[TO RICHARD BELGRAVE HOPPNER]  
La Mira, Sept. 12th, 1817

I set out yesterday morning with the intention of paying my respects, and availing myself of your permission to walk over the premises. On arriving at Padua, I found that the march of the Austrian troops had engrossed so many horses, that those I could procure were hardly able to crawl; and their weakness, together with the prospect of finding none at all at the post-house of Monselice, and consequently either not arriving that day at Este, or so late as to be unable to return home here the same evening, induced me to turn aside in a second visit to Arqua, instead of proceeding onwards; and even thus I hardly got back in time.

Next week I shall be obliged to be in Venice to meet Lord Kinnaird and his brother, who are expected in a few days. And this interruption, together with that occasioned by the continued march of the Austrians for the next few days, will not allow me to fix any precise period for availing myself of your kindness, though I should wish to take the earliest opportunity. Perhaps, if absent, you will have the goodness to permit one of your servants to show me the grounds and house, or as much of either as may be convenient; at any rate, I shall take the first occasion possible to go over, and regret very much that I was yesterday prevented.

I have the honour to be your obliged, &c.

[TO JOHN MURRAY]  
Sept 15th, 1817

Dear Sir—I enclose a sheet for correction if ever you get to another edition—you will observe that the blunder in printing makes it appear as if the Chateau was over St. Gingo—instead of being on the opposite shore of the lake over Clarens—so—separate the paragraphs otherwise my typography will seems as inaccurate as your typography on this occasion. The other day I wrote to convey my proposition with regard to the 4th & concluding Canto—I have gone over—& extended it to one hundred and fifty stanzas which is almost as long as the two first were originally—& longer by itself—than any of the smaller poems except the “Corsair”—Mr. Hobhouse has made some very valuable & accurate notes of considerable length—and you may be sure I will do for the text all that I can to finish with decency.—I look upon Childe Harold as my best—and as I began—I think of concluding with it—but I make no resolutions on that head—as I broke my former intention with regard to “the Corsair”—however—I fear that I shall never do better—and yet—not being thirty years of age for some moons to come—one ought to be progressive as far as Intellect goes for many a good year—but I have had a devilish deal of wear & tear of mind and body—in my time—besides having published too often & much already. God grant me some judgement—I do what may be most fitting in that & every thing else—for I doubt my own exceeding— — — I have read “Lallah Rookh”—but not with sufficient attention yet—for I ride about—& lounge—& ponder—two or three other things—so that my reading is very desultory & not so attentive as it used to be.—I am very glad to hear of its popularity—for Moore is a very noble fellow in all respects—and will enjoy it without any of the bad feelings which Success—good or evil—sometimes engenders in the men of rhyme.—Of the poem itself I will tell you my opinion when I have mastered it—I say of the poem—for I don’t like the prose at all—at all—and in the mean time the “Fire-worshippers” is the best and the “Veiled Prophet” the worst, of the volume.—

With regard to poetry in general I am convinced the more I think of it—that he and all of us—Scott—Soutey—Wordsworth—Moore—Campbell—I—are all in the wrong—one as much as another—that we are upon a wrong revolutionary poetical system—or systems—not worth a damn in itself—and from which none but Rogers and Crabbe are free—and that the present & next generations will finally be of this opinion.—I am the more confirmed in this—by having lately gone over some of our Classics—particularly Pope—whom I tried in this way—I took Moore’s poems & my own & some others—and went over them side by side with Pope’s—and I was really astonished (I ought not to have been so) and mortified—at the ineffable distance in point of sense—harmony—effect—and even Imagination Passion—& Invention—between the little Queen Anne’s Man—and us of the lower Empire—depend upon it [it] is all Horace then, and Claudian now among us—and if I had to begin again—I would model myself accordingly—

R. B. Hoppner, British Consul in Venice, had occupied a country house or "villeggiatura" called "'I Cappucini" in the Euganean Hills near Este. Byron later sublet it from Hoppner, but never lived there. He loaned it to Shelley in the summer of 1818, and sent Allegra there to be with her mother, Claire Clairmont, for a few weeks. For an account of Hoppner and Byron's relations with him, see Appendix IV.  
1 Byron here refers to the third canto of Childe Harold.  
2 Murray showed this letter to Gifford who wrote the following note with respect to Byron's critique of modern poets and his judgment of Pope: "There is more good sense, and feeling and judgment in this passage, than in any other I ever read, or Lord Byron wrote." (L.J, IV, 168n.)
C rabbe's the man—but he has got a coarse and impracticable subject—and Rogers the Grandfather of living Poetry—is retired upon half-pay, (I don't mean as a Banker)—

Since pretty Miss Jaqueline
With her nose aquiline

and has done enough—unless he were to do as he did formerly.—

[TO JOHN MURRAY] Venice. Sept. 17th. 1817

Dear Sir—I shall send the assignment by Mr. Kinnaird—who is not yet arrived here—but your rectification of guineas does not bring you quite right yet—you said a thousand pounds—it is however—twelve hundred & thirty pounds—viz—a balance of £ six hundred—on the 3d Canto & three hundred guineas Manfred—and three hundred Tasso—making six hundred & thirty pounds on the latter—according to my Cocker.—As to the time of payment—I repeat that I don't wish to press you—but that when it suits your convenience—it will not be incompatible with mine;—By Messrs. Morland's last account I perceive that a sum which I imagined to have been from your quarter came instead from Mr. Hanson—so that it should seem you are more in my books than I thought—for which reason I am thus precise as to items.—Mr. Hobhouse purposes being in England in November—he will bring the 4th Canto with him notes and all—the text contains one hundred and fifty stanzas—which is long for that measure.—With regard to the "Ariosto of the North" surely their themes Chivalry—which amused me—but till I have your answer—I can say nothing about that.—But as to their "measures," you forget that Ariosto's is an octave stanza—and Scott's anything but a Stanza.—If you think Scott will dislike it—say so—and I expunge.—I do not call him the Scotch Ariosto "which amused me—but till I have your answer—I can say nothing

1 Coleridge reviewed Maturin's Bertram in Chapter 28 of his Biographia Literaria published in 1817. 2 Byron compared Coleridge to John Henley whom Pope had ridiculed as "Zany of thy age." (Dunciad, Book III, line 206.) 3 Richard Brothers (1757-1824) believed that, in 1795, he was to be Prince of the Hebrews and ruler of the world. He was arrested and confined as a lunatic. 4 See Sept. 2, 1814, to Murray, note 6. (vol. 4, p. 164). 5 For the anecdote which was the foundation of the story of Beppo, see Marchand, Byron: A Biography, II, 706. The verse form, the ottava rima as used by John Hookham Freere in his mock heroic poem, supposedly by William and Robert Whistler, had recently come to Byron's attention.