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We will venture upon one more specimen :—

“ Endearing Waltz !—to thy more melting tune,  
Bow Irish Jig,—and ancient rigadon;  
Scotch reels avaunt !—and country-dance forego,  
Your future claims to each fantastic toe;  
Waltz, Waltz—alone both arms and legs demands,  
Liberal of feet—and lavish of her hands;  
Hands which may freely range in public fight,  
Where ne'er before—but pray “ put out the light ;”  
Methinks the glare of yonder chandelier  
Shines much too far—or I am much too near.” P. 15.

He who could write like these passages might have written un-exceptionably; but prudence and genius, though they might always be allied, are too apt to squabble and part for trifling causes.

## December 1813

Byron, *The Giaour* (5th edition, 1813); *British Critic*, XLII (Dec. 1813), 611-613. The reviewer finds himself falling behind; *The Bride of Abydos* is published and *The Giaour* is not yet reviewed!

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## BRITISH CATALOGUE.

### POETRY.

ART. 10. *The Giaour, a Fragment of a Turkish Tale.* By Lord Byron. Fifth Edition, with considerable Additions. 8vo. 66 pp. 4s. 6d. Murray. 1813.

This ingenious nobleman, to whom, without reserve, we give the honourable name of POET, which no royal patent can confer, (except on the Laureat) is at once so popular and so fertile, that his productions pass through five editions, and are succeeded by new poems, before we can find time to write down our opinions of them. The *Giaour* is now succeeded by the *Maid of Abydos*, which will probably be circulated with equal rapidity, and followed, in as short a space of time, by another effusion. We must speak, therefore, of this immediately.

Besides the poetical vigour of Lord Byron's compositions, there is a peculiar colour of originality, in addition to all others, drawn from the knowledge which he gained in his travels. Nothing can more happily encourage and enrich a poetical genius than the examination of various countries, with that distinguishing and comparing eye which belongs to the real poet. That Lord B. possessed this original qualification, was made evident before he left this country, by his inimitable Satire, entitled “ British

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Bards and Scotch Reviewers \*," but even the finest satire is less pleasing, than poems enriched with various views of nature, people, and character. The *Gisour*, (or *Infidel*) is perhaps the most singular tale that was ever told; not only in the circumstances of the story, but still more in the mode of relating it. This is alluded to by the author when he calls it "a Fragment of a tale:" but it consists, in fact, of several fragments, unconnected in themselves, and yet so managed altogether, that the attentive reader may combine from them a regular story. But attention is required. So many specimens of this beautiful poem have been published in newspapers, magazines, and reviews, from the intrinsic charm they possess, that we shall quote but little; and in that avoid the passages which have been generally taken, though they perhaps are the most striking. The following description places the reader quite in the East.

"Fair clime! where every season smiles  
Benignant o'er those blessed isles,  
Which seen from far Colonna's height,  
Make glad the heart that hails the sight,  
And lead to loneliness & delight.  
There mildly dimpling—Ocean's cheek  
Reflects the tints of many a peak  
Caught by the laughing tides that lave  
These Edens of the eastern wave;  
And if at times a transient breeze  
Break the blue crystal of the seas,  
Or sweep one blossom from the trees,  
How welcome is each gentle air,  
That wakes and wafts the odours there!  
For there—the Rose o'er crag or vale,  
Sultana of the Nightingale †,  
The maid for whom his melody—  
His thousand songs are heard on high,  
Blooms blushing to her lover's tale;  
His queen, the garden queen, his Rose,  
Unbent by winds, unchill'd by snows,  
Far from the winters of the west,  
By every breeze and season blest,  
Returns the sweets by nature given  
In softest incense back to heaven;  
And grateful yields that smiling sky  
Her fairest hue and fragrant sigh.  
And many a summer flower is there,  
And many a shade that love might share,

\* See Brit. Crit. xxxiii. p. 410.

† "The attachment of the nightingale to the rose is a well-known Persian fable—if I mistake not, the 'Bulbul of a thousand tales' is one of his appellations."

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And many a grotto, meant for rest,  
That holds the pirate for its guest:  
Whose bark, in sheltering cove below,  
Lurks for the passing peaceful prow,  
Till the gay mariner's guitar  
Is heard, and seen the evening star;  
Then stealing with the muffled oar,  
Far shaded by the rocky shore,  
Rush the night-prowlers on the prey,  
And turn to groans his roundelay." P. 1.

The following passage we cannot forbear, though here we believe we have been anticipated.

"As rising on its purple wing  
The insect-queen \* of eastern spring,  
O'er emerald meadows of Kashmeer  
Invites the young pursuer near,  
And leads him on from flower to flower  
A weary chase and wasted hour,  
Then leaves him, as it soars on high  
With panting heart and tearful eye,  
So beauty lures the full-grown child  
With hue as bright, and wing as wild;  
A chase of idle hopes and fears,  
Begun in folly, closed in tears.  
If won, to equal ills betrayed,  
Woe waits the insect and the maid,  
A life of pain, the loss of peace,  
From infant's play, and man's caprice;  
The lovely toy so fiercely sought  
Has lost its charm by being caught,  
For every touch that wooed its stay  
Has brush'd its brightest hues away,  
Till charm, and hue, and beauty gone,  
'Tis left to fly or fall alone.  
With wounded wing, or bleeding breast,  
Ah! where shall either victim rest?  
Can this with faded pinion soar  
From rose to tulip as before?  
Or Beauty, blighted in an hour,  
Find joy within her broken bower?" P. 21.

We object to the lines which immediately follow, where the Poet regrets the sternness of female virtue towards the fallen fair; a conduct too necessary to the welfare of society to be given up. But when we styled Lord B. a Poet, we did not add that he is a moralist. It is unnecessary to extend our account of a poem so generally read.

\* "The blue-winged butterfly of Kashmeer, the most rare and beautiful of the species."

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