the hills they hold;--
Their glitt'ring arms succeeding files unfold,
And join th'expectant throng;--from all her shores
Her warrior sons collected Asia pours.
Known by his turban green of high command,
The haughty Chief arrays the straggling band:
Proud of his pure descent and ancient line,
Proud of the gifts he bears to Mecca's shrine,
For all their wants his watchful care provides,
His pow'r protects them, and his counsel guides.
Lo! where the chosen guards, in awe profound,
With closing ranks their Sultan's gifts surround,
Where tapestried wonders, to the sight unroll'd,
Mix their rich splendour with the beaming gold,
To music's sounds where denser squadrons move,
And tow'ring lances form a leafless grove,--
Bright with the lustre of the solar rays,--
The crescent standard all its pride displays.
Thou Salem, favour'd once of Heav'n! hast seen
Oft in thy courts the wand'ring tribes convene:
Oft, though in scorn the name of Christ they mock,
Thy sacred walls detain Mohammed's flock.
Yes--Memory there forbids his race unmov'd
Each spot to traverse, of the Lord belov'd;
And purer thoughts the Moslem's heart can fill
On Salem's plain, and Sion's holy hill.

The march resum'd--a thousand ills dismay;

A thousand perils mark the pilgrim's way:
Yet droops he not 'till, far from man's abode,
O'er the long desert lies the trackless road;
'Till o'er the sandy plain's far-stretch'd expanse
The shudd'ring eye extends a hopeless glance.
No flow'ry herbage cheers the aching sight;
No welcome shades a short repose invite;
No smiling culture clothes the arid plain
With grassy verdure or the yellow grain;
O'er the parch'd earth no gath'ring clouds diffuse
The genial influence of their fost'ring dews:
But o'er the redden'd skies and blist'ring sands
The orb of day his fiercest beams expands;
Pours on th'unshelter'd tribes his fiery rays,
And pining nature withers in the blaze.
Sad is the wand'rer's lot, remote from home,
Condemn'd Arabia's desert sands to roam;
Condemn'd, without a friend, without a guide,
To meet that mimic sea's resistless tide.
Oft at the whirlwind's desolating blast
O'erwhelming clouds involve the sultry waste;
And, mocking hope's bright vision, death demands
Full many a victim 'mid the drifting sands.
Oft on their march along the wide domain
The mounted Arab leads a lawless train,
Athirst for spoil;--and oft, as ev'ning fades,
Some peaceful tent the wily chief invades;
With open conflict oft infests the way,
And scatters terror in the blaze of day.

Onward they press;--and if perchance be found
Some gurgling rill which shady palms surround,
Some grassy spot, inviting brief delay,
Impending dangers still forbid to stay:
By the cool waters of the mossy glade,
'Mid the calm freshness of the palmy shade,
They fear to linger;--onward still they press,
'Till Mecca's tow'rs their sight enraptur'd bless.

Yet ere the goal, reveal'd to view, they gain,

Those cherish'd scenes awhile their steps detain,
Where, first victorious o'er opposing foes,
On Beder's height Mohammed's banner rose.
Dear is the spot, and kindling memory there
Pourtrays the Prophet's might, the foe's despair:
There shall the pilgrim oft, with proud delight,
Relate the terrors of that awful fight;
Tell how the Moslem's scanty force, assail'd
By countless hosts, in Allah's name prevail'd;
How, 'mid the battle's rage, to frenzy driv'n,
The routed squadrons own'd the cause of Heav'n.
For there, 'tis said, refulgent to the view,
His flaming sword seraphic Gabriel drew;
The Prophet's band to deathless glory led,
Celestial radiance beaming o'er his head.

Soon as their longing eyes from Beder's height,
Of Mecca's temple gain the promis'd sight,
To errors past awaken'd thoughts return,
And sinful breasts with harrowing anguish burn;
The stings of conscience and remorse they feel,
And gushing tears their penitence reveal.
No more shall now the splendid vest be worn,
The brow no more shall clust'ring locks adorn;
In the pure stream their toil-worn limbs they lave,
And wear the sable garments of the grave.

The hour arrives:--in sorrow's mournful guise,
'Mid the low murmur of repentant sighs,
The phalanx moves;--and Mecca's holy fane,
In marshall'd ranks, receives th'adoring train.
Lo! fifty portals op'ning wide declare
The dazzling glories of that House of Pray'r:
In solid brass a hundred columns shine,
And silver chains each tow'ring shaft entwine.
Yet, while from golden lamps th'unheeded ray
Mocks the full brilliance of meridian day,
While circling splendours fail with awe to move,
The sacred Kaaba claims the Pilgrim's love.
Yet think not there hath pomp a charm bestow'd;

No worthless splendour decks the plain abode,--
The Prophet's dwelling:--woe to all that dare
False vows to breathe or thoughts irreverent there;
Woe to the wretch, from mercy's mansion driv'n,
That dares to doubt the fabled work of heaven!
Oft as assembling hosts the fane invest,
Those darken'd walls the Pilgrim's zeal attest;
And pious hands, as annual rites enjoin,
Replace the sable vesture of the shrine.
Such holy gift, in fair Damascus wrought,
To Mecca first imperial Omar brought;
Such, ere invading hosts their pow'r subdued,
Year after year Egyptian kings renew'd:
Now falls the task on Othman's race alone,
And swells the grandeur of the Sultan's throne.

Stretch'd on the holy ground, with loud acclaim,
Thrice call the pious crowds on Allah's name:
Allah il Allah! whose divine command
From Chaos bade creation's charms expand;
Allah il Allah! to whose sovereign nod
Creation bows,--the true, the only God!
Then, on the ground still humbly stretch'd, they raise
The song of gladness in Mohammed's praise:
Tell how the Lord with mighty arm upheld
His chosen Prophet 'mid the battle-field;
From foes and perils gave his soul release,
And crown'd his labours with perpetual peace.
'Twas thine, they cry, illustrious Chief! to soar,
Where seraph Hosts th'Eternal Word adore;
In Heav'ns pure streams to wash thy sins away,
And earth revisit cleans'd from error's clay;
Twas thine to taste the bliss without alloy,
To mark the bright futurity of joy;
And teach thy flock delights in Heav'n prepar'd,
For Moslem faith the triumph and reward.
There 'mid luxuriant shades, in tranquil rest,
Shall verdant swards by weary limbs be prest;
There, 'mid the spacious hall, or cool retreat,
Ambrosial feasts th'awaken'd sense shall greet;
And, from the eager lip withheld no more,

Their purple tide nectareous vines shall pour.
And there the Houri, fair angelic maid,
In rosy smiles of innocence array'd,
The beauteous minister of bliss shall prove,
And breathe around a Paradise of Love.
Such are the fix'd rewards, the promis'd joys,
To strike the sense Mohammed's creed employs;
Such the seductive arts, that still maintain
O'er half the world unfading error's reign.

Not such the zeal, mistaken and o'er-wrought,
Not such the rites by true devotion taught;--
Vain empty duties;--not by these alone
Shall Christ's disciples for their sins atone;
Nor hope the Author of their Faith to please
By barren pomp and showy gifts like these:

Fount of Eternal Life! how far more dear
In thy pure sight will steadfast Faith appear;
How far more precious, through the mortal strife,
The guiltless conscience, and unspotted life!
Thee, Son of God! on God's right hand enthron'd!--
(Who once on earth the form of manhood own'd,
For us who suffer'd, and for us who bled,
Mute as the peaceful lamb to slaughter led,
Who took the bondage of the world away)--
With grateful hearts we worship and obey:
Thou to lost mortals hast Redemption giv'n,
And dying hast restor'd our forfeit hopes of Heav'n!

George Canning

The Pilot That Weath'D The Storm

If hush'd the loud whirlwind that ruffled the deep,
The sky, if no longer dark tempests deform;
When our perils are past, shall our gratitude sleep?
No!--Here's to the Pilot who weather'd the storm!

At the foot-stool of Power let flattery fawn,
Let Faction her idols extol to the skies;
To virtue in humble resentment withdrawn,
Unblam'd may the merits of gratitude rise.

And shall not His memory to Britain be dear,
Whose example with envy all nations behold;
A Statesman unbiass'd by int'rest or fear,
By pow'r uncorrupted, untainted by gold?

Who, when terror and doubt thro' the universe reign'd,
While rapine and treason their standards unfurl'd,
The heart and the hopes of his Country maintain'd,
And one kingdom preserv'd 'midst the wreck of the world.

Unheeding, unthankful, we bask in the blaze,
While the beams of the sun in full majesty shine;
When he sinks into twilight, with fondness we gaze,
And mark the mild lustre that gilds his decline.

Lo! Pitt, when the course of thy greatness is o'er,
Thy talents, thy virtues, we fondly recall!
Now justly we prize thee, when lost we deplore;
Admir'd in thy zenith, but lov'd in thy fall!

O! take, then--for dangers by wisdom repell'd,
For evils, by courage and constancy brav'd--
O take! for a throne by thy counsels upheld,

The thanks of a people thy firmness has sav'd!

And O! if again the rude whirlwind should rise!
The dawning of Peace should fresh darkness deform,
The regrets of the good, and the fears of the wise,
Shall turn to the Pilot that weather'd the storm!

George Canning

The Slavery Of Greece

Unrivall'd Greece! thou ever honor'd name,
Thou nurse of heroes dear to deathless fame!
Though now to worth, to honor all unknown,
Thy lustre faded, and thy glories flown;
Yet still shall Memory, with reverted eye,
Trace thy past worth, and view thee with a sigh.

Thee Freedom cherish'd once with fostering hand,
And breath'd undaunted valour through the land;
Here, the stern spirit of the Spartan soil,
The child of poverty, inur'd to toil.

Here, lov'd by Pallas and the sacred Nine,
Once did fair Athens' tow'ring glories shine,
To bend the bow, or the bright faulchion wield,
To lift the bulwark of the brazen shield,
To toss the terror of the whizzing spear,
The conqu'ring standard's glitt'ring glories rear,
And join the mad'ning battle's loud career.

How skill'd the Greeks; confess what Persians slain
Were strew'd on Marathon's ensanguin'd plain;
When heaps on heaps the routed squadron fell,
And with their gaudy myriads peopled hell.
What millions bold Leonidas withstood,
And seal'd the Grecian freedom with his blood;
Witness Thermopylæ! how fierce he trod!
How spoke a hero, and how mov'd a God!
The rush of nations could alone sustain,
While half the ravag'd globe was arm'd in vain.
Let Leuctra say, let Mantinea tell,
How great Epaminondas fought and fell!

Nor war's vast art alone adorn'd thy fame,
"But mild philosophy endear'd thy name."

Who knows not, sees not with admiring eye,
How Plato thought, how Socrates could die?

To bend the arch to bid the column rise,
And the tall pile aspiring pierce the skies;
The awful scene magnificently great,
With pictur'd pomp to grace, and sculptur'd state,
This science taught; on Greece each science shone:
Here the bold statue started from the stone;
Here, warm with life, the swelling canvass glow'd;
Here, big with life, the poet's raptures flow'd;
Here Homer's lip was touch'd with sacred fire,
And wanton Sappho tun'd her am'rous lyre;
Here bold Tyrtæus rous'd th' enervate throng
Awak'd to glory by th' inspiring song;
Here Pindar soar'd a nobler, loftier way,
And brave Alcæus, scorn'd a tyrant's sway;
Here gorgeous Tragedy, with great controul,
Touch'd every feeling of th' impassion'd soul;
While in soft measure tripping to the song,
Her comic sister lightly danc'd along--

This was thy state! But oh! how chang'd thy fame,
And all thy glories fading into shame.
What! that thy bold, thy freedom-breathing land,
Should crouch beneath a tyrant's stern command;
That servitude should bind in galling chain;
Whom Asia's millions once oppos'd in vain,
Who could have thought? Who sees without a groan,
Thy cities mould'ring and thy walls o'erthrown?
That where once tower'd the stately solemn fane,
Now moss-grown ruins strew the ravag'd plain;
And unobserv'd but by the traveller's eye
Proud vaulted domes in fretted fragments lie;
And thy fall'n column on the dusty ground,
Pale ivy throws its sluggish arms around.

Thy sons (sad change!) in abject bondage sigh;
Unpitied toil, and unlamented die;

Groan at the labours of the galling oar,
Or the dark caverns of the mine explore.
The glitt'ring tyranny of Othman's sons,
The pomp of horror which surrounds their thrones
Has aw'd their servile spirits into fear;
Spurn'd by the foot, they tremble and revere.

The day of labour, night's sad sleepless hour,
Th' inflictive scourge of arbitrary pow'r,
The bloody terror of the pointed steel,
The murd'rous stake, the agonizing wheel,
And (dreadful choice!) the bow-string or the bowl,
Damps their faint vigour, and unmans the soul.

Disastrous fate! still tears will fill the eye,
Still recollection prompt the mournful sigh,
When to thy mind recurs thy former fame,
And all the horrors of thy present shame.

So some tall rock, whose bare broad bosom high,
Tow'rs from th' earth, and braves th' inclement sky;
On whose vast top the blackening deluge pours,
At whose wide base the thund'ring ocean roars;
In conscious pride its huge gigantic form
Surveys imperious, and defies the storm.
Till worn by age and mould'ring to decay,
Th' insidious waters wash its base away;
It falls, and falling cleaves the trembling ground,
And spreads a tempest of destruction round.

George Canning

The Traitor's Epitah

May this dreary abode be for ever unknown,
For ever, by virtue, by Pity, untrod;
Unbreathed be his name, and unhonor'd his stone;
The foe of his country, his monarch, his God.

George Canning

Though Short Thy Span, God's Unimpeach'D Decrees

Though short thy span, God's unimpeach'd decrees,
Which made that shorten'd span one long disease,
Yet merciful in chastening, gave thee scope
For mild, redeeming virtues, Faith and Hope;
Meek Resignation; pious Charity
And, since this world was not the world for thee,
Far from thy path removed, with partial care,
Strife, Glory, Gain, and Pleasure's flowery snare,
Bade Earth's temptations pass thee harmless by,
And fix'd on Heaven thine unadverted eye!
Oh! mark'd from birth, and nurtur'd for the skies!
In youth, with more than learning's wisdom, wise!
As sainted martyrs, patient to endure!
Simple as unweari'd infancy and pure!
Pure from all stain (save that of human clay,
Which Christ's atoning blood hath wash'd away!)
By mortal sufferings now no more oppress'd,
Mount sinless Spirit, to thy destined rest!
While I--reversed our nature's kindlier doom
Pour forth a father's sorrows on thy tomb.

George Canning