

72.

I live not in myself, but I become 680
 Portion of that around me;⁷⁴ and to me
 High mountains are a feeling, but the hum
 Of human cities – torture – I can see
 Nothing to loathe in Nature, save to be
 A link reluctant in a fleshly chain, 685
 Classed among creatures, when the Soul can flee,
 And with the sky – the peak – the heaving plain
 Of Ocean, or the Stars, mingle – and not in vain.

73.

And thus I am absorbed, and this is life:
 I look upon the peopled desert past, 690
 As on a place of agony and strife,
 Where, for some sin, to sorrow I was cast,
 To act and suffer, but remount at last
 With a fresh pinion; which I feel to spring,
 Though young, yet waxing vigorous as the Blast 695
 Which it would cope with, on delighted wing,
 Spurning the clay-cold bonds which round our being cling.

74.

And when, at length, the Mind shall be all free
 From what it hates in this degraded form,
 Reft of its carnal life, save what shall be 700
 Existent happier in the fly and worm,
 When elements to elements conform,
 And dust is as it should be, shall I not
 Feel all I see – less dazzling – but more warm?
 The bodiless thought? the Spirit of each Spot? 705
 Of which, even now, I share at times the immortal lot?

75.

Are not the mountains, waves and skies a part
 Of me and of my Soul, as I of them?
 Is not the love of these deep in my heart
 With a pure passion? should I not condemn 710
 All objects, if compared with these? and stem
 A tide of suffering, rather than forego
 Such feelings for the hard and worldly phlegm
 Of those whose eyes are only turned below,
 Gazing upon the ground, with thoughts which dare not glow? 715

74: Without warning, B. goes Wordsworthian.

76.

But this is not my theme;⁷⁵ and I return
 To that which is immediate, and require
 Those who find contemplation in the Urn
 To look on One,⁷⁶ whose dust was once all fire,
 A Native of the land where I respire 720
 The clear air for a while – a passing guest,
 Where he became a being – whose desire
 Was to be glorious; 'twas a foolish quest,
 The which to gain and keep, he sacrificed all rest.

77.

Here the self-torturing Sophist, wild Rousseau, 725
 The Apostle of Affliction, he who threw
 Enchantment over Passion, and from Woe
 Wrung overwhelming Eloquence, first drew
 The breath which made him wretched; yet he knew
 How to make Madness beautiful, and cast 730
 O'er erring deeds and thoughts a heavenly hue
 Of words, like Sunbeams, dazzling as they past
 The eyes, which o'er them shed tears feelingly and fast.

78.

His love was Passion's Essence – as a tree
 On fire by lightning, with ethereal flame 735
 Kindled he was, and blasted; for to be
 Thus, and enamoured, were in him the same.
 But his was not the love of living dame,
 Nor of the dead who rise upon our dreams,
 But of ideal Beauty,⁷⁷ which became 740
 In him existence, and o'erflowing teems
 Along his burning page – distempered though it seems.

75: Why then introduce it?

76: Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) philosopher and author of the novel *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse* (1761). Famous for the dictum, "Man is born free but is everywhere in chains".

77: Compare *CHP* IV 1454, and contrast *Beppo* 13, 2.

79.

This breathed itself to life in Julie; *this*
 Invested her with all that's wild and sweet;
 This hallowed, too, the memorable kiss 745
 Which every morn his fevered lip would greet
 From hers, who but with friendship his would meet;
 But to that gentle touch through brain and breast
 Flashed the thrilled Spirit's love-devouring heat;
 In that absorbing sigh perchance more blest 750
 Than vulgar Minds may be with all they seek possess. *

* This refers to the account in his "Confessions" of his passion for the Comtesse d'Houdetot (the mistress of St. Lambert) and his long walk every morning for the sake of the single kiss which was the common salutation of French acquaintance.⁷⁸ – Rousseau's description of his feelings on this occasion may be considered as the most passionate, yet not impure description and expression of Love that ever kindled into words; which after all must be felt, from their very force, to be inadequate to the delineation: a painting can give no sufficient idea of the Ocean.

80.

His life was one long war with self-sought foes,⁷⁹
 Or friends by him self-banished; for his Mind
 Had grown Suspicion's sanctuary, and chose,
 For its own cruel sacrifice, the kind, 755
 'Gainst whom he raged with fury strange and blind.
 But he was phrenzied – wherefore, who may know?
 Since cause might be which skill could never find;
 But he was phrenzied by disease or woe,
 To that worst pitch of all, which wears a reasoning show. 760

81.

For then he was inspired, and from him came,
 As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,
 Those oracles which set the world in flame,
 Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more:
 Did he not this for France? which lay before 765
 Bowed to the inborn tyranny of years?
 Broken and trembling to the yoke she bore,
 Till by the voice of him and his Compeers
 Roused up to too much wrath, which follows o'ergrown fears?

78: The real Comtesse d'Houdetot was the model for the fictional Julie. "J'ai dit qu'il y avoit loin de l'Hermitage à Eaubonne; je passois par les coteaux d'Andilly, qui sont charmans. Je rêvois en marchant à celle que j'allois voir, à l'accueil caressant qu'elle me feroit, au baiser qui m'attendoit à mon arrivée. Ce seul baiser, ce baiser funeste, avant même de le recevoir, m'embrasoit le sang à tel point, que ma tête se troublait, un éblouissement m'aveugloit, mes genoux tremblans ne pouvoient me soutenir; j'étois forcé de m'arrêter, de m'asseoir; toute ma machine étoit dans un désordre inconcevable: j'étois prêt à m'évanouir. Instruit du danger, je tâchois, en partant, de me distraire et de penser à autre chose." Rousseau, *Confessions*, Book IX (ed. van Bever, Garnier, 1954??, 298-9). "I have said that it was some distance from the Hermitage to Eaubonne; I went by the hills of Andilly, which are delightful; and as I walked I dreamt of her I was about to see, of the affectionate welcome she would give me, and of the kiss, the fatal kiss, even before I received it. It so fired my blood that I was dizzy, my eyes were dazzled and blind, and my trembling knees could no longer could no longer support me. I had to stop and sit down; my whole bodily mechanism was in utter disorder; I was on the point of fainting. Aware of my danger I tried as I set out again to distract myself and think of something else" (tr. J.M.Cohen, Penguin 1953 p. 414). B.'s evaluation of the passage is idiosyncratic – we can see that when he accused Keats of "f—gg—ng his imagination," (BLJ VII 225) he knew what he was talking about.

79: Like B.'s. See BLJ IX 11-12 for B.'s denial that he was at all like Rousseau.

82.

They made themselves a fearful Monument! 770
 The Wreck of old opinions – things which grew,
 Breathed from the birth of Time: the Veil they rent,
 And what behind it lay, all Earth shall view.
 But Good with Ill they also overthrew,
 Leaving but ruins, wherewith to rebuild 775
 Upon the same foundation, and renew
 Dungeons and thrones, which the same hour refilled *
 As heretofore, because Ambition was self-willed.

* See Spain and France, &c. &c. – Ferdinand “the Beloved,”⁸⁰ Louis “the Desired”⁸¹ – the Stork and the Log – the lovely and the desirable – but the Frogs would have kings and must now keep them.⁸²

83.

But this will not endure, nor be endured!
 Mankind have felt their strength and made it felt. 780
 They might have used it better, but, allured
 By their new vigour, sternly have they dealt
 On one another; Pity ceased to melt
 With her once natural Charities. But they,
 Who in Oppression’s darkness caved had dwelt, 785
 They were not Eagles, nourished with the day;
 What marvel then, at times, if they mistook their prey?

84.

What deep wounds ever closed without a scar?
 The Heart’s bleed longest, and but heal to wear
 That which disfigures it; and they who war 790
 With their own Hopes, and have been vanquished, bear
 Silence, but not submission: in his lair
 Fixed Passion holds his breath, until the hour
 Which shall atone for years; none need despair:
 It came – it cometh – and will come – the Power 795
 To punish or forgive – in *One* we shall be slower.

85.

Clear, placid Leman! thy contrasted lake,
 With the wild world I dwelt in, is a thing
 Which warns me, with its stillness, to forsake
 Earth’s troubled waters for a purer Spring.⁸³ 800
 This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing
 To waft me from Distraction; once I loved
 Torn Ocean’s roar, but thy soft murmuring
 Sounds sweet as if a Sister’s voice⁸⁴ reproved,
 That I with stern delights should e’er have been so moved. 805

80: Ferdinand VII (1784-1833) oppressive, anti-liberal King of Spain.

81: Louis XVIII (1755-1824) obese, gouty, wheelchair-bound King of France

82: Refers to Aesop’s fable in which the frogs ask Zeus for a king, and, annoyed by their perpetual dissatisfaction with his choices, he sends them a snake, which eats them all up. Compare *AoB*, 406.

83: Compare *Prometheus*, 47-8: *Man is in part divine, / A troubled stream from a pure source ...*

84: A covert reference to Augusta, with whom B. sailed on the Newstead lake.