

TO IANTHE.^{1 1}

NOT in those climes where I have late been straying,
Though Beauty long hath there been matchless
deemed,
Not in those visions to the heart displaying
Forms which it sighs but to have only dreamed,
Hath aught like thee in Truth or Fancy seemed :
Nor, having seen thee, shall I vainly seek
To paint those charms which varied as they beamed—

i. *To the Lady Charlotte Harley.*—[MS. M.]

1. [The Lady Charlotte Mary Harley, second daughter of Edward, fifth Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, was born 1801. She married, in 1823, Captain Anthony Bacon (died July 2, 1864), who had followed "young, gallant Howard" (see *Childe Harold*, III. xxix.) in his last fatal charge at Waterloo, and who, subsequently, during the progress of the civil war between Dom Miguel and Maria da Gloria of Portugal (1828-33), held command as colonel of cavalry in the Queen's forces, and finally as a general officer. Lady Charlotte Bacon died May 9, 1880. Byron's acquaintance with her probably dated from his visit to Lord and Lady Oxford, at Eywood House, in Herefordshire, in October—November, 1812. Her portrait, by Westall, which was painted at his request, is included among the illustrations in Finden's *Illustrations of the Life and Works of Lord Byron*, ii. See *Gent. Mag.*, N.S., vol. xvii. (1864) p. 261; and an obituary notice in the *Times*, May 10, 1880. See, too, letter to Murray, March 29, 1813 (*Letters*, 1898, ii. 200).]

To such as see thee not my words were weak ;
 To those who gaze on thee what language could they
 speak ?

Ah ! may'st thou ever be what now thou art,
 Nor unbeseem the promise of thy Spring—
 As fair in form, as warm yet pure in heart,
 'Love's image upon earth without his wing,¹
 And guileless beyond Hope's imagining !
 And surely she who now so fondly rears
 Thy youth, in thee, thus hourly brightening,
 Beholds the Rainbow of her future years,
 Before whose heavenly hues all Sorrow disappears.

Young Peri of the West !—'tis well for me
 My years already doubly number thine ;²
 My loveless eye unmoved may gaze on thee,
 And safely view thy ripening beauties shine ;
 Happy, I ne'er shall see them in decline ;
 Happier, that, while all younger hearts shall bleed,
 Mine shall escape the doom thine eyes assign
 'To those whose admiration shall succeed,
 But mixed with pangs to Love's even loveliest hours
 decreed.

1. [The reference is to the French proverb, *L'Amitié est l'Amour sans Ailes*, which suggested the last line (line 412) of *Childish Recollections*, "And Love, without his pinion, smil'd on youth," and forms the title of one of the early poems, first published in 1832 (*Poetical Works*, 1898, i. 106, 220).]

2. [In 1814, when the dedication was published, Byron completed his twenty-sixth year, Ianthe her thirteenth.]

Oh ! let that eye, which, wild as the Gazelle's,
 Now brightly bold or beautifully shy,
 Wins as it wanders, dazzles where it dwells,¹
 Glance o'er this page, nor to my verse deny
 That smile for which my breast might vainly sigh
 Could I to thee be ever more than friend :
 This much, dear Maid, accord ; nor question why
 To one so young my strain I would commend,
 But bid me with my wreath one matchless Lily
 blend.

Such is thy name² with this my verse entwined ;
 And long as kinder eyes a look shall cast⁴
 On Harold's page, Ianthe's here enshrined
 Shall thus be *first* beheld, forgotten *last* :
 My days once numbered—should this homage past
 Attract thy fairy fingers near the Lyre

i. *And long as kinder eyes shall deign to cast
 A look along my page, that name enshrined
 Shall thou be first beheld, forgotten last.*—[MS.]

1. [For the modulation of the verse, compare Pope's lines—

“Correctly cold, and regularly low.”
Essay on Criticism, line 240.

“Glows while he reads, but trembles as he writes.”
Ibid., line 198.]

2. [Ianthe (“Flower o’ the Narcissus”) was the name of a Cretan girl wedded to one Iphis (*vid. Ovid., Metamorph.*, ix. 714). Perhaps Byron’s dedication was responsible for the Ianthe of *Queen Mab* (1812, 1813), who in turn bestowed her name on Shelley’s eldest daughter (Mrs. Esdaile, d. 1876), who was born June 28, 1813.]

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 ?¹

i. *Though more than Hope can claim—Ah! less could I require?—*
[MS.]

The Works
OF
LORD BYRON.

A NEW, REVISED AND ENLARGED EDITION,
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS.

Poetry. Vol. II.

EDITED BY
ERNEST HARTLEY COLERIDGE, M.A.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
NEW YORK: CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS.

1899.