

together, and from 1792 to 1803 Bedford was a clerk in the Exchequer Office. He had contributed a parody, *The Rhetorician Barbers*, to the *Monthly Magazine* in (May 1797), which was reprinted by RS in *Annual Anthology* 1 (1799); and he printed privately a translation of Musaeus' *Hero and Leander*, also in 1797.

The application of the lines to Grosvenor Bedford refers to his failure to marry (despite the frequent urging of RS), and obliquely to his character: he was genial and sociable, but apparently inefficient and dilatory. See SL (Curry) II 481–2. However, it is quite possible that C is applying to Grosvenor Bedford lines he had found elsewhere applied to a duke of Bedford: Francis Russell, fifth duke (b. 1765), was interested in crossing breeds of cattle and was to die unmarried in 1802 (DNB). Some play on the duke's parallel situation is doubtless involved, even if C wrote the lines himself.

By crossing despair of improving this Breed,
And wearied to Bedfordshire hasten indeed.

253. LOVE

[Nov–Dec 1799]

The poem was inspired by C's first visit to Sockburn in Oct–Nov 1799, when he met and fell in love with SH. Feelings roused at Sockburn were shaped by fantasy and projected against a Stowey background, though the feeling and the sense of background are of a kind which have misled many readers. Genevieve is a figure of wish-fulfilment, as in the Christ's Hospital sonnet of that name (poem 17), whatever innocent trifles passed between C and SH in 1799 (see CV I 578, 1575). Although there is a recumbent statue of an armed knight (of the Conyers family) at Sockburn, as well as a famous "Grey Stone" nearby, the ruined tower midway on a mound, with a statue of a figure alongside ("tall" and "rudely carved" in the ms), more obviously pictures the folly and statue halfway up the hill at Cotterstone Park, in the part called Tilbury on the flank of Bagborough Hill, near Stowey.

A brief description and an illustration of the Bagborough tower and statue (which, it should be added, are some 300 yards apart) are given by Barbara Jones *Follies and Grotesques* (2nd enlarged ed 1974) 383. Edward Blone's drawing of the effigy in Sockburn Church, which has undoubtedly affected C's presentation of the Bagborough statue, is in BM Add MS 42014 f 11^r.

Other earlier experiences, in Germany as well as in the Quantocks, are incorporated. Compare CL I 499; to Mrs C 17 May 1799 with lines 9–10, CV I 230 and CL I 504; to Mrs C 17 May [1799] with the cancelled stanza between lines

44 and 45, etc. For evidence of how the central imagined experience recurred in C's mind see 347 *Phantom* 4–5. WW's objection is worth recording: he told Tom Moore that "there was too much of the sensual in it" (*Journal of Thomas Moore* ed Dowden IV 1661, under 20 Feb 1835).

C drafted the poem as an "Introduction to the Tale of the Dark Ladie" (poem 182), on which he had been working since Stowey days, and which had failed, like *Christabel*, to move forward. The present poem was published with this title ("Introduction . . .") in *M Post* (21 Dec 1799). It is introductory in the sense that it celebrates energy of the kind needed to complete the *Dark Ladie*—i.e. a sense of emotional renewal for C himself—but otherwise its relation is oblique. C pruned the opening and closing stanzas and made a few other revisions when he included it as an independent poem, re-entitled *Love*, to replace WW's *The Convict* in *LB* (1800). The revised form was included in *SL* (1817) and later collections with only minor changes. The version reproduced here is that of *SL*, taking in C's own erratum.

The originally drafted "Introduction to the Tale of the Dark Ladie" and the later, pruned version, *Love*, were popular from the first, and were frequently reprinted in newspapers and anthologies in C's lifetime. Walter Scott told the actress Sarah Smith, "The verses on Love . . . are among the most beautiful in the English language" (*Scott* I III 400); and John Gibson Lockhart described the poem as "better known than any of its author's productions . . . many hundreds of our readers have got it by heart long ago, without knowing by whom it was written" (*Bl Mag* VI (31)—Oct 1819—12; repeated in similar terms *ibid* XI (65)—Jun 1822—670; cf also J. G. Lockhart *Peter's Letters to his Kingsfolk*—"2nd ed" 3 vols Edinburgh 1819—II 220–1). The artist George Dawe exhibited a large picture based on *Love* at the Royal Academy in 1812, which he entitled *Genevieve* (exhibit 220). This has led to both versions on occasion being described as "Genevieve"—a title never employed by C. C placed it first among the "Love Poems" section in his later collections, and told Allsop (probably c 1820): "The 'Ancient Mariner' cannot be imitated, nor the poem, 'Love'. *They may be excelled; they are not imitable*" (Allsop 195).

The following stanzas appeared in the earlier form of the poem, when it was an "Introduction to the Tale of the Dark Ladie", in *M Post* (21 Dec 1799):

-1

O leave the Lilly on its stem;
O leave the Rose upon the spray;
O leave the Elder-bloom, fair Maids!
And listen to my lay.

A Cypress and a Myrtle bough,
This morn around my harp you twin'd,
Because it fashion'd mournfully
Its murmurs in the wind.

And now a Tale of Love and Woe,
A woe'ful Tale of Love I sing:

Hark, gentle Maidens, hark! it sighs
And trembles on the string.

But most, my own dear Genevieve!
It sighs and trembles most for thee!
O come and hear what cruel wrongs
Befel the Dark Ladie.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,¹
My hope, my joy, my Genevieve!
She loves me best whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

44+
And how he cross'd the Woodman's paths,
Thro' briars and swampy messes beat,
How boughs rebounding scourg'd his limbs,
And low stubs gor'd his feet;

80+
I saw her bosom heave and swell,
Heave and swell with inward sighs—
I could not choose but love to see
Her gentle bosom rise.

96+
And now once more a tale of woe,
A woeful tale of love I sing:
For thee, my Genevieve! it sighs,
And trembles on the string.

When last I sang the cruel scorn
That craz'd this bold and lonely Knight,
And how he roan'd the mountain woods,
Nor rested day or night;

I promis'd thee a sister tale
Of Man's perfid'ous cruelty:
Come, then, and hear what cruel wrong
Befel the Dark Ladie.

End of the Introduction.

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

¹ This stanza became the fifth in the later version of the poem, lines 17–20 below.

Off in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruin'd tower.

The Moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She leant against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight;
She stood and listen'd to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope! my joy! my Genevieve!
She loves me best, whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I play'd a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listen'd with a fitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew, I could not chuse
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he woo'd
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined; and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

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She listen'd with a fitting blush,
 With downcast eyes, and modest grace;
 And she forgave me, that I gazed
 Too fondly on her face! 40

But when I told the cruel scorn
 That craz'd that bold and lovely Knight,
 And that he cross'd the mountain-woods,
 Nor rested day nor night;

That sometimes from the savage den,
 And sometimes from the darksome shade,
 And sometimes starting up at once
 In green and sunny glade, 45

There came and look'd him in the face
 An angel beautiful and bright;
 And that he knew it was a Fiend,
 This miserable Knight! 50

And that unknowing what he did,
 He leap'd amid a murderous band,
 And sav'd from outrage worse than death
 The Lady of the Land! 55

And how she wept, and claspt his knees;
 And how she tended him in vain—
 And ever strove to expiate
 The scorn that crazed his brain. 60

And that she nursed him in a cave;
 And how his madness went away;

When on the yellow forest-leaves
 A dying man he lay.

His dying words—but when I reach'd
 That tenderest strain of all the ditty,
 My faultering voice and pausing harp
 Disturb'd her soul with pity! 65

All impulses of soul and sense
 Had thrill'd my guileless Genevieve;
 The music, and the doleful tale,
 The rich and balmy eve; 70

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
 An undistinguishable throng,
 And gentle wishes long subdued,
 Subdued and cherish'd long! 75

She wept with pity and delight,
 She blush'd with love, and virgin-shame;
 And like the murmur of a dream,
 I heard her breathe my name. 80

Her bosom heav'd—she stept aside,
 As conscious of my look she stept—
 Then suddenly, with timorous eye
 She fled to me and wept. 70

She half enclosed me with her arms,
 She press'd me with a meek embrace;
 And bending back her head, look'd up,
 And gazed upon my face. 85

'Twas partly Love, and partly Fear,
 And partly 'twas a bashful art, 90

41, 60, scorn] The same word re- alienation, which WW and C associ- curred significantly in 146, XI *Osorio*, ated with Godwinian rationalism. Cf WW's *The Borderers* and *Lines Left* 182 *The Ballad of the Dark Ladie upon a Seat in a Yew-tree*, and many other poems by both authors. It suggests that the knight's peculiar af- 20EC: 44*. The extra stanza printed in *M Post* (see the headnote) does not appear in any of the earlier ms versions.

81. Her bosom heav'd] The *M* was later dropped, and which in the *Post* version reads "Her wet cheek ms draft was at the centre of a pas- glow'd", following on from the stanza sage which C considerably reworked. at 80* (given in the headnote) which

That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calm'd her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin-pride,
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous Bride.

95

254. ODE TO GEORGIANA,
DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE,
ON THE 24TH STANZA IN HER
PASSAGE OVER MOUNT GOTHARD

[Dec 1799]

The duchess, whose private life was somewhat scandalous, was active in the Foxite Opposition. She published *The Passage of the Mountain of Saint Gothard*, a thirty-stanza poem, in the Opposition papers of 19 and 20 Dec. The Austrians and French (and later the Russians) had been fighting over the St Gothard Pass since May, but the timeliness of the poem stems from fears that Austria would secede from the war and that St Gothard and Piedmont would revert to the French. The poem was dedicated "To my Children", and Rousseauistic nursing of her own children was a frequently noised fact about the duchess. Woodring 119–23 gives references, and describes how the ode chimes with C's changing attitude towards Fox, Sheridan, and the Whigs. One year later the duchess, like Fox, received a copy of *LB* (1800) from C (see *CL* II 665: to TP 19 Jan 1801).

C's poem was first printed (he said badly) in *M Post* (24 Dec 1799), and soon afterwards in vol II of *RS's Annual Anthology* (Bristol 1800). It was included in subsequent collections with very few revisions. The text given here is from *SL* (1817), with some slight adjustments to the pattern of indentation. In line with the title, the epigraph does indeed derive from the 24th stanza of the duchess's poem.

"And hail the Chapel! hail the Platform wild!
Where Tell directed the avenging Dart,
With well strung arm, that first preserv'd his Child,
Then aimed the arrow at the Tyrant's heart."

Splendor's fondly fostered child!
And did you hail the Platform wild,
Where once the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell?
O Lady, nurs'd in pomp and pleasure!
Whence learnt you that heroic measure?

5

Light as a dream your days their circlets ran,
From all that teaches Brotherhood to Man
Far, far removed! from want, from hope, from fear!
Enchanting music lull'd your infant ear,
Obscure praises sooth'd your infant heart:
Emblazonnments and old ancestral crests,
With many a bright obtrusive form of art,
Detain'd your eye from nature: stately vests,
That veiling strove to deck your charms divine,
Rich viands, and the pleasurable wine,
Were your's unearn'd by toil; nor could you see
The unenjoying toiler's misery.
And yet, free Nature's uncorrupted child,
You hail'd the Chapel and the Platform wild,

20

Where once the Austrian fell
Beneath the shaft of Tell!
O Lady, nurs'd in pomp and pleasure!
Whence learnt you that heroic measure?

There crowd your finely-fibred frame,

25

All living faculties of bliss:
And Genius to your cradle came,
His forehead wreath'd with lambent flame,

And bending low, with godlike kiss
Breath'd in a more celestial life!

30

But boasts not many a fair compeer
A heart as sensitive to joy and fear?
And some, perchance, might wage an equal strife,
Some few, to nobler being wrought,
Co-rivals in the nobler gift of thought.

35

Yet *these* delight to celebrate
Laurell'd War and plummy State;
Or in verse and music dress
Tales of rustic happiness—