

Southey, Moore, Lauderdale, Strangford, and Payne Knight share the same fate.—I am sorry, but C— Recollections must be suppressed during this edition, I have altered at your Suggestion the *obnoxious allusions* in the 6th Stanza of my last ode.—And now, Becher I must return my best acknowledgments for the interest you have taken in me and my poetical Bantlings, and I shall ever be proud to show how much I esteem the *advice* and the *Adviser*.—Believe me

most truly yours  
BYRON

P.S.—Write soon.

[TO JOHN CAM HOBHOUSE]

*Dorant's, February 27th. 1808*

Dear Hobhouse,—I write to you to explain a foolish circumstance, which has arisen from some words uttered by me before Pearce and Brown,<sup>1</sup> when I was devoured with Chagrin, and almost insane with the fumes of, not "last night's Punch" but that evening's wine.—[In consequence of a misconception of something on my part, I mentioned an intention of withdrawing my name from the Whig Club,<sup>2</sup> this I hear has been broached, and perhaps in a moment of Intoxication and passion such might be my idea, but *soberly* I have no such design, particularly as I could not abandon my principles, even if I renounced the society with whom I have the honour to be united in sentiments which I never will disavow.—This I beg you will explain to the members as publicly as possible, but should this not be sufficient, and they think proper to erase my name, be it so, I only request that in this case they will recollect, I shall become a *Tory of their own making*. I shall expect your answer on this point with some impatience, now a few words on the subject of my own conduct.—I am buried in an abyss of Sensuality, I have renounced *hazard* however, but I am given to Harlots, and live in a state of Concubinage, I am at this moment under a course of restoration by Pearson's prescription, for a debility occasioned by too frequent Connection.—Pearson sayeth, I have done sufficient with[*in*] this last ten days, to undermine my Constitution, I hope however all will soon be well.—As an author, I am

<sup>1</sup> Henry Pearce and Dominick Browne were two of the original members of the Cambridge Whig Club. (*LJ*, IV, 500.)

<sup>2</sup> Byron in his cups no doubt gave voice to his indignation at the Whigs in general because he had been attacked in the Whig *Edinburgh Review*, in which he had just seen the review of his poems.

cut to atoms by the E[*dinburgh*] Review,<sup>3</sup> it is just out, and has completely demolished my little fabric of fame, this is rather scurvy treatment from a Whig Review, but politics and poetry are different things, & I am no adept in either, I therefore submit in Silence.—Scrope Davies is meandering about London feeding upon Leg of Beef Soup, and frequenting the British Forum, he has given up hazard, as also a considerable sum at the same time.—Altamont is a good deal with me, last night at the Opera Masquerade, we supped with seven whores, a *Barad* and a *Ballet-master*, in Madame Catalani's<sup>4</sup> apartment behind the Scenes, (of course Catalani was *not* there) I have some thoughts of purchasing D'egville's<sup>5</sup> pupils, they would fill a glorious Harem.—I do not write often, but I like to receive letters, when therefore you are disposed to philosophize, no one standeth more in need of precepts of all sorts than

yours very truly  
BYRON

[TO JOHN CAM HOBHOUSE]

*Dorant's, February 29th. 1808*

Dear Hobhouse,—Upon my *honour* I do not recollect to have spoken of you and any friend of yours in the manner you state, and to the Club itself I am certain I never applied the epithets mentioned, or any terms of disrespect whatever.—As it is however possible I may have spoken of the very extraordinary state of Intoxication in which I have seen you and another, not conceiving it to be a secret as never having been looked upon to make a part of the *mysteris* of the meeting, I cannot altogether deny the charge, though I do deny and disclaim all malice in the statement.—Besides I do not exactly see, how "your sacrifice to the God of Wine" as you classically term it, can possibly involve the interests or reputation of the Club, or by what sophistry my mention of such a circumstance can be tortured into an "*attack* on the society

<sup>3</sup> The criticism that cut Byron to the quick was the critic's ridicule of the vanities in his preface which he thought he had concealed. The reviewer concludes: "We are well off to have got so much from a man of this lord's station, who does not live in a garret, but 'has the sway' of Newstead Abbey."

<sup>4</sup> Madame Angelica Catalani, the popular Italian Opera singer, came to London in 1806, and was then singing at Covent Garden.

<sup>5</sup> James d'Egville (the name he assumed as a ballet and dancing master—his family name was Harvey) had studied dancing with Gaetano Vestris, dancing master at the court of Frederick the Great, and with Gardel, the court teacher of Marie Antoinette. Byron became a familiar of the theatrical and demi-monde people of his circle.