

Such is thy name with this my verse entwined;
 And long as kinder eyes a look shall cast
 On Harold's page – Ianthe's here enshrined
 Shall thus be first beheld, forgotten last; 40
 My days once numbered, should this homage past
 Attract thy fairy fingers near the lyre
 Of him who hailed thee, loveliest as thou wast,
 Such is the most my memory may desire,
 Though more than Hope can claim – could Friendship less require? 45

1.

Oh, thou! in Hellas deemed of heavenly birth,
 Muse! formed or fabled at the minstrel's will!
 Since shamed full oft by later lyres on earth,
 Mine dares not call thee from thy sacred hill:
 Yet there I've wandered by thy vaunted rill; 5
 Yes! sighed o'er Delphi's long deserted shrine, *
 Where save that feeble fountain, all is still;
 Nor mote⁴⁹ my shell awake the weary Nine
 To grace so plain a tale – this lowly lay of mine.

* The little village of Castri⁵⁰ stands partly on the site of Delphi. Along the path of the mountain, from Chryso, are the remains of sepulchres hewn in and from the rock: "One," said the guide, "of a king who broke his neck hunting." His Majesty had certainly chosen the fittest spot for such an achievement.

A little above Castri is a cave, supposed the Pythian, of immense depth; the upper part of it is paved, and now a cow-house.

On the other side of Castri stands a Greek monastery; some way above which is the cleft in the rock, with a range of caverns difficult of ascent, and apparently leading to the interior of the mountain; probably to the Corcyrian Cavern mentioned by Pausanias. From this part descend the fountain and the "Dews of Castalie."

2.

Whilome in Albion's isle there dwelt a youth 10
 Who ne in virtue's ways did take delight;
 But spent his days in riot most uncouth,
 And vexed with mirth the drowsy ear of Night.
 Ah, me! in sooth he was a shameless wight,
 Sore given to revel and ungodly glee; 15
 Few earthly things found favour in his sight
 Save concubines and carnal companie,
 And flaunting wassailers of high and low degree.

49: "mote" means "must": the word is the first of several Spenserianisms which B. uses in *CHP* I.

50: B. and H. arrived at Castri (in ancient Greece, site of the Delphic Oracle) on Saturday December 16th 1809.

3.

Childe Harold was he hight: – but whence his name
 And lineage long, it suits me not to say; 20
 Suffice it, that perchance they were of fame,
 And had been glorious in another day:
 But one sad losel⁵¹ soils a name for aye,
 However mighty in the olden time;
 Nor all that heralds rake from coffined clay, 25
 Nor florid prose, nor honeyed lies of rhyme,
 Can blazon evil deeds, or consecrate a crime.

4.

Childe Harold basked him in the noon-tide sun,
 Disporting there like any other fly;
 Nor deemed before his little day was done 30
 One blast might chill him into misery.
 But long ere scarce a third of his passed by,
 Worse than adversity the Childe befell;
 He felt the fulness of satiety:
 Then loathed he in his native land to dwell, 35
 Which seemed to him more lone than Eremite's sad cell.

5.

For he through Sin's long labyrinth had run,
 Nor made atonement when he did amiss,
 Had sighed to many though he loved but one,⁵²
 And that loved one, alas! could n'er be his. 40
 Ah, happy she! to 'scape from him whose kiss
 Had been pollution unto aught so chaste;
 Who soon had left her charms for vulgar bliss,
 And spoiled her goodly lands to gild his waste,
 Nor calm domestic peace had ever deigned to taste.⁵³ 45

6.

And now Childe Harold was sore sick at heart,
 And from his fellow bacchanals would flee;
 'Tis said, at times the sullen tear would start,
 But Pride congealed the drop within his ee:
 Apart he stalked in joyless reverie, 50
 And from his native land resolved to go,
 And visit scorching climes beyond the sea;
 With pleasure drugged he almost longed for woe,
 And e'en for change of scene would seek the shades below.⁵⁴

51: A losel or lozel is a rascal. See *The Winter's Tale*, II, iii, 108.

52: Perhaps a covert reference to Mary Chaworth.

53: The lines describe B.'s father, and B., when in 1815 he tried domestic life.

54: As Manfred does in the second act of the play which bears his name. It may be that Harold visits the shades below on his excursion to see Ali Pacha, whose fortress is on the Acherousian Lake