

J.C. Becher: Poem to Byron on *Hours of Idleness*, 1807

Say, Byron! why compel me to deplore  
Talents designed for choice poetic lore,  
Deigning to varnish scenes, that shun the day,  
With guilty lustre, and with amorous lay?  
Forbear to taint the Virgin's spotless mind,  
In Power though mighty, be in Mercy kind,  
Bid the chaste Muse diffuse her hallowed light,  
So shall thy Page enkindle pure delight,  
Enhance thy native worth, and proudly twine,  
With Britain's Honors, those that are divine.

Quoted in Willis Pratt, *Byron at Southwell: The Making of a Poet, with New Poems and Letters*.