

# ORLANDO FURIOSO:

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF

LODOVICO ARIOSTO;

WITH NOTES:

By JOHN HOOLE.

IN FIVE VOLUMES.

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THE  
TWENTIETH BOOK

OF

ORLANDO FURIOSO.

VOL. III.

B

## THE ARGUMENT.

THE champion of the Amazons discovers himself to be Guido of the house of Clarmont, and gives an account of the history and first establishment of the Amazon government. The warriors consult together on the means of quitting the country. Marphisa would persuade them to effect it by force of arms. Guido takes the management upon himself; and next morning they attempt to break through the whole body of the Amazons, but are nearly overpowered by numbers, when Astolpho, blowing his horn, drives all the Amazons before him. Sansonetto, Guido, Gryphon, Aquilant, and Marphisa, being terrified with the rest, precipitately hasten on board the ship prepared for them, and leave Astolpho behind them. The knights and Marphisa afterwards landing, Marphisa parts from the others. Her encounter with Gabrina, Pinabello, and lastly with Zerbino.

THE  
TWENTIETH BOOK

Q F

ORLANDO FURIOSO.

**I**N fields of battle, and the Muses' lore,  
What wonders have been wrought by dames of  
yore,  
Whose skill in arms and letters spreads their praise  
Throughout the world to these far-distant days !

Ver. 1. *In fields of battle, &c.*] This introduction seems to have been copied and enlarged by Spenser in his *Fairy Queen*.

Where is the antique glory now become,  
That whilom wont in women to appear ?  
Where be the brave achievements done by some ?  
Where be the battles, where the shield and spear ? &c.

Book III. C. iv. St. 1.

Camilla and Harpalice, renown'd 5  
 In hardy camps, with wreaths unfading crown'd,  
 And Sappho and Corinna, held so high  
 For Learning's-sacred gifts, shall never die.  
 Oppos'd to man, behold the beauteous race,  
 In every science, our renown efface; 10  
 And each, who turns the leaf of story past,  
 Shall undiminish'd see their honours last.

Ver. 5. *Camilla and Harpalice*,—] Camilla, queen of the Volscians, a female warrior, who came to the assistance of Turnus, and was treacherously slain by Aruns. See VIRGIL's *Æn.* vii. xi. Harpalice was a warlike virgin of Thrace, who, when the Getæ, a people of Scythia, had made her father prisoner, collected together a body of troops with great celerity, suddenly attacked the enemy, cut a great number to pieces, and set her father at liberty.

Ver. 7. — *Sappho and Corinna*,—] Sappho, a well-known poetess, born at Lesbos. See her Epistle to Phaon, in OVID. There were three of the name of Corinna, all skilled in letters. One was of Thebes, one of Thespis, and the third of Corinth. The last lived at the time, and is supposed to have been the favourite of Ovid; but the most famous was she who, in a trial of poetry, conquered the great poet Pindar. Her glory seems to have been fully established by the public memorial of her picture exhibited in her native city, and adorned with a symbol of her victory. Pausanias, who saw it, supposes her to have been one of the handsomest women of her age. Time has left us only a few scraps of Corinna's poetry.

Though

Though such examples seem of late to fail,  
Not always evil influence shall prevail,  
When those, whose writings should their worth reveal,  
Through ignorance or envy oft conceal : 16  
Yet, in our times, I see with joyful eyes  
Such countless virtues in the sex arise,  
As well may claim the pen and faithful page  
To hand them down to every future age. 20  
Then slanderers' tongues no more with canker'd speech  
Shall taint those glories which they cannot reach ;  
But to such height shall soar the female name,  
As even to leave behind Marphisa's fame.

To her we now return—The dame address'd 25  
The courteous knight, and answer'd his request.  
Eager to know the youth, she soon reveal'd  
In few her dreadful name, till then conceal'd :  
Marphisa am I call'd—no more she said,  
For Fame through every realm the rest had spread. 30  
The stranger then—All here, I trust, may know  
The glorious stock to which my birth I owe !  
Not only France, and Spain, each neighbouring land,  
But Æthiop, Ind, and Pontus' frozen strand,  
Have heard of Clarmont's far-resounding name, 35  
Whence the bold knight \* who flew Almontes came ;

\* ORLANDO.

## 6 ORLANDO FURIOSO. B. XX.

And he \*, by whom the fierce Mambrino slain  
 (His kingdom laid in ruin) press'd the plain.  
 That blood I boast—and near the Euxine waves,  
 Where I sther with his streams the region laves, 40  
 To Amon's duke (who on that fated shore  
 His wanderings ended) me Constantia bore.  
 One year has roll'd, since her, in sorrow lost,  
 I left to seek my friends on Gallia's coast :  
 But, 'midst the voyage, rose a stormy wind, 45  
 And hither drove me from the port design'd.  
 Ten months have past, since here detain'd I mourn  
 The lingering hours, and curse each day's return.  
 Guido the Savage, am I call'd—a name  
 Scarce yet recorded on the list of fame. 50

Here,

\* RINALDO.

Ver. 49. *Guido the Savage*,—] This character appears to have been introduced by Ariosto, as no such name occurs in Boyardo. Spenser has a knight with the appellation of " Savage Knight," which seems given him not from any reproach, but merely to express a disposition inured to hardy feats, and stranger to the softness of a court.

It was a goodly swain, and of great might,  
 But in vain shews, that wont young knights bewitch,  
 And courtly services, took no delight.

It was, to weet, the good Sir Satyrane,  
 That rang'd abroad, to seek adventures wild,

As

Here, with his ten compeers, in listed field,  
 I Angelon of Melibæa kill'd. *never*

Next the soft conflict with the dames I try'd,  
 And now ten wedded partners grace my side,  
 Whom, fairest, gentlest of the female band, 55  
 I chose, and rule with uncontroll'd command.  
 Thus shall he fare, whom, on the fated day,  
 Prevailing Fortune gives the ten to slay.

The warriors question'd Guido, whence so few  
 The males appear'd, and why the female crew 60  
 Each husband to their sovereign will compell'd,  
 When males in other lands dominion held?  
 Then Guido answer'd—Often while detain'd  
 I here have liv'd, I heard the cause explain'd,  
 And what I heard, shall tell, since you demand. 65 } }

As was his wont, in forest and in plain.  
 He was all arm'd in rugged steel, unfit'd,  
 As in the smoky forge it was compit'd,  
 And in his scutcheon bore a satyr's head.

FAIRY QUEEN, B. III. C. vii. St. 29.

Again, in another place.

— On his shield was writ,  
 “ Selvagge fans finesse,” shewing secret wit.

This explanation may serve for Ariosto, who has assigned no reason for giving this name to Guido.

## ORLANDO FURIOSO. B. XX.

Now twice ten years elaps'd, the Grecian bands  
From Troy return'd to view their native lands,  
(Ten years the siege endur'd, as many tost  
On adverse seas, they rov'd from coast to coast)  
Arriv'd, they found their wives, who vainly try'd 70  
To bear such absence, had their place supply'd  
With young gallants, whom to their love they led,  
No more to freeze in a forsaken bed.  
The Grecians finding with another's breed  
Their dwellings fill'd, by joint consent agreed 75  
T' excuse th' offence ; for each well knew his wife  
Could ne'er so long forget the nuptial life :  
But the sad children, born of lawless love,  
Must exil'd thence a vagrant fortune prove ;  
Nor would the husbands so entail disgrace, 80  
To nourish, at their cost, a spurious race.  
Some were expos'd, and some with better fate  
Their mothers kept conceal'd to man's estate.  
Some, from their native feats, in various bands,  
As chance directed, rov'd to foreign lands. 85  
Some arms pursu'd ; some chose the student's toil ;  
Some follow'd arts ; some plough'd the rustic soil :  
These liv'd in courts ; those serv'd the herds to rear ;  
As best it seem'd to her \* who governs here.

\* FORTUNE.

Departing

Departing with the rest, a youth was seen, 90  
 Of Clytemnestra born, the cruel queen ;  
 His age eighteen, and fresh in bloom as flowers  
 The lily fair, or newly-gather'd rose.  
 He, in a ship, with all provision stor'd,  
 For wealth and prey each creek and coast explor'd. 95  
 A hundred like himself compos'd his band,  
 With care selected from the Grecian land.  
 The Cretans, that Idomeneus expell'd,  
 The wretched fire who Crete's dominion held,  
 And next, collecting arms and troops, prepar'd 100  
 Their new establish'd state from foes to guard,  
 Engag'd Phalantus (so the youth was nam'd)  
 With ample stipends, as his merits claim'd,  
 To serve their soldier, while his comrades all  
 With him they join'd to guard Dictamnum's wall. 105  
 A hundred cities grac'd the Cretan lands,  
 But chief above the rest Dictamnum stands,

Ver. 99. *The wretched fire—*] Idomeneus, king of Crete, having vowed, in case he returned in safety from the siege of Troy, to offer up the first object that presented itself, was met by his own son, whom, to keep his vow, he caused to be sacrificed. His subjects, struck with the barbarity of the action, banished him from his kingdom. See the whole story in *Telemachus*, Book ii.

Wealthy

Wealthy and fair, renown'd for amorous dames  
Of lovely form, for pleasures, sports, and games.

The dames, accustom'd kindly to receive 110  
Each foreign guest, to these such welcome give,  
That little wanted to the Grecian train  
O'er ev'ry house to hold their boundless reign.  
Vigorous as fair, the youths their ardour prove  
In blending raptures, as in kindling love. 115  
To win the fair a few short days suffic'd,  
Till these o'er every joy their lovers priz'd.

Now peace restor'd, Phalantus was releas'd  
From warlike cares; the soldier's labour ceas'd;  
And every hope of future stipends o'er, 120  
The youths decreed to quit the Cretan shore.  
The mourning females tears incessant shed,  
As if they view'd their dearest parents dead:  
Full oft apart they urg'd them to remain;  
But when they found each fond entreaty vain, 125  
Resolv'd with them the voyage to partake,  
Their brothers, sires, and children they forsake,  
While from her home each bears, by wary stealth,  
Rich gems of price, and countless sums of wealth;  
And with such secret care her dwelling leaves, 130  
That not a man of Crete their flight perceives.

B. XX. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 11

So prosperous was the hour, so swift the wind,  
So well Phalantus had their course design'd,  
That many a league his vessel plough'd the tide,  
Ere those of Crete their heavy los's descry'd. 135

At length this fated strand, then scarcely prest

By foot of mortals, gave the wanderers rest.

Securely here they stay'd, and here awhile  
At leisure weigh'd the profits of their guile.

Ten days to them this region seem'd a seat 140

Of amorous pleasures, and a blest retreat :

But, as it oft befalls, the fullest joy,

In youthful bosoms, sooner tends to cloy ;

All now agreed to free them from the charge

Of female mates, and live again at large. 145

For fickle man ill brooks the heavy lot,

To keep the woman when the love's forgot !

Eager of rapine, ready to contend

For ravag'd wealth, but little prone to spend,

They saw a troop, so numerous and so fair, 150

Requir'd far other than a soldier's care.

For this, their wretched partners they forsook,

And, loaded with their spoils, their course they took

To where, in Puglia, near the sea-beat shores,

They founded fair Tarentum's future towers. 155

The

The dames, abandon'd on a desert coast,  
Betray'd by those in whom they trusted most,  
Along the sands some days in silent grief  
Like statues stood ; but finding no relief  
From plaints or tears, they turn'd them to debate 160  
What means might best relieve their hapless state :  
When, what her thoughts suggested, each disclos'd :  
Some to regain their native Crete propos'd,  
And rather dare the worst they might engage  
From a wrong'd husband, or a father's rage, 165  
Than hid in deserts or in forests lie,  
With want to linger, or with famine die.  
Some said, they never to such shame would bend,  
But rather, plung'd in seas, their being end ;  
And urg'd it better far, with honour lost, 170  
Though poor, or slaves, to rove from coast to coast,  
Than willing victims, to their native clime  
Returning, meet the sentence of their crime.  
Such wretched thoughts, and still more wretched,  
rose  
In every breast, from sense of present woes. 175  
At length a female, Oronthea nam'd,  
Stood forth, who kindred from king Minos claim'd:

The

The youngest, fairest of the beauteous band,  
Less guilty she, of all who left the land,  
To brave Phalantus had her virgin charms 180  
Resign'd, and fled for him her parents' arms.

Now while her speech and outward looks express'd  
The indignation of a generous breast,  
She first condemn'd what each had singly mov'd,  
Then urg'd that counsel which the rest approv'd. 185

She will'd them there to dwell, for there they found  
A wholesome air, and fields with plenty crown'd ;  
Clear silver streams that through the country stray'd,  
Rich spreading meads, and forests thick with shade ;  
Fair ports and bays, that from the stormy wave 190  
To wandering seamen ready shelter gave ;  
That now from Afric, now from Egypt brought  
Their barks, with every store and treasure fraught.  
She urg'd them there t' abide, and for the sake  
Of those who wrong'd them, heavy vengeance take  
On all the sex ; and every vessel tost 196  
By tempests, driven to shelter on the coast,  
Pillage and burn, assail with fire and steel,  
Nor let a single life their mercy feel.

Thus counsell'd she—till all alike inflam'd 200  
With cruel thoughts, the new-made law proclaim'd.

When

When winds fore-run a storm, the desperate train  
 Of females, arm'd, rush headlong to the main :  
 Their fury ruthless Oronthea guides,  
 Who, made their queen, above the rest presides. 205  
 Whate'er devoted strangers touch the strand,  
 But 'scape the seas to perish by the hand  
 Of mad revenge, where fire and sword affail,  
 Till not a wretch remains to tell the tale.  
 Thus some few years the widow'd females show 210  
 A settled hate of man, their mortal foe.  
 But, should they still persist, they soon must find  
 Certain destruction hovering o'er their kind.  
 Should no young offspring from themselves descend,  
 Their state, their name, their vengeance soon must  
 end, 215

Which to remotest times they labour'd to extend.  
 Their rigour then relax'd, and every crew  
 Explor'd with care that to their region drew  
 In four succeeding years ; from these, at length,  
 Ten knights they chose, of manly form and strength ;  
 Whose youthful vigour, bred in amorous games, 221  
 Suffic'd to meet in love their hundred dames.  
 A hundred form'd their whole, and every ten  
 One husband claim'd : but e'er the chosen men

Their

Their safety found, what numbers lost their life ! 225  
All found unequal to the arduous strife.  
The ten, in trial well approv'd, they take,  
And partners of their bed and kingdom make ;  
But swear them first, that every wanderer led,  
Of every rank, those hapless shores to tread, 230  
Without distinction by their swords should fall,  
And one remorseless slaughter swallow all.

The dames, now pregnant grown, began with  
fear

To view the day of their delivery near,  
Left in succeeding time the numbers born 235  
Of issue male, should hold their law in scorn ;  
And they, at length, behold in evil hour  
To hated man revert their darling power.  
For this they sought such danger to repel,  
Ere years had taught their children to rebel 240  
And threat their freedom ; hence a law decreed  
The mother's care one only male should breed.  
Their new-born sons from shore to shore they sent,  
With charge to those who thus commission'd went,  
T' exchange the boys for girls in distant lands, 245  
Or not, at least, return with empty hands.

Nor

Nor had the dames in mere compassion spar'd  
A single man, save but their herds to guard,  
And keep alive their name ; and thus was shown  
Their law's stern mercy to themselves alone ! 250  
All others felt its rage, one only grace  
The strangers found, that when they reach'd the  
place

They fell not all at once beneath this cruel race.  
If ten, if twenty, or if more arriv'd,  
In chains they lay, of liberty depriv'd ; 255  
Whence every day was drawn, by fate decreed,  
A wretch devoted in the fane to bleed ;  
Where, in the midst, by Oronthea rear'd,  
A dreadful altar to Revenge appear'd ;  
While, nam'd by lot, one held the ready knife, 260  
To shed, in sacrifice, his comrade's life.

Long years had past, when to th' inhuman shore  
A noble youth his luckless fortune bore ;  
From great Alcides' stock his birth he claim'd,  
In arms experienc'd, and Elbanio nam'd. 265  
Him, careless of a foe, and unprepar'd,  
At once they seiz'd, and with a numerous guard,  
With all his crew, detain'd in cruel thrall,  
Sad victims destin'd by their laws to fall.

B. XX. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 17

Fair was the youth, of semblance rarely seen, 270  
Of graceful carriage and commanding mien ;  
So from his lips the honey'd accents broke,  
That venom'd asps might listen while he spoke.  
From fame the news of his arrival caught,  
To Alexandra's gentle ear was brought ; 275  
Fair Alexandra, born of her who sway'd  
The sceptre still, though now with years decay'd :  
Still Oronthea liv'd, but none surviv'd,  
Save her alone, of all that first arriv'd ;  
While, as their years increas'd, the female crew 280  
Increas'd in strength, and in dominion grew.

Ten knights, renown'd for deeds of arms atchiev'd,  
With hostile welcome, all that came, receiv'd.  
Now Alexandra, eager to behold  
A youth whose praise report so loudly told, 285  
To Oronthea her request preferr'd,  
And saw Elbanio, and his converse heard.  
But when she sought to go, her virgin heart  
Felt the first throbbing of an amorous smart.  
In vain she struggled : she at length remain'd 290  
A helpless prisoner by her captive chain'd.  
Elbanio then—O fairest of thy kind !  
If pity here could e'er reception find,

Pity, which dwells where'er the sun display'd  
Gives tints to objects, and gives light to shade, 295  
Fain would I now (by those transcendent charms  
Whose powerful influence every gazer warms)  
From thee request my life, that what I owe  
To thee prolong'd, for thee I might bestow :  
But if dire fury here the virgin steals      300  
To each soft passion human nature feels,  
I ask not life—such hopes I know are vain,  
But let me yet a warrior's right obtain.

Whate'er my fate—O ! give me but to wield  
My glorious arms, and die with spear and shield ! 305  
Not like some criminal whom laws arraign,  
Or brutal beast before the altar slain.

Fair Alexandra, in whose lovely eyes  
Compassion pleaded for the youth, replies.

Though savage is our land, more cruel known 310  
Than every realm, yet think not I shall own  
Each woman a Medea,—were the mind  
Of all our females in destruction join'd,  
Yet I alone would rise above my kind :  
Or if, like many a soul with fury steel'd,  
I seem'd till now unknowing how to yield, 315

Till

B. XX. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 19

Till thy arrival here, perchance there came  
No stranger that might equal favour claim.  
But sure some tigress has my soul inflam'd,  
And more than adamant my bosom fram'd ; 320  
If when I view thy valour, form, and age,  
Compassion chace not all vindictive rage.

O ! would to Heaven I might as well arrest  
Th' inhuman law that binds each wretched guest,  
As freely now my death I would receive, 325  
And, with my own, thy better life reprieve !  
But here no rank avails to break thy chain,  
And what thou ask'st, though little, hard to gain :  
Yet all I can, expect—while much I dread  
New sufferings hang o'er thy devoted head ! 330

Let me but meet (Elbanio thus rejoin'd)  
The ten in arms—so firm my heart I find,  
I trust t' escape with life the bloody fray,  
And every foe, though trebly arm'd, to slay.

To this the virgin-fair made no reply. 335  
But from her bosom drew a tender sigh.  
She went, and parting, in her heart she found  
A thousand shafts, and each a curseless wound ;  
Then sought her mother, and with earnest prayer  
Inclin'd the queen the noble youth to spare ; 340

On this condition, that in lifted fight  
The ten should perish by his single might.

Queen Oronthea then the female train  
To council call'd, and thus her speech began.

From every crew whom chance may hither send, 346  
We still should place the bravest to defend

Our port and shores : by trial must we chuse,

What fits our wants to take, and what refuse,

Lest, to our wrong, the coward soul should rise

To reign amongst us, while the valiant dies. 350

If with my judgment, you, O friends! agree,

Let us henceforth a sovereign law decree,

That every knight, by fortune hither led,

Fire in the dreadful fane his blood we shed,

Shall (in such compact if he dares engage) 355

At once with ten the combat singly wage;

And should he conquer all, he, with a train  
Of chosen others, shall our guard maintain.

Thus far I speak, since in our prison lies

A captive, who to battle ten defies. 360

Should he their equal prove—forbid it Heaven!—

But to such worth some favour should be given :

Or should he fail in what he rashly dares,

He meets the punishment himself prepares.

Thus

B. XX. ORLANDO FURIOSO.

21

Thus Oronthea to the council said,

365

When from the eldest one this answer made.

Th' important cause whence we to change began

Our first design, and commerce hold with man,

Was not to guard our state from foreign bands;

For this our constant souls, our valiant hands, 370

Might well suffice—O ! could we but extend

Our race as well, which time, alas ! must end

Without the help of man—and hence we make

Our choice of youths, but only one we take

To wed ten dames, lest man the sovereign sway 375

From us should rend, and we in turn obey.

We need not males our empire to defend,

But must for progeny on these depend.

In this alone their prowess we require,

Nor other aid, nor other task desire.

380

To keep a chief whose nervous limbs combine

The strength of ten, must frustrate our design.

If such a troop his single arm can slay,

How many women shall he hold at bay ?

Were such our present ten, one fatal hour

385

Had to themselves transferr'd the ruling power.

Ill suits it us, who wish to hold command,

T' entrust our weapons in a stranger's hand.

Grant that thy boasted youth so far succeed,  
 That by his arm our chosen ten should bleed ; 390  
 A hundred women, widow'd by his sword,  
 Shall see their husbands' deaths with tears deplo'rd :  
 Then, should he 'scape with life, let him fulfil  
 Far other task than ten brave youths to kill :  
 If with a hundred dames he will supply 395  
 The place of those they mourn, he shall not die.

Artemia thus her cruel thoughts display'd,  
 (So was she nam'd) and had her counsel sway'd,  
 Elbanio, in the temple's dire abodes,  
 Had fall'n a victim to th' infernal gods. 400  
 But Oronthea, with a mother's love,  
 Reply'd, and every hearer's mind to move,  
 Such reasons urg'd, that most, with one consent,  
 Their suffrage yielded for the queen's content.  
 Elbanio's matchless graces deep imprest, 405  
 With powerful charm in every youthful breast,  
 Against those elders weigh'd, whose ruthless mind  
 With fierce Artemia's rigorous sentence join'd,  
 T' enforce their ancient law ; while some agreed  
 (No terms premis'd) Elbanio should be freed. 410  
 At length 'twas fix'd, the youth should grace obtain,  
 When in the list his arm the ten had slain ;

And next, not with a hundred consorts try'd  
A husband's fondness, but with ten supply'd.

Th' ensuing day, to liberty restor'd, 415  
The knight receiv'd his armour, steed, and sword :  
Alone against the warrior ten he stood,  
And one by one he shed their vital blood :  
At night, to show in Cupid's school his art,  
With ten fair dames he play'd the lover's part; 420  
Who, taught by him connubial joys to prove,  
All rose experienc'd votaries of love.

For this the youth with Oronthea won  
Such added grace, she chose him for her son,  
And gave him Alexandra's charms to wed; 425  
With her the other nine, all whom he led,  
Ten virgins late, to share his genial bed.  
She left the youth with Alexandra fair,  
(From whom the land was nam'd) her kingdom's  
heir,

On this condition, that his future reign 430  
Might still this statute through the realm maintain ;  
That every wanderer there should lose his life,  
Or meet ten warriors in unequal strife ;  
Those could he first in dangerous combat foil,  
Then find, with ten fair dames, his fortune smile; 435

O'er these he should preside, and at his will  
 Dismiss his consorts, or their places fill ;  
 And hold the sway, till to the land arriv'd  
 Some foreign knight that him of life depriv'd.

Two thousand years have roll'd, since first was  
 plann'd 440

This hateful law, and still it rules the land.  
 Few days elapse, but, for a sacrifice,  
 Some hapless stranger in the temple dies.  
 Oft when, as chance directs, a fearless knight  
 Dares, like Elbanio, arm him for the fight, 445  
 Before th' opponent's foot his life he lays,  
 And, ah ! how rare the second proof essays :  
 Such have been found, but such so rare befel,  
 That on the fingers we their names may tell.

Of these was Argillan—but little space 450  
 He with his wives maintain'd the sovereign place ;  
 For hither driven by tempests from the deep,  
 I clos'd his eyes in everlasting sleep.  
 O had I shar'd that day his envy'd death,  
 And not prolong'd in bonds a shameful breath ! 455

Ver. 449. *That on the fingers, &c.—*] A ludicrous expression, to denote how few adventurers had been successful in their trial with the Amazons. The words are literal from the Italian.

Gay

Gay pleasures, smiling sports, and amorous toys;  
 Each soft delight that youth like mine employs;  
 Rich vests and jewels that the person grace;  
 And, 'midst his peers, pre-eminence of place,  
 Heaven knows avail but little him, who crost 460  
 By envious Fortune, has his freedom lost !

Ah! wretch! that while I thus my bonds deplore,  
 Must never hope to quit this hateful shore !  
 To see vile sloth my fairest flower destroy  
 In prime of life, embitters every joy. 465

The fame of Clarmont wide her wings extends  
 To highest heaven from earth's remotest ends !  
 O! to my brethren's could I join my name,  
 My deeds with theirs might honour's portion claim !  
 Hard is my lot, condemn'd a life to lead 470

In such vile service, like the wretched steed,  
 That blind, or lame, or with enfeebled force,  
 Unfit for battle or the dusty course,  
 Is, with his fellow-brutes that turn the soil,  
 Condemn'd to every task of servile toil ! 475  
 Since death alone from such detested thrall  
 Can set me free, on welcome death I call.

Here Guido clos'd his tale, and curs'd the day  
 That gave him o'er the land detested sway ;

Gave

Gave him from either field the prize to bear, 480  
To slay the champions, and to please the fair.

Astolpho silent stood, awhile conceal'd,  
Till now by many a certain mark reveal'd,  
In him his kinsman Guido well he knew, 484  
Who by an alien's bed his birth from Amon drew.

Then thus—Behold the English duke confess'd,  
Thy own Astolpho here—he said, and press'd  
The youthful champion with a close embrace,  
While tears of pleasure trickled down his face.  
What proof so certain could we here receive? 490  
What proof, dear kinsman, could thy mother leave  
To speak thy birth, like what thy sword has shown  
In glorious fight, to stamp thee for our own?

Guido in every land, save this, had view'd,  
With joyful greeting, one so near in blood; 495  
But saw him now with grief, since well he knew,  
The conquest his, destruction must ensue  
To England's noble knight; Astolpho freed  
From fear of death or chains, himself must bleed;  
Where this good fortune finds, to that must ill suc- }  
ceed. 500 } } }

He mourn'd, that when his arm had won the fight,  
Eternal bonds must wait each hapless knight;

Nor

Nor (should he perish in the doubtful strife),  
Could each in freedom better hold his life.  
If in the first their champion's arms prevail, 505  
A female in the second field must fail.  
Molphisa hence would conquer him in vain,  
When victim she must fall, and captives they remain.  
No less the valour of the generous youth,  
His early manhood, and heroic truth, 510  
Such pity kindled in Molphisa's breast,  
Such thoughts inspir'd in every valiant guest,  
That freedom which his death alone could give,  
On terms like these they wish'd not to receive ;  
And if Molphisa with his life must buy 515  
Her comrades' safety, she with him would die.

To Guido then—Unite thee to our band,  
And let us quit by force this hated land.  
Such hopes, alas ! are fruitless (he reply'd),  
Our combat only must our fate decide. 520  
Then she—This heart through fear shall never shun  
The glorious task my arms have thus begun :  
Nor know I any safer means to try,  
Than what my sword and own right hand supply.  
Such in the battle have I prov'd thy might, 525  
With thee I dare the most unequal fight.

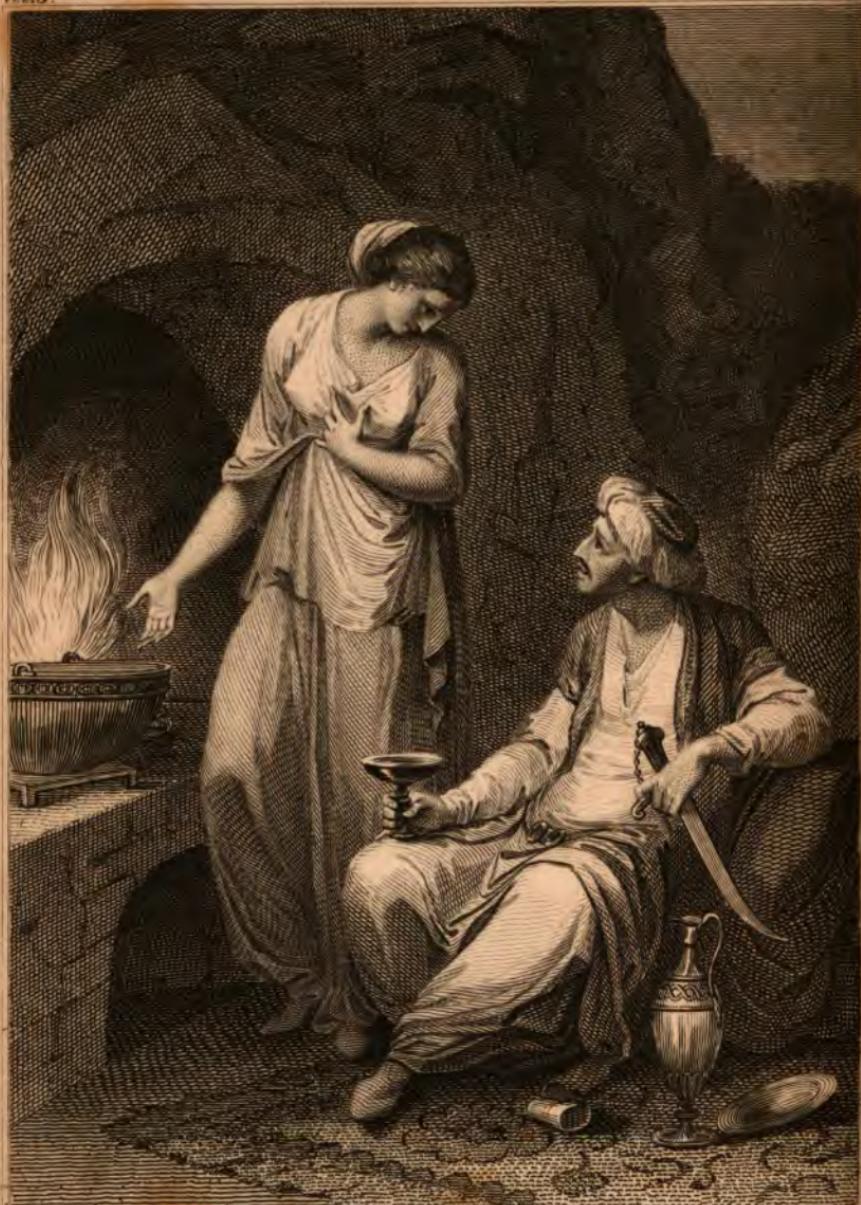
When,

When, on to-morrow's fun, the vulgar crew  
 Shall throng the theatre our joust to view,  
 Let us on all our deathful rage dispense,  
 On those that fly, and those that make defence; 530  
 To wolves and vultures cast their bodies dead,  
 And see the flames on all their city spread.

Behold me ready (fearless Guido cry'd)  
 To join thy arms, and perish by thy side :  
 But never must we hope with life to fly; 535  
 Suffice that unreveng'd we shall not die.  
 Oft have I told, of this inhuman race,  
 Ten thousand females in the crowded space ;  
 As many guard the castle, walls, and strand,  
 That none, unquestion'd, can depart the land. 540

To whom Marphisa—Be their numbers more  
 Than Xerxes muster'd on the Grecian shore :  
 Than those rebellious spirits, justly driven  
 To endless pains from blissful seats of heaven,

Ver. 543. *Than those rebellious spirits,—*] Some critics have condemned Ariosto for making Marphisa, a Pagan (or rather Mahometan), allude to the fate of the angels, one of the traditions of the Christian church: but to this it may be answered, that the Mahometan religion has adopted many tenets of the Mosaic and Christian faith; and that, among others, the Koran refers to the rebellion in heaven. RUSCELLI.



Angelica Kauffmann Del.

Amor Smith Sculp.

Be thou my aid—at least, assist not those; 545  
 One day shall see me rout this host of foes.

Then Guido—Hear what haply may prevail,  
 All other means are vain if this should fail:  
 Know none but females ever make resort  
 To view the harbour or frequent the port. 550  
 Of all my wives, in one I chief confide,  
 By many a proof of long affection try'd.  
 Alike with me, would she desire to break  
 My slavish bonds, could she my flight partake;  
 So from her rivals might she hope to prove 555  
 The single partner of my future love:  
 She in the bay, ere morn has clear'd the air  
 From murky shade, a pinnace shall prepare,  
 Which, amply stor'd, your mariners shall find,  
 To plough the deep and catch the favouring wind.  
 You close behind my guiding steps pursue, 561  
 Knights, merchants, seamen, (a determin'd crew)  
 United firmly; every welcome guest  
 That here has deign'd beneath my roof to rest.  
 Should aught oppose to intercept our course, 565  
 Your arms and valour must a passage force;  
 And thus, I trust, with spear and sword in hand,  
 To set you free from this detested land.

Act as thou wilt (Molphisa thus reply'd),  
 I for my safety in myself confide. 570

First by this trusty weapon's edge shall fall  
 Each foe inclos'd within this fatal wall,  
 Ere any eye behold me flying here,  
 Or aught that in this bosom argues fear :  
 Let me, with dint of arms, by day depart ; 575  
 All other ways ill suit the dauntless heart.  
 Yet were my sex disclos'd, a woman's name  
 Would fair regard from every female claim.  
 Here might I dwell esteem'd in highest grace,  
 And 'midst their senate hold an honour'd place; 580  
 But since with these I came, with these to share  
 One common fortune is alone my care ;  
 Nor would I poorly freedom here retain,  
 Or hence depart while these in bonds remain.

Molphisa thus, and by her words made known, 585  
 That more her comrades' safety than her own  
 Restrain'd her ardour ; lest on them should fall  
 Those mischiefs, which she sought t' avert from all.  
 Else had she loosen'd on the female kind  
 Her generous wrath ; but now with cooler mind  
 To Guido's conduct she the day resign'd. 591 }  
 Guido,

Guido, by night, his faithful dame address'd,  
 Aleria, of his consorts lov'd the best :  
 Nor needed much to move her gentle mind  
 To second what her dearest lord design'd. 595  
 A ship she chose with due provisions stor'd,  
 And all her wealthiest treasures plac'd on board ;  
 Then, with her comrades, feign'd at morning break  
 In search of spoil a venturous cruize to make.  
 Meanwhile, beneath her roof she bade prepare 600  
 Spears, bucklers, swords, each implement of war ;  
 With these against th' unnumber'd foes to stand,  
 To arm the merchants and the sailor band.  
 All night, against surprize, the guard they keep,  
 By turns they hold the watch, by turns they sleep ; 605  
 And sheath'd in armour wait, with longing eyes,  
 To see the dawning red in eastern skies.  
 Scarce had the day begun with beamy light  
 To chace from earth the gloomy veil of night ;  
 Scarce had the offspring of Lycaon driven 610  
 The early ploughshare through the fields of heaven,

When

Ver. 610. *Scarce had the offspring of Lycaon—*] By the offspring of Lycaon, the poet means Arcas, son of Calisto, and grandson of Lycaon, said to be placed among the stars, and

When in the theatre the female throng,  
 To view the combat, pour'd in heaps along :  
 Thus o'er the threshold of their peopled hive,  
 When spring returns, the bees in clusters drive. 615  
 With trumpets, drums, and horns, that echo'd  
 round,  
 The tumult thickens ; earth and skies resound ;  
 While thus their lord they summon'd to the fight,  
 To end his battle with the stranger knight.

In armour Guido, Sansonetto came, 620  
 Gryphon, and Aquilant, the martial dame\*,  
 With England's duke †; and next a mingled crowd,  
 Some march'd on foot, and some the steed bestrode.  
 From Guido's dwelling, to the port and bay,  
 Their passage through the list of combat lay : 625  
 Thus said the youth, and urg'd the valiant crew  
 His bold example fearless to pursue.

\* MARPHISA.

† ASTOLPHO.

and called Boëtes. He is feigned by the poets to be a husbandman in heaven, and to drive the northern wain, here, perhaps, by rather a forced construction, supposed to have been a plough.

See OVID. Met. B. II.

Ver. 618. *While thus their lord, &c.*] By this is meant Guido, who, as the poet tells us, for his singular valour had obtained a kind of sovereignty over the Amazons.

Silent

Silent he led them on, resolv'd to dare  
 The dreadful trial in the public square.  
 He enter'd now, a hundred in his train, 630  
 And eager strove the adverse gate to gain ;  
 In vain he strove, while countless throngs inclos'd,  
 And with their glittering arms his course oppos'd.

Soon as they saw him head his following band, 634  
 They deem'd he meant with those to leave the land :  
 At once they seiz'd their bows, their shafts prepar'd,  
 And swiftly rush'd the portal's pass to guard.  
 Guido, his bold compeers with dauntless breast,  
 But chief Marphisa, brave above the rest,  
 Forget not now their dreadful swords to ply, 640  
 And every means to force the passage try.  
 But now so thick the arrows rain around,  
 That wounded some, some lifeless press the ground.  
 Deep, and more deep, th' unequal conflict grows,  
 Till valour shrinks before such hosts of foes : 645  
 In happy time each warrior's temper'd arms  
 Defend his bosom from invading harms.  
 Beneath him Sansonetto's steed is slain,  
 And near him falls Marphisa's on the plain :  
 Then thus Astolpho thought—What dangerous hour  
 Can better claim my horn's subduing power ? 651

Since all our fwords avail not—let us prove  
If this, as wont, can every fear remove.

Thus he ; and to his mouth the horn applies ;  
The earth resounds, and echoes rend the skies. 655  
Each startled breast is seiz'd with sudden fright,  
Each ready foot is turn'd to speedy flight ;  
These from their seats aghast and trembling fall,  
Those undefended leave the gates and wall.

As, when deep slumber every eyelid seals, 660  
Where, by degrees, the flame close lurking steals  
From beam to beam, till all around it preys ;  
Sudden awaken'd in the fiery blaze,  
From room to room the shrieking wretches fly,  
From roofs and windows leap, while from on high }  
Some 'scape by falling, some by falling die. 666 }  
Thus, careless of her life, and wild with fear,  
Each flies the sound that thunders in her ear.  
At every gate at once a thousand press ;  
Heaps fall on heaps ; the driving throngs increase,  
And choak the passage: numbers trod beneath 671  
Are slain ; and numbers meet untimely death,  
From gates or ramparts cast : one sudden dies ;  
One, with crush'd limbs, a lingering victim lies !

Dire

Dire is the tumult, mingled cries ascend, 675  
 And loud laments the starry regions rend.  
 Where'er the horn is heard, they speed their pace ;  
 Nor wonder if the vile ignoble race  
 With coward looks and panting hearts appear,  
 Since nature forms the dastard hare to fear : 680  
 But how of bold Marphisa shall I tell ?  
 Of Guido Savage, prov'd in fight so well ?  
 Of Olivero's \* sons, whose martial praise  
 Such lasting honours to their house could raise :  
 Who late whole armies view'd with fearless eye, 685  
 And now, bereft of courage, trembling fly ?  
 They fly like timorous doves, or helpless deer,  
 What time some strange approaching noise they hear.  
 To every friend and foe alike is found  
 The spelful terror of the magic sound : 690  
 Guido the brave, and Sansonetto, yield ;  
 The brethren \*, and Marphisa lately steel'd  
 To every chance, attempt to shun in vain  
 The fearful din which still their ears retain.  
 Meantime Astolpho through the city goes, 695  
 And with new breath his horn terrific blows.

\* GRYPHON and AQUILANT.

D 2

One

One gains the sea ; one climbs the mountain's side,  
And one in gloomy forests seeks to hide.

Some traverse many a league of country o'er,  
And some review their native seats no more : 700  
While some t' escape from land would stem the wave,  
And find in ruthless seas a watery grave.

Each house, or dome, is now an empty space,  
And all the city shows a desert place.

Morphisa, Guido bold, the brethren two, 705  
Gryphon and Aquilant, their flight pursue ;  
With these the merchants, and the sailor-train,  
In equal terror throng the beaten plain ;  
And now they come, where near the castle rides  
A vessel which Aleria's care provides : 710  
With speed embarking, they forsake the shore,  
Hoist every sail, and bend to every oar.

The city clear'd, Astolpho seeks the strand,  
In hopes again to join his social band.  
Now here, now there he turns, but views in vain 715  
Th' abandon'd port, till casting tow'rs the main  
His eager eyes, at distance far he sees  
The vessel sail before the favouring breeze !  
Forsaken thus, he other thoughts revolves  
To quit the realm ; and many a scheme resolves. 720

But

B. XX. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 37

But let him go, nor heed though thus we make  
The gentle duke his lonely journey take  
Through barbarous realms, and unbelieving lands,  
Where constant danger constant fear demands.  
Yet wherefore should he fear, whose horn display'd  
In every danger brings resistless aid ? 726

Now let his frightened friends our care divide,  
Who quit the land, and plough th' unstable tide.  
Full swell their sails, till distant from the shore,  
The horn, so late their dread, is heard no more !  
One terror now dispell'd, the fear of blame 731  
In every feature lights the glow of shame :  
They dare not meet their comrades' eyes, but stand  
With down-cast eyes, a mute dejected band.

The pilot, on his course, by Cyprus glides, 735  
By fertile Rhodes, and cuts th' Egean tides.  
A hundred islands vanish from his sight ;  
With these the Malean cape, a dangerous height.  
Then scudding onward, with a steady wind,  
He leaves the Greek Morea far behind. 740  
From Sicily, the Tyrrhene surges crost,  
He sails by Italy's delightful coast ;

Ver. 721. *But let him go, &c.*] He follows him, Book  
xxii. ver. 31.

And now to Luna's wish'd-for port he bends,  
And hails his home and long-forsaken friends ;  
In thanks to Heaven for all his trials o'er, 745  
By storms at sea, and perils on the shore.

The warriors here with bold Marphisa find,  
In happy time, a ship for France design'd.  
The pilot these invites : the willing train  
That day embarking, soon Marseilles they gain. 750

It chanc'd that Bradamant, whose noble hand  
Deputed rul'd, was absent from the land :  
Else had they, by the generous maid detain'd,  
Beneath her friendly roof awhile remain'd.  
They quit the ship—Marphisa bids adieu 755  
To Guido's dame, to all the knightly crew.  
It ill beseem'd, in one same troop (she cry'd)  
To view so many knights of valour try'd :  
While doves and storks are seen together join'd,  
And deer and stags, with all the timorous kind ; 760  
The falcon fierce, the royal eagle's race,  
That ne'er in others hopes of safety place,  
Bears, lions, tigers, beasts that know not fear,  
Unaided still, and single still appear.

Such were her words, tho' not alike they weigh'd  
With all the rest ; but hence the wondrous maid 766

The

The champions leaves, and travels thence, alone,  
 Through unfrequented woods and paths unknown.  
 Gryphon the white, and Aquilant the black,  
 Guido and Sansonetto find the track 770.

That to a castle led, whose courteous lord  
 Gave each a welcome to his bed and board :  
 Courteous at least he seem'd, while each deceiv'd,  
 His plausible words and semblance fair believ'd ;  
 But, soon as sleep at night their eyes oppress'd, 775  
 He seiz'd them while they lay secure at rest ;  
 Nor from the captives would their chains withdraw,  
 Till each had sworn t' observe a cruel law.

But ere we further speak what these befel,  
 The deeds of brave Marphisa let us tell. 780

Druenza past, the Seine and Rhodan's stream,  
 At length she near a lofty mountain came ;  
 There by a flood, with sudden waters swell'd,  
 An aged dame in sable weeds beheld :  
 With travel spent she seem'd, and sore distrest, 785  
 But more with heavy thought than toil opprest.  
 Lo ! this was she, who far from haunts of men,  
 Had liv'd with outlaws in the savage den ;

Ver. 779. *But ere we further speak—*] He returns to these,  
 Book xxii. ver. 372.

Where Heaven the Paladin Orlando drew,  
 To wreak full justice on that impious crew. 790  
 The beldame fearing death (and why such fate  
 She seem'd to fear, the sequel shall relate)  
 Through fields and forests fled remote from sight,  
 And shunn'd to meet the face of hind or knight.  
 She sees the vesture of the martial dame, 795  
 With foreign arms, a stranger born proclaim ;  
 And hence she flies not, as she flies from those  
 Whose garb a warrior of the country shows.  
 Beside the stream she waits, and now she meets  
 Th' approaching knight, and low saluting, greets ;  
 Beaching, on his steed to waft her o'er 801  
 Th' opposing torrent to the further shore.  
 Marphisa, courteous from her earliest years,  
 Across the flood the ancient beldame bears,  
 And, past the ford, disdains not to convey 805  
 Behind her courser, till they pass'd a way  
 Heavy with slough—when clad in armour bright,  
 With trappings rich they met an unknown knight,  
 Gay pacing tow'rds the stream ; with him a dame,  
 And single squire (his sole attendant) came. 810  
 Fair was the dame he brought, but fair in vain,  
 Her haughty carriage cast a deepening stain

On all her beauty, while her scorn and pride  
Seem'd well befitting him that grac'd her side.

This knight was Pinabel, whose treach'ry gave 815  
To Bradamant the fall in Merlin's cave.

His sighs were breath'd, his scalding tears were shed  
For her, whom now beneath his care he led ;  
For her, whom then the magic tower detain'd :  
But when Atlantes' guile no more restrain'd 820  
His captives, freed by brave Dordona's \* dame,  
She, not unmindful of her former flame,  
To Pinabel return'd, and with him still  
Wander'd from tower to tower, o'er forest, dale,  
and hill.

Soon as she view'd Marphisa's aged crone, 825  
The shameless fair, to taunting ever prone,  
No more the venom of her tongue suppress'd,  
But gave full vent to many a scornful jest.  
Then brave Marphisa, little us'd to bear  
Another's insult, or unpunish'd hear, 830  
Inflam'd with anger, to the dame replies :  
His partner should with her dispute the prize  
Of beauty's bloom, with offer on her knight  
To vouch the proof ; and these the terms of fight,

\* BRADAMANT.

That,

That, if o'erthrown her lover pres'd the field, 835  
The damsel should her vest and palfrey yield.

Here Pinabello, rous'd by sense of shame,  
T' accept the challenge and defend his dame,  
His spear and buckler seizing, wheel'd his steed,  
And on Morphisa rush'd with wrathful speed. 840  
Her mighty spear in rest Morphisa held,  
And full on Pinabello's helm impell'd  
The forceful stroke that hurl'd him to the plain,  
Where stunn'd he lay, as number'd with the slain.  
At length he rose; when, victor of the day, 845  
Morphisa from the stranger rent away  
Her glittering ornaments and youthful vest,  
And with the spoils her aged beldame dress'd;  
Then on the palfrey plac'd, which late before,  
With other grace, the haughty damsel bore. 850  
This done, she turn'd, the way with her to hold,  
Who seem'd by dress still more deform'd and old.

Three days they journey'd on, ere aught besel  
In length of travel, worthy here to tell.  
The fourth they met a knight, who, bent on speed,  
With goring rowels urg'd his flying steed: 856  
Zerbino nam'd, the king of Scotland's son,  
For manly beauty fam'd and battles won:

Of

Of vengeance late defrauded on the hand  
 Who dar'd his godlike mercy to withstand. 860  
 In vain Zerbino long incens'd purſu'd  
 The bold offender through the devious wood,  
 Who knew fo well to wind each tangled brake,  
 So well th' advantage of the ground to take,  
 That, shelter'd by surrounding shade, and veil'd 865  
 In misty vapours by the morn exhal'd,  
 He 'scap'd purſuit, resolv'd himself to hide,  
 Till time should bid his prince's wrath ſubſide.

Though ill-dispos'd, Zerbino could not hold  
 From laughter, when he view'd the beldame old, 870  
 Whose youthful habit ſeem'd fo ill to grace  
 Her doating age, and wither'd homely face.  
 Then to Marphifa, prancing at her ſide :  
 'Thy prudence merits praife, Sir Knight (he cry'd)  
 That chusing for thy mate fo fair a dame, 875  
 Thou need'ſt not fear a rival in thy flame.

By fallow hue and wrinkled ſkin appears  
 Th' ill-favour'd hag beyond the Sybil's years.

A gran-

Ver. 860. *Who dar'd his godlike mercy to withstand.*] Alluding to the paſſage in the XIXth book, where Zerbino purſues the knight, one of his company, who wounded Medero.

Ver. 877. —*wrinkled ſkin appears*

*Th' ill-favour'd hag—]* Dolce, the Italian commentator, here gravely observes, that the poet particularly dwells

A grandame ape she looks, in gamesome sort,  
With vesture clad to make the vulgar sport; 880  
Her eyes askance with spite and anger roll'd:  
What hurts a woman more than to be told  
The world intitle her deform'd and old?

The noble maid, here feigning wrath, to try  
What haply might ensue, made this reply. 885

She whom I guard, I swear by Heaven has more  
Of beauty's claim, than thou of courteous lore.  
Thou seem'st to her transcendent graces blind,  
To veil the baseness of thy dastard mind.  
What other knight that here should chance to meet  
A maid so young, in every charm complete, 891  
By one defended, but his strength would prove  
To win in her the sweet reward of love?

So well with thee she suits (Zerbino cries),  
'Twere much injustice to dispute the prize; 895  
Nor shall I, lost to sense, my arms employ  
In such a cause—thou, what thou hast, enjoy.  
Yet, if thou seek'st with me in fight to join,  
On other terms, I shall not this decline.  
But think me not so blinded, for her sake 900  
In listed field a single lance to break.

on this circumstance, to denote the years of Gabrina; and  
sagely concludes, that wrinkles are a mark of old age!

Homely

Homely or fair, with thee she shall abide,  
 Nor will I love, so aptly pair'd, divide :  
 Heaven knows you both are join'd beyond compare,  
 If thou art valiant as the nymph is fair. 905

Morphisa then rejoin'd—In thy despite,  
 To win this damsel must thou prove the fight :  
 Ne'er shalt thou view her beauties with desire,  
 And not to win those peerless charms aspire.

I know not who (Zerbino made reply) 910  
 For such a conquest would the combat try ;  
 Where courting danger with unfruitful pains,  
 The victor loses while the vanquish'd gains.

Since terms like these displease thee, hear me make  
 Another offer which thou well may'st take ; 915  
 (Morphisa answer'd) if in joust to thine  
 My arms submit, this dame shall still be mine ;  
 But, if I conquer, her thou shalt receive ;  
 Thus be our trial who the prize shall leave.  
 Should Fortune bid thee now resign the day, 920  
 'Tis thine to guard her as she points the way.

Agreed—Zerbino said, and speaking, wheel'd  
 His rapid courser to dispute the field :  
 Firm on his stirrups with collected might,  
 He stood; and, to direct his spear aright, 925

Against

Against her buckler drove the pointed wood ;  
 Which, like a mount of steel, the shock withstood ;  
 While she, with better nerve, his helmet found,  
 And instant hurl'd him senseless to the ground.

Zerbino, thus unhors'd, such shame confess'd,  
 As ne'er till then his generous soul depress'd. 931  
 Full many a warrior had his spear before  
 Cast from their seats ; but now, he fears, no more  
 His arm shall clear his fame, while lost in thought,  
 New anguish in his pensive bosom wrought, 935  
 To think henceforth, by sacred promise plight,  
 Himself constrain'd to rest the beldame's knight.

High seated on her steed, the conquering maid  
 Turn'd with a smile—Accept my gift (she said) ;  
 The more I see the dame in beauty shine, 940  
 It joys me more to see such beauty thine.  
 Then, in my place, her champion's charge sustain,  
 Nor let thy faith, so lately pledg'd, be vain.  
 Whate'er she bids, it fits thee to obey,  
 Guide of her fate, and partner of her way. 945

She stay'd not for reply, but left the knight,  
 And soon the forest shut her from his sight.

Ver. 947.—*but her from his sight.*] He returns to Marphisa,  
 Book xxv. ver. 676.

Then

Then to the crone he spoke (for sure he deem'd  
 His conquering foe a warrior as she seem'd)  
 Give me to hear what knight has stain'd my fame?  
 The beldame answer'd, eager to proclaim 951  
 What known would grieve him more—On yonder  
 land

Thou fall'st (she cry'd) beneath a virgin's hand :  
 A virgin, who for valour well may wield  
 The warrior's falchion and the warrior's shield ; 955  
 Who now from Eastern realms, with sword and lance,  
 Is come to prove the Paladins of France.

At this, Zerbino's soul indignant glow'd,  
 While o'er his visage flush'd the changing blood ;  
 Thro' all his frame the deep contagion spread, 960  
 And ev'n his armour seem'd to blush with red.  
 Remounting on his steed, he curs'd in vain  
 The nerves that could not late his seat maintain.  
 The hag in secret smil'd, and every art  
 Of malice try'd t' afflict his generous heart 965  
 With cruel taunts, and bade him call to mind  
 What chance had now to hers his will resign'd.

Zerbino heard abash'd, nor aught reply'd,  
 Constrain'd the worst, like weary steed, t' abide, }  
 That feels the bit in mouth, and rowels at his side. }

In

In frequent sighs he gave his anguish vent: 971  
What dire reverse (he cry'd) has Fortune sent!  
While she, the first in virtue as in charms,  
Untimely torn from these desiring arms,  
Is dash'd on rocks, or given the precious food 975  
Of ravenous fish and fowls that haunt the flood;  
Lo! her, that buried in her earthy bed,  
Should long ere this the hungry worms have fed,  
Thou now preserv'st beyond her loathsome date,  
To add new torments to my wretched state. 980

Thus spoke Zerbino, hapless and forlorn:  
Nor less in words and looks he seem'd to mourn  
His odious mate, by luckless chance acquir'd,  
Than loss of her whom most his soul desir'd.

If still your mind retains what once I told, 985  
This hag was she who left the cavern'd hold,  
Where Isabella, who Zerbino held  
In love's soft bonds, some days a prisoner dwell'd:  
Oft had she there rehears'd her story o'er,  
How first she left her dear paternal shore; 990  
How, shipwreck'd on the seas and shelvy strand,  
She sav'd her life on Rochelle's welcome land.  
Oft would the love-lorn maid delight to tell  
Of lost Zerbino; oft with rapture dwell

On

On every grace: Soon as the beldame nigh 995  
 Had mark'd his mien and face with heedful ey  
 She deem'd in him she view'd the noble youth  
 By Isabella wept with matchless truth ;  
 Whose absence to her soul more sorrow gave  
 Than cruel bondage in the outlaws' cave. 1000

But when she now with fix'd attention heard  
 His words in bitterness of soul preferr'd,  
 She found 'twas he, who, by report misled,  
 His dearest Isabella mourn'd as dead ; 1004  
 And while the truth she knew, with impious spite,  
 T' exclude all gleam of comfort from the knight,  
 What best might raise his hope she kept conceal'd,  
 And what would give him pain alone reveal'd.

Hear thou (she cry'd) from whom I thus have  
 borne

Such haughty carriage, such insulting scorn, 1010  
 Didst thou but think what tidings I could tell  
 Of her on whom thy fond affections dwell,  
 How might'st thou speak me fair—but all in vain  
 Would force or sooth'ing now that secret gain,  
 Which, had thy speech more gentle manners shown,  
 Thou might'st, perchance, discourteous youth, have  
 known. 1016

As the grim mastiff, who with fury threats  
Th' invading robber, soon his rage forgets,  
Whene'er by scent of savoury meat allur'd,  
Or lull'd with spells by magic art procur'd; 1020  
Thus soon Zerbino, with a soften'd air,  
Besought the hag with tears and humble prayer,  
By Gods and men, no longer to conceal  
Whate'er of good or ill she could reveal.

Nought canst thou know, that known would yield  
delight 1025

(Th' unfeeling beldame answer'd to the knight);  
She lives, whom now as dead thy sighs deplore,  
But lives to envy those who live no more!  
Full twenty; not by laws nor faith restrain'd,  
Thy Isabella long in bonds detain'd: 1030  
Then think, should fate restore her to thy arms,  
What hope remains t' enjoy her virgin charms?

Ah! hag accrû'd! (Zerbino made reply)  
How hast thou fram'd a foul detested lye!  
Though twenty might the captive fair detain, 1035  
Not one would dare her spotless honour stain.

Thus he—then question'd when and where she  
view'd

His best belov'd; but she, in sullen mood,

Was,

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Was mute; determin'd to disclose no more,  
Nor add a word to what she told before. 1040  
Zerbino mildly first his speech address'd,  
Then held his threatening weapon to her breast.  
Alike in vain his prayer, his menace prov'd,  
Nor prayer, nor threat, the stubborn beldame mov'd.  
Yet what he heard, he ponder'd deep in thought, 1045  
Till secret fears his jealous torment wrought,  
He burn'd his Isabella's charms to view,  
Through toils to follow, and to death pursue;  
But durst not move without his partner's will,  
Which late Marphisa bound him to fulfil. 1050  
Thence, as she led, through solitary shade  
And unfrequented paths Zerbino stray'd.  
Whether o'er hill or vale their way they took,  
Nor words they utter'd, nor exchang'd a look:  
But when the sun, with slow declining ray, 1055  
Had past the splendor of meridian day,  
To break the silence, in the way there fell  
A knight, whose name th' ensuing book shall tell.

END OF THE TWENTIETH BOOK.

THE  
TWENTY-FIRST BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

## THE ARGUMENT.

**ZERBINO**, to defend Gabrina, engages in single combat with Hermonides, from whom he hears the particulars of her wicked life, and is warned of the mischiefs that may befall him from her company.

THE  
TWENTY-FIRST BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

NOT strongest cords, in circling bandage roll'd,  
So closely brace; not clasps of iron hold  
The plank so firm, as plighted faith can bind  
In never-loosening ties the noble mind.  
The sages hence, of ancient time, have drest      5  
Faith (heavenly Goddess!) in a spotless vest  
Envelop'd fair, and white as falling snows,  
That every casual foil and blemish shows.

Ver. 5. *The sages hence, &c.—*] That faith (or sincere dealing) was anciently painted in white garments, may be gathered from this passage in Horace.

— et albo rara fides colit  
Velata panno.

True honour must in even tenor run,  
 Before a thousand pledg'd, or given to one : 10  
 Not less in woods or lonely caverns known,  
 Far from the concourse of the peopled town,  
 Than at the full tribunal, where aloud  
 Each act is witness'd to the listening crowd :  
 Without, or oaths or forms judicial past, 15  
 A promise made but once should ever last.  
 This duty, still on virtuous minds imprest,  
 Was ever present to Zerbino's breast ;  
 So sacred held, that from his purpos'd way  
 He turn'd aside, through devious paths to stray 20  
 With her, whom like disease or death he view'd ;  
 Such sense of right his generous soul pursu'd.

Thus journey'd they, till from the western hills  
 The setting sun display'd his hindmost wheels,  
 When near advancing, with a fearless look, 25  
 A wandering warrior on their silence broke.  
 Well was he noted by the hateful dame ;  
 Hermonides of Holland, was his name ;  
 Who bore athwart, depicted on his shield,  
 A band vermilion in a sable field, 30  
 By features chang'd the crone her fears express'd,  
 And to the prince her humble speech address'd.

She

She bade him now in mind his promise bear  
 To her, who plac'd her in his guardian care ;  
 For he, the knight who met them face to face, 35  
 Was foe to her, and foe to all her race :  
 Her dear-lov'd father perish'd by his guilt ;  
 By him her only brother's blood was spilt ;  
 And still he sought, with more than ruthless mind,  
 To glut his rage on all her wretched kind. 40  
 Woman ! in me behold thy champion near !  
 (Zerbino cry'd) and banish every fear.

When now, with heedful eyes, th' approaching  
 knight

Had mark'd that face, so odious to his sight,  
 Prepare with me in single fight to meet, 45  
 (Aloud he threatening cry'd with generous heat)  
 Or quit yon' female's side, and by my hand  
 Give her to perish as her crimes demand :  
 If thou defend'st her cause, thou must be slain,  
 For thus it falls to those who wrong maintain. 50  
 Zerbino then with courteous speech reply'd,  
 Such thoughts could only with the base reside ;  
 Yet if he press'd the fight, he should not find  
 A flying foe ; but will'd him first in mind

To

To ponder, how a knight of gentle strain, 55  
 In helpless woman's blood his hand could stain.

These words, and many more, in vain ensu'd ;  
 For deeds at length the contest must conclude.  
 Now for the tilt they wheel around the plain,  
 Then, turning furious, meet with loosen'd rein. 60  
 Not with such speed the whizzing rocket flies,  
 Dismist with joy to burst in upper skies ;  
 As in the dreadful shock each fiery horse  
 Bore either champion to the headlong course.  
 Low aim'd Hermonides his spear, and try'd 65  
 Through the left flank his pointed wood to guide :  
 The feeble wood in crashing splinters broke,  
 And scarce the knight of Scotland felt the stroke.  
 Far different came his lance ; with force impell'd,  
 The targe it pierc'd, and in the shoulder held 70  
 Its raging way, through plate and mail it flew,  
 And on the plain Hermonides o'erthrew.

Zerbino deem'd him slain ; with pitying haste  
 He lighted, and his glittering helm unlac'd.  
 At length, as from a trance, the wounded knight 75  
 Recovering, on Zerbino fix'd his sight  
 Awhile in silence, till in mournful strain  
 He said—It grieves me little to sustain

This shame from one, whom well his deeds bespeak  
 The flower of wandering knights that danger seek. 80  
 But much to suffer in her cause I grieve,  
 Whose murderous guile, accustom'd to deceive,  
 Could such a knight in her defence engage :  
 For ill it suits an arm so brave to wage  
 A strife like this—and when thou hear'st the cause 85  
 That on her head my righteous fury draws,  
 Remembrance ever will remorse awake,  
 To think thou thus hast wrong'd me for her sake.  
 And if my spirits last (though much I fear  
 My strength may fail) a story shalt thou hear, 90  
 Which told, will prove how far her deeds disgrace  
 A woman's name, and all the human race.

My youthful brother, on his fame intent,  
 From Holland once, our native dwelling, went,  
 And to Heraclius soon a knight was made 95  
 (Heraclius, who the Grecian empire sway'd) ;

Ver. 95. —*Heraclius*—] Heraclius was the sixteenth emperor of Greece, and succeeded Phocas. He was created emperor at Constantinople anno 611, and reigned near thirty years; and appears to be the same Heraclius in whose time the Saracen army, under Caled, laid siege to the city of Damascus: on which event Mr. Hughes founded his *Siege of Damascus*, the most excellent of modern tragedies.

A baron's

A baron's friendship in the court he prov'd,  
 And he no less the courteous baron lov'd ;  
 Who kept, near Servia's lands, a lonely seat,  
 A guarded fortres and a calm retreat. 100  
 Argeo was his name, whose choice had led  
 Yon loathsome woman to his nuptial bed,  
 On whom he doated with so fierce a flame,  
 As pass'd the bounds that rank like his became :  
 But she, more changeful than the wither'd leaves 105  
 Which Autumn every year of sap bereaves,  
 When the chill winds, collecting to a storm,  
 The verdant honours of the grove deform,  
 Now sudden chanc'd from her inconstant breast  
 The love her husband there had once possest ; 110  
 And every art essay'd of loose desire,  
 To make my brother burn in lawless fire.  
 Not steadier meets th' Acroceraunean shore  
 (Of impious fame) the ocean's surgy roar :

Ver. 113. — — — *th' Acroceraunean shore* — ] Horace calls  
 the rocks of Acroceraunia infamous, because mariners there  
 often suffer shipwreck.

Infames scopulos Acroceraunia —

LIB. I. Od. iii.

These are high rocks or mountains in Epirus, the tops of  
 which are frequently struck with lightning, from which circum-  
 stance they derive their name. They are near the promontory  
 that hangs over the Ionian Sea.

Not

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Not firmer, 'midst the northern blast, appears 115

A pine, the produce of a hundred years

(Far as whose head above the Alps ascends,

So deep its root beneath the surface tends),

Than now my brother met the dame's request,

A dame, of every vice the fertile nest ! 120

Meantime, as it befalls a wandering knight,

Who danger seeks, on dangers oft to light ;

It chanc'd my brother, on adventures bound,

Receiv'd in combat many a grievous wound.

Argeo's fort was near ; no need to wait 125

For leave to enter at his friendly gate ;

He came, as wont, resolv'd with med'cine's power,

And rest, his health and vigour to restore.

Argeo, on some secret purpose bent,

As need requir'd him, from the castle went : 130

His consort then the welcome time embrac'd,

To tempt my brother with her suit unchaste :

But he, a loyal friend as virtuous youth,

Impatient to behold his spotless truth

So hard beset, whom evils thus inclose,

At length of many ills the lightest chose ;

Of many ills this choice the youth pursues,

To fly Argeo, and his friendship lose ;

And

And dwell an outcast, where the shameless dame  
 Might never hear again his luckless name. 140  
 Hard was the choice, but harder to fulfil,  
 Against his duty, her ungovern'd will ;  
 Or to her lord accuse a faithless wife,  
 Her lord who priz'd her dearer than his life.

Still pale and feeble with his wounds, he took 145  
 His arms and courser, and the place forsook ;  
 In willing exile from his friend he went,  
 But envious Fortune cross'd his good intent.  
 Lo ! to his home the husband came, and found  
 His wife in floods of seeming sorrow drown'd, 150  
 With hagg'd features and dishevell'd hair :  
 Surpris'd, he question'd whence her deep despair :  
 Again, and yet again, her speech he woo'd  
 To learn the cause, while she, in sullen mood,  
 Within her bosom schemes of malice bred, 155  
 T' avenge her slighted flame on him who fled.  
 Nor deem it strange that she, refus'd so late,  
 Should sudden change her former love to hate.

At length—Ah! wherefore should I seek (she cry'd)  
 The guilt, incur'd when thou wert gone, to hide ?  
 Though from the world the horror I disguise, 161  
 It ever naked to reflection lies !

The

The soul that groans beneath a secret sin,  
 Feels its own weight of punishment within,  
 That far exceeds all outward pain of sense 165

Another might inflict for such offence ;  
 If that, which force constrains, offence we name :  
 But be it as it may—attend my shame !

Then from its seat polluted let thy sword  
 To this unspotted soul release afford : 170

So shall these lids be clos'd in welcome sleep,  
 No longer after such disgrace to weep  
 With eyes cast downward, fearing still to read  
 In every face abhorrence of the deed.

Know then—thy friend, thy bosom friend, affai'd  
 My matron honour, and by force prevail'd : 176  
 Then dreading lest I should his crime recite,  
 The villain parted hence with speedy flight.

Thus she ; and with these impious words addrest  
 Against his friend, inflam'd her husband's breast : 180  
 Too easy of belief, Argeo flew  
 With arms and steed his victim to pursue ;  
 The seeds of vengeance rankling in his mind,  
 Vers'd in the ways, my brother soon he join'd,  
 Who, faint with scarce heal'd wounds, in journey slow,  
 Pass'd pensive on, and little fear'd a foe. 186

Now

Now, in a lonely shade, with eager rage,  
 The baron rush'd th' unequal fight to wage.  
 My hapless brother vain excuses fram'd ;  
 Incens'd Argeo loud the combat claim'd. 190  
 The one was strong, with deep resentment mov'd ;  
 The other weak, and much his friend he lov'd.  
 Philander then (so call th' unhappy youth,  
 The guiltless victim of unspotted truth)  
 Who such a foe with strength unequal found, 195  
 Was vanquish'd in the fight, and captive bound.  
 Forbid it, Heaven ! tho' now to justice led  
 For guilt so deep as thine (Argeo said)  
 I e'er should kill the man I held so dear,  
 The man I deem'd to me with faith sincere 200  
 Ally'd so late——my friendship thus betray'd,  
 Our cause before th' impartial world be weigh'd.  
 As I in love excell'd when once we lov'd,  
 So would I stand in hatred unreprov'd.  
 Let other punishment thy deeds attend, 205  
 Than death from him who call'd thee once his friend.

Thus he ; and on a courser bade be plac'd  
 A rustic bier of branches interlac'd,  
 Half dead thereon the wretched youth was laid,  
 And to the castle's neighbouring walls convey'd, 210  
 Where

Where, in the lone retreat, he lay confin'd,  
The penance for his future life design'd.  
Imprison'd there, he found each lenient grace,  
Save only, in excursion from the place,  
To roam abroad; in all beside, he still  
Found every menial ready at his will. 215

But that abandon'd dame, whose impious mind  
Renew'd the purpose she at first design'd,  
Each day Philander view'd, and as she chose,  
With ready key bade every gate uncloset; 220  
My brother with infatiate will she press'd,  
And bolder now preferr'd her foul request.  
What more avails thy boasted truth (she cry'd),  
Since my report has set that boast aside?  
In vain thy virtue due regard may claim, 225  
When each insults thee with a traitor's name.  
How had thy honour and thy peace been spar'd,  
Would'st thou have given my love its dear reward?  
Behold the guerdon of thy mighty pains!  
Of all thy rigour, lo! what fruit remains! 230  
Thou dwell'st in durance, never hence to part,  
Till pity soften thy obdurate heart:  
But if thou yield'st—I some device will frame  
To set thee free, and heal thy wounded fame.

Philander answer'd—Hope not to prevail ; 235  
 Nor think Philander's faith shall ever fail,  
 Though now it meets such unexpected lot :  
 Howe'er the world my merits has forgot,  
 One Power above my innocence can see,  
 And, at his will, my soul from trouble free. 240  
 If all suffice not—let Argeo take  
 This wretched being, his revenge to slake.  
 Perchance in Heaven hereafter may I find  
 That recompence withheld me by mankind ;  
 When he, who now detests my hated name, 245  
 As life shall cease to warm this mortal frame,  
 May to my mem'ry wrong'd at last be just,  
 And weep his dear companion laid in dust.

Thus oft the shameless woman strives to gain  
 Philander's love, as oft she strives in vain : 250  
 Blind with her lust, she feeds her flame within,  
 And hopes, at length, her lawless will to win ;  
 Each rack'd invention in her thought applies,  
 And ponders all her magazine of lyes ;  
 A thousand schemes, now here, now there, re-  
 volves, 255  
 Nor yet on one her wavering mind resolves.

Six months elaps'd since last the impious dame,  
 As was her custom, to his presence came,  
 And hence he hop'd that time had cur'd her lust-  
 ful flame.

But Fortune, friendly to the wicked, brought 260  
 The wish'd occasion which she long had sought ;  
 And gave her, by unheard-of guilt, t' attain  
 The purpose which she oft had try'd in vain.

Between her husband and a baron reign'd  
 A hatred, in their houfes long maintain'd : 265

Morando was he call'd, furnam'd the Fair,  
 Who oft, Argeo absent, would repair

Within his castle gates, and every outrage dare.

But, while the lord was there, aloof he stay'd,  
 Nor durst for many a mile the seat invade. 270

Argeo, to entice him thither, feign'd  
 A solemn vow to visit Sion's land.

He seem'd to go, and all who view'd him thought,  
 That parting thence, Jerusalem he sought.

Thus went the fame, while to his wife was known  
 The truth entrusted to her faith alone. 276

At close of eve the castle he regain'd,  
 And every night within the walls remain'd.

With arms and ensigns chang'd, at dawn of day,  
Each morning to the woods he took his way. 280

Now here, now there, with heedful watch he stray'd  
Around his castle, lurking in the shade,  
To mark, if trusting to the well-form'd tale,  
Morando durst, as wont, his walls assaile.

All day abroad he roam'd, but when he view'd 285  
The light extinguish'd in the briny flood,  
He came, where station'd his return to wait,  
His wife receiv'd him at a secret gate.

All, save herself, believ'd that many a mile  
Argeo travell'd; she with murderous guile 290  
The curst occasion took, my brother found,  
And with dire fraud her impious wishes crown'd;  
While from her eyes, for ever brew'd at will,  
She pour'd a shower of tears her breast to fill. 294

Where shall I fly? (she cry'd) what succour claim  
To guard my own, to guard my husband's fame?  
But were thy noble friend Argeo here,  
Nor this, nor that, would give me cause for fear.  
Thou know'st Morando well—Argeo hence,  
Scarce Gods or men can yield me now defence 300  
Against the traitor, who, with many a bribe  
And menace, would seduce my menial tribe

To

To win me to his will—who, since he heard  
My lord no longer in these gates appear'd,  
On distant travel bent, has dar'd presume,  
Unask'd, and hateful, in my sight to come;  
But, were my consort now within my call,  
Had kept aloof from this well-guarded wall.

The suit he once by distant message press'd,

He boldly now has face to face address'd;

So close address'd, I dread that future shame

And dire misfortune will attend my name:

And but I late, with more attentive ear,

Gently appear'd his amorous tale to hear,

His passion would have seiz'd, by open force,

What now he hopes to win by milder course.

I promis'd soon to yield—yet ne'er design'd

To keep what, made through fear, can never bind.

For this, in thee alone I trust for aid;

Unhelp'd by thee my honour is betray'd,

With my Argeo's—which, if truth may lie

In friend'ship's words, you once esteem'd so high.

If thou refuse—I to the world attest,

Thy bosom wants that faith it once profes'd.

Nor was it virtue, but thy cruel scorn,

Urg'd thee to slight my tears, and see me mourn:

Argeo's fame pretended was the shield,  
 That held before thy ruthless soul conceal'd.  
 With thee Love's theft had lurk'd secure from blame,  
 But with Morando all must know my shame. 330

There needs not this (Philander cries) to move  
 A spirit ever prompt the most to prove  
 For my Argeo's sake—thy wish explain—  
 The faith I once posseſſ'd, I still retain.  
 Whate'er the woes which undeserv'd I feel, 335  
 No deed of his abates my constant zeal :  
 Peril and death for him I dare oppose,  
 Be Fate itself, and all the world, my foes.

Then impious she—Thy weapon must destroy  
 The wretch who seeks to poison all my joy. 340  
 Fear not that evil shall thyself betide,  
 Do thou but firmly act as I shall guide.  
 Morando will return when rising night  
 With murky shade obscures the setting light,  
 While, at a signal fix'd, prepar'd I wait 345  
 Unseen, to give him entrance at the gate.  
 Thee will I safe in secret ambush place,  
 Without a ray the friendly gloom to chace ;  
 Till, urg'd by me, his arms aside to lay,  
 He to thy justice falls an easy prey. 350

With

With cruelty unheard, the ruthless wife  
 Thus form'd the snare t' entrap her husband's life:  
 If wife she may be call'd, or rather nam'd  
 A fiend, with more than fiend-like rage inflam'd.

When now the fatal night her shadows spread, 355

She to her room my wretched brother led;

There plac'd him with his arms and trusty sword,  
 Till home return'd the castle's absent lord.

All to her impious hopes in course befel;

'Tis rare but evil deeds succeed too well.

360

Philander deem'd in him Argeo's foe,

And at his own Argeo aim'd the blow:

The cruel weapon cleft his head in twain,

No helm was there the fury to sustain:

Speechless he fell; and bleeding as he lay,

365

Without a struggle groan'd his life away.

Unheard of chance! when thinking to bestow

A friend's kind aid, he, with a fatal blow,

Such greeting gave as fits the deadliest foe.

The husband thus dispatch'd, his murdering sword

My brother to Gabrina's hand restor'd.

37

Gabrina was her name, who every day

Is born to curse, and lives but to betray!

She who, till then, conceal'd the horrid truth,  
 With lighted torch approach'd th' unhappy youth,  
 And bade him view how well his arm had sped, 376  
 And show'd where lay his friend Argeo dead.

She menac'd then, unless his pliant will  
 The dictates of her hateful love fulfil,  
 In every part to make his trespass known, 380  
 Which all should tell, and he in vain disown.  
 So must he die, with guilt of murder stain'd,  
 A public victim to the hangman's hand.  
 She bade him ponder, tho' to die he dar'd,  
 If for a shameful death he stood prepar'd. 385

Philander, when his dire mistake he view'd,  
 Congeal'd with horror and amazement stood :  
 Remorse and rage to vengeance first impell'd  
 His raving thought ; and had not reason quell'd  
 The rash design, suggesting, that expos'd 390  
 In hostile walls he stood, with foes inclos'd ;  
 Though now disarm'd, his hand the means had  
 found

To rend her mangled corse with many a wound,  
 And with her bleeding members strew the ground. }  
 As when a ship, that in mid ocean sails, 395  
 Drives to and fro by two opposing gales ;

Between

Between two evils thus Philander prest  
 Debates; at length he fixes on the least :  
 Beside the certain view of speedy death,  
 He fears with infamy to yield his breath, 400  
 If in the castle should his deed be try'd ;  
 And little time is left him to decide.

Fate urges now the dreadful draught to take,  
 Though all her arts before could never shake 404  
 His constant faith : the dread of death, with shame,  
 Compels him, while he loaths her impious flame,  
 To plight his vow to join with hers his hand,  
 When both had safely left the Grecian land.

Thus the foul forc'ress won his forc'd consent,  
 And with him closely from the castle went. 410  
 Again his home and friends Philander view'd,  
 But infamy in Greece his name pursu'd.  
 Still in his mind he bears, with thrilling pain,  
 His lov'd companion by his weapon slain ;  
 Whence, for a murder'd friend (ah dire to tell !) 415  
 He gain'd a Progne, or Medea fell ;  
 And, but his honour plighted could control,  
 With powerful ties, th' emotions of his soul,  
 Her death had follow'd : yet his hatred more  
 Pursu'd that life, his sword, compell'd, forbore. 420

Ne'er

Ne'er was he seen, from that curst hour, to wear  
 A cheerful smile : his looks were all despair.  
 Sighs burst unceasing from his mournful breast ;  
 Like young Orestes by the Furies prest,  
 In dread avengement for the fatal deed, 425  
 That made his mother and Egystus bleed.  
 Deep, and more deep, grief work'd its canker'd way,  
 Till on his bed of sickness sad Philander lay.

The foul adulteress, who his heart beheld  
 Still to her flame averse, indignant fwell'd 430  
 To fierce resentment ; till her thoughts, estrang'd  
 From all her love, again to hatred chang'd :  
 And soon, as once against the baron's life,  
 Against my brother's wrought this impious wife,  
 From this bad world to send, with arts accurst, 435  
 The second husband, as she sent the first.

A leech she found, far better taught to kill  
 With poisonous, than with wholesome draughts to  
 heal ;  
 And him she drew, by hopes of vast reward,  
 With her infernal purpose to accord, 440  
 The strength of some envenom'd juice to prove,  
 And from her loathing sight her lord remove.

Join'd with myself, a mourning friendly band  
 Inclos'd his bed, when with the cup in hand  
 The leech approach'd, and said the drink he bore 445  
 Would soon my brother's wasted health restore.  
 But ere the patient could the mixture taste,  
 Gabrina, with inhuman craft, in haste  
 Advanc'd, perchance a witness to remove  
 Who knew th' effects of her detested love ; 450  
 Perchance in av'rice to withhold his gains,  
 The price agreed to recompense his pains :  
 She seiz'd his hand, while to the sick he held  
 The fatal goblet that the drink conceal'd.  
 Be not displeas'd (she cry'd) if thus I fear 455  
 For one whose life I ever held so dear :  
 Give me, by proof, to know thou hast not brought  
 Some potion here with fatal venom fraught :  
 Think not my lord the proffer'd cup shall take,  
 Till first thy lips the med'cine's trial make. 460  
 Reflect, sir knight ! how stood, depriv'd of speech,  
 In his own treason caught, the wretched leech :  
 The time that press'd allow'd not to revolve,  
 And fix his mind on what he should resolve :  
 Fearful t' expose his guilt, he deem'd it best, 465  
 Without delay, to give th' exacted test.

The

The sick man then, with unsuspecting thought,  
 Quaff'd all the remnant of the deadly draught.  
 As when a hawk, whose crooked talons feel  
 The partridge that he dooms his future meal, 470  
 Beholds the dog, late partner of his toil,  
 Assail, and from his grasp convey the spoil ;  
 So this vile leech, by thirst of gain betray'd,  
 Remains deserted where he look'd for aid.

O unexampled guilt ! henceforth on all, 475  
 Who thirst, like him, for gold, may equal justice fall !

The deed complete, the wretch prepar'd to take  
 His journey home, some antidote to make,  
 Ere yet too far the poison through his blood  
 Had spread ; but fell Gabrina this withstood. 480  
 She vow'd he must not yet his patient leave,  
 Till all the virtue of his drugs perceive.

In vain with prayers, in vain with bribes, he try'd  
 To be dismiss'd ; the traitress-hag deny'd,  
 All desperate now, he sees before his eye 485  
 Immediate death, nor from that death can fly.

Then to th' assistants he the truth expos'd,  
 Nor could the hag disprove the truth disclos'd.  
 Thus on himself that good physician brought  
 Such evil, as he oft for others wrought. 490

And

And now his spirit follow'd, to pursue  
 My brother's spirit that before him flew ;  
 While we, who late with freezing horror heard  
 The truth that by the leech's tale appear'd,  
 Seiz'd on that hag, with fiercer rage indu'd, 495  
 Than every howling savage of the wood ;  
 And in a dungeon shut, condemn'd by fire  
 For all her crimes in torture to expire.

Thus said Hermonides, and more had spoke,  
 To tell how from her prison walls she broke, 500  
 But, fainting with the anguish of his wound,  
 He backward fell, half senseless, on the ground ;  
 While two attending squires, with ready care,  
 Of branches lopt a rustic bier prepare :  
 Here, as he will'd, Hermonides they laid, 505  
 And thus, disabled, from the field convey'd.  
 Zerbino seeks t' excuse his luckless deed,  
 Much griev'd by him to see the champion bleed ;  
 Yet, as requir'd from those who knighthood claim,  
 He but defended her with whom he came : 510  
 Else had his plighted faith been empty wind ;  
 For when the crone was to his charge consign'd,

Ver. 499. *Thus said Hermonides,—*] This story of Gabrina and the physician is to be found in the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius.

He

He vow'd his prowes should with arms oppose,  
In her behalf, whoe'er appear'd her foes.

In all beside, he stood by deed or word      515  
Prepar'd to aid, with counsel or with sword,  
A knight whose chance his generous heart de-  
plor'd.

The knight return'd—He wish'd him to beware,  
And rid his hands of fell Gabrina's care,  
Ere her black arts had fram'd some guileful train  
To make his grief and late repentance vain.      521  
Gabrina silent stood, with downcast eye ;  
For truth confirm'd admits not a reply.

Departing thence, Zerbino took his way  
Where with the hag his destin'd journey lay,      525  
And curs'd her oft, to think his arms had brought  
Such ill on him, whom for her sake he fought.  
And since her impious life was brought to view,  
By one who well her hidden actions knew,  
His hatred kindled to so fierce a height,      530  
He turn'd with horror from her loathsome sight.  
She, who beholds Zerbino's secret mind,  
Nor will in enmity remain behind,

Ver. 524. *Departing thence,--]* The poet speaks no more  
of Hermonides.

B. XXI. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 79

Bates not an inch of malice, but repays  
His hatred with her own a hundred ways : 535  
Black poison rankles in her impious breast,  
In every feature rancour stands confess'd.  
Thus in firm concord, as the Muse has told,  
Through the thick wood their friendly course they  
hold :  
When from the west the setting rays appear, 540  
The noise of blows and clashing arms they hear ;  
The sign of battle nigh—With eager speed  
To learn the cause Zerbino spurs his steed,  
Nor seems more slow Gabrina to pursue— 544  
What chanc'd, th' ensuing book reveals to view.

END OF THE TWENTY-FIRST BOOK.

THE  
TWENTY-SECOND BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

VOL. III.

G

## T H E A R G U M E N T.

ASTOLPHO arrives at the enchanted palace of Atlantes, where, by the help of his horn, he dissolves the enchantment, and sets all the prisoners at liberty. Rogero and Bradamant meet and know each other: They depart together, and are addressed by a damsel, who engages them to undertake the deliverance of a youth condemned to be put to death. In their way they are stopped at the castle of Pinabello, where Rogero jousts with four knights, who were sworn to defend a law which Pinabello had made, to spoil all strangers who travelled that way. Rogero casts his enchanted shield into a well.

THE  
TWENTY-SECOND BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

YE courteous damsels ! to your lovers dear ;  
Content in love one favour'd youth to hear !  
Though rarely, midst the female race, we find  
A chosen few that boast a constant mind ;

Ver. 1. *Ye courteous damsels !* — Spenser seems to have imitated this, and the beginning of the xxviith Book, in the following passage, where he is about to treat of the wanton Helle-

nore :

Redoubted knights and honourable dames,  
To whom I level all my labours end,  
Right sore I fear, left with unworthy blames  
This odious argument my rhymes should shend,  
Or aught your goodly patience offend ;  
Whiles of a lovely lady I do write,  
Which with her loose incontinence doth blend  
The shining glory of your sovereign light,  
And knighthood foul defaced by a faithles knight.

Book iii. C. ix. St. 1.

G 2

Be

Be not displeas'd, if following thus my tale, 5  
 Against Gabrina late I dar'd to rail  
 In terms so harsh, and still, some future page,  
 Prepare to scourge her more than impious rage!  
 Such as she was, even such I must reveal,  
 Nor (so my patron bids) the truth conceal: 10  
 Yet think not hence their honours shall be lost,  
 Whose purer hearts untainted faith can boast.  
 Who to the Jews his Lord betray'd for gain,  
 Nor leaves on Peter, nor on John a stain:  
 Not Hypermnestra less in fame survives, 15  
 Though her dire sisters sought their husbands' lives.  
 For one, on whose demerits here I dwell,  
 (As wills the order of the tale I tell)  
 A hundred shall adorn by better lays,  
 And, like the radiant sun, diffuse their praise. 20

Ver. 15. *Not Hypermnestra—*] Hypermnestra was one of the fifty daughters of Danaüs, who being constrained to marry their kinsmen, the fifty sons of Ægystus, all, but Hypermnestra, at the command of their father, slew their husbands on the wedding night; the oracle having foretold to Danaüs, that he should die by the hand of a son-in-law: but Hypermnestra saved her husband Linus, and contrived means for his escape. See OVID'S EPISTLES, Hypermnestra to Linus.

Attend the vary'd story, which to hear  
I trust that many lend a gracious ear.

We left the Scottish knight, with loud alarms  
Of sudden tumult rouz'd, and clashing arms.  
Between two hills a narrow vale he found, 25  
Whence late before he heard the falchion's sound ;  
But now the noise was hush'd :—There pale he view'd  
A knight just slain, and weltering in his blood.  
His name I shall reveal—though now, to seek  
The eastern clime, no more of France I speak : 30  
The Paladin Astolpho let us find,  
Who to the west his speedy course design'd :  
We saw him last, amidst th' inhuman band  
Of warlike females, clear the hostile land ;  
While his pale friends their ready canvas spread, 35  
And from the shore disgrac'd and trembling fled.  
Now hear his tale—The knight those realms forsook,  
And to Armenia next his journey took.  
Some days elaps'd, he hasten'd to survey  
Natolia, then to Brusia held his way ; 40  
Till coursing on beyond the midland tide,  
He enter'd Thrace ; by Danube's flowery side

Ver. 29. *His name I shall reveal—*] See Book xxiii.  
ver. 281.

His rapid progress through Hungaria held :  
 Then, as if wings his courser's speed impell'd,  
 He pass'd Moravia and Bohemia's land, 45  
 And where the Rhine o'erflows Franconia's strand.  
 To Aquisgrana, and to Arden's wood,  
 He came ; to Brabant next his way pursu'd ;  
 At Flanders then embark'd, where friendly gales  
 So fill'd the freighted vessel's flying sails, 50  
 Ere long Astolpho reach'd fair England's shore,  
 And gain'd the welcome port at noontide hour.

He press'd his steed, and reach'd with eager haste  
 Fair London's tow'rs ere eve her shadows cast ;  
 There heard that many a month its course had run  
 Since aged Otho lay in Paris' town ; 56  
 That many a baron, by example led,  
 Had left the land his glorious steps to tread.  
 He strait resolv'd to Gallia to resort,  
 And turn'd again to Thames's crowded port. 60  
 With hoisted sail he issues on the tide,  
 And bids the crew their prow to Calais guide.  
 A gale, that gently seems at first to sweep  
 The vessel's deck, and scarcely curl the deep,  
 At length, by slow degrees, increasing blows, 65  
 And now, beyond the pilot's wishes, grows

So

So near a storm, as claims his skilful care,  
 The conflict of the dashing waves to bear.  
 High o'er the furrow'd sea, before the wind,  
 The bark is driven, and quits her course design'd: 70  
 Now on the right, and now the left she rides ;  
 As here, or there, malicious Fortune guides.  
 Near Roan, at length, she anchor'd on the strand :  
 Astolpho, when he touch'd the welcome land,  
 On Rabicano's back the saddle plac'd ; 75  
 His limbs the mail, his side the falchion grac'd ;  
 He grasp'd his fearful horn, a surer aid  
 Than marshall'd bands in glittering arms array'd.

Now passing through a wood, he reach'd a hill  
 Whose foot was moisten'd by a crystal rill ; 80  
 What time the flocks to crop the mead forbear,  
 And to the fold or mountain cave repair.

With burning heat, with parching thirst distress'd,  
 The helm unlac'd, whose weight his brows oppress'd,  
 Amid the brakes his fiery steed he ty'd ; 85  
 Then to the stream, for cooling draughts, apply'd  
 His eager lips ; but ere his lips essay'd.  
 The moistening liquid, from the neighbouring shade  
 A rustic starting swift, his courser took,  
 Leapt on his back, and turn'd him from the brook. 90

Astolpho, rouzing at the noise, perceives  
 'Th' insulting outrage, and the fountain leaves.  
 Resentment now the place of thirst supplies,  
 And swift he follows as the caitiff flies.

The caitiff led him on in doubtful chace, 95  
 Now check'd, and now impell'd his courser's pace.  
 At length (pursuing one, and one pursu'd)  
 They left the forest, and the palace view'd,  
 Where magic spells, without a prison, hold  
 In lasting durance many a baron bold. 100

The rustic to the palace drives the steed,  
 Light as the wind, and like the wind in speed.  
 Astolpho, in his plated arms confin'd,  
 With heavy shield encumber'd, lags behind :  
 'Till now arriving, he beholds no more 105  
 The hind and courser he pursu'd before.  
 He plies his feet within the palace wall,  
 Explores in vain each gallery, room, and hall :  
 He knows not where the traitor has conceal'd  
 His Rabicano, that in course excell'd 110  
 The fleetest beast : at length his better thought  
 Suggests, that all by magic art was wrought.

Ver. 100. —*lasting durance*—] The story of this palace is  
 continued from Book xii. where it is fully described, ver. 54.  
 and seq.

He

He calls to mind the book that to his hand  
 Sage Logistilla gave in India's land,  
 Which ever near he kept, with heedful care, 115  
 A certain guide in every magic snare.

There full describ'd was all the costly pile,  
 Each strange enchantment, and each secret guile ;  
 What means the foul magician's arts would quell,  
 And free his prisoners from the potent spell. 120  
 Beneath the threshold plac'd, a demon rais'd  
 The various wonders that the sense amaz'd.  
 The stone remov'd, where clos'd the spirit lay,  
 The palace walls would melt in smoke away.

Thus said the book ; and hastening to pursue 125  
 The great adventure open'd to his view,  
 The Paladin advanc'd, with fearless pace,  
 To lift the ponderous marble from its base.  
 Soon as Atlantes saw his hands prepar'd  
 To set at large the castle's fatal guard, 130  
 Fearful of what might chance, his restless mind  
 Against the champion other wiles design'd :  
 By magic art, he gives the gentle knight  
 A different shape to each beholder's sight :  
 By this, a hind ; by this, a giant seen ; 135  
 By that, a warrior of ill-favour'd mien ;

While

While each in him th' illusive image view'd,  
For which he late Atlantes' steps pursu'd.

Impatient to retrieve their honours stain'd,  
All turn'd on him—a fierce determin'd band ! 140

Rogero, Bradamant, Gradafso there,

Iroldo, Brandimart in arms, prepare,

With brave Prafilo, by the spell misled,

To wreak their vengeance on Astolpho's head :

But, mindful of his horn, he soon depress'd, 145

With chilling terror, every haughty crest.

In happy time the fear-dispensing breath  
Preserv'd the Paladin from instant death.

Soon as his lips have touch'd the narrow vent,

And wide around the deafening clangor sent, 150

Like trembling doves, when through the breaking  
skies

Resounds the gun, each knight affrighted flies :

Not less th' enchanter old \* the noise receives ;

Not less amaz'd the wondrous dome he leaves,

To distance flies, heart-struck with deep dismay, 155

Till, dying off, the dreadful sounds decay !

\* ATLANTES.

Ver. 153. —*th' enchanter old*—] Nothing more is heard of  
him till the xxxvith Book, ver. 461.

The keeper \* and his prisoners quit the walls ;  
 And numerous steeds with these forsake their stalls,  
 That, not by halters, nor by reins confin'd,  
 Through various paths their absent masters join'd.  
 While thus the knight his fearful music play'd, 161  
 Nor cat, nor mouse, within the dwelling stay'd ;  
 Ev'n Rabican had fled, but with his hand  
 Astolpho, as he pass'd, the steed detain'd.

And now th' intrepid duke (the forc'r' gonē) 165  
 From off the threshold heav'd a weighty stone,  
 An image there he found, with many a spell  
 Of hidden force, that boots not here to tell.  
 Eager to quell the charm, with frequent stroke,  
 Whate'er he found, the knight in pieces broke ; 170  
 For so the book (his sure instructor) show'd,  
 And all the palace vanish'd in a cloud !  
 Held by a chain of beaten gold, he view'd  
 Where good Rogero's winged courser stood ;

\* ATLANTES.

Ver. 161. — *bis fearful music play'd,*

*Nor cat, nor mouse, &c. — ]* Such passages as these, that are certainly ludicrous and familiar, and very different from the genius of Epic writing, will not admit of any elevation of language, and yet ought surely to be preserved, if a translator means to exhibit to an English reader the features of his author.

That

That winged courser which the wizard \* Moor 175  
 Had sent to bear him to Alcina's shore.  
 For which had Logistilla deign'd to frame  
 The reins and bit, with which to France he came;  
 And, borne from distant Ind to England's strand,  
 Had hover'd o'er vast tracts of seas and land. 180  
 I know not if your mem'ry still retains,  
 How to the tree that day the griffin's reins  
 Rogero left, when, bright in naked charms,  
 Albracca's princess † vanish'd from his arms,  
 And left him whelm'd in shame—with rapid speed 185  
 Back to his lord return'd the faithful steed,  
 Wondrous to see! and stabled there remain'd,  
 Till the strong spell no more its power retain'd.

No chance than this could yield sincerer joy  
 To good Astolpho, who resolv'd t' employ 190  
 Th' occasion given new regions to explore,  
 Oceans and realms by him unseen before.  
 He prov'd how well the matchless steed could bear  
 The flying rider, when through fields of air  
 He late escap'd from India's fatal lands, 195  
 Freed by Melissa from her cruel hands,

\* ATLANTES.

† ANGELICA.

Wha,

Who, with infernal arts, his limbs estrang'd  
 From human form, and to a myrtle chang'd.  
 He saw, how Logistilla, to restrain  
 The docile beast, had fix'd the curbing rein ; 200  
 And mark'd the counsel which the prudent dame  
 Rogero gave, his furious course to tame.  
 The ready saddle on the steed he brac'd,  
 Then in his mouth the bit and reins he plac'd,  
 As suited best ; for choice of bridles there 205  
 He found, which many a steed was wont to wear.  
 The thought of Rabicano yet detain'd  
 The knight, and yet awhile his flight restrain'd.  
 Well had he cause to hold the courser dear ;  
 None better in the list with rested spear 210  
 Could run at tilt : with him to Gallia's land  
 He travell'd safe from Egypt's burning sand.

Debating long, Astolpho now decreed,  
 With some well-chosen friend t' entrust the steed,  
 Rather than leave him an invalu'd prey, 215  
 For him whom Fortune led to pass the way.  
 His purpose fix'd, with looks intent he stood,  
 To mark if hind or huntsman cross'd the wood,  
 Who to some neighbouring town might lead behind  
 Good Rabicano, to his charge confign'd. 220

All

All day he stay'd, he stay'd till roseate morn  
Had made, in eastern skies, her wish'd return,  
When, scarce the shadows chac'd by misty light,  
He saw, or seem'd to see, a wand'ring knight.

But, ere I speak the rest, I first shall tell 225  
What to the noble Bradamant befall,  
With brave Rogero, when (dispell'd their fear)  
No more the clangor of the horn they hear.

The lovers saw, what, ne'er till then reveal'd,  
Atlantes long from either had conceal'd : 230  
Such mists of darkness o'er their fight he drew,  
That neither, till that hour, the other knew.

On Bradamant Rogero fix'd his eyes ;  
She on Rogero gaz'd with like surprize.

Now round her waist his eager arms he throws, 235  
Her blushes kindling like the maiden rose,  
While from her lips each balmy sweet he provès,  
The blossoms of his first auspicious loves !  
A thousand times th' enraptur'd lovers meet  
In fond embrace ; a thousand times repeat 240  
Their mutual vows, while scarce their breasts contain  
The joy that throbs in every glowing vein.

Ver. 225. *But, ere I speak the rest,—]* The poet returns to  
Astolpho, Book xxiii. ver. 66.

Yet

Yet much they sorrow'd, that by magic flight,  
 They liv'd so long estrang'd from either's sight,  
 And lost so many days of dear delight. 245 }

While Bradamant such favour'd grace bestows,  
 As the chaste maid to chaste affection owes,  
 She tells Rogero, would he hope to prove  
 The last dear blessings of connubial love,  
 He from her father Amon (ere the bands 250  
 Of sacred Hymen join their plighted hands)  
 Must gain consent, and in the hallow'd wave  
 With Christian rites his Pagan errors lave.

Rogero, for his dearest mistress' sake,  
 Not only yields a Christian's name to take, 255  
 Which once his father and his uncle bore,  
 Which all his ancestors profess'd before ;  
 But vows, for her, in every chance to give  
 The remnant years Heaven doom'd him yet to  
 live.

Behold me sworn, (he cries) at thy desire, 260  
 To plunge in water, or to plunge in fire.

Then first to be baptiz'd, and next to wed,  
 Rogero follow'd as the virgin led :

Tow'rds

Tow'rs Vallombrosa went the martial dame,  
 That to an ancient abbey gave the name, 265  
 Wealthy and fair, in hallow'd rituals blest,  
 And courteous to receive the stranger-guest.

Now issuing from the wood a gentle maid  
 They chanc'd to meet, whose looks her grief be-  
 tray'd.

Rogero prompt to feel for each distress, 270  
 But chief those sorrows which the fair oppress ;  
 With pity touch'd the tender mourner view'd,  
 (Whose trickling tears her bloomy cheeks bedew'd)  
 And, greeting mild, besought the cause to know,  
 That o'er her features drew the clouds of woe. 275  
 He spoke ; when, lifting up her humid eyes,  
 To speak her grief, she sweetly thus replies.

Ah ! noble knight ! thou soon shalt learn (she said)  
 Why o'er my face these drops of anguish spread :  
 I mourn a youth, who, ere the day is past, 280  
 Must in a neighbouring castle breathe his last.

Ver. 264. *Tow'rs Vallombrosa—*] The religious order of Vallombrosa had its beginning from one Giovanni Gualberto, a Florentine, who, forsaking the world, led a solitary life in a part of the Apennines called Vall' ombrosa (shady vale), and built a church there. FORNARI.

He

He lov'd the fairest of the female train,  
 Whose fire, Marsilius, holds the rule of Spain.  
 Cloth'd in a female garb, with soft disguise,  
 His well-feign'd voice and downcast bashful eyes  
 Bely'd his sex——their loves, awhile conceal'd, 286  
 At length ill chance to strangers' ears reveal'd :  
 Each tells his fellow, till at length they bring  
 (Tale following tale) the tidings to the king.  
 Last night a guard from stern Marsilius came, 290  
 To seize in bed the lover and the dame :  
 Thence were they hurried by the king's command,  
 And in the castle walls apart detain'd ;  
 And, ah ! I fear, ere this day's sad decline,  
 The youth in torment must his life resign, 295  
 And now to shun the dreadful sight I fly :  
 Alive they sentence him by fire to die.  
 Can e'er my soul again such sorrows know,  
 That every future bliss will change to woe,  
 Oft as I call to mind the cruel flame 300  
 That prey'd relentless on his beauteous frame ?  
 While Bradamant attends the mournful tale,  
 She feels the sympathy of grief assail  
 Her tender breast; nor less she seem'd to feel,  
 Than if she trembled for a brother's weal. 305

Then, turning to Rogero, thus she cry'd :  
 For this unhappy let our force be try'd.  
 The damsel next she sooth'd—Compose thy grief,  
 Trust in our arms to bring unhop'd relief.  
 Lead to yon' walls—and should he yet survive, 310  
 No earthly power shall him of life deprive.

No less Rogero, than the warlike maid,  
 With ardour burns to give the wretched aid.  
 Then to the dame, from whose grief-swelling eyes  
 A torrent streams—Why this delay? (he cries) 315  
 Not tears avail in this disastrous state,  
 Conduct us instant to the scene of fate ;  
 And here I vow to free him from his foes,  
 Though swords and spears, by thousands rang'd,  
 oppose :

But hence—nor thus in fruitless converse stay, 320  
 Till yonder flames shall mock our long delay.

Thus here The presence of the warlike pair,  
 Whose mien and words their dauntless souls de-  
 clare,

Fair hope rekindles in the virgin's breast,  
 So late with sorrow and with fear opprest ; 325  
 Yet pondering now she stood which path to tread,  
 Of two that tow'rds the destin'd castle led.

Should

B. XXII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 99

Should we (she cry'd) the readiest track pursue,  
That open lies, extended to the view,  
I trust in time our succour might we give, 330  
Ere yet the pile the deadly flame receive ;  
But since compell'd to take the winding way,  
Heavy and rough, I fear the closing day  
To end our travel scarcely will suffice ;  
And, ere we reach the place, the victim dies. 335

But wherefore must we shun (Rogero cry'd)  
The nearest path ?—and thus the maid reply'd.

Athwart our way a stately castle stands,  
Which Pinabello, Pontier's earl, commands ;  
Who, scarce three days elaps'd, has fram'd a law 340  
That knights and damsels holds in cruel awe :  
He, worst of men, with every vice is stor'd,  
Son of Anselmo, Altariva's lord ;  
From whose ill-omen'd gate no knight nor dame 344  
Departs unstay'd, and 'scapes untouch'd with shame.  
Each thence must fare on foot : the warrior leaves  
His shining arms ; the dame her vesture gives.  
No braver knights, thro' all the realms of France,  
Now hold, or many a year have held, the lance,  
Than four, that rank'd in Pinabello's train, 350  
Have sworn his lawless custom to maintain.

H 2

Hear

Hear whence it rose—and mark the doom unjust  
 On noble minds t' impose such impious trust !  
 In marriage band is Pinabello join'd  
 To one, the scandal of the female kind, 355  
 Whom late, as with her lord she chanc'd to ride,  
 A champion met that brought to shame her pride.  
 Behind the champion, on his steed, was borne.  
 An aged crone, whom with insulting scorn  
 Th' injurious earl address'd : the stranger-knight  
 With Pinabello wag'd th' unequal fight. 361  
 Him, strong in pride, but weak in arms, he struck  
 Headlong to earth ; then from her palfrey took  
 The haughty fair one, left on foot, and dress'd  
 The ancient beldame in her youthful vest. 365  
 The dame dismounted (whom with rancorous mind  
 In every evil Pinabello join'd)  
 Declar'd no night nor day could rest afford,  
 No future hour behold her peace restor'd,  
 Unless a thousand dames, and warriors foil'd, 370  
 She view'd unhors'd, of vest and armour spoil'd.

It chanc'd that day to Pinabello came  
 Four noble knights, the first in martial fame ;  
 These knights, with whom but few in arms could vie,  
 Return'd from realms beneath a distant sky : 375

Ver. 360. —*the stranger-knight*—] See Book xx. ver. 807.

Young

B. XXII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 101

Young Sanfonetto ; Guido, Savage nam'd ;  
Gryphon and Aquilant, the brethren fam'd.  
These Pinabello at his gate receives  
With semblance fair, and courteous welcome gives.  
At night, when sleep has lull'd each fense to peace,  
He binds the four, nor will their bonds release, 381  
Till all consenting, as his laws prescribe,  
A year and day to dwell amidst his tribe,  
Shall swear from knights their steeds and arms to  
wrest,  
And from the damsels take their steeds and vest. 385  
To this compell'd, with heavy hearts they swore ;  
And not a champion, to this fatal hour,  
Has yet been found their vigour to sustain,  
Who press'd not, at his length, the fearful plain.  
Full many a champion there his fall receives, 390  
And, stript of arms, on foot the castle leaves.  
'Tis fix'd, that he who first with single force,  
Shall pass the bridge, alone must run the course :  
But should such lance against the stranger fail,  
The rest united must his strength affail. 395  
Reflect, if each can boast such nerve in fight,  
What three must prove, when three their spears unite.

Ver. 376. *Young Sanfonetto*—] See Book xx. ver. 769.

Ill suits it us, whose haste forbids our stay,  
 In such a strife to hazard new delay.  
 For grant, that here your arms attain success, 409  
 As sure your warlike looks presage no less,  
 Yet much I fear, ere evening shades arise,  
 The youth, for whom I weep, unaided dies.

Rogero then——'Tis ours, with ready zeal,  
 What honour bids, undaunted to fulfil ; 405  
 The rest let Heaven direct, or Fortune guide,  
 What pow'rs soe'er in these events preside.  
 To thee the sequel of the jousts may show  
 How far our aid protection can bestow  
 On him, who (as thou say'ft) in youthful prime, 410  
 Is doom'd to death for such a venial crime.  
 Thus he—No more reply'd the gentle maid,  
 But through the nearest way the pair convey'd :  
 Not past three miles their journey they pursu'd,  
 When now the castle's bridge and gates they view'd,  
 Where arms and vests are left, where valu'd life 416  
 Is put to hazard in the dangerous strife.  
 The ready warder, on the ramparts plac'd,  
 Twice rung the warning—when, behold ! in haste,  
 On a low steed an ancient fire appear'd, 420  
 And, as he came, his voice before was heard.

Hold,

Hold, strangers, hold! (he thus began to say)  
 Here stop, and here the fine exacted pay:  
 If yet you know not—let me now reveal  
 Our law—and then he sought their law to tell, 425  
 And next t' enforce, with accents sage and grave,  
 That counsel, which to every knight he gave.  
 Yon lady of her vest, my sons, bereave;  
 And you (he cry'd) your arms and coursers leave:  
 Nor think, by dreadful perils here inclos'd, 430  
 With four such warriors safe to stand oppos'd;  
 Arms, vests, and coursers we with ease obtain,  
 But life, once lost, what prowess can regain?

Ver. 428. *Yon lady of her vest, my sons, bereave;*  
*And you (he cry'd) your arms and coursers leave:]*

These kind of laws occur perpetually in the old romances, and several such are to be found in Spenser, particularly one, whereby knights and ladies pay toll of their beards and hair.

Ver. 432. *Arms, vests, and coursers, &c.—]* Not unlike these lines in the speech of Achilles to the ambassadors in the IXth Iliad:

Lost herds and treasures we by arms regain,  
 And steeds unrival'd on the dusty plain;  
 But from our lips the vital spirit fled,  
 Returns no more to wake the silent dead.

POPE, ver. 528.

Rogero cut him short—Forbear to show,  
In fruitless prelude, what prepar'd we know. 435

No more—I come to prove, if what my will  
Aspires to act, my actions can fulfil.

Arms, steed, and vest, I ne'er to others yield  
For empty threatenings in an untry'd field;  
And well I trust, for sounding words alone,  
My partner never will resign his own. 440

But give me to behold them face to face,  
Whose strength must purchase, to my foul disgrace,  
My arms and steed—o'er yonder hill we haste,  
Nor longer here the precious hours can waste. 445

To whom the fire—Lo! issuing to the plain  
One warrior comes—nor were his words in vain.  
High on the bridge appear'd a noble knight,  
In crimson surcoat deck'd with flowers of white.  
Now Bradamant Rogero su'd to trust 450  
With her the first fair honours of the joust,  
From his high seat to hurl the knight, who wore  
The mantle red, with flowers embroider'd o'er.  
In vain she su'd, Rogero this deny'd:  
Constrain'd to yield, she silent stood beside 455  
To view the course, while on himself her knight  
Took all the hazard of the dubious fight.

Rogero

B. XXII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 105

Rogero then enquir'd the warrior's name,  
Who foremost from the castle's portal came.

'Tis Sansonetto (thus the fire reply'd) 460  
I know th' embroider'd scarf with crimson dy'd.

Now Pinabello issu'd from the gate,  
And round their lord his thronging menials wait,  
All well prepar'd of arms and steeds to spoil  
The hapless knights that fell within the toil. 465

Swift to the course each hardy champion press'd,  
And firmly held his ponderous spear in rest,  
Huge, knotty, long, in native forests bred,  
The tough ash ending in a steely head.  
Of these full ten had Sansonetto brought, 470  
From neighbouring woods—of these, in lances  
wrought,

He fix'd on two; in brave Rogero's hand  
The one he plac'd, and one himself retain'd.

Now here, now there, impatient of delay,  
Each silent wheels his steed a different way : 475  
Then turning swift, with levell'd spears, they meet,  
The field wide-shaking to their coursers' feet.  
Against their shields unerring aim they took :  
Rogero's shield receiv'd, unhurt, the stroke :

Atlantes'

Atlantes' buckler, whose enchanted light 480

With powerful splendor clos'd the gazer's sight,

Which still, unless by dangers great assail'd,

The knight beneath a silken covering veil'd.

Not so the adyerte shield, whose mortal mold

Could not against the furious tourney hold. 485

As with a thunder-bolt the spear impell'd,

Reach'd the stunn'd arm that scarce the buckler  
held,

And Sansonetto, with a grievous wound

Forc'd from his seat, fell headlong to the ground.

The first was he, of all the social train

490

Compell'd this ruffian usage to maintain,

That yet had fail'd a stranger to despoil,

Or from his seat dismounted, prest the soil :

Who laughs to-day, some future day may mourn,

And find to frowns the smiles of Fortune turn. 495

Again the warden rings th' alarm, and calls

The remnant three to quit the castle walls.

Meantime it chanc'd, that Pinabello came

To noble Bradamant, and sought the name

Of him whose valour thus in arms excell'd,

500

Who thus the champion of his castle quell'd.

Eternal

Eternal Heaven, to give his crimes the meed  
 They well deserv'd, conducts him on the steed  
 Which, scarce eight months elaps'd, the wretch be-  
 fore

From Bradamant, by murderous treason, bore : 505  
 When, if your mem'ry still the tale recall,  
 In Merlin's tomb he let the virgin fall ;  
 What time the shatter'd pole receiv'd her weight,  
 And Heaven reserv'd her for a happier fate.

The generous heroine with a nearer view 510  
 Her courser saw, and soon the traitor knew ;  
 His well-known voice recall'd, his every look  
 Intent she mark'd, and to herself she spoke.  
 Lo ! this is he, who once my death design'd,  
 Now hither brought his due reward to find. 515  
 At once she threatens—to the sword applies  
 Her eager hand, and on the caitiff flies.  
 Between his castle and the recreant knight  
 She cuts off all retreat, nor can his flight  
 Avail to reach the gate ; as to his den 520  
 The fox retires beset by dogs and men.  
 Defenceless, pale, before the martial maid,  
 He seeks, with coward cries, the woodland shade :

With

With trembling heart he spurs his rapid steed,  
And hopes alone for safety from his speed. 525

The Dordon dame pursues, with all the zeal  
Of just revenge, and whirls her fatal steel;  
Now at his side or bosom aims the wound:  
The tumult echoes, and the woods resound.

But at the castle Pinabello's crew 530  
Nor heard his clamours, nor his danger knew:  
There every eye was fix'd, there every sense  
Rogero's conflict held in deep suspense.

And now the three remaining champions came  
From forth the fort; with these the vengeful dame  
Who fram'd that base device; while every knight 536  
Blush'd with a single foe to wage the fight;  
And rather wish'd to die, in fame unstain'd,  
Than meet a conquest so ignobly gain'd.

But she, who first th' unequal joust design'd, 540  
T' enforce th' observance, bade them call to mind  
How each had sworn, by every solemn tie,  
For her revenge their strength combin'd to try.  
But if my single weapon can suffice,  
T' unhorse yon' warrior (Savage Guido cries) 545  
Thus shall I joust!—be mine the single strife,  
And if I fail—exact my forfeit life.

Gryphon

Gryphon and Aquilant alike demand  
 To meet the stranger singly, hand to hand.  
 To these th' imperious dame—Why thus delay 530  
 In vain debate the bus'ness of the day?  
 I brought you here yon' champion's arms to take,  
 Not other compacts, other laws, to make.  
 Why urge not pleas like this, ere yet ye swore  
 T' observe my will, when first within my power; 555  
 Not when th' occasion calls you to maintain  
 Your promise given, nor make that promise vain?

Thus they—Behold (Rogero eager cries)  
 The knights and dame!—if still you seek the prize  
 Of armour, steed, or vest, why this delay 560  
 To seize with valiant force the offer'd prey?

The matron there impels each tardy knight;  
 Here storms Rogero, and demands the fight.  
 Compell'd at length, though fill'd with generous rage,  
 All rush at once the stranger to engage. 565  
 First rode the brother chiefs, whose lineal name  
 From the high Marquis of Burgundia came:  
 Then mounted on a steed of heavier pace,  
 Behind them Guido Savage held his place.  
 Rogero with the spear to combat drew, 570  
 The spear that Sansonetto late o'erthrew:

His

His nervous arm the fated buckler bore,  
 Which in Pyrené's hills Atlantes ware ;  
 Th' enchanted buckler, whose resolute light  
 At greatest need preserv'd the noble knight : 575  
 Yet only thrice the wondrous aid he try'd ;  
 And only thrice the shield its aid supply'd :  
 Twice, when the joys of shameful life he fled,  
 For seats where virtue every blessing shed ;  
 The last, when in the billowy main he left 580  
 The raging orc, of precious food bereft.  
 Save these alone, in every chance beside,  
 A veil was wont the dazzling orb to hide ;  
 At ease remov'd, whene'er the dangerous hour  
 Requir'd the help of more than mortal power. 585  
 Well-fenc'd by this, he rush'd with warlike heat  
 Against the three that came his force to meet :  
 Not more he fear'd each warrior's threat'ning spear,  
 Than boldest hearts the weakest infants fear.

At Gryphon now Rogero aim'd the thrust 590  
 Above the buckler's verge, the furious joust  
 His helm confess'd ; on either hand he reel'd,  
 Till, falling from his steed, he press'd the field.

Ver. 578. —————the joys of shameful life he fled,  
 For seats where virtue, &c.] See Book viii. and  
 x. where he uses the shield against the falconer that opposes his  
 flight from Alcina, and where it is employed against her fleet.

Against

Against Rogero's buckler Gryphon sent  
 The spear, that erring from the knight's intent, 595  
 Struck on th' impassive orb with fruitless sound,  
 And, hissing, glanc'd across the polish'd round;  
 The veil it rent, and freed the magic rays:  
 Advancing Aquilant receiv'd the blaze; . . . . .  
 On Guido Savage next, who came the last, 600  
 The wondrous targe its beamy splendor cast.  
 All fell—but little yet Rogero knew  
 The finish'd joust, and swift his falchion drew;  
 Then wheel'd his steed, when on the ground he  
 view'd  
 His senseless foes with little force subdu'd; 605  
 Knights, squires, and each that issu'd to the plain,  
 The numerous foot, and all the female train.  
 Alike he saw, as if in battle dead,  
 Low on the field each warrior-courser spread:  
 Till, casting down a casual glance, he spy'd 610  
 From his left arm, dependent at his side,  
 The veil that still was wont the light to hide. }  
 Sudden he turn'd, and sought with anxious care  
 His bosom's best belov'd, the martial fair,  
 Her whom he left, where, plac'd apart, she stood  
 To mark the tilt begun; but when he view'd 616

The

The fair no more, he deem'd her course was bent  
 To free the lover, and his fate prevent,  
 Who, while she stay'd t' attend the castle's strife,  
 She fear'd in flames would lose his hapless life. 620  
 Among the rest he sees the gentle maid,  
 Their fair conductress, deep in slumber laid :  
 Her in his arms he rais'd, and plac'd before  
 High on his steed, the pensive warrior bore : 624  
 Her scarf he took, and wrapt with this, conceal'd  
 The buckler's blaze ; the blaze no more reveal'd,  
 The virgin soon her heavy eyes unseal'd.

Rogero's features flush'd with rosy shame,  
 His down-cast looks his secret thoughts proclaim ;  
 He fears that all his former deeds are stain'd 630  
 By such a conquest so ignobly gain'd.  
 Where shall I turn ? (he cries) how cleanse away  
 The infamy of this ill-omen'd day ?  
 The triumph here atchiev'd each tongue shall tell,  
 Not due to valour, but to magic spell. 635

Thus he : with generous wrath his bosom glow'd ;  
 When, what he sought, spontaneous chance bestow'd.  
 Far in a wood's surrounding gloom he found  
 A crystal well, that sunk beneath the ground :

Hither, when fated Herds their food forfake, 640

Oppress'd with heat they came their thirst to slake.

Rogero then—No more shall scorn or blame,

From thee, O shield ! arise to taint my name;

No longer mine—I here such arms forego,

Nor more to thee will shameful succour owe. 645

Thus he ; and swift alighting as he spoke,

With generous wrath a craggy stone he took ;

To this the buckler, well-secur'd, he ty'd,

And to the well consign'd—Lie there (he cry'd)

And with thee there my foul dishonour hide. 650 }

Deep was the well, and high the waters swell'd,

Ponderous the stone, and ponderous was the shield :

At once it sunk, a bed the bottom gave,

And sudden o'er it clos'd the limpid wave. 654

Soon Fame divulg'd the deed, with trumpet's sound,

Thro' France, thro' Spain, thro' every region round,

From tongue to tongue it spread, and many a train

Of noble knights aspir'd the prize to gain.

In vain they sought the forest, where, conceal'd

From human sight, remain'd the precious shield : 660

The dame who blaz'd the tale, refus'd to tell

What secret wood contain'd the fatal well.

When brave Rogero from the castle pass'd,  
 Where, with such little strife, to earth he cast  
 The knights of Pinabello's guard, and left 665  
 The valiant four of strength and sense bereft ;  
 The light remov'd, each eye unclos'd appear'd ;  
 Each from the ground his limbs astonish'd rear'd :  
 All day they commun'd of the wondrous shield,  
 That every fight in magic slumber seal'd. 670  
 While such discourse they held, the news arriv'd  
 Of Pinabello, late of life depriv'd :  
 Of Pinabello slain were tidings brought ;  
 But yet unknown what hand the deed had wrought ;  
 Deep in a vale, with gloomy woods confin'd, 675  
 The martial dame the recreant warrior join'd ;  
 Where, in his panting breast and bleeding side,  
 A hundred times the vengeful blade she dy'd ;  
 And from her seat the hateful spirit chac'd,  
 Whose impious deeds had all the land disgrac'd. 680  
 Then with that steed, which late with guileful art  
 The traitor took, she hasten'd to depart

Ver. 673. *When brave Rogero, &c.*] He resumes the story  
 of Rogero, Book xxv. ver. 28.

And

And join her knight, but now explor'd in vain  
Her former way, and rov'd o'er hill and plain  
With travel long, while Fortune yet deny'd 685  
To lov'd Rogero's fight her course to guide.

But he that hears my tale with grateful ear,  
Must to th' ensuing book the rest defer.

END OF THE TWENTY-SECOND BOOK.

THE  
TWENTY-THIRD BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

## THE ARGUMENT.

BRADAMANT, after the death of Pinabello, loses herself in a wood : She is met by Aftolpho, who, preparing to take his flight on the griffin-horse, entrusts her with the care of his horse Rabicano. Bradamant meets her brother Alardo, and goes with him to Mount Albano, from which place she sends Hippalca, her maid, on a message to Rogero, with his horse Frontino, which is afterwards taken from her by Rodomont. Zerbino, travelling with Gabrina, finds the dead body of Pinabello: He is accused of the murder, and led to be put to death. The arrival of Orlando and Isabella. Meeting of the two lovers. Mandricardo overtakes Orlando: their battle. Orlando, parting from Zerbino and Isabella, comes to the grotto where Angelica and Medoro used to meet. The manner in which he discovers the whole story of their love; which discovery ends in the total deprivation of his senses.

THE  
TWENTY-THIRD BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

**I**F man to man his friendly succour lends,  
It rarely proves but fair reward attends  
Each generous deed ; at least we thus ensure  
Our future peace, and Heaven's regard secure.  
Who wrongs another, soon or late shall find      5  
The punishment for evil deeds assign'd.  
The proverb holds, that oft man's wandering train  
Each other meet ; but mountains fix'd remain.

Ver. 7. *The proverb holds, that oft man's wandering train  
Each other meet ; but mountains fix'd remain.]*

From the ancient proverb, *Mons cum monte non miscetur*. The meaning of this rather uncouth passage is, that though mountains never meet, yet men, who are ever wandering from place to place, may unexpectedly meet with those to whom they have done a good or ill turn, and find either their punishment or their reward.

Behold the fate on Pinabello brought,  
 In due return for all the ill he wrought ; 10  
 While gracious God (who ne'er beholds unmov'd  
 With sufferings undeserv'd the guiltless prev'd)  
 The virgin fav'd ; and ever saves the just,  
 Who, press'd with sorrows, place in him their trust.

When Pinabello deem'd the noble maid 15  
 His wretched victim, in the cavern'd shade  
 Alive entomb'd, he little fear'd to view  
 Her vengeful arms his ruffian guile pursue ;  
 Where nought avail'd his near paternal seat,  
 T' avert the vengeance he was doom'd to meet. 20  
 'Midst savage mountains Altaripa stands,  
 Fast by the confines of Pontieri's lands ;  
 The hoary earl Anselmo's fair domain :  
 Of him was born, of unpropitious strain,  
 The wretch, whom now to 'scape from Clarmont's  
25  
 sword

No friends assist, no powers relief afford.  
 Beneath a hill the generous dame affails  
 His worthless life, and soon her arm prevails  
 Against a foe, that no defence prepares,  
 But heartless cries and unavailing prayers. 30

The traitor slain, who once her death design'd,  
 She turn'd again her dearest knight to find,  
 Whom late she left in strife unequal join'd. }  
 But envious Fortune through the dreary shade,  
 By winding paths her wandering steed convey'd; 35  
 And to the woodland's deep recesses led,  
 What time, at sun-set, eve her shadows spread.  
 Unknowing where th' approaching night to pass,  
 She checks her reins, and on the verdant grafts,  
 Beneath the covering trees, her limbs she throws, 40  
 To cheat the tedious hours with short repose;  
 Now watches Venus, Saturn, Mars, or Jove,  
 With every wandering star that shines above:  
 But from her sleeping sense, or waking mind,  
 Her dear Rogero never is disjoin'd. 45  
 She sighs to think revenge her soul could move  
 Beyond the softer claims of faithful love.  
 Insensate rage has sever'd me (she cries)  
 From all I hold most dear—Unheeding eyes!  
 That when I first my treacherous foe pursu'd, 50  
 Mark'd not the tracks of this perplexing wood:  
 Then had I known in safety to return,  
 Nor here been lost, dejected and forlorn.

In words like these she mourns without relief;  
 And now she broods in silence o'er her grief; 55  
 While winds of sighs, and floods of tears, that shake  
 Her gentle breast, a cruel tempest make.  
 At length the long-expected morn appears,  
 When streaky light the grey horizon cheers.  
 She takes her steed, that graz'd beside the way, 60  
 And, mounting, turns to meet the rising day.  
 Not far she pass'd, when issuing from the wood,  
 She came to where the wizzard's palace stood,  
 Where once, with many a fraud, Atlantes' power  
 Had long detain'd her in his magic bower. 65  
 Astolpho here she met, who lately gain'd  
 The griffin-steed, and but his flight restrain'd  
 For Rabicano's sake, till chance should give  
 Some trusty friend, his courser to receive.  
 The thoughtful Paladin his face display'd 70  
 Without his casque, when through the misty shade  
 The valiant Bradamant her kinsman knew,  
 And, greeting fair, impatient nearer drew;

Ver. 66. *Astolpho*—] The griffin-horse came into the possession of Astolpho in the xxiid Book, ver. 173, where he destroys the enchanted dwelling of Atlantes.

Declar'd her name, her covering helm uniac'd,  
Reveal'd her features, and the knight embrac'd. 75

To Otho's son\*, who fought some trusty friend  
To whom he might his Rabican commend,  
No friend could Fortune, at his present need,  
Like Bradamant supply, to keep the steed  
Till his return ; and, when his flight was o'er, 80  
Again in safety to his hand restore.

Their greeting done—Too long I here delay  
My purpos'd voyage through a trackleis way ;  
(Astolpho cry'd)—then to the maid he told  
His flight design'd, and bade his steed behold. 85  
She saw, but saw incurious what before  
Her eyes had seen, when from th' enchanted tower  
Atlantes' hand the flying courser rein'd,  
And with the maid a combat strange maintain'd.  
She calls to mind the day, on which she view'd 90  
The parting pinions, and his course pursu'd  
With sharpen'd sight, when, soaring to the skies,  
He bore Rogero from her longing eyes.

Astolpho tells, that to her friendly care,  
He Rabicano gives, beyond compare 95  
First in the course, whose swiftness leaves behind  
The arrow parting on the wings of wind ;

\* ASTOLPHO.

To

To her his ponderous arms he means to give,  
 And wills her at Albano these to leave  
 Till his return : since armour might be spar'd, 100  
 Or aught of weight that could his flight retard.  
 His sword and horn he still retain'd, though well  
 His horn alone could every danger quell.  
 To Bradamant he gave the golden lance, 105  
 Which once the son of Galaphron to France  
 From India brought, whose hidden power was such,  
 T' unhorse each champion with its magic touch.

Astolpho now bestrode the winged horse,  
 And slowly through the air impell'd his course,  
 Till Bradamant, who watch'd his upward flight, 110  
 All in a moment lost him from her sight.  
 So from the port the guiding pilot steers,  
 Who dangerous sands and rocky shallows fears ;  
 But when he leaves the rocks and sands behind,  
 He shifts each sail, and scuds before the wind. 115

The duke departing thus ; the martial maid,  
 In deep suspense, awhile in silence weigh'd  
 The means to Mount Albano thence to bear  
 Her kinsman's steed and implements of war.

Ver. 116. *The duke departing—*] He returns to Astolpho,  
 Book xxxiii. ver. 701.

For

For now, with fond desire, her bosom burn'd 120  
 To see Rogero, in his absence mourn'd,  
 Whom (yet deny'd to meet) her anxious mind  
 At least in Vallombrosa hop'd to find.

While silent thus she stood in pensive mood,  
 It chanc'd a peasant on the way she view'd, 125

And him she bade Astolpho's armour take,  
 And place the weight on Rabicano's back ;  
 Then lead the courser, which the burden bore,  
 With that which Pinabello rode before.

To Vallombrosa now she sought the way, 130

But doubtful of the track, she fear'd to stray  
 From where she wish'd ; nor knew the peasant well  
 The country round ; and thus, as chance befel,  
 A path she took, and through the forest wide  
 At random stray'd, without a friend to guide. 135

At noontide hour they left the covert shade,  
 And on a hill a castle near survey'd

Of stately scite ; the virgin at the view  
 Believ'd in this she Mount Albano knew :

And Mount Albano there the dame beheld, 140  
 In which her mother and her brethren dwell'd.  
 This when she found, a sudden dread opprest  
 Her heart, that flutter'd in her tender breast.

Her

Her coming known, she fear'd the pressing train  
 Of friends and kindred would her steps detain, 145  
 Where she, a prey to love's consuming fire,  
 Might view no more the lord of her desire ;  
 No more at Vallombrosa hope to meet  
 Her dear Rogero, and their vows complete.

Awhile in doubt the maid her thoughts revolv'd ;  
 At length from Mount Albano she resolv'd 151  
 T' avert her steps, and thence her journey bend  
 To where the abbey's hallow'd spires ascend.  
 But Fortune soon, in this pursuit, bereft  
 Her breast of hope ; for, ere the vale she left, 155  
 She on Alardo sudden chanc'd to light,  
 And sought in vain t' elude her brother's sight.

This

Ver. 156. —*Alardo*—] One of Bradamant's brothers. Romance writers give different accounts of the genealogy of the house of Clarmont. Take the following as most consonant to Ariosto. Of Guido of Antona, son of Buovo and Orlandina, daughter of the King of Langues, were born Bernardo and Chiaramonte (Clarmont). The last died young without issue ; and his parents, out of regard to his memory, gave the name of Clarmont to their castle, and called their family by the same name. Bernardo had eight sons, six legitimate, and two natural. The legitimate were duke Amon of Dordona ; Buovo of Agramont, or Agrismont ; Gerardo of Rossignol ; Leone (Leo), afterwards pope ; Otho king of England ; and Milo

This youth had stacion'd many a warlike band  
 Of horse and foot, which, at the king's command,  
 He lately rais'd from all the neighbouring land. }  
 Return'd, he chanc'd his sister here to meet ; 161  
 With seeming joy the pair each other greet ;  
 And now, in friendly converse, side by side  
 Together join'd, to Mount Albano ride.

Thus to her native seats the fair return'd, 165  
 Where Beatrice had long her absence mourn'd  
 With fruitless tears, and sent, with anxious pain,  
 To seek her through the realms of France in vain.  
 But what are all the joys she here may prove,  
 Her mother's fondness, or her brethren's love, 170

Milo of Anglantes. The natural sons were Anserigi, and Elfroi, by some called Sanguino, and Dado. Amon had, by his wife Beatrice, five sons, Guichardo, Richardo, Rinaldo, Alardo, and Richardetto, and one daughter named Bradamant ; and, according to Ariosto, he had by Constantia one natural son, afterwards called Guido Savage. Buovo of Agrismont had two legitimate sons, Vivian and Malagigi ; and one natural son called Aldiger, who entertains Rogero at the castle of Agrismont, in the xxvth Book. Milo of Anglantes was father to the celebrated Orlando. Of Otho, king of England, was born Aftolpho, the English duke.

See QUADRIO della Storia d'ogni Poesia.

Compar'd

Compar'd to happiness so late possest,  
When lov'd Rogero clasp'd her to his breast!

Herself restrain'd, she purpos'd one should bear  
To Vallombrosa, with a faithful care,  
Her greeting kind, and tell him how, 175  
She with reluctance from his sight remain'd;  
And urge (if need to urge him) for her sake  
The name of Christian knight baptiz'd to take;  
Then woo her friends his amorous suit t' approve,  
And tye the knot of hymeneal love. 180  
By this her messenger, his generous steed  
She meant to send, which, fam'd for strength and speed,  
Rogero priz'd; for through the Pagan lands,  
And all the realms the Gallic lord commands,  
With him no steed an equal glory claim'd, 185  
Save Brigliadoro and Bayardo fam'd.

When good Rogero on the winged horse  
Was borne aloft, a strange and fearful course,

Ver. 186. *Save Brigliadoro and Bayardo—}*

—ne sotto il signor Gallo,  
Piu bel destrier di questo, o piu gagliardo,  
Eccetto Brigliadoro solo e Baiardo.

The poet seems here to have forgotten Rabican, Astolpho's  
horse.

Ver. 187. *When good Rogero, &c.]* See Book iv. ver. 321.

He

He left Frontino, which the martial dame  
 Receiv'd in trust (Frontino was his name), 190  
 And sent to Mount Albano, where, at large,  
 Wanton he rov'd, or fed beneath her charge  
 In plenteous stalls ; or when he felt the rein,  
 Was gently pac'd along the level plain : 194  
 Thus, pamper'd high in ease, and nurs'd with care,  
 His shining skin more sleek, more noble seem'd his  
 air.

And now she urg'd her virgins to divide  
 The pleasing task : each virgin soon apply'd  
 Her ready skill, and wrought, of golden thread,  
 A costly net, which o'er a pall they spread 200  
 Of finest silk, and on the courser plac'd,  
 With trappings gay, and rich embroidery grac'd.  
 A maid she chose, of long-experienc'd truth,  
 Whose mother, Callitrepbia, nurs'd her youth  
 From infant years : to her she oft confess'd  
 How far Rogero all her soul possess'd ; 205  
 Full oft his beauty and his valour prais'd,  
 And every grace above a mortal's rais'd.

To her she spoke—Whom sooner shall I trust  
 Than thee, Hippacla dear, discreet and just ? 210

In whom, like thee, of all my train (she cry'd),  
 Can I the message of my heart confide?

Hippalca (such the faithful damsel's name)  
 Was now dismiss'd; and, by the love-sick dame  
 Instructed in her way, receiv'd, at large, 215  
 To him (her bosom's lord) this tender charge:  
 To say, that while in promise late she fail'd  
 To reach the abbey's walls, no change prevail'd  
 In what she wish'd; but Fortune, that has still  
 The sovereign rule of all, oppos'd her will. 220

Thus she; then bade the damsel mount her steed,  
 And by the golden reins Frontino lead:  
 But should she, in her travel, chance to find  
 A wretch so senseless, or so base of mind,  
 To seize the steed, she will'd her but to tell 225  
 The courser's lord, his folly to repel:  
 For every knight she deem'd, whate'er his fame  
 In arms, must tremble at Rogero's name.  
 Much more she said, and by her trusty maid  
 To lov'd Rogero greetings kind convey'd; 230  
 Which, treasur'd in her mind, without delay  
 Hippalca bade farewell, and issu'd on her way.

Ver. 232. *Hippalca bade farewell—*] He returns to Bradamant, Book xxxi. ver. 41.

For

For ten long miles the maid her journey held,  
 Through beaten path, thick wood, or open field :  
 One noon of day, descending from a height, 235  
 As on a narrow pass she chanc'd to light  
 Stony and rough, fierce Rodomont she view'd,  
 Who arm'd, on foot a guiding dwarf pursu'd :  
 On her the cruel Pagan cast his eye,  
 And loud blasphem'd th' eternal Hierarchy, 240  
 To find a steed so stately and so fair  
 Without his lord, beneath a dams'el's care.  
 Late had he sworn, his arm the goodly horse,  
 He first should meet, would seize by lawless force.  
 Lo ! this the first, and never could his need 245  
 Attain the conquest of a nobler steed.  
 But since to take him from a helpless maid  
 Honour forbade, awhile in doubt he stay'd ;  
 With eager looks he stood, and, gazing, cry'd,  
 Why art thou here without thy warlike guide ? 250  
 O ! were he here (Hippacla said) thy mind  
 Would soon forego the purpose it design'd :

Ver. 233. — *ten long miles* — ] In the xxvith Book, on the same occasion, Ariosto says thirty miles—a little slip of memory.

Ver. 237. — *fierce Rodomont she view'd*,] See Book xviii. ver. 230. where Rodomont, led by a dwarf, goes in search of Mandricardo and Doralis.

Who this bestrides, excels thy arms in fight,  
And through the world scarce breathes so brave a knight.

What chief (return'd the Moor) thus treads the fame  
Of others down?—Rogero (said the dame). 256

Then he—The steed I mine can nobly make,  
Which from Rogero fam'd in arms I take;  
And should he seek his courser to regain,

I here defy him to the listed plain. 260

The weapon's choice be his—this prize I claim—

War is my sport, and Rodomont my name!

Where'er I go, my steps he may pursue,

My deeds shall ever point me forth to view:

I shine by my own light, and mark my course 265  
With tracks more fatal than the thunder's force.

Thus he; and turning, as these words he said,  
The golden bridle o'er Frontino's head,  
Leapt in the seat, and sudden left behind  
Hippalca, weeping with distressful mind. 270

On Rodomont her threats and plaint she bends:

He hears, regardless, and the hill ascends;

Led by the dwarf, rage flushing on his cheeks,  
He Doralis and Mandricardo seeks;

While

While the sad maid his flight indignant views, 275  
And from afar with railings vain pursues.

Some other time shall speak what these befel :—  
Here Turpin, from whose page the tale I tell,  
Turns to the land, where bleeding on the plain  
Lies the foul traitor of Maganza slain. 280

When Amon's daughter from the place in haste  
Had turn'd her steed, and through the forest pass'd ;

Thither, by different ways arriving, came  
The good Zerbino, and her sex's shame \*.

He sees the body lifeless in the vale, 285  
And tender thoughts his noble breast assail.

There Pinabello lay ; and, drench'd in blood,  
Pour'd from such numerous wounds the crimson  
flood,

It seem'd a hundred foes, in cruel strife,  
Had join'd their swords to end his wretched life. 290

\* GABRINA.

Ver. 277. *Some other time shall speak—*] He returns to Rodomont, Book xxiv. ver. 695. and to Hippalca, Book xxvi. ver. 401.

Ver. 281. *When Amon's daughter—*] See the beginning of the present Book, ver. 31.

Ver. 284. *The good Zerbino, and her sex's shame.*] See Book xxii. ver. 23.

The knight of Scotland was not slow to trace  
 The track of horses' feet, that mark'd the place,  
 In hope to find where from pursuit had fled  
 Th' unknown assassin of the warrior dead :  
 Meantime he bade Gabrina to remain,      295  
 And there expect his quick return again.

Now near the scene of death Gabrina drew,  
 Exploring all the corse with greedy view ;  
 For still to every other vice she join'd  
 The deepest av'rice of a female mind :      300  
 And, but she knew not to conceal her theft,  
 Her hands rapacious had the knight bereft  
 Of every spoil ; the scarf embroider'd o'er  
 With gold, and all the glittering arms he wore.  
 A belt of costly work she safely plac'd      305  
 Beneath her vest, conceal'd around her waist :  
 'Twas all she could ; and, while of this possest,  
 The beldame griev'd in heart to leave the rest.

Zerbino, now return'd, who, through the wood,  
 With fruitless search had Bradamant pursu'd ;      310  
 The day declining, swift his course address'd,  
 With that dire hag, to find a place of rest.

Two miles remote they to a castle came,  
 (Fam'd Altariva was the castle's name)

And here they stay'd to pass th' approaching night,  
That quench'd the splendor of departing light. 316  
Here scarce arriv'd, on every side they hear  
The voice of loud laments invade their ear,  
And tears they see from every eye-lid fall,  
As if one common woe had seiz'd on all. 320

Zerbino ask'd what cause their anguish wrought ;  
And heard of tidings to Anselmo brought,  
How, 'twixt two mountains, in a shady dell,  
His son, his Pinabello, murder'd fell.

Zerbino, doubtful of some evil nigh, 325  
Withdraws apart from every prying eye :  
He deem'd their sorrows must his death bewail,  
Whom late he saw lie bleeding in the vale.

Soon came the bier with Pinabello dead,  
While torches round their solemn splendor shed,  
To where the thickest ranks lamenting stand, 331  
Raise the shrill cry, and wring the mournful hand ;  
Where every eye is fill'd with gushing woe,  
And down the beard the trickling currents flow.

Above the rest, see, impotent in grief, 335  
The wretched father mocks each vain relief ;  
While all, as sacred custom each invites,  
Prepare, with pomp, the last funereal rites ;

Such as of old were wont the dead to grace,  
But now forgot by this degenerate race. 340

The herald from the prince declares aloud  
The sovereign will, and to the murmuring crowd  
Proclaims, that vast rewards the man shall gain  
Who tells the wretch by whom his son was slain.  
From tongue to tongue the spreading tidings flew,  
From ear to ear, till all the city knew : 346  
At last they reach'd the hag, whose fury fell  
Not bears or tigers of the woods excel ;  
Who now Zerbino to destroy prepares ;  
Whether through hatred that the knight she bears ;  
Or that her impious soul aspir'd to show 351  
A human breast that mock'd at human woe ;  
Or whether greedy gain her purpose wrought ;  
The presence of th' afflicted earl she sought ;  
There first with plausible speech his ear amus'd, 355  
And good Zerbino of the deed accus'd ;  
Then from her lap, to prove the story true,  
The costly belt produc'd in open view, }  
Which, seen, too well the wretched parent knew. }  
With tears, his hands uplifting to the skies, 360  
Thou shall not perish unreveng'd—he cries ;

Then

B. XXIII. ORLANDO EURIOSO. 137

Then bids surround the house.—With furious zeal  
The people, rouz'd, obey their ruler's will ;  
And while no danger near Zerbino knows,  
He finds himself a prisoner to his foes, 365  
Giv'n to Anselmo's rage, when funk to rest  
Refreshing sleep his heavy eyes depreſſ'd.  
Him in a darkſome cell that night detain'd,  
They kept in shackles and with bolts restrain'd,  
Condemn'd to ſuffer for imputed guilt, 370  
In that ſad valley where the blood was ſpilt.  
No further proof there needs the fact to try ;  
Their lord has ſentenc'd, and th' accuſ'd muſt die.

When from her couch Aurora made return,  
With many-coloured beams to paint the morn, 375  
The populace, as with one voice, demand  
The prisoner's life, and press on every hand  
With horse and foot ; Zerbino thence they led  
T' atone the blood another's hand had ſhed.  
On a low ſteed the knight of Scotland rides, 380  
His noble arms cloſe pinion'd to his ſides,  
And head caſt down ; but God, who ſtill defends  
The guiltleſſ, that for help on him depends,  
Already watchful o'er the warrior's ſtate,  
Prepares to ſnatch him from impending fate. 385

Orlando thither comes, and comes to save  
 The prince from shame and an untimely grave :  
 Along the plain he view'd the swarming crew,  
 That to his death the wretched champion drew.

Galego's daughter, Isabella fair, 390

With him he brought, who, from the watery war  
 And bulging vessel sav'd, was doom'd, at land,  
 Th' unhappy captive of a lawless band ;  
 She, whose lov'd form Zerbino's heart possess'd,  
 More dear than life that warm'd his faithful breast.

Orlando, since he freed the gentle maid, 396  
 Had watch'd beside her with a guardian's aid.

When on the subject plain her eyes she bent,  
 She ask'd Orlando what the concourse meant :  
 'Tis mine to learn the cause—the warrior said, 400  
 Then left his charge, and down the mountain sped.  
 The throng he join'd ; when, from th' ignoble train,  
 Zerbino soon he singled on the plain ;  
 And by his outward looks at once divin'd  
 The chief a baron of no vulgar kind. 405

Approaching near, he ask'd his cause of shame,  
 And whither led in bands, and whence he came.

Ver. 386. *Orlando thither comes—*] See Book xiii. ver. 292.  
 where Orlando takes Isabella under his protection, having de-  
 livered her from the outlaws.

At

At this, his head the mourning champion rear'd,  
And, when the Paladin's demand he heard,  
With brief reply his piteous tale disclos'd, 410  
In truth sincere, that soon the earl dispos'd,  
For his defence, to combat on his side,  
Who, guiltless of the charge, unjustly dy'd.  
But when he found that Altariva's lord  
The sentence past, the noble sufferer's word 415  
Stood more confirm'd ; for in Anselmo's breast  
He deem'd that justice ne'er her seat possess'd.  
Between Maganza's house, and Clarmont, reign'd  
A lineal hate, from sire to son maintain'd.  
Then to the herd he turn'd with threat'ning cry : 420  
Ye caitiff bands ! release the knight, or die !  
And who is he (said one to prove his zeal,  
In luckless hour) that thus with words would kill ?  
Well was his menace, were our feeble frame  
Of wax or straw, and his consuming flame. 425  
He said ; and ran against the knight of France ;  
And him Orlando met with rested lance.  
That glittering armour, which the night before  
The fierce Maganzan from Zerbino tore,  
Now proudly worn, could not the death prevent,  
Which from his spear Anglante's warrior sent. 430  
On

On his right cheek was driv'n the pointed wood,  
 And though the temper'd helm the point withstood,  
 The neck refus'd the furious stroke to bear ;  
 The bone snapt short, and life diffolv'd in air. 435

At once, while yet the spear remain'd in rest,  
 He pierc'd another through the panting breast ;  
 There left the lance, and Durindana drew,  
 And midst the thickest press resistless flew.  
 Of this, the skull in equal parts he cleaves ; 440  
 That, of his head at one fierce stroke bereaves :  
 Some in the neck he thrust—a moment's space  
 Beholds a hundred dead, or held in chace.  
 A third are slain, or fly with fear oppress'd ;  
 His thundering falchion knows nor pause nor rest. 445  
 This quits his helmet ; that, his cumbrous shield ;  
 All cast their useless weapons on the field.  
 Some leap the fosse, some scour the broad-way side ;  
 In forests some, and some in caverns hide :  
 That day Orlando gave his wrath the rein, 450  
 And will'd that none should there alive remain :  
 As Turpin writes, from whom the truth I tell,  
 Full fourscore breathles by his weapon fell.

The throng dispers'd, he to Zerbino press'd,  
 Whose anxious heart yet trembled in his breast : 455

What

B. XXIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 141

What words can speak Zerbino's alter'd cheer,  
Soon as he saw his brave deliverer near?

Low had he fall'n, and prostrate on the ground  
Ador'd the knight, from whom such aid he found ; }  
But to the steed his feet with cords were bound. }

Orlando now his limbs from shackles freed, 461  
And help'd him to resume his warlike weed,  
Which late the captain of Maganza's train  
Had worn in battle, but had worn in vain.

Meanwhile Zerbino Isabella view'd, 465  
Who on the neighbouring height attentive stood,  
Till peace succeeding new to war's alarms,  
She left the hill, and, bright in blooming charms,  
Approach'd the field, where, when she nearer drew,  
In her his best-belov'd Zerbino knew : 470

Her, whom from lying Fame he mourn'd as lost  
In roaring billows on the rocky coast.

As with a bolt of ice, his heart became  
All freezing cold ; a trembling seiz'd his frame :  
But soon a feverish heat succeeding, spread 475  
Through every part, and dy'd his cheeks with red.  
Love bade him rush, and clasp her to his breast ;  
But reverence for Anglante's lord repress'd

His

His eager wish——and, ah ! too sure he thought  
 Her virgin grace the stranger's soul had caught. 480  
 From sorrows thus to deeper sorrows cast,  
 He finds how soon his mighty joys are past :  
 And better could he bear to lose her charms  
 By death, than see her in another's arms :  
 But most to find her in his power he griev'd, 485  
 Whose sword so late his threaten'd life repriev'd :  
 No other knight (howe'er in battle prov'd)  
 Had pass'd unquestion'd with the maid he lov'd.  
 But what the earl had wrought that glorious day,  
 Impell'd him every grateful meed to pay, 490  
 And at the champion's feet his head subjected lay.

Thus journeying on, the knights and princely  
 maid,

At length dismounting, near a fountain stay'd :  
 The wearied earl releas'd his laden brows,  
 And bade Zerbino there his helm uncloose. 495  
 Soon as the fair her lover's face espies,  
 From her soft cheek the rosy colour flies,  
 Then swift returns——so looks the humid flower  
 When Sol's bright beams succeed the drizzling  
 shower :

Careleis

Careless of aught, she runs with eager pace, 500  
 And clasps Zerbino with a dear embrace ;  
 There, while in silence to his neck she grows,  
 Tear following tear, his face and breast o'erflows.  
 Orlando, by their side, attentive stands,  
 Their meeting marks, nor other proof demands 505  
 That this unknown, who late his succour prov'd,  
 Was prince Zerbino, by the dame belov'd.

Soon as the fair-one rais'd her voice to speak,  
 (The drops yet hanging on her vender cheek).  
 Her grateful lips no other could proclaim, 510  
 Than the full praises of Orlando's name,  
 His valorous succour for her sake bestow'd,  
 And every courtesy the warrior shew'd.  
 Zerbino, who so lov'd the princely maid,  
 Her good with his in equal scales he weigh'd; 515  
 Low at his knee the generous earl ador'd,  
 Who in one day had twice his life restor'd.

Ver. 500. — *she runs with eager pace, &c.*] It may at first appear extraordinary, that this discovery should not have happened before, as, by the poet's words, Zerbino may be supposed to have declared his name to Orlando when the Paladins first accosted him; but, it must be observed, in defence of Ariosto, that Isabella was not then present, being left by Orlando on the hill during the battle.

Thus

Thus they : when sudden from the neighbouring  
brake

They heard, with rustling sound, the branches shake;  
Each to his naked head his helm apply'd : 520  
Each seiz'd the reins ; but, ere he could bestride  
His foaming courser, from the woodland came,  
Before their sight, a champion and a dame.

The knight was Mandricardo, who pursu'd  
Orlando's track, till Doralis he view'd : 525  
But when the warrior from her numerous band  
Had won the damsel with his conquering hand,  
The zeal grew slack that urg'd him to obtain  
Revenge on him, who on the bloody plain }  
Had Manilardo quell'd, and young Alzirdo slain. }  
He knew not yet the sable chief, whose might 531  
Had rais'd his envy, was Anglante's knight ;  
Though him his deeds and fair report proclaim  
A wandering champion of no common fame. ;  
Him (while beside unmark'd Zerbino stood) 535  
From head to foot fierce Mandricardo view'd,  
And, finding every sign describ'd agree,  
Lo ! thou the man (he cry'd) I wish to see.

Ver. 523. — *a champion and a dame.*] See Book xiv.  
ver. 490.

Ten

B. XXIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 145

Ten days my anxious search, from plain to plain,  
Has trac'd thy course, but trac'd till now in vain :  
So have thy deeds, in all our camp confess'd, 541  
With rival envy fir'd my swelling breast,  
For hundreds sent by thee to Pluto's strand,  
Where scarcely one escap'd thy dreadful hand,  
To tell the numbers which thy weapon flew 545  
Of Tremizen and Norway's valiant crew.

I was not slow to follow, with thy sight  
To feast my eyes, and prove thy force in fight.  
Full well inform'd, I know thy sable dress ;  
Thy vest and armour him I seek confess'd. 550  
But were not such external marks reveal'd,  
And didst thou with a thousand lurk conceal'd,  
Thy bold demeanour must too surely tell  
That thou art he in battle prov'd so well.

Thee too no less (Orlando thus reply'd) 555  
All must pronounce a knight of valour try'd ;  
For thoughts so noble never shall we find  
The tenants of a base degenerate mind.  
If me thou com'st to view—indulge thy will—  
Unloose my helmet, and behold thy fill! 560  
But having view'd me well, proceed to prove  
(What most thy generous envy seems to move)

How much in arms my prowess may compare  
With that demeanour thou hast held so fair.

'Tis there I fix my wish (the Pagan cry'd) ; 565  
My first demand is fully satisfy'd.

Meanwhile the earl from head to foot explor'd  
The Tartar round, but view'd nor axe nor sword,  
Then ask'd what weapon must the fight maintain,  
Should his first onset with the lance be vain. 570

Heed not my want (he said)—this single spear  
Has often taught my bravest foes to fear.

A solemn oath I took, no sword to wear,  
Till Durindana from the earl I bear :

Him through the world I seek—for such my vow,  
When first I plac'd this helmet o'er my brow ; 576  
Which, with these arms, I conquer'd—all of yore  
By Hector worn, a thousand years before.

This sword alone was wanting to the rest,  
How stol'n I know not ; but of this possest, 580  
'Tis said the Paladin subdues his foes,

And hence his courage more undaunted grows.

But let me once his arm in combat join,

His ill-got spoils he quickly shall resign :

Yet more—my bosom glows with fierce desire 585  
T' avenge the death of Agrican, my sire,

Whom

Whom base Orlando flew in treacherous strife,  
Nor could he else have reach'd his noble life.

The earl, no longer silent, stern replies :  
Thou ly'st, and each that dares affirm it, lyes. 590  
Chance gives thee what thou seek'st—Orlando view  
In me, who Agrican with honour flew.  
Behold the sword thou long hast wish'd to gain,  
And, if thou seek'st, with glory may'st obtain :  
Though justly mine, yet will I now contend 595  
With thee my claim, and to a tree suspend  
The valu'd prize, which rightly thou shalt take,  
If me thy force can slay, or prisoner make.

He said ; and instant from his side unbrac'd,  
And Durindana on a sapling plac'd. 600  
Already now they part to half the space,  
Sent from the bow a whizzing shaft can trace :  
Already each on each impels his steed,  
And gives the reins at freedom to his speed :  
Already each directs his spear aright, 605  
Where the clos'd helmet but admits the light.  
The ash seems brittle ice, and to the sky  
With sudden crash a thousand splinters fly.  
The staves break short—yet neither knight woul'd yield  
One foot, one inch—then wheeling round the field,

Again they meet, and with the vant-plate rear, 611  
 Firm in each grasp, the truncheon of the spear  
 That yet remain'd—these chiefs that once engag'd  
 With sword or lance, like rustics now enrag'd,  
 Whose blows dispute the stream or meadow's  
 right, 615

With shatter'd staves pursu'd a cruel fight.  
 Four times they struck, the fourth the truncheon  
 broke

Close to the wrist, nor bore another stroke :  
 While either knight, as mutual fury reign'd,  
 Alone with gauntlet arm'd the strife maintain'd :  
 Where'er they grapple, steely plate and scale 621  
 They rend asunder, and disjoint the mail :  
 Not ponderous hammers fall with weightier blows,  
 Not clasps of iron stronger can inclose  
 With griping hold.—What now remains to save  
 The Pagan's honour who the challenge gave ? 626  
 Or what in such a fruitless fight avail'd,  
 Where more th' assailant suffer'd than th' assail'd ?  
 Each nerve exerting, with Orlando clos'd  
 The Pagan warrior, breast to breast oppos'd, 630

Ver. 611. —*the vant-plate*—] The part by which the  
 spear was held.

In

In hope with him the like success to prove,  
As with Antæus once the son of Joye.  
With both his arms he grasps the mighty foe,  
Tugs with full force, and draws him to and fro :  
He foams, he raves —he scarcely can contain 635  
His rising rage, nor heeds his courser's rein.  
Collected in himself, Orlando tries  
Whate'er advantage strength or skill supplies.  
His hand he to the Pagan's steed extends,  
And from his head by chance the bridle rends. 640  
The Saracen with every art essayes,  
In vain, his rival from the seat to raise ;  
But, firm, with pressing knees, the earl preserves  
His saddle still, nor here nor there he ferves ;  
Till, yielding to the Pagan's furious force, 645  
The girth breaks short, and sudden from his horse  
Orlando falls to earth ; but still his feet  
The stirrups keep, and still, as in the seat,  
His thighs are strain'd, while, with a clanking sound,  
His armour rattled as he touch'd the ground. 650  
The adverse courser, from the bridle freed,  
Across the champaign bends with rapid speed  
His devious way : when thus the fair \* espy'd  
Her lover borne from her unguarded side ;

\* DORALIS,

L 3

Without

Without his presence fearful to remain, 655  
 His flight to trace, she turns her palfrey's rein.

The haughty Pagan, as his courser flies,  
 Now soothes, now strikes, and now with angry cries  
 He threatens the beast, as if with sense indu'd,  
 Who, mindless of his lord, his way pursu'd. 660  
 Three miles he bore, and still had borne the knight,  
 But that a crossing ditch oppos'd their flight :  
 There fell both man and horse : the Pagan struck  
 Against the ground, but from the dangerous shock  
 Escap'd unhurt ; and here concludes his speed : 665  
 But how unbridled shall he guide the steed ?  
 Him by the ruffled mane, in furious mood,  
 The Tartar seiz'd, and now debating stood  
 What course to take.—To whom the damsel cry'd,  
 Lo ! from my palfrey be your need supply'd ; 670  
 Bridled or loose, mine, patient of command,  
 Obeys the voice, and answers to the hand.

The Pagan deem'd it ill a knight became  
 To accept the proffer of the courteous dame ;  
 But Fortune, wont her kindly aid to give, 675  
 Found better means that might his wants relieve,  
 And foul Gabrina to the place convey'd,  
 Who, since her guile Zerbino had betray'd,

Ver. 678. —*Zerbino had betray'd,]* See ver. 346 of this Book.

Shunn'd

B. XXIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 151

Shunn'd every stranger, like the wolf that flies  
The hunters' voice, and dogs' pursuing cries. 680  
This beldame now the youthful vestments wore,  
Which Pinabello's dame had worn before ;  
She pres'ld the saddle (late her gorgeous seat)  
And unawares the Tartar chanc'd to meet.

King Stordilano's daughter \*, and her knight, 685  
Beheld with laughter such an uncouth sight ;  
The dress ill suiting her unseemly shape,  
And wither'd features, like a grandame ape !  
From her, his courser's bridle to supply,  
He takes the reins ; then, with a shouting cry, 690  
Her palfrey drives, that to the forest bears  
The trembling crone expiring with her fears,  
Through rough or even paths, o'er hills and dales,  
By hanging cliffs, deep streams, or gloomy vales.

But let us to pursue her tale forbear, 695

When brave Orlando better claims our care.

His saddle now repair'd, and every need  
Supply'd, he mounted on his warlike steed :

\* DORALIS.

Ver. 695. *But let us to pursue, &c.—*] Gabrina is again introduced, Book xxiv. ver. 254.—Mandricardo and Doralis appear again, Book xxiv. ver. 416.

Awhile he stay'd, in hopes, ere long, to view

His foe return, the combat to renew ;

700

At length resolv'd the Tartar to pursue.

Yet, ere he went, as one whose deeds express'd

The soft effusions of a courteous breast,

With gentle speech, fair smiles, and open look,

He friendly leave of both the lovers took.

705

Zerbino mourn'd to quit the generous chief ;

And Isabella wept with tender grief :

The noble earl their earnest suit refus'd

To share his fortune, and to each excus'd

What honour must deny ; for greater shame, 710

He urg'd, could never stain a warrior's name,

Than, in the day of glorious strife, to make

A friend his danger and his toils partake.

He then besought them, if the Pagan knight

(Ere him he met) should chance on them to light, 715

To tell him that Orlando meant to wait

Three days at hand to end the stern debate,

So late begun ; and thence direct his course

To where Imperial Charles encamp'd his force,

Beneath the numerous banners rang'd, and where

The Tartar prince to seek him might repair. 720

This

This done : as each his separate fortune guides,  
Zerbino here, and there Orlando rides :  
But ere the valiant earl the place forsook,  
His trusty falchion from the tree he took. 725

The winding course the Pagan's steed pursu'd  
Through the thick covert of th' entangled wood,  
Perplex'd Orlando, who, with fruitless pain,  
Two days had follow'd, nor his sight could gain ;  
Then reach'd a stream that through a meadow led,  
Whose vivid turf an emerald carpet spread, 731  
Spangled with flowers of many a dazzling hue,  
Where numerous trees in beauteous order grew,  
Whose shadowy branches gave a kind retreat  
To flocks, and naked swains, from mid-day heat. 735  
With ponderous cuirass, shield, and helm oppress'd,  
Orlando soon the welcome gales confess'd ;  
And entering here to seek a short repose,  
In evil chance a dreadfulfeat he chose ;  
Afeat, where every hope must fade away 740  
On that unhappy, that detested day.

There, casting round a casual glance, he view'd  
Full many a tree, that trembled o'er the flood,

Ver. 723. *Zerbino here, and there Orlando rides : ]* Zerbino  
and Isabella appear again, Book xxiv. ver. 105.

Inscrib'd

Inscrib'd with words, in which, as near he drew,  
The hand of his Angelica he knew.

745

This place was one, of many a mead and bower,  
For which Medoro, at the fultry hour,  
Oft left the shepherd's cot, by love inspir'd,  
And with Cathay's unrivall'd queen retir'd.  
Angelica and her Medoro, twin'd

750

In amorous posies on the sylvan rind,  
He sees ; while every letter proves a dart,  
Which love infixes in his bleeding heart.  
Fain would he, by a thousand ways, deceive  
His cruel thoughts—fain would he not believe 755  
What yet he must—then hopes some other fair  
The name of his Angelica may bear.  
But ah ! (he cry'd) too surely can I tell  
Those characters oft seen and known so well—  
Yet should this fiction but conceal her love, 760  
Medoro then may blest Orlando prove.

Thus, self-deceiv'd, forlorn Orlando strays  
Still far from truth, still wanders in the maze  
Of doubts and fears, while in his breast he tries  
To feed that hope his better sense denies. 765

Ver. 747. —— *Medoro, at the fultry hour,—*] See Book xix.  
ver. 251.

So

B. XXIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 255

So the poor bird, that from his fields of air  
Lights in the fraudulent gin or viscous snare,  
The more he flutters, and the subtle wiles  
Attempts to 'scape, the faster makes the toils.

Now came Orlando where the pendent hill, 770  
Curv'd in an arch, o'erhung the limpid rill :  
Around the cavern's mouth were seen to twine  
The creeping ivy and the curling vine.  
Oft here the happy pair were wont to waste  
The noontide heats, embracing and embrac'd ; 775  
And chiefly here, inscrib'd or carv'd, their names  
InnumEROus witness'd to their growing flames.  
Alighting here, the warrior pensive stood,  
And at the grotto's rustic entrance view'd  
Words by the hand of young Medoro wrought ; 780  
And fresh they seem'd, as when his amorous thought  
For bliss enjoy'd his grateful thanks express'd,  
And first in tuneful verse his passion dress'd.  
Such in his native tongue might sure excel,  
And thus, in ours transfus'd, the sense I tell. 785

Hail ! lovely plants, clear streams, and meadows  
green ;  
And thou, dear cave, whose cool sequester'd scene

No

No sun molests ! where she, of royal strain,  
 Angelica, by numbers woo'd in vain,  
 Daughter of Galaphron, with heavenly charms, 790  
 Was oft enfolded in these happy arms !

O ! let me, poor Medoro, thus repay  
 Such boundless rapture ; thus with every lay  
 Of grateful praise the tender bosom move,  
 Lords, knights, and dames, that know the sweets of  
 love ; 795

Each traveller, or hind of low degree,  
 Whom choice or fortune leads this place to see ;  
 Till all shall cry—Thou sun, thou moon, attend !  
 This fountain, grotto, mead, and shade defend !  
 Guard them, ye choir of nymphs ! nor let the swain  
 With flocks or herds the sacred haunts profane ! 801

These verses, in Arabian written, drew  
 The knight's attention, who their idiom knew :  
 To him full well was many a language known,  
 But chiefly this, familiar as his own : 805  
 Such knowledge sav'd him oft, in distant lands,  
 From wrong and shame amid the Pagan bands :  
 But, ah ! no more th' advantage shall he boast,  
 That in one fatal hour so dearly cost !

Three times he reads, as oft he reads again 810

The cruel lines ; as oft he strives, in vain,

To give each sense the lye, and fondly tries

To disbelieve the witness of his eyes ;

While at each word he feels the jealous smart,

And sudden coldness freezing at his heart. 815

Fix'd on the stone, in stiffening gaze, that prov'd

His secret pangs, he stood with looks unmov'd,

A seeming statue ! while the godlike light

Of reason nearly seem'd eclips'd in night :

Confide in him, who by experience knows, 820

This is the woe surpassing other woes !

From his sad brow the wonted cheer is fled,

Low on his breast declines his drooping head ;

Nor can he find (while grief each sense o'erbears) 825

Voice for his plaints, or moisture for his tears :

Impatient sorrow seeks its way to force,

But with too eager haste retards the course.

As when a full-brimm'd vase, with ample waist

And slender entrance form'd, is downward plac'd,

And stands revers'd, the rushing waters pent, 830

All crowd at once to issue at the vent ;

The narrow vent the struggling tide restrains,

And scarcely drop by drop the bubbling liquor drains.

He wishes—hopes—believes some foe might frame  
 A falsehood to defile his fair-one's name;      835  
 Or with dire malice, by the tainting breath  
 Of jealous rage, to work his certain death :  
 Yet he, whoe'er the foe, his skill had prov'd  
 In feigning well the characters belov'd.

When now the sun had to his sister's reign      840  
 Resign'd the skies, Orlando mounts again  
 His Brigliadoro's back, and soon espies  
 The curling smoke from neighbouring hamlets rise :  
 The herds are heard to low, the dogs to bay ;  
 And to the village now his lonely way      845  
 Orlando takes ; there pale and languid leaves  
 His Brigliadoro, where a youth receives  
 The generous courser ; while, with ready hafte,  
 One from the champion has his mail unbrac'd ;  
 One takes his spurs of gold ; and one from rust      850  
 His armour scours and cleanses from the dust.

Lo ! this the cot, where feeble with his wound  
 Medoro lay, where wondrous chance he found.

No nourishment the warrior here desir'd ;  
 On grief he fed, nor other food requir'd.      855  
 He sought to rest, but ah ! the more he sought,  
 New pangs were added to his troubled thought :

Where'er

Where'er he turn'd his sight, he still descry'd  
The hated words inscrib'd on every side.  
He would have spoke, but held his peace in fear 360  
To know the truth he dreaded most to hear.

The gentle swain, who mark'd his secret grief,  
With cheerful speech to give his pains relief,  
Told all th' adventure that the pair befel,  
Which oft before his tongue was wont to tell 365  
To every guest that gave a willing ear ;  
For many a guest was pleas'd the tale to hear.  
He told, how to his cot the virgin brought  
Medoro wounded ; how his cure she wrought,  
While in her bosom Love's impoison'd dart 370  
With deeper wound transfix'd her bleeding heart :  
Hence, mindless of her birth, a princess bred  
Rich India's heir, she deign'd, by passion led, }  
A friendless youth of low estate to wed.  
In witness of his tale, the peasant show'd 375  
The bracelet by Angelica bestow'd,  
Departing thence, her token of regard  
His hospitable welcome to reward.

This fatal proof, his well-known present, left  
Of every gleam of hope his soul bereft : 380

Love,

Love, that had tortur'd long his wretched thrall,  
With this concluding stroke determin'd all.

At length, from every view retir'd apart,  
He gives full vent to his o'erlabour'd heart :  
Now from his eyes the streaming shower releas'd, 885  
Stains his pale cheek, and wanders down his breast ;  
Deeply he groans, and, staggering with his woes,  
On the lone bed his listless body throws ;  
But rests no more than if in wilds forlorn,  
Strech'd on the naked rock or pointed thorn. 890  
While thus he lay, he sudden call'd to mind,  
That on the couch, where then his limbs reclin'd,  
His faithless mistress, and her paramour,  
Had oft with love beguil'd the amorous hour :  
Stung with the thought, the hated down he flies : 895  
Not swifter from the turf is seen to rise  
The swain, who courting grateful sleep perceives  
A serpent darting through the rustling leaves.  
Each object now is loathsome to his sight ;  
The bed—the cot—the swain—he heeds no light 900  
To guide his steps, not Dian's silver ray,  
Nor cheerful dawn, the harbinger of day.  
He takes his armour, and his steed he takes,  
And through surrounding gloom impatient makes

His

His darkling way, there vents his woes alone, 905  
In many a dreadful plaint and dreary groan.  
Unceasing still he weeps, unceasing mourns ;  
Alike to him the night, the day, returns ;  
Cities and towns he shuns ; in woods he lies,  
His bed the earth, his canopy the skies. 910

He wonders oft what fountain can supply  
His floods of grief ; how sigh succeeds to sigh.  
These are not tears (he cry'd) that ceaseless flow ;  
Far other signs are these that speak my woe.  
Before the fire my vital moisture flies, 915  
And now, exhaling, issues at my eyes :  
Lo ! thus it streams, and thus shall ever spend,  
Till with its course my life and sorrows end.  
These are not sighs that thus my torments show ;  
Sighs have a pause, but these no respite know. 920  
Love burns my heart ! these are the gales he makes,  
As round the flame his fanning wings he shakes.  
How canst thou, wondrous Love ! surround with fire,  
Yet, unconsum'd, preserve my heart entire ?

Ver. 923. *How canst thou, wondrous Love ! &c.*] It is much to be regretted, that the poet has disgraced this admirable passage with such poor conceits.

I am not he, the man my looks proclaim, 925

The man that lately bore Orlando's name;

He, by his fair one's cruel falsehood, dies;

And now, interr'd, her hapless victim lies.

I am his spirit freed from mortal chains,

Doom'd in this hell to rove with endless pains; 930

A wretched warning here on earth to prove

For all henceforth who put their trust in love.

Through the still night, the earl from shade to shade

Thus lonely rov'd, and when the day display'd

Its twilight gleam, chance to the fountain led 935

His wandering course, where first his fate he read

In fond Medoro's strains—the fight awakes

His torpid sense, each patient thought forsakes

His maddening breast, that rage and hatred breathes,

And from his side he swift the sword unsheathes. 940

He hews the rock, he makes the letters fly;

The shatter'd fragments mount into the sky:

Hapless the cave whose stones, the trees whose rind

Bear with Angelica Medoro join'd;

Ver. 925. *I am not he,—*] Imitated from Catullus.

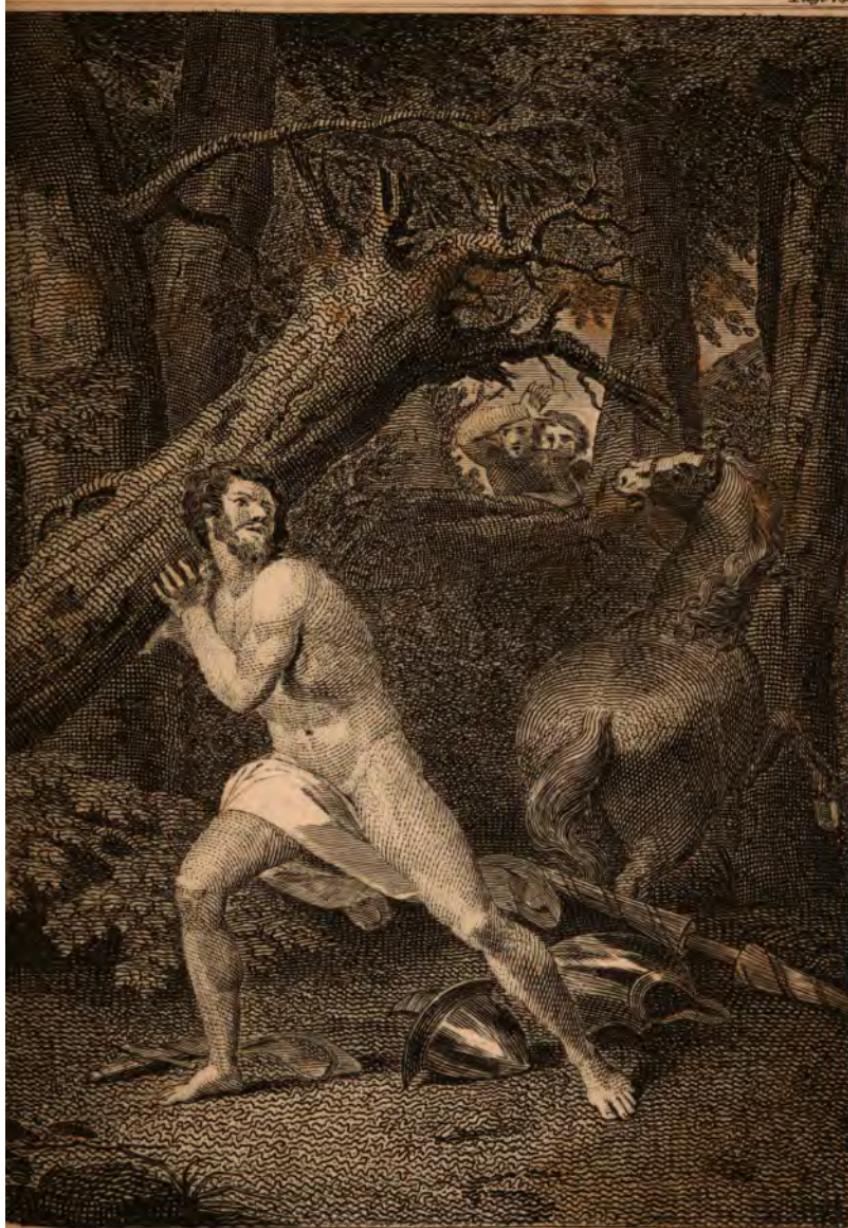
Non ego sed tenuis vapulat umbra mea.

From that curs'd day no longer to receive, 945  
And flocks or swains with cooling shade relieve ;  
While that fair fountain, late so silvery pure,  
Remain'd as little from his arm secure :  
Together boughs and earthen clods he drew,  
Crags, stones, and trunks, and in the waters threw ;  
Deep to its bed, with ooze and mud he spoil'd 951  
The murmuring current, and its spring defil'd.  
His limbs now moisten'd with a briny tide,  
When strength no more his senseless wrath supply'd,  
Low on the turf he sunk, unnerv'd and spent, 955  
All motionless, his looks on heaven intent,  
Stretch'd without food or sleep ; while thrice the sun  
Had stay'd, and thrice his daily course had run.  
The fourth dire morn, with frantic rage possest,  
He rends the armour from his back and breast : 960  
Here lies the helmet, there the bossy shield,  
Cuishes and cuirass further spread the field ;  
And all his other arms, at random strow'd,  
In divers parts he scatters through the wood ;  
Then from his body strips the covering vest, 965  
And bares his sinewy limbs and hairy chest ;  
And now begins such feats of boundless rage,  
As far and near th' astonish'd world engage.

His sword he left, else had his dreadful hand  
 With blood and horror fill'd each wasted land  
 But little pole-axe, sword, or mace he needs  
 T' assist his strength, that every strength exceeds  
 First his huge grasp a lofty pine up-tears  
 Sheer by the roots ; the like another fares  
 Of equal growth ; as easy round him strow'd  
 As lowly weeds, or shrubs, or dwarfish wood.  
 Vast oaks and elms before his fury fall ;  
 The stately fir, tough ash, and cedar tall.  
 As when a fowler for the field prepares  
 His sylvan warfare ; ere he spreads his snares, 980  
 From stubble, reeds, and furze, th' obstructed land  
 Around he clears : no less Orlando's hand  
 Levels the trees that long had tower'd above,  
 For rolling years the glory of the grove !  
 The rustic swains that 'mid the woodland shade 985  
 Heard the loud crash, forsook their flocks that stray  
 Without a shepherd, while their masters flew  
 To learn the tumult and the wonder view.

Thus

Ver. 988. —*the wonder view.*] This Book concludes with one of the finest incidents in the poem, which gives name to the whole work, the madness of Orlando. The narrative begins at ver. 726. Few passages, in any author, excel the remaining part



17th century

17th century

Thus far I've reach'd, but further to extend  
The present story might, perchance, offend ; 990  
And rather would I here defer the rest,  
Than with a tedious tale your ear molest.

part of the book ; and it is surely needless to point out to the Reader of taste and discernment the pathos and fire of the Poet, whether we contemplate his hero in the first dawn of his jealousy, or through the gradual progress of this passion, in which, while he seems to fly from conviction, he finds, by a train of concurrent circumstances, most artfully brought together, the truth forced upon him, till at length he breaks out into a frenzy, that closes the book with wonderful sublimity !

END OF THE TWENTY-THIRD BOOK.

THE  
TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

M 4

## T H E A R G U M E N T.

THE extravagant feats of Orlando in his madness. Zerbino and Isabella are met by Almonio and Corebo, who bring Odorico bound, to receive from Zerbino the punishment of his disloyalty. Arrival of Gabrina, and the sentence passed on these two by Zerbino. Zerbino fights with Mandricardo in defence of Orlando's sword: issue of the combat. Meeting of Mandricardo and Rodomont: A dreadful battle between them for Doralis, till, on the appearance of a messenger from the Pagan camp, and at the request of Doralis, they agree to break off the combat, and go to the assistance of Agramant.

T H E  
TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK  
O F  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

WHOEVER his feet on Cupid's snares shall set,  
Must seek t' escape, ere in th' entangling net  
His wings are caught ; for sage experience tells,  
In love's extreme, extreme of madness dwells.  
Though each may rage not with the wild excess   5  
Orlando rag'd, their frenzy all express  
By different ways—what more our folly shows,  
Than while we others seek, ourselves to lose ?  
Various th' effects of this destructive flame,  
The first dire cause of frenzy is the same:   10  
Love is a forest, where the lover strays  
From path to path, bewilder'd in the maze ;

And

And he who leads his life in amorous pain,  
Deserves to feel the gyves and shackling chain.

Here some may cry—Brother, thy words have  
shown

15

Another's faults, forgetful of thy own.

Yes—in my intervals of sense I see  
My bosom's conflict with the charge agree :  
Yet have I striv'n, and hope in time to cure  
The wounds I now from beauty's shafts endure. 20

I told, how from his limbs Orlando drew  
Furious his arms, and o'er the forest threw  
The scatter'd harness ; how his vest he rent,  
And to the ground his fatal falchion sent :  
How trees he rooted, while the woods around  
And cavern'd rocks re-echo'd to the sound ;  
Till rustic swains, to where the tumult spread,  
Their grievous sins, or cruel planets led.

As nearer now the madman they beheld,  
Whose feats of strength all human strength ex-  
cell'd ;

They turn'd to fly, but knew not where ; nor  
whence

Such sudden fears distracted every sense.

25  
30  
Swift

Swift he pursu'd, and one who vainly fled  
He seiz'd, and from the shoulders rent the head.

Easy,

Ver. 34. *He seiz'd, and from the shoulders rent the head.*] Here begins the description of the extravagant and ludicrous feats performed by Orlando in his madness; which passages of our author Cervantes seems to ridicule, when he represents Don Quixote in the fable mountain, debating whether he shall imitate the melancholy frenzy of Amadis de Gaul, or the more boisterous fury of Orlando.

“ Have I not told you,” said Don Quixote, “ that I design to imitate Amadis, acting here the desperado, the senseless, and the madman: at the same time copying the valiant Don Orlando, when he found, by the side of a fountain, some indications that Angelica the Fair had dishonoured herself with Medoro: at grief whereof he ran mad, tore up trees by the roots, disturbed the waters of the crystal springs, slew the shepherds, destroyed flocks, fired cottages, demolished houses, dragged mares on the ground, and did an hundred thousand other extravagancies, worthy to be recorded, and had in eternal remembrance. And supposing that I do not intend to imitate Roldan, or Orlando, or Rotelando (for he had all these three names) in every point, and in all the mad things he acted, said, and thought, I will make a sketch of them the best I can, in what I judge the most essential. And, perhaps, I may satisfy myself with only copying Amadis, who, without playing any mischievous pranks, by weepings and tendernesses, arrived to as great a fame as the best of them all.” JARVIS’S DON QUIXOTE, Vol. I. B. ii. C. 11.

Though much of the satire of the above citation must be allowed to be just, and though most of the actions recorded of

Easy, as from the stalk, or tender shoot, 35

A peasant crops the flower, or plucks the fruit :

The lifeless body by the leg he took,

And, as a club, against his fellows shook.

Two stretch'd on earth in lasting slumber lay,

Perchance to rise not till the judgment day. 40

The rest were soon dispers'd on every side,

So well advis'd their rapid feet they ply'd :

Nor had the madman loiter'd to pursue,

But on their herds with headlong speed he flew.

The labouring hinds the peril near survey'd, 45

And left their ploughs, with all the rural trade

Of scythes and spades, while seiz'd with pale af-  
fright

One climbs a roof, and one the temple's height

(Since elms and oaks avail not); trembling there,

They view the dreadful havock from afar. 50

of Orlando in his madness may be given up to all the severity of criticism, yet no part of the description in the foregoing book, notwithstanding several of the circumstances are unfairly included in the ridicule of Cervantes, can be censured by any discerning reader; but let the whole of the passage be tried by the standard of truth and nature, and compared with whatever is excellent of the kind in ancient or modern poetry, and surely Ariosto will not lose by the comparison.'

Before

Before his fury steeds and oxen yield,  
And swift the courser that escapes the field.

Now might ye hear in every village rise  
Tumultuous clamours, blending human cries  
With rustic horns and pipes ; while echo'd round 55  
The pealing bells from neighbouring steeples sound.

All seize such weapons as the time provides,  
Bows, slings, and staves ; and down the moun-  
tain's sides

A thousand rush ; while from the dells below,  
As many swarm against a single foe. 60

As when the tide appears the shore to lave,  
The southern wind impelling wave on wave,  
Scarce curls the first, the second deeper swells,  
And this, the third with rising force excels ;  
Till more and more the victor-flood ascends, 65  
And o'er the sands his liquid scourge extends.  
Th' increasing throngs Orlando thus assail,  
Pour down the hill, and issue from the vale.

Ten wretches first, then other ten he slew,  
That near his hand in wild disorder drew. 70  
None from his fated skin could draw the blood ;  
His skin unhurt each weapon's stroke withstood :

To

To him such wondrous grace the King of Heaven  
 To guard his faith and holy church had given.  
 Could aught of mortal risk Orlando's life, 75  
 Great were his risk in this unequal strife :  
 Then had he miss'd the mail he late unbrac'd,  
 And miss'd the falchion which aside he cast.

The crowds, that view'd each weapon aim'd in  
 vain,

With backward steps retreated from the plain ; 80  
 When mad Orlando, who no further thought,  
 The rustic dwellings of a hamlet sought :  
 All thence were fled ; yet there in plenteous store  
 He found such food as suits the village poor,  
 Of homely kind ;—but prest with pining fast 85  
 On roots or bread his eager hands he cast ;  
 Greedy alike devour'd whate'er he saw,  
 Or savoury viands bak'd, or morsels raw :  
 Then through the country round, with rapid pace,  
 To man and beast alike he gave the chace ; 90  
 Through the deep covert of the tangled wood  
 The nimble goat or light-foot deer pursu'd :  
 Oft on the bear and tusky boar he flew,  
 And, with his single arm, in combat flew ;

Then

Then with their flesh, his savage spoils of fight, 95  
 Infatiate gorg'd his ravenous appetite.

Thus o'er the realm of France, from land to land,  
 He ran, till on a day a bridge he gain'd,  
 Where swift (inclos'd in craggy banks and steep)  
 A river pours its current broad and deep, 100  
 And built beside a stately castle stands,  
 That far around the subject fields commands.  
 What there ensu'd some future time shall tell;  
 Now turn to what Zerbino next befel.

Orlando gone, awhile Zerbino stood, 105  
 Then took the path the Paladin pursu'd;  
 Scarce past a mile, slow riding, when he spy'd  
 A recreant knight, with hands behind him ty'd,  
 Plac'd on a humble steed, and for his guard,  
 On either side a knight in arms prepar'd. 110  
 Full soon Zerbino, as he nearer drew,  
 Full soon the lovely Isabella knew  
 False Odorico, trusted late to keep  
 Her virgin charms, like wolves to watch the sheep.

Ver. 104. *Now turn to what Zerbino, &c.]* Orlando appears again, Book xxix. ver. 281.—The last we heard of Zerbino was when he parted from Orlando, Book xxiii. ver. 723.

Him

Him had the prince preferr'd o'er every friend, 115  
 From ill or shame his mistress to defend ;  
 Nor could he think that faith, to him so prov'd,  
 Would fail to her, whom more than life he lov'd.

Then chanc'd fair Isabella to unfold  
 Her past escapes ; and all the tale she told, 120  
 How, ere her vessel bulg'd beneath the wave,  
 She fought the bark her sinking life to save :  
 How Odorico had his faith betray'd ;  
 And how the outlaws to the cave convey'd  
 Her helpless youth,—and scarce these words she  
 said, 125

When, lo ! she saw the traitor prisoner led.

The two, who thither brought the faithless knight,  
 On Isabella cast their wondering sight,  
 As one they oft had seen ; with her they guess'd  
 Their dearest lord, the partner of her breast, 130  
 Companion rode ; for well his blazon'd shield  
 The colours of his noble line reveal'd.  
 Approaching near, they saw with raptur'd eyes  
 His well-known face confirm their first surmize.  
 Swift from their steeds they leapt, with eager  
 pace, 135  
 And open arms, impatient to embrace

Zerbino's

Zerbino's knees : bareheaded now they stood  
Before his sight, and lowly reverent bow'd.

Zerbino fix'd on each his earnest view,  
And soon Corebo and Almonio knew ; 140  
Those well-try'd friends, to whom he gave the care  
With Odorico to protect the fair.

Almonio then—Since Heaven has pleas'd once  
more

To thee thy Isabella to restore,  
Why should I now, my much-lov'd lord, relate 145  
What well thou know'st—why in this captive state  
Yon caitiff rides—for she, the fair betray'd,  
Has long ere this his treacherous guilt display'd ;  
Has told, how by his base and guileful art  
Deceiv'd, the wretch induc'd me to depart ; 150  
How brave Corebo to defend her stood,  
And, deeply wounded, shed his generous blood.

Attend the sequel—From the town in haste,  
With steeds and menials, to the strand I pass'd ;  
Still casting round my eager eyes, to find 155  
The friends and virgin whom I left behind.

Ver. 151. *How brave Corebo, &c.*] See Book xiii. ver. 199,  
from which part this narrative is continued by Almonio.

Foremost I spurr'd, and travers'd all the shore,  
 Search'd every part their feet had trod before :  
 In vain—no sign appear'd on either hand,  
 But some new marks of footsteps on the sand. 160  
 I follow'd these, and these my course convey'd  
 Beneath the covert of the woodland shade :  
 Led by the sound of arms, at length I found  
 Unblest Corebo bleeding on the ground—  
 Where is our virgin-charge I left so late ? 165 }  
 Where Odorico ? say, what adverse fate  
 Has here reduc'd thee to this wretched state ? }  
 Thus I—and now the fatal truth reveal'd,  
 I sought th' apostate wretch ; the wretch conceal'd  
 Deceiv'd my search, and all the day beguil'd, 170  
 Through wood and brake I wander'd in the wild ;  
 At length return'd to where a crimson tide  
 From pale Corebo's wounds the herbage dy'd ;  
 Where (speedy help delay'd) the gloomy grave  
 Alone could take what art refus'd to save ; 175  
 Where friars and monks might funeral rites prepare,  
 When vain the healing couch and leech's care.

Then from the woodland to the town I bore  
 The fainting youth, his vigour to restore ;

Where

Where soon our host a sage physician found, 180  
With sovereign plants to close each bleeding wound.  
Corebo cur'd, he took his arms and horse ;  
To find the wretch we bent our eager course :  
Him in Alphonso's regal court I met,  
And, dar'd in open list, against him set 185  
My trusty lance : the king allow'd the fight  
With every legal form to prove the right.  
My cause prevail'd ; for Fortune, who at will  
Oft conquest gives, dispensing good or ill,  
So help'd my arms, his strength avail'd no more,  
And he remain'd a captive in my power. 191  
Th' offender's crime reveal'd, the monarch gave  
To me his life, to punish or to save.  
Nor would I free, nor take his forfeit head,  
But thus to thee in captive chains have led, 195  
That thy decree might doom him to be slain,  
Or kept alive, reserv'd for further pain.  
Fame spoke thee join'd with Charles' imperial force,  
And hopes to find thee, hither urg'd our course.  
All thanks to Heaven ! that thus, when least I  
thought 200  
To see my prince, my happy steps has brought :

Nor less my thanks, that thus I see restor'd  
 Thy Isabella to her plighted lord;  
 Whom late that traitor, with insidious art,  
 Had seem'd for ever from thy arms to part. 205

Zerbino silent, while Almonio spoke,  
 On Odorico fix'd his earnest look :  
 Hatred he little felt, but chief he mourn'd  
 To find his hope from friendship thus return'd ;  
 To think that one, who least had cause to leave 210  
 His prince and friend, should both alike deceive :

Ver. 208. *Hatred he little felt, &c.*] Zerbino is one of the most amiable characters in the whole work, and must strongly interest the reader. His sentiments of mercy and generosity, on the reflection of his friend's treachery and ingratitude, may remind us of the behaviour of Titus the Roman emperor to his friend Sextus, who had conspired against his life, so admirably painted by Metastasio, an author who abounds in the most noble and elevated sentiments. Titus, in his interview with Sextus, thus endeavours to make him confess his guilt.

Observe me, Sextus, we are now alone ;  
 Thy sovereign is not present : open then  
 Thy heart to Titus ; trust it with thy friend ;  
 I promise thee Augustus ne'er shall know  
 The secret thou disclosest : tell me how  
 Thy faith was first seduc'd : let us together  
 Seek some pretence t' excuse thee : I, perchance,  
 Shall be ev'n happier than thyself to find it.

ACT III. SCENE VIII.

Till

B. XXIV. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 181

Till, with a deep-drawn sigh, he rais'd his head,  
And thus, benignant, to the prisoner said :  
Declare, unhappy, nor the truth suppress ;  
And, if we right have heard, thy guilt confess. 215  
At this the faithless friend, low-bending, press'd  
His knee to earth, and thus his lord address'd.

To err is still the lot of man below :  
But hence the good from wicked minds we know ;  
The last, by nature prone to every fault, 220  
At once give way to evil's first assault.  
The good for brave defence their weapons wield,  
But, if the foe be strong, no less they yield.  
Hadst thou, O prince ! consign'd to my com-  
mand

Some frontier-post, and had my dastard hand 225  
Without resistance given the hostile powers  
To plant their standard on thy conquer'd towers ;  
Then might the foulest curse pursue my name,  
The traitor's danger, and the coward's shame :  
But, if compell'd to yield, not blame would meet,  
But praise itself might follow such defeat. 231  
'Twas mine to guard my faith from mental foes,  
Like some strong fort which numerous troops in-  
close.

With all the force supply'd me from above  
 By Heaven's supreme decree, full long I strove 235  
 To guard the fortress, till my vigour fail'd,  
 And the strong foe with stronger arms prevail'd.

Thus Odorico spoke ; and more he said,  
 To prove what mighty power his faith betray'd ;  
 With every art of soothing speech address'd, 240  
 He sought to move his injur'd prince's breast :  
 While good Zerbino stood in deep suspense,  
 Or to forgive, or punish such offence.  
 Thoughts of the heavy crime now seem'd to wake  
 His sleeping wrath, the traitor's life to take : 245  
 Now dear remembrance of their friendship past,  
 Which, till that fatal chance, so firm could last,  
 With pity's stream resentment's flame suppress'd,  
 And nourish'd mercy in his generous breast.

While unresolv'd Zerbino still remains. 250  
 To free th' offender, or to hold in chains ;  
 By death to sweep him from his sight, or give  
 The wretch in lengthen'd sufferings yet to live ;  
 Behold loud neighing comes th' affrighted steed,  
 Which Mandricardo from his bridle freed, 255

Ver. 254. *Behold loud neighing, &c.]* See Book xxiii. ver. 673, where Mandricardo takes away Gabrina's bridle.

And

And with him bears the beldame, pale for breath,  
Whose guile had nearly wrought Zerbino's death.  
The roving palfrey from a distant ground  
The coursers hears, and seeks the kindred sound.  
Soon as Zerbino thither turns his eyes, 260  
He lifts his hands in praises to the skies,  
For two so wicked to his power resign'd,  
Whose deeds deserv'd his deepest hate to find.

The noble knight that impious crone detains :  
And now he ponders with himself what pains 265  
Her crimes should meet ; to lop her nose and ears,  
To make her piece-meal die, at first appears  
A just decree ; to give her limbs for food  
To gorge the hungry vultures' screaming brood.  
Now this, now that, his wavering thoughts revolve,  
At length, determin'd, fix his last resolve : 271  
Then, turning to his friends, he cries—I give  
My free consent the faithless youth shall live :  
Though such offence may scarce forgiveness gain,  
At least it merits not severest pain. 275  
Still let him live, and freed, my mercy prove,  
Since well I know his crime the crime of love.  
Love has ere this a firmer bosom brought  
To guilt more deep than Odorico's fault,

Whish now we judge—to him let grace be shown; 284

The suffering should be mine, and mine alone :

Blind as I was, so vast a trust to yield,

Yet knew how flame can catch the stubble field !

To Oderico then—Be this thy doom,

The penance of thy deed—thy task to come ; 285

One circling year this woman's steps attend,

From all that seek her life, her life defend ;

Her foes be thine—and range, at her command,

The realms of spacious France from land to land.

Zerbino thus : and him, who for his crime 290

Deserv'd his death, he gave some future time

To certain fate ; expos'd in evety shape

To perils human wit could ne'er escape,

So oft some ill-starr'd knight, or wife, or maid,

Her arts had ruin'd, and her guile betray'd ; 295

Whoe'er her safety watches, risks his life

With wandering knights in many a dangerous strife.

Thus each was justly punish'd—she for crimes

That long for vengeance cry'd in former times ;

While he, for her defence who wrongly stood, 300

In some stern fight must shed his vital blood.

A solemn oath Zerbino fram'd, to bind

The recreant knight to keep the terms enjoin'd ;

And

And vow'd, if e'er he broke the faith he swore,  
 And fell again the captive of his power, 305  
 No longer prayer or mercy to regard,  
 But with his death his perjury reward.

Then to Almonio and his friend he made  
 A sign to free their prisoner ; these obey'd  
 With slow reluctance ; either griev'd to find 310  
 Himself defrauded of revenge design'd.  
 And now the faithless knight the place forsook,  
 And with him thence that aged beldame took.  
 What chanc'd to these no further Turpin writes,  
 But thus another bard the tale recites : 315  
 The bard (his name untold) has thus declar'd :  
 Ere these together one day's journey far'd,  
 False Odorico, deaf to every call  
 Of plighted faith, to free himself from thrall,  
 Around Gabrina's neck a halter flung, 320  
 And to an elm the crone detested hung ;  
 And thence a twelvemonth (but unknown the place)  
 Almonio made him run the self-same race.

Zerbino, who the Paladin pursues  
 With earnest search, and fears the track to lose, 325  
 Now fends a message to his martial train,  
 Anxious what cause could thus their lord detain.

To good Almonio he his charge declares,  
Which now to tell, the muse for haste forbears.

To good Almonio is Corebo join'd, 330  
And Isabella sole remains behind.

Great was the love Zerbino had profess'd,  
And great in Isabella's tender breast,  
For brave Orlando; great was either's zeal  
To learn what chance the virtuous earl befel, 335  
So late unhors'd: three days t' await the knight\*,  
Whose fearless arm rejects the sword in fight,  
The earl had vow'd; and hence till thrice the day  
Had rose and set, the prince decreed to stay, }  
And to the squadrons his return delay. 340 }

In every place through which Orlando pass'd,  
His hapless way Zerbino following trac'd:  
At length he came, where, 'midst the lonely grove,  
The fair ingrate had carv'd the notes of love.  
The spring disturb'd; the trees and cave he view'd;  
Those lopt and rooted, this in fragments hew'd. 346  
Not far he saw a sudden gleam of light,  
And first the warrior-cuirass struck his sight:  
The helmet next—not that which fam'd of yore,  
The haughty African, Almontes, wore. 350

\* MANDRICARDO.

He heard a courser in the woods conceal'd  
Repeated neigh, and now advanc'd, beheld  
Where Brigliadoro graz'd the verdant plain,  
While from his saddle hung the loosen'd rein.

He Durindana sought, and soon he found 355  
The sword, unsheathe'd, lie useless on the ground.  
He saw the surcoat, which in pieces strow'd,  
The wretched earl had scatter'd through the wood.

With Isabella now Zerbino gaz'd  
In sad suspense, while every object rais'd 360  
A secret fear, yet little they divin'd  
(Howe'er they weigh'd the signs with anxious mind) }  
Orlando from his better sense disjoin'd.  
One drop of blood discover'd on the plain  
Had imag'd to their thoughts the champion slain.

And now a rustic hind with headlong pace 366  
Approach'd, deep terror on his bloodless face,  
Who late in safety, from a rock's tall height,  
Beheld the wretched madman's frantic might ;  
How from his limbs he drew his vest and arms, 370  
And shepherds flew, and wrought a thousand harms.  
He certain tidings to Zerbino gives,  
Who, fill'd with wonder, scarce the truth believes,

Though

Though clear the proofs—the shepherd's tale he hears  
With pitying heart, and leaves his seat in tears. 375

He lights to gather from the woodland ground  
The warlike reliks widely scatter'd round.

With him the gentle fair her steed forsakes,

And from the ground the arms and vestment takes;

When, lo! appears a dame in looks distrest, 380

Sighs frequent bursting from her mournful breast:

If any ask who thus her woes deplored,

'Twas Flordelis, who rov'd to seek her lord;

For Brandimart, departing thence unknown,

Had left the fair in Paris' regal town; 385

Where seven or eight long moons the mourner  
stay'd;

But when she found his wish'd return delay'd,

From sea to sea she pass'd, from plain to plain,

Far as the hills that sever France from Spain;

All parts she search'd, but where estrang'd from  
home 390

He liv'd in old Atlantes' magic dome;

Ver. 383. 'Twas Flordelis, &c.] In the viiiith Book, ver. 604, Flordelis is mentioned to have left Paris in search of her husband Brandimart, who was gone after Orlando.

Where,

Where, with Rogero Brandimart detain'd,  
 Where, with Orlando, stern Ferrau remain'd.  
 But when Astolpho, with his wondrous blast,  
 Had driv'n the forc'r'er from his seats aghast, 395  
 To Paris Brandimart again return'd,  
 Unknown to her, who still his absence mourn'd.  
 Thus lovely Flordelis, to chance resign'd,  
 Zerbino and his Isabella join'd :  
 Too well she Brigliadoro knew, who stray'd 400  
 Without his lord, and, ah ! with grief survey'd  
 Each cruel object, while she heard relate  
 The dreadful sequel of Orlando's fate,  
 Who rov'd, of sense distraught, from place to place,  
 A wretched outcast of the human race. 405

Zerbino now the arms together drew,  
 And fix'd them on a pine in open view,  
 A trophy fair ! and, lest some venturous knight  
 (Native or stranger born) on these should light,  
 The verdant rind this short inscription bore : 410

THESE ARMS THE PALADIN ORLANDO WORE.

As if he said—Let none these arms remove,  
 But such as dare Orlando's fury prove.

This pious task perform'd, the prince with speed  
 Prepar'd to part ; but, ere he rein'd his steed, 415

Ver. 392. *Where, with Rogero, &c.*] See Book xii. ver. 28.

Fierce Mandricardo came, who, when he turn'd  
 And saw the trunk with those rich spoils adorn'd,  
 He ask'd from whence, and who such arms dispos'd ;  
 To whom Zerbino, all he knew, disclos'd.  
 The Pagan king o'erjoy'd, no longer stay'd, 420  
 Approach'd the pine, then seiz'd the sword, and said.

Let rashly none presume my deed to blame,  
 This fatal blade by law of arms I claim :  
 Long, long ere now this gallant sword was won,  
 And still, where'er I find, I claim my own. 425  
 Orlando, fearing to defend his right,  
 Has feign'd his madness but to shun the fight :  
 Then wherefore should I now forbear to take  
 What coward baseness urg'd him to forsake?

Rash knight, refrain—nor think (Zerbino cries)  
 Without dispute to snatch the glorious prize. 431  
 If such thy claim to Hector's arms, then know  
 'Twas theft, not valour, did those arms bestow.

Ver. 416. *Fierce Mandricardo—*] See Book xxiii. ver. 690, where Mandricardo is last mentioned.

Ver. 424. *Long, long ere this the gallant sword was won,]* Mandricardo seems to mean that he had proved his title to the sword, by the perilous adventure which he encountered at the castle of the Syrian Fairy, where he conquered the armour of Hector. The story is told at large in the note to Book xiv. ver. 240.

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No more was said ; for each with equal heat,  
And equal courage, springs his foe to meet. 435  
Scarce is the fight begun, when echo'd round  
A hundred blows their polish'd arms resound.  
Where Durindana threatens from on high,  
Zerbino seems a rapid flame to fly  
The falling stroke, whene'er to shun the steel 440  
Light as a deer he makes his courser wheel.  
Behoves him now his utmost skill t' employ,  
Since, from that edge, accustom'd to destroy,  
One wound might send him to the dreary grove,  
Where love-lorn ghosts through shades of myrtle  
rove. 445

As singled from the herd, the nimble hound  
Invades the boar, and cautious circling round,  
Shifts every side, but still maintains the field,  
By turns assaulting, and by turns repell'd.

Ver. 445. —— *shades of myrtle* — ] Virgil, in his sixth  
Æneid, tells us, that the ghosts of departed lovers were thus dis-  
posed of.

Hic, quos durus amor crudeli tabe peredit,  
Secreti celant calles, et myrtea circum  
Sylva tegit. —

The souls, whom that unhappy flame invades,  
In secret solitude and myrtle shades  
Make endless moan. —

DRYDEN.

So

So brave Zerbino, as the sword descends, 450  
 Or threats aloft, with wariest heed attends ;  
 Honour and life to guard, his sharpen'd eyes  
 Watch every stroke, and as he strikes he flies.  
 Thus he ; while fiercely as the Pagan foe 454  
 Whirls his dread sword, and gives or fails the blow,  
 He seems a whirlwind that from heaven descends,  
 And 'twixt two Alpine hills the forest rends ;  
 Now bent to earth the trees deep groaning bears,  
 Now from the trunks the shatter'd branches tears.  
 Though oft Zerbino turn'd aside, or fled 460  
 The trenchant blade, at length the Pagan sped  
 A downward stroke, that with full force imprest  
 Between the sword and buckler, reach'd his breast.  
 Strong was the corslet, strong the plated mail,  
 With texture firm ; yet all could nought avail 465  
 Against the blade, that thundering from above,  
 Through plate and mail, and shatter'd corslet drove.  
 The sword fell short, else had the stroke design'd  
 Cleft all the knight, yet reach'd so far to find 469  
 The naked part, whence from the shallow wound,  
 A span in length, the warm blood trickling round  
 Stray'd o'er his shining arms, and stain'd the }  
 ground.

So have I seen a filken floweret spread,  
And dye the silver vest with blushing red,  
Wrought by her snowy hand with matchless art, 475  
That hand, whose whiteness oft has pierc'd my heart.

Ah ! what avails the good Zerbino now  
Courage to dare, or strength to urge the blow,  
Though master of the war ?—Here virtue fail'd,  
Where stronger arms and stronger nerve prevail'd. 480  
Slight was the wound, though by the crimson hue  
Not slight it seem'd, but, startled at the view,  
Pale Isabella's heart, with fear opprest,  
All cold and trembling, sunk within her breast.

Zerbino, fir'd with generous thirst of fame, 485  
With deep resentment stung, and conscious shame,  
Rais'd both his hands, and with redoubled might  
Struck on the helmet of the Tartar knight.

The staggering Saracen the weight confess'd,  
And to the saddle bow'd his haughty crest : 490  
Th' enchanted casque made every weapon vain,  
Else that dire stroke had cleft him to the brain.

Impatient for revenge, the Pagan lord  
Against Zerbino's helmet rais'd the sword.

Zerbino, who the foe's intent beheld, 495  
Swift to the right his well-taught courser wheel'd ;

Yet not so swift, nor could he shun so well  
 The biting edge, which on his buckler fell,  
 But through the plates from side to side it went,  
 And deep beneath his mailed gauntlet rent ; 500  
 Laid bare his arm, then glancing downward found  
 His steel-clad thigh; and deep impress'd a wound.  
 Now here, now there, Zerbino strikes in vain ;  
 The foe's tough arms, unhurt, the stroke sustain :  
 Each pass he tries ; no pass the plates afford, 505  
 And harmless from the surface bounds the sword.  
 Not so the Tartar king—his fiercer might  
 With such advantage urg'd th' unequal fight ;  
 Seven times his steel has drunk Zerbino's blood,  
 Has pierc'd or cleft his shield, his helmet hew'd. 510  
 By slow degrees life's issuing current drains  
 His ebbing strength, but dauntless he remains :  
 His vigorous heart, still nourish'd with the flarie  
 Of inbred worth, supports his feeble frame.  
 Sad Isabella, now with fears distress'd, 515  
 To Doralis her earnest suit address'd ;  
 By every power adjur'd her to suppress  
 The battle's rage, and turn their strife to peace.  
 Courteous as fair, and doubting yet th' event  
 Of combat, Doralis with glad consent 520

To Isabella yielding, soon inclin'd  
To friendly truce her valiant lover's mind.  
Not less Zerbino calm'd his vengeful heart  
For her he lov'd, consenting to depart  
Where'er she led ; and, at her powerful word, 325  
Unfinish'd left th' adventure of the sword.

But Flordelis, who ill-defended view'd  
Unblest Orlando's falchion, weeping stood  
To wail the loss ; and oft she wish'd that fate  
Had brought her lord to share the dire debate. 330  
Yet could she e'er (if chance so fair beset)  
To her lov'd Brandimart the story tell ;  
Stern Mandricardo, to his deadly cost,  
Might rue that conquest now his haughty boast.

From morn till evening Flordelis in vain 535  
Still sought her lord, from morn till eve again  
At random stray'd ; while he, whose loss she mourn'd,  
Once more to Paris' regal walls return'd.  
So long she travers'd mountain, hill, and wood,  
At length she came, where near a running flood 540

• Ver. 535. *From morn till evening Flordelis, &c.*] Here it seems that Flordelis departs without accosting Zerbino and Isabella, to whom she appears a stranger.

The wretched Paladin she saw and knew—  
But let us now Zerbino's tale pursue.

Though scarce the noble youth hisfeat maintains,  
So fast his blood has flow'd, so fast it drains,  
Yet, self-accus'd, affliction rends his mind,      545  
For Durindana to the foe resign'd :

His pains increase—and soon with shortening breath  
He feels the certain chill approach of death.  
Th' enfeebled warrior now his courser stays,  
And near a fountain's side his limbs he lays.      550

Ah ! what avails the wretched virgin's grief ?  
What can she here to yield her lord relief ?  
In desert wilds for want she sees him die,  
No friend to help, no peopled dwelling nigh,  
Where she, for pity or reward, might find      555  
Some skilful leech his streaming wounds to bind.

In vain she weeps—in vain with frantic cries  
She calls on Fortune, and condemns the skies.  
Why was I not in surging waters lost,  
When first my vessel left Galicia's coast ?      560

Ver. 542. *But let us now Zerbino's tale pursue.*] He ~~re~~ turns to Flordelis, Book xxix. ver. 297, and to Mandricardo in the 689th verse of this book.

Zerbino,

Zerbino, as his dying eyes he turn'd  
On her, while thus her cruel fate she mourn'd,  
More felt her sorrows, than the painful strife  
Of nature struggling on the verge of life.

My heart's sole treasure ! may'st thou still (he  
said) 565

When I, alas ! am number'd with the dead,  
Preserve my love—think not for death I grieve ;  
But thee thus guideless and forlorn to leave,  
Weighs heavy here—O ! were my mortal date  
Prolong'd to see thee in a happier state, 570  
Blest were this awful hour—content in death,  
On that lov'd bosom to resign my breath.  
But summon'd now at Fate's unpitying call,  
Unknown what future lot to thee may fall—  
By those soft lips, by those fond eyes I swear, 575  
By those dear locks that could my heart ensnare !  
Despairing to the shades of night I go,  
Where thoughts of thee, left to a world of woe,  
Shall rend this faithful breast with deeper pains  
Than all that hell's avenging realm contains. 580

Ver. 580. ———*hell's avenging realm*] We must always remember, that the Italian poets, without scruple, make use of the old Pagan mythology.

At this, sad Isabella pour'd a shower  
 Of trickling tears, and lowly bending o'er,  
 Close to his mouth her trembling lips she laid,  
 His mouth now pale like some fair rose decay'd ;  
 A vernal rose, that, cropt before the time, 585  
 Bends the green stalk, and withers ere its prime.

Think not (she said) life of my breaking heart !  
 Without thy Isabella to depart :  
 Let no such fears thy dying bosom rend ;  
 Where'er thou go'st, my spirit shall attend : 590  
 One hour to both shall like dismission give,  
 Shall fix our doom, in future worlds to live,  
 And part no more—when ruthless death shall close  
 Thy fading eyes, that moment ends my woes !  
 Or should I still survive that stroke of grief, 595  
 At least thy sword will yield a sure relief.  
 And, ah ! I trust, reliev'd from mortal state,  
 Each breathless corse shall meet a milder fate ;  
 When some, in pity of our hapless doom,  
 May close our bodies in one peaceful tomb. 600

Thus she ; and while his throbbing pulse she feels  
 Weak, and more weak, as death relentless steals  
 Each vital sense, with her sad lip she drains  
 The last faint breath of life that yet remains.

To

To raise his feeble voice Zerbino try'd— 605  
 I charge thee now, O lov'd in death ! (he cry'd)  
 By that affection which thy bosom bore,  
 When, for my sake, thou left'st thy father's shore,  
 And, if a truth like mine such power can give,  
 While Heaven shall please, I now command thee,  
 live : 610

But never be it from thy thoughts remov'd,  
 That, much as man can love, Zerbino lov'd.  
 Fear not but God, in time, will succour lend,  
 From every ill thy virtue to defend ;  
 As once he sent the Roman knight to save 615  
 Thy youth unfriended from the robber's cave :  
 As from the seas he drew thee safe to land,  
 And snatch'd thee from th' impure Biscayner's hand :  
 And when at last all other hopes we lose,  
 Be death the last sad refuge that we chuse. 620

Thus spoke the dying knight ; but scarce were  
 heard  
 His latter words, in accents weak preferr'd.  
 Here ended life——the light so drooping dies,  
 When oil or wax no more the flame supplies.

What

Ver. 623. *Here ended life——*] The death of Zerbino, with  
 all the attendant circumstances, is one of those fine passages

What tongue can tell how mourn'd the wretched maid, 625

What plaints she utter'd, and what tears she shed,  
When in her arms her dear Zerbino lay,  
All icy cold, a lump of lifeless clay !

Prone on the bleeding corse herself she threw,  
Clasp'd his stiff limbs, and bath'd with tender dew :  
She rav'd so loud, that all the plains around, 631  
And woods, re-echo'd the distressful sound :  
Nor her white breast nor blooming cheeks she spares,

But cruel that she strikes, and these she tears ;  
She rends her golden locks, that know not blame,  
Invoking, vainly, oft the much-lov'd name ; 636  
And, little mindful of Zerbino's charge,  
His fword had set her frantic soul at large,  
But, lo ! a hermit, wont each stated day  
To the clear fount to bend his lonely way, 640  
Came from his neighbouring dwelling, timely sent  
By Heaven's high will t' oppose her dire intent.

This reverend man, in whom at once were join'd  
A sage experience and a gentle mind,

so admired by the Italians, and which, if the translator has done any justice to his author, cannot fail strongly to affect the English reader.

Whose

B. XXIV. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 201

- Whose hallow'd wisdom all examples knew, 645  
And brought, as in a mirror, these to view ;  
Now, with a pious healing hand, address'd  
The balm of patience to her wounded breast,  
And many a woman bright in virtue nam'd,  
In either volume's \* sacred text proclaim'd. 650  
He show'd how vain our search of bliss is spent,  
When GOD alone can yield us true content ;  
That earth's enjoyments, ever shifting, leave  
The wish unsated, and the hope deceive.  
He wrought so far, with mild persuasion's breath,  
To change her heart so lately fix'd on death, 656  
And raise her wish to quit this vale of strife,  
And dedicate to GOD her future life.  
Yet would she never banish from her mind  
Zerbino's love, or leave his corse behind ; 660  
Resolv'd through all her pilgrimage to bear  
With her the relicks of a form so dear.  
Then, by the hermit's aid, who show'd in age  
A strength of limb his years could ill presage,  
Zerbino on his pensive steed she laid, 665  
And travers'd many a mile the woodland shade.

\* OLD and NEW TESTAMENT.

The

The cautious hermit led not to his cell  
 The lovely maid, with him alone to dwell,  
 Where stood his mansion in the neighbouring dell. ]  
 His thoughts suggest—that hand we justly blame,  
 Which bears at once the fuel and the flame ; 674  
 Nor would in prudence or in years confide,  
 By such a proof to find his virtue try'd ;  
 But meant to lead her to Provence, where stood,  
 Near fam'd Marseilles, a holy house, endow'd 675  
 With wealthy gifts, whose spacious walls contain'd  
 Of heaven-devoted dames a saint-like band.  
 Awhile their steps a friendly castle stay'd,  
 Where, in a fable coffin clos'd, they laid 679  
 The slaughter'd knight, and safely thence convey'd. ]

Ver. 667. *The cautious hermit*—] So light a turn given to the narrative, after so beautiful and affecting a catastrophe, will, I fear, disgust the reader; but, at the same time, as it strongly marks the general complexion of the early Italian poets of this class, and more especially the genius of Ariosto, it was not thought allowable to omit the passage. These are among the parts alluded to by Gravina, who accuses Ariosto of “sometimes mingling ludicrous reflections or allusions with serious matter.” See the Preface.

Ver. 680. —*thence convey'd*.] In the time of Ariosto, Joan, queen of Castile, in like manner carried with her, in a coffin, the body of her dead husband, Philip of Austria. ZATTA.

A spacious

A spacious tract of land, day following day,  
 Through the lone wild and least frequented way,  
 They strove to pass unknown, secure from harms,  
 Now all the country round was fill'd with arms.  
 At length a knight they met, who stopp'd their course  
 With brutal insult and unmanly force : 686  
 Of him some fitter time the muse shall tell ;  
 Now turn to what the Tartar king befel.

The battle ended thus, his generous steed  
 The warrior from the reins and saddle freed, 690 }  
 And turn'd him loose to graze the flowery mead.  
 Pleas'd with the fair retreat, his limbs he laid  
 Beside the stream beneath the cooling shade ;  
 But lay not long, ere from a distant height  
 Descending to the plain, appear'd a knight : 695  
 Him, soon as Doralis beheld, she knew,  
 And pointing out to Mandricardo's view,  
 Unless the distant sight deceive my eyes,  
 Lo ! yonder comes fierce Rodomont (she cries) ;  
 To give thee combat from the hill he speeds, 700  
 And well such combat now thy prowess needs ;

Ver. 688. *Now turn to what the Tartar king befel.*] He returns to Isabella and the hermit, Book xxviii. ver. 676.

Rage

Rage for my loss, affianc'd to his bed,  
Has drawn down all his vengeance on thy head.

As the bold hawk a fiercer mien assumes,  
Lifts his high head, and spreads his ruffled plumes,  
If chance some birds of household breed he spies 706  
(The starling, duck, or dove) before him rise :  
So Mandricardo, well assur'd to bear  
From Rodomont the bloody wreaths of war,  
With joy exulting, mounts his steed again, 710  
His feet the stirrups press, his hand the rein.

And now the wrathful chiefs approach'd so near,  
That each the other's threatening words might hear.  
The king of Algiers shook his haughty head,  
Wav'd his right arm, and thus aloud he said : 715  
Soon shall I make thee rue thy fatal joy,  
Who for a short-liy'd gift, an amorous toy,  
Haft dar'd t' insult a prince, whose powerful hand  
Shall wreak the vengeance that such wrongs demand.  
Then Mandricardo thus :—In vain he tries 720  
To shake my courage who with threats defies.  
Women and boys are scar'd with seeming harms,  
Or those that ne'er were bred to use of arms :  
Not such am I—whose soul no terror knows,  
The hour of combat is to me repose : 725  
On

On foot, on horse, disarm'd or arm'd, I dare,  
In the close list, or open field of war.

Rage follows rage, and threatenings threatenings  
breed;

Their swords are drawn, and thundering strokes suc-  
ceed.

Like winds that first but whisper through the brake,  
Next the high tops of elms or beeches shake; 731  
Then whirl the gathering dust aloft in air,  
Sweep cots away, and lay the forest bare;  
In tempests kill the flocks that graze the plain,  
And whelm the vessels in the howling main: 735  
These Pagan knights, whose like could ne'er be found  
Through all the realms for deeds of arms renown'd,

Ver. 727. — *In the close list, or open field of war.*] This speech of Mandricardo is in the spirit of Hector to Ajax, before the single combat between them. Ajax had defied him, with haughtiness, to which he replies :

Me, as a boy or woman, would'st thou fright,  
New to the field, and trembling at the fight?  
Thou meet'st a chief deserving of thy arms,  
To combat born, and bred amidst alarms:  
I know to shift my ground, remount the car,  
Turn, charge, and answer every call of war;  
To right, to left, the dexterous lance to wield,  
And bear thick battle on my sounding shield.

POPE'S Iliad, Book vii. ver. 285.

With

With dauntless hearts, and many a dreadful stroke,  
 Pursu'd a fight that well their race bespoke.  
 With horrid clangor oft their falchions meet; 740  
 Earth seems to groan and shake beneath their feet,  
 While, from their batter'd armour, frequent fly  
 The fiery sparks, ascending to the sky.  
 On either side alike the knights assail  
 The plates to sever, or to rend the mail. 745  
 Each inch of ground they guard with equal care,  
 And in a narrow orb contract the war.  
 Amidst a thousand aim'd, the Tartar bends  
 A stroke, that driven with both his hands descends  
 On Sarza's front—the many-colour'd light 750  
 Now shuns in mist before his dazzled sight.  
 Back fell the African, of sense bereav'd,  
 The crupper of his steed his helm receiv'd;  
 He lost his stirrups, and his seat had lost,  
 Ev'n in her sight whose love he valu'd most: 755  
 But as a bow of temper'd steel, constrain'd  
 To yield reluctant to a potent hand,  
 The more it bends, the stronger, when releas'd,  
 It springs, and sends the shaft with strength in-  
 creas'd:

Again

Again the Pagan rising from the blow, 760  
 Return'd redoubled vengeance on his foe.  
 Where late himself the hostile weapon felt,  
 Stern Rodomont on Mandricardo dealt  
 The furious blade : the blade no entrance found ;  
 The Trojan casque secur'd the knight from wound :  
 But scarce the Tartar, with the blow bereav'd 766  
 Of fight and sense, the day from night perceiv'd.

While Rodomont repeated strokes bestow'd,  
 And on his helmet laid the furious load ;  
 The Tartar's courser, that beheld with fear 770  
 The hostile steel which his'd aloft in air,  
 With his own fate his rider's safety bought :  
 For while to shun the fearful noise he sought,  
 Full on his neck descends the weighty sword,  
 And gives to him the wound design'd his lord ; 775  
 He wanted Hector's helm his head to shield,  
 And hence he fell—but instant from the field  
 Rais'd on his feet, again with fearless look  
 Bold Mandricardo Durindana shook :  
 Rage swell'd his breast to view his courser slain ; 780  
 While Rodomont on him with loosen'd rein  
 Impell'd his steed ; but Mandricardo stood,  
 Firm as some rock amidst the billowy flood ;

While,

While, with his lord o'erthrown, extended low  
 Was laid the courser of the Sarzan foe. 785

Sudden the king of Algiers left his steed,  
 His feet as swiftly from the stirrups freed,  
 And stood recover'd with the foe to wage  
 An equal fight ; no less the Tartar's rage  
 His rival met—Now blows succeeding blows, 790  
 Fierce and more fierce the burning combat grows.  
 But, lo ! an envoy came from Afric's bands,  
 With numbers more dispatch'd thro' Gallia's lands,  
 Back to their banners every chief to call,  
 And private knight, when need requir'd them all :  
 For he \*, whose arms the golden lily bore, 796  
 Had in their works besieg'd the Pagan power ;  
 And, did not speedy aid retrieve their fame,  
 Destruction soon must whelm the Moorish name.

The trusty herald, as he nearer drew, 800  
 By arms and vestment well the warriors knew ;  
 But more he knew them by their force in field,  
 And weapons, which like theirs no hands could  
 wield.

He dares not rush between their wrathful swords,  
 And trust the privilege his name affords : 805

\* CHARLES.

To

To Doralis he hastens first to tell  
What deep mischance the Saracens befel ;  
How Agramant, Marsilius, and their train,  
With Stordilano join'd, a siege sustain  
From Christian Charles ; and will'd her to relate  
To either combatant their sovereign's state. 811

He said—the damsel with undaunted breast  
Between them stept, and in these words addres'd.

I charge ye, by the love which well I know  
To me ye bear, your swords your courage show 815  
T' assert a nobler cause—be now display'd  
Your mutual worth our friendly camp to aid ;  
Where the brave Saracens besieg'd, await  
Your saving arm, or some disastrous fate.

The herald then his embassy reveal'd, 820  
And letters gave to Ulien's offspring \*, seal'd  
From king Troyano's son ; when either knight  
Agreed to calm his wrath, and stay the fight ;  
And fix the truce, till some propitious hour  
Should raise the siege, and free the suffering Moor.  
The siege once rais'd, no longer either breast 825  
Shall let revenge or rival hatred rest,

\* RODOMONT.

But rage anew, till mutual valour try'd  
Their fatal title to the dame decide.

Thus they ; and she to whom their faith they  
vow'd, 830

The sacred pledge for either warrior stood.  
But Discord stern, whose unrelenting mind  
Abhorr'd all treaties that to peace inclin'd,  
And Pride no less the friendly terms oppos'd  
That thus in hated league their anger clos'd. 835  
But these in vain, with force combin'd, assai'd,  
Where Love's resistless power o'er all prevail'd :  
He bent his bow, his arrows swiftly flew,  
Till Pride and Discord from the field withdrew ;  
The truce confirm'd by her whose sovereign sway  
Compell'd each hardy champion to obey. 841  
One warlike steed they miss'd, for in the fight  
Lay dead the courser of the Tartar knight ;  
When thither gallant Brigliadoro stray'd,  
Who cropt, beside the stream, the verdant glade.

Since here the book concludes, permit me here  
To pause, and for a while the tale defer. 847

THE  
TWENTY-FIFTH BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

## THE ARGUMENT.

Roger goes, with the damsel, to deliver the youth who was condemned to die. Tale of Richardetto and Flor despina. Roger and Richardetto arrive at the castle of Agrismont, where they are entertained by Aldiger of the house of Clarmont. Aldiger gives Richardetto ~~un~~welcome tidings of their kinsmen Malagigi and Vivian, who were prisoners to Lanfusa, the mother of Ferrau. Roger engages to set them at liberty. Roger's letter to Bradamant to excuse his absence. Roger, Richardetto, and Aldiger set out next day to rescue Malagigi and Vivian from the hands of the Pagans.

THE  
TWENTY-FIFTH BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE thirst of honour and the force of love  
Eternal strife in youthful bosoms move :  
Nor yet is known which most inclines the scales,  
Since this or that alike in turn prevails.  
The call of glory, and the sense of right, 5  
Not little now can weigh with either knight  
To stay the combat for the damsel fought,  
Till succour to the Moorish camp was brought :  
But Love more weigh'd—and had not her commands  
Whose power was sovereign held their wrathful hands,  
Ne'er had the battle ceas'd, till one subdu'd 11  
Had stain'd his rival's wreaths with vital blood ;  
And Agramant, with all his social train,  
Had hop'd assistance from their arms in vain.

Condemn not Love—if oft he merits blame, 15  
 His generous influence oft our praise may claim.

All thoughts of contest o'er, the warlike pair  
 Tow'rs Paris' walls, with her, the gentle fair,  
 Direct their steeds : the dwarf attends their course,  
 The dwarf who led, to meet his rival's force, 20  
 The jealous Rodomont, nor ceas'd to trace  
 The Tartar, till he brought them face to face.  
 A meadow entering now, at ease they find  
 Four knights beside a crystal fount reclin'd :  
 Two all unarm'd, two wear their helmets lac'd ; 25  
 And by their side a beauteous dame is plac'd.  
 But who the knights and dame, some future time  
 Shall tell—Rogero first demands my rhyme :  
 Rogero who, but late the tale has shwon,  
 In the deep well his magic shield had thrown. 30

Scarce from the well a mile Rogero pass'd,  
 When, lo ! an envoy came ; (of those in haste  
 Dispatch'd by king Troyano's son, to claim  
 His champions to retrieve the Pagan name)

Ver. 27. *But who the knights and dame, &c.]* He returns to  
 these, Book xxvi. ver. 498.

Ver. 30. *In the deep well—]* See Book xxii. ver. 663.

From

From him he heard the camp's disastrous state, 35 }  
Where now the powers, besieg'd by Charles, await }  
(Unless reliev'd) the last distress of fate. }

At this, conflicting thoughts Rogero press'd,  
And rent at once his undetermin'd breast  
With different calls—nor which t' attend he knows, 40  
Scarce time or place to weigh the choice allows.  
At length the herald he dismiss'd, and sped  
His course to follow where the damsel led,  
Who urg'd him on, till with the setting sun  
They reach'd a city by Marsilius won 45  
From royal Charles, where still his arms maintain'd,  
Amidst the heart of France, his conquest gain'd.  
No bridge nor portal here their haste delay'd ;  
None clos'd the portal, nor their passage stay'd ;  
Though near the fosse and gate was seen to stand 50  
(To guard the place) an arm'd and numerous band.  
The maid, his fair conductress, well they knew,  
And hence, unquestion'd, let the knight pursue  
His purpos'd way, till to the square he came,  
And saw the thronging crowd and kindled flame; 55  
Where stood the youth, who seem'd prepar'd to wait,  
With downcast looks, his near-approaching fate.

But when, by chance, he rais'd his mournful eyes  
 Suffus'd in tears, Rogero, with surprize,  
 Believ'd in him his Bradamant he view'd ;      60  
 So much the youth a kindred likeness shew'd :  
 Still as he gaz'd, and gaz'd with nearer look,  
 The mien and features Bradamant he spoke :  
 Or this (he cries) is she, or I no more  
 Am that Rogero I was call'd before.      65  
 Through too much zeal to give th' unhappy aid,  
 She hither came, and here, by fate betray'd,  
 A prisoner stands—Why did thy haste, my fair,  
 Forbid thy knight th' adventurous deed to share ?  
 Yet, thanks to Heaven ! that favour'd thus I come,  
 With timely succour to reverse thy doom.      71

His sword unsheathing with a furious look,  
 (His spear on Pinabello's knights he broke)  
 Against the throngs unarm'd his steed he guides,  
 O'er many a body, prest to earth, he rides.      75  
 With cries the wretches fly, and all the train  
 (So numerous late) are chac'd, or maim'd, or slain.  
 As whep, beside a pool, the household breed  
 Of smaller birds in flocks securely feed ;  
 If chance a hawk, descending from the skies,      80  
 Amidst them strikes, and makes his single prize ;

Each quits his fellow, for himself provides,  
 And from his feather'd foe for safety hides :  
 So had you seen dispers'd the heartless crew,  
 When first Rogero on their numbers flew : 85  
 From four or six that thence too slowly fled,  
 At one fierce stroke Rogero lopt the head :  
 Cleft to the breast through some his steel he sent ;  
 There, through the skull ; here to the teeth it went.  
 What tho' no ponderous helms their heads inclose,  
 But lighter morions bind each wretch's brows, 91  
 Yet, were they arm'd at proof, his raging blade  
 Through temper'd helmet had the passage made.  
 Rogero's strength was not the strength we find  
 In modern knights, or their degenerate kind : 95  
 Not such the tusky boar or lion boasts,  
 The fiercest beast of ours, or foreign coasts :  
 Perchance the thunder may his force excel,  
 Or that dire fiend (not he that reigns in hell) 99  
 But that which, arm'd with fire, my lord employs,  
 Which drives thro' seas and skies, and all destroys.

Ver. 99. *Or that dire fiend (not he that reigns in hell)*

*But that which, arm'd with fire, my lord employs,]*

By these lines the poet is supposed to mean a large piece of artillery belonging to the duke of Ferrara, which, from the vast execution it did in the field, had justly acquired the name of the  
**GREAT DEVIL.**

**RUSCELL.**

**Not**

Not less than one was slain at every wound,  
 But oftener two at once he hurl'd to ground :  
 Now four, now five he slew ; and soon remain'd  
 A hundred breathless by his fatal hand. 105  
 The sword, which from his noble side he drew,  
 Cuts, like soft curd, the hardest steel in two.  
 This sword, the work of Falerina's skill,  
 Was in Orgagna's garden forg'd to kill  
 The bold Orlando : but her alter'd mind 110  
 Full soon repented what she once design'd :  
 For all her arts she found in vain employ'd,  
 When with this sword her garden he destroy'd.  
 What horrors now, what slaughter must it yield,  
 When giv'n in such a warrior's hand to wield ! 115  
 If e'er Rogero force or skill posses'd,  
 To save his mistress, now it shone confess'd.  
 As the poor hare defends her from the hound,  
 So from the knight the crowds their safety found.  
 What numbers by his thundering arm lay dead ! 120  
 But who shall number those who trembling fled !

Meanwhile the damsel loos'd the cruel bands  
 That captive held the wretched victim's hands ;

Ver. 108. — *Falerina's skill, &c.*] See note to Book  
 xli. ver. 192, for an account of this adventure.

With

With zealous speed she arm'd them for the fight,  
 The buckler grac'd his left, the fword his right. 125  
 Fir'd with his wrongs, he rush'd with vengeful mind  
 To vent his rage on that degenerate kind.

Such were his deeds, as future times shall tell  
 That valour which he then approv'd so well.

The parting sun beneath the western main 130  
 Had plung'd, in ruddy waves, his golden wain,  
 When, with the youth preserv'd from cruel fate,  
 Rogero issu'd victor from the gate.

The youth, repriev'd by good Rogero's aid  
 From threaten'd death, his grateful thanks repaid :  
 Thanks ever due to one, who thus unknown 136  
 Had for another's safety risk'd his own ;  
 Then begg'd him to reveal his name, and show  
 To whom his life could such deliverance owe.

Rogero to himself—Lo ! there are seen 140  
 My fair-one's features, with her beauteous mien ;  
 But not the voice of Bradamant I hear,  
 Whose sweetness stole upon my raptur'd ear.  
 Not such the thanks that Bradamant would pay  
 To him she loves, on this eventful day. 145  
 But can it be—or can my faithful dame  
 So soon forget her dear Rogero's name ?

To

To ease his doubts, he thus with courteous grace:  
 These eyes are sure familiar to thy face ;  
 But when, or where, I seek in vain to find ;      150  
 Thou, gentle youth, relieve my wandering mind.

Thou may'st, ere this, Sir knight, have met these  
 eyes,

But when, or where, I know not (he replies),  
 Since through the world, like other knights, I range  
 From land to land, to seek adventures strange. 155  
 Perchance in me a sister's form appears,  
 Who wears the cuirass, and the falchion bears.  
 Our birth was one—and oft our semblant make  
 Has held our parents in a fond mistake :  
 Not thou the first of numbers who deceiv'd      160  
 By either's looks, have each for each believ'd ;  
 One difference only seen—these tresses shorn  
 Scarce reach my shoulders, as by men are worn :  
 While hers, with lengthen'd growth, in many a fold,  
 Beneath her helm in silken braids are roll'd.      165  
 Once on her head a Pagan's weapon fell  
 With ghastly wound, but how, 'twere long to tell ;

Ver. 167. *With ghastly wound, &c.*] Bradamant, being without her helmet, was wounded by a Pagan, and afterwards cured of the wound by a father of the order of Jesus, who, for that purpose, caused her hair to be cut off; to which circumstance Ariosto several times alludes.

See General View of BOYARDO's Story.  
 When,

When, for her cure, a holy father's care  
 (Of Jesus train) lopt close her length of hair :  
 No sign was then that either could proclaim, 170  
 And all our difference was in sex and name.

Her Bradamant, call Richardetto me ;

I brother to Rinaldo, sister she.

If now you deign to lend attention, hear  
 A wondrous tale that well deserves your ear : 175  
 A chance, which from our mutual likeness rose,  
 Begun in joy, but nearly clos'd in woes.

Rogero, who no other tale requir'd,  
 No sweeter converse than of her desir'd,  
 Of her his best belov'd and sole delight, 180  
 Befought the youth his story to recite.

He thus began—As through the woodland shade,  
 With tresses shorn, my martial sister stray'd,  
 One day fatigu'd with toil, and faint with heat,  
 She reach'd a pleasant fountain's cool retreat ; 185  
 Then left her steed, her shining helm unbound,  
 And sunk in slumber on the verdant ground.  
 Not all the fables ancient poets tell,  
 Or fancy'd legends, can this truth excel.

A royal virgin, eager at the chace, 190  
 Fair Flordespina, to the lonely place

By

By fortune came, and drawing nigh, survey'd  
 My sleeping sister in bright arms array'd,  
 All save her head : her side the falchion wore,  
 And every part a manly semblance bore. 195

Struck with her form, awhile the virgin gaz'd  
 In wonder wrapt, till Love a passion rais'd, }  
 That soon through all her tender bosom blaz'd.  
 She urg'd her to the chace ; then from the crew  
 Of horns and hounds the seeming champion drew 200  
 To where no prying witness might intrude,  
 In deepest shade of friendly solitude.

By words and gesture there the gentle maid  
 The secret of her deep-struck heart betray'd :  
 With languor-darting eyes, with sighs of fire, 205  
 She show'd her soul consuming with desire.  
 Now from her cheeks the rosy colour fled ;  
 Returning warmth now flush'd the deep'ning red :  
 Till, lost in thoughts of visionary blis,  
 And bolder grown, she ventur'd on a kiss. 210

Ver. 210. *And bolder grown, &c.]* This behaviour of Flor despina seems an outrage on all female decency ; but it must be remembered, that our poet, in this extensive work, exhibits every kind of personage ; that the attractions of Flor despina are merely the attractions of beauty, and that her character is so far from being amiable, that the Italian commentators have supposed her to represent inordinate and ungoverned passion.

Too well my sister knew her manly frame,  
And martial guise, beguil'd the gentle dame ;  
She knew no power t' assuage the fair one's smart,  
And soft compassion touch'd her friendly heart.

Then to herself—'Twere better to reveal 215  
My woman's sex, and thus her frenzy heal ;  
To own myself a maid of gentle mind,  
Not seem a youth of rude degenerate kind :  
And well she said—for recreant must he prove,  
A man whose pulse was never warm'd to love ; 220  
Who, when some beauteous damsel courts his arms,  
With youthful sweetness and alluring charms,  
Should waste in talk the hour good fortune brings,  
And, like a cuckoo, hang his coward wings.

My sister now, with mild address, prepar'd 225  
To soothe the virgin, and the truth declar'd ;  
That like Camilla, panting for a name,  
Or fierce Hypolita, she burnt for fame ;  
And in Arzilla born, on Afric's shore,  
From earliest youth the lance and buckler bore. 230

In vain she spoke ; her words no spark remove  
Of passion kindled in the fire of love :  
Too late the medicine came to heal the smart,  
Since Love, alas ! too deep had plung'd his dart.

Whene'er

Whene'er she views the manly mien and arms, 235  
 A transient hope her beating bosom warms ;  
 But soon, the lov'd-one's sex recall'd to mind,  
 Again is hope to cold despair resign'd.  
 Whoe'er that day had heard the virgin mourn,  
 Would sigh for sigh, and tear for tear return. 240

Did ever wretch (she cry'd) such torments know  
 To equal what I feel---my cureless woe !  
 All other loves, save mine, success may find,  
 Whether of lawful or of impious-kind.  
 From the sharp thorn the blooming rose we part, 245  
 But vain desire must ever rend my heart.  
 Ah, ruthless Love ! since envious of my bliss,  
 Thou must, with cruel pains, pollute my peace,  
 Suffic'd it not to give some common wound,  
 Which others from thy various darts have found ? 250  
 Ne'er midst the human race, or bestial train,  
 A female seeks a female's love to gain :

Ver. 241. *Did ever wretch, &c.*] This complaint of Flor-  
 despina is closely copied from the fable of Iphis and Ianthe, in  
 OVID. See Metam.—But while the poet makes Flordespina  
 enumerate the unnatural loves of Semiramis, Pasiphaë, and Myr-  
 rha, and complain of the singularity of her own, he seems en-  
 tirely to forget the story of Iphis and Ianthe.

No damsel's charms attract a damsel's sight,  
 Nor hinds in hinds, nor lambs in lambs delight :  
 In air—on earth—but one, alas ! can prove, 255  
 And I, alas ! that one—so strange a love.  
 Thus, ruthless power ! my wretched fate must show  
 A great example of thy rule below.  
 The wife of Ninus, by the Furies fir'd,  
 To her son's bed with impious lust aspir'd : 260

Ver. 259. *The wife of Ninus*,—] Semiramis. This name is said to have been given her because she was nourished by doves, which are so called in the Syrian tongue. Many fables are told of her. Diodorus Siculus relates, that she was born in a wood, near the city of Ascalonia; that her mother was a reputed goddess, and her father a priest; that at her birth she was concealed in a grotto, where the doves, stealing milk from the shepherds, carried it to the infant. He relates, that she was afterwards brought up by the king's head shepherd, and in process of time married Ninus, king of Assyria. At his death she took upon her the government of the empire, and was famous for her courage and conduct. She was a princess of the most abandoned principles; and, in order to conceal her amours, is said to have caused every man to be put to death who partook of her favours. She had a son by her husband called Ninus, with whom, some say, she fell in love; and that, upon her solicitation to comply with her impious desires, she was slain by him. Others say, that she married him; and in order to cover her guilt enacted a law, by which it was permitted for a mother to marry her son.

PORCACCHI.

Myrrha her father lov'd; the Cretan dame  
 A bull deceiv'd—but wilder is my flame.  
 In these the females still the males pursue,  
 And each attain'd her wish, if tales be true;  
 But here should Dedalus his arts apply, 265  
 No art could such a Gordian knot untie,  
 Which Nature fram'd to make my passion vain,  
 Nature, whose laws must every power restrain.

Thus to herself laments the fair distrest,  
 And feeds eternal anguish in her breast; 270  
 She rends her locks, she tears her lovely cheeks,  
 While on herself a mad revenge she seeks:  
 Touch'd with her woe, my pitying sister hears,  
 Sighs back her sighs, and answers tears with tears.  
 In vain she strives to cure her senseless love, 275  
 No words can soothe her, and no reasons move;  
 While she, who seeks not comfort but relief,  
 Still mourns the more, and sinks from grief to grief.

The day but little now remain'd to run,  
 Red in the west appear'd the setting sun: 280  
 And time requir'd to seek a port for those  
 That would not there in forest wilds repose;  
 When now the virgin huntress made request,  
 For Bradamant beneath her roof to rest.

My sister, yielding to the dame consent, 285

Together to Marsilius' town they went;

Where but for thee, whose aid so timely came,

These wretched limbs had fed the hungry flame.

Arriving, Flor despina to the place

My sister welcom'd with a sister's grace; 290

Then in a female garb her friend array'd,

That all who saw might know her for a maid:

And more---she hop'd the cause of her distress

From error nourish'd by the manlike dres,

The dres once chang'd, her fond desire might cease,

And all her bosom be compos'd to peace. 296

Ah! how unlike that night the couch they press'd!

One soundly lock'd in all-composing rest:

One waking sigh'd, or if she clos'd her eyes,

In broken slumbers flattering visions rise. 300

She fancies, at her prayer, indulgent Heaven

To Bradamant a better sex had given.

As, worn with tedious watch, the patient dreams.

(Long parch'd with feverish thirst) of limpid streams,

And cooling draughts; so she in sleep enjoys 305.

What all in vain her waking thought employs.

Sudden she starts, extending round the bed

Her longing hands; but finds the blessing fled.

That night what offerings she to Macon vow'd,  
 To every power!—that for her sake bestow'd, 310  
 Some miracle, in pity to her flame,  
 Might to a youth transform the virgin dame.  
 In vain she prays—in vain her tears—her love—  
 No Macon hears her, and no powers approve.  
 All night she mourn'd, till Phœbus from the wave 315  
 His locks disclos'd, and light returning gave:  
 The light return'd, from bed the pair arose,  
 Day adding force to Flor despina's woes:  
 For Bradamant (whom much it irk'd to prove  
 The hapless object of so vain a love, 320  
 And by her presence more inflame the smart)  
 Declar'd her speedy purpose to depart.  
 But, ere she went, fair Flor despina brought  
 A stately steed, with trappings richly wrought;  
 To these a surcoat join'd of costly make, 325  
 Work'd by her hands; and will'd her, for the sake  
 Of parting love, the precious gifts to take. }

And now my sister urg'd her speedy way  
 To Mount Albano, ere the close of day;  
 Where we, her mother and her brethren, flew 330  
 With eager joy her welcome face to view.

London, Jan. 1st 1820

For Richardetto's sake Rogero prov'd,  
 A kinsman dear by Aldiger belov'd : 500  
 Though now his guests he met not with that air  
 Of cheerful greeting he was wont to wear,  
 But pensive came : that day were tidings brought,  
 Which fill'd his face with grief, his breast with  
 thought.

Instead of glad salute, with heavy look, 505  
 Young Richardetto first he thus bespoke.

Alas ! my kinsman—hear me now disclose  
 Unwelcome news, to speak our kindred's woes.  
 Know Bertolagi, sprung of ruthless seed,  
 Has with Lanfusa, ruthless dame ! agreed 510  
 Large wealth in sums of countless gold to pay,  
 For which the dame our brethren shall convey  
 Vivian and Malagigi, to the hand  
 Of Bertolagi, and his impious band.  
 E'er since the time Ferrau subdu'd in fight 515  
 Our kinsmen, has she kept each helpless knight  
 In the drear confines of a darksome cell,  
 Till this dire compact which I loath to tell.  
 To-morrow's sun the prisoners, with a guard,  
 She sends to Bertolagi, where prepar'd, 520

Ver. 513. *Has with Lanfusa*,—] Lanfusa, the mother of Ferrau.

Near

Near fair Bayona, he with gifts of cost  
 Shall buy the dearest blood that France can boast.  
 To our Rinaldo on a swift-foot steed  
 The news I sent, but much I fear our need  
 Requires that speedy succour from his sword, 525  
 The length of way forbids him to afford.  
 No force have I to lead against the foe ;  
 My will is prompt, but, ah ! my means are slow.  
 Then, whither shall I turn, what method try?  
 If in his hands they fall, they surely die. 530

Ill Richardetto this advice receiv'd,  
 Which, grieving him, no less Rogero griev'd :  
 He saw, where both in pensive silence stood,  
 Opprest with evil chance, despairing good ;  
 Then dauntless thus—Compose each anxious breast,  
 With me alone this enterprize shall rest ; 536  
 Against a thousand weapons shall you see  
 Mine boldly drawn, to set your brethren free :  
 My single arm the Pagan bands shall face ;  
 Give but a guide to lead to yonder place, 540  
 Where such a compact threats your wretched  
 race.  
 Soon shall the battle's tumult reach your ear,  
 Though distant, each the cries or groans shall hear,

OF

Of those that bargain for each wretched thrall,  
 Of those that fly me, or of those that fall. . . . . 545  
 Thus he ; and what he spoke one warrior knew,  
 By proof late seen, his deeds might well make true ;  
 While one scarce heard, or heard but as the words  
 Of those, whose boasting little hope affords.  
 But Richardetto him aside address'd, . . . . . 550  
 And told how late his life, when sore distress'd,  
 Rogero sav'd, and well he knew his deed.  
 On fit occasion would his speech exceed.  
 At this good Aldiger, with alter'd mind,  
 To do him reverence every thought inclin'd ; . . . . . 555  
 And, at his table plac'd, where plenty pour'd  
 Her well-fill'd horn, he honour'd as his lord.  
 And now the knights and noble youth agree,  
 Without more aid, the captive pair to free.

The hour approach'd, when sleep prepar'd to close  
 The eyes of lords and knights in soft repose, . . . . . 560  
 All save Rogero's ; in whose anxious breast  
 Corroding thought repell'd approaching rest.  
 The siege of Agramant, which late he heard,  
 Engross'd his thoughts ; he knew each hour de-  
 ferr'd . . . . . 565  
 To

To join his lord, must fully his fair fame,  
 Nor could he, but with deepest sense of shame,  
 Afflit his sovereign's foes, and own the Christjan  
 name.

His change of faith at other times had prov'd  
 A mind sincere, by pure religion mov'd ; 570  
 But now, when Agramant, in state distrest,  
 Requir'd his arm, might rather speak him preſt  
 With daſtard fear, than urg'd by force of truth :  
 While these reſlections pain the generous youth,  
 He dares not yet to Agramant depart, 575  
 Without her leave, the sovereign of his heart.  
 Each thought by turns his dubious bosom ſways ;  
 Now this prevails, and now more lightly weighs.  
 Once had he hop'd, but vainly hop'd, to meet  
 His Bradamant at Flor despina's ſeat, 580  
 Which with the guiding fair, and martial maid \*,  
 He lately ſought in Richardetto's aid.  
 And now he calls to mind his firſt design,  
 At Vallombroſa's walls his love to join,  
 His virgin-love, who there might well expect 585  
 His fight in vain, and blame his ſlow neglect.

## \* BRADAMANT.

His

His thoughts thus changing, never at a stay,  
He fix'd at length by letter to convey  
His secret soul ; though doubtful yet whose care  
Might to her hand the gentle message bear ; 590  
Yet trusts that chance would on his way provide  
A messenger, in whom he might confide.

He quits his bed—and pens and light demands :  
The ready pages, with officious hands,  
Each need supply—and first, as lovers use, 595  
He greets her fair, then tells th' unwelcome news.  
He bids her think, on him what shame must wait,  
Should death or bondage be his sovereign's fate :  
That since he hop'd her husband's name to gain,  
No slightest blemish must his honour stain ; 600  
As nought impure must her pure love enjoy,  
Whose soul was truth, refin'd from all alloy.

Ver. 593. *He quits his bed—and pens and light, &c.]*

The Italian.

————— *falta delle piume,*  
*Si fa dar carta, inchiostro, penna, e lume.*

\* Literally,

————— He leaps from his bed,  
And causes paper, ink, pens, and a light to be given him.

These familiar passages cannot well be rendered in our language ; and it is surely difficult to convey, in any tolerable manner, the author's sense in English verse.

If e'er he wish'd to purchase virtuous fame,  
 Or wish'd, when purchas'd, to preserve the claim,  
 What must he now, when she, his future wife, 605  
 Would share with him in each event of life?  
 With him in weal or woe be ever join'd,  
 Two bodies link'd by one informing mind?  
 And as he oft had vow'd, he thus once more  
 His vows confirm'd; the fated season o'er, 610  
 For which he to his lord must keep unstain'd  
 His loyal truth; he then, if life remain'd,  
 By every proof would all her fears relieve,  
 And Christian faith with open rites receive;  
 And from her fire, her brother, all her train 615  
 Of kindred friends, her hand in marriage gain.  
 First will I raise (he said) with thy consent,  
 The siege by which my sovereign lord is pent,  
 Lest men should say, while Agramant maintain'd  
 His prosperous state, Rogero firm remain'd; 620  
 But now for Charles since Fortune changes hands,  
 He spreads his standard with the victor's bands.  
 Some thrice five days, or twenty, let me prove  
 My force, my monarch's danger to remove,  
 Then will I frame a just excuse, to take 625  
 My leave of Agramant—for honour's sake,

I ask

I ask no more, and all my future life  
I give to thee, my mistress and my wife.

In phrase like this, Rogero painted well 632  
His secret thoughts, which scarce the Muse can tell ;  
Nor stay'd his pen, till words fast flowing o'er,  
The love-directed page could hold no more,  
The letter ending here, the lines he seal'd,  
And sealing, in his careful bosom held,  
In hopes some friend, ere one revolving day, 635  
Might to her hand the gentle charge convey.  
The letter clos'd, he clos'd in slumber deep  
His heavy lids o'er-watch'd—the Power of Sleep  
Stood near his couch, and o'er his members threw  
The peaceful drops of Lethe's silent dew. 640  
He slept, till in the east a breaking cloud  
With blended hues of white and purple glow'd ;  
Whence flowers were strow'd o'er all the smiling skies,  
And, thron'd in gold, the morn began to rise.

When now the birds, from every verdant spray,  
With early music hail'd the new-born day, 646

Ver. 629. *In phrase like this, &c.*] Spenser has in like manner introduced a letter into his poem, upon which Mr. Upton observes, " Spenser has not the authority of Homer and Virgil for introducing an epistle in his epic poem, but he has the authority of Ariosto."

Good Aldiger (Rogero thence to lead,  
 With Richardetto, where their venturous deed  
 Must set the brethren free from captive bands,  
 Condemn'd to impious Bertolagi's hands) 650  
 Was first on foot ; and with him either guest,  
 Who heard the summons, left his downy rest.  
 Now cloth'd with temper'd steel, in meet array,  
 Rogero with the kinsmen took his way.

Oft had Rogero pray'd, but pray'd in vain, 655  
 His single arm might that day's glory gain ;  
 The two, through ardour in their kinsmen's cause  
 To join his arms, and urg'd by honour's laws,  
 Like rocks unmov'd, refus'd to him to yield  
 Alone the danger of so brave a field. 660

The hour approach'd, when either Pagan train  
 Prepar'd to bring each car and loaded wain,  
 With Malagigi, Vivian, and the gold  
 For which the wretched chiefs were bought and sold.  
 The warriors reach'd the place ; a field that lay, 665  
 Of wide extent, expos'd to Phœbus' ray :  
 No laurel there, no myrtle's fragrant wood,  
 Nor oak, nor elm, nor lofty cypress stood ;  
 But thorns and brambles choak'd the barren soil,  
 That felt no spade, nor own'd the ploughman's toil.  
 The

B. XXV. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 245

The three bold champions check'd their coursers' rein, 671

Where stretch'd a path extending o'er the plain ;  
When drawing nigh, a warrior they behold,  
Array'd in costly arms that flam'd with gold,  
In whose fair shield of vivid green appears 675  
The wondrous bird that lives a thousand years.

Here cease, my lord, while thus the book I close,  
And, pausing here, entreat awhile repose.

END OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH BOOK.

THE  
TWENTY-SIXTH BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

## THE ARGUMENT.

ROGERO, Richardetto, and Aldiger, meet an unknown warrior who joins their party. They attack the troops of Maganza and the Moor, and defeat them. Rogero and Marphisa signalize their valour. The prisoners, Malagigi and Vivian, are set at liberty. The warriors reposing themselves after the battle, Malagigi explains to the rest the mystical sculpture on a fountain made by Merlin. Hippalca arrives, and gives an account to Richardetto and Rogero of her losing Frontino, which was taken away by Rodomont. Rogero departs to revenge the affront. Arrival of Rodomont, Mandricardo, and Doralis: Mandricardo jousts with all the knights, and overthrows them: His battle with Marphisa. Rogero returns to the fountain. Strange dissentions amongst the warriors. Rogero claims his horse of Rodomont; and Mandricardo wrangles with Rogero for the device on his shield. Rodomont, Mandricardo, and Rogero fight: Marphisa takes part with Rogero. Malagigi, fearing for the safety of Richardetto attacked by Rodomont, causes, by his magic art, a demon to enter the horse of Doralis, which carrying her away, she is immediately followed by Mandricardo and Rodomont, who are afterwards pursued by Rogero and Marphisa.

THE

TWENTY-SIXTH BOOK

OF

ORLANDO FURIOSO.

THE generous dames, of ancient time, despis'd  
The charms of wealth, and virtue only priz'd ;  
In this our age, we see the female train  
Scarce bend a wish to aught but fordid gain :  
Yet those who, blest with inbred goodness, shun 5  
That love of gold which has the sex undone,  
Living, content and peace may justly claim ;  
And, dead, should find the meed of endless fame.  
For ever, sure, must Bradamant be prais'd,  
Who not her thoughts to power or riches rais'd, 10  
But lov'd whate'er bespoke the noble mind,  
Grace, courage, honour, in Rogero join'd ;  
And well deserv'd a knight of such desert  
Should bear her image in his constant heart ;

And

And for her sake those valorous deeds atchieve, 15  
 Which after ages scarcely could believe.

Rogero, with the two, as late I told,  
 With Aldiger and Richardetto bold,  
 (The knights of Clarmont) bright in steel array'd,  
 Prepar'd to give the brother-prisoners aid. 20  
 I told you how a warrior crois'd the field,  
 Of fearless gesture, bearing on his shield  
 The bird that from its ashes springs to birth,  
 And (strange to tell !) but one appears on earth.

Soon as the knight unknown, advancing, view'd 25  
 Where each brave chief prepar'd for combat stood,  
 Eager he burn'd to prove, in martial deed,  
 How far their valour with their looks agreed.  
 Is there amongst you one who dares (he cries)  
 With me in single fight dispute the prize ? 30  
 With spear or sword in rough encounter meet,  
 Till one shall fall, while one retains his seat ?

That man were I—(thus Aldiger reply'd)  
 'With thee the sword to wield, the spear to guide :  
 But (as thyself shalt see) far other task 35  
 Bids us refuse what courage bids thee ask ;  
 A task, that scarce permits these few short words,  
 Much less the time to run at tilt affords.

Behold

B. XXVI. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 251

Behold where station'd here, we three prepare  
At least six hundred men in arms to dare, 40

That by our love and valour may be freed  
Two wretched friends, to cruel bonds decreed.

He said; and to the brave unknown reveal'd  
The cause at full, that brought them to the field.

Well hast thou urg'd such reasons as suffice 45  
For just excuse (the stranger thus replies);  
And sure three knights you seem whose dauntless  
worth

Scarce meets its equal through the spacious earth.  
With you I sought, erewhile, to run the course  
On equal terms, for proof of either's force: 50  
But since on others I shall see your might  
Far better try'd—I claim no more the fight:  
But this I claim—my arms with yours to wield,  
With yours to join this helmet, lance, and shield;  
And trust to prove, when on your side I stand, 55  
Not undeserving of so brave a band.

Some here may wish to learn the warrior's name;  
Who thus, a fearless candidate for fame,  
Would with Rogero and his fellows meet  
The dreadful hazards of their hardyfeat. 60

She

SHE then (no longer HE this champion call)  
 Was bold Marphisa, from whose hand his fall  
 Zerbino suffer'd, sworn by her to guard  
 Gabrina foul, for every ill prepar'd.

The good Rogero, and each noble lord 65  
 Of Clarmont's house, receiv'd with one accord  
 The proffer'd aid of her, whom all esteem'd  
 Of manly fex, as by her dress she seem'd.

Not long they stay'd, ere Aldiger beheld,  
 And shew'd his friends, at distance on the field, 70  
 A banner rais'd, that to the breezes flow'd,  
 And round the banner throng'd a mingled crowd.  
 When now advanc'd, so near in sight they drew,  
 That by their Moorish garb the warriors knew  
 The hostile band; amid the shouting throng 75  
 They saw the hapless brethren borne along  
 On two low steeds, expecting to behold  
 For sums of wealth their persons chang'd and sold.

Then thus Marphisa—Wherfore such delay,  
 When these are present, to begin the fray? 80  
 Rogero answer'd—Of th' invited train  
 To crown the banquet, many guests remain

Vet. 62. SHE then (no longer HE—]  
 Costei (non piu costui detto vi sia).

Not

Not yet arriv'd—we form a solemn treat,  
 And all must join to make the feast complete;  
 Soon will the rest attend—While thus he said, 85  
 His bold compeers the remnant foes survey'd :  
 The traitors of Maganza's line advance,  
 And all is ready to begin the dance.

There swarm'd the numbers of Maganza's crew,  
 With groaning mules in loaded wains, that drew 90  
 Gold, vests, and precious wealth ; while here were  
 seen

The captive brethren, with dejected mien ;  
 Who slowly rode, in shameful shackles bound,  
 With lances, swords, and bows encompas'd round ;  
 And Bertolagi (cause of either's grief ) 95  
 Was heard conferring with the Moorish chief.  
 Not Buovo's son, nor he \* of Amon's strain,  
 The traitor present, could their wrath contain :  
 At once his spear in rest each warrior took ;  
 And each, at once, the proud Maganzan struck : 100  
 One through his helm the deadly wound impress'd ;  
 One drove the thrilling weapon through his breast.  
 As Bertolagi by these knights was slain,  
 Like him so perish all, that wrong maintain.

\* RICHARDETTO.

At

At this Marphisa with Rogero fir'd, 100  
 No other signal for th' attack requir'd ;  
 And ere her spear she broke, the martial maid  
 Low on the ground three warriors breathless laid.  
 The other impious chief was worthy found  
 From fierce Rògero's spear to meet his wound : 110  
 He fell ; and, by the same dire weapon slain,  
 Two more were sent to Death's relentless reign.  
 An error now amidst th' assail'd was bred,  
 That wide and wider to their ruin spread :  
 Those of Maganza deem'd themselves betray'd 115  
 By the fierce Saracens ; the Moors, dismay'd  
 By frequent wounds and deaths on every hand,  
 With treacherous murder charg'd Maganza's band ;  
 Till fell reproach to mutual carnage rose,  
 With spears in rest, drawn swords, and bended bows.

Now here, now there, by turns Rogero flew 121  
 On either troop ; now ten, now twenty slew.  
 As many by the virgin's weapon kill'd,  
 In divers parts lay scatter'd o'er the field.  
 The rider from his saddle lifeless fell, 125  
 Whene'er descended either trenchant steel ;  
 Helmet and corslets yielded where it came,  
 As crackling ferewood to destroying flame.

If e'er you saw, or e'er have heard the tale,  
How, when fierce factions in the hive prevail, 130  
As to their standard in the fields of air,  
The buzzing legions for the fight prepare,  
Amidst them oft the hungry swallow pours,  
Rends, kills, or scatters, and whole troops devours :  
So think Marphisa, so Rogero rag'd : 135  
Alike by turns each daftard troop engag'd.  
But Richardetto nor his kinsman chang'd  
The slaughter thus, nor thus alternate rang'd;  
The band of Saracens untouched they leave,  
While all their furies to Maganza's cleave. 140  
Rinaldo's brother, to the dauntless mind  
That fits a knight, had mighty prowefs join'd ;  
And now the hatred he Maganza bore,  
Gave twofold vigour to his wonted power :  
This fir'd the base-born son of Buovo's bed, 145  
Who, like a lion, his resentment fed :  
Through helm and head his weapon took its course,  
And both gave way before the crashing force.  
What soul but here had caught the martial ire ?  
What breast but here had glow'd with Hector's fire ?  
Here, with Marphisa and Rogero join'd, 151  
The choice, the flower of all the warrior kind !

Marphisa,

Morphisa, as she fought, oft turn'd her eyes,  
 And view'd her comrades' deeds with vast surprize;  
 She prais'd them all ; but good Rogero rais'd 155  
 Her wonder most, him o'er mankind she prais'd :  
 Sometimes she deem'd that Mars had from above  
 Left his fifth heaven, the fights of men to prove.  
 She mark'd his dreadful sword, that never fail'd,  
 Against whose edge no temper'd steel avail'd ; 160  
 The helm and cuirass strong it pierces through,  
 It cleaves the rider to the seat in two,  
 And sends, divided, in a crimson tide,  
 The corse in equal parts on either side ;  
 Nor deaden'd there its dreadful fury stays, 165  
 But with his wretched lord the courser slays.

Ver. 163. *And sends, divided, in a crimson tide,  
 The corse in equal parts on either side ;  
 Nor deaden'd there, &c.]*

These passages remind us of the wounds given by knights-errant in romances, so often ridiculed by Cervantes, and for which Ariosto is, with these authors, liable to the censure of extravagance. The host, who like Don Quixote is intoxicated with reading romances, makes the following eulogium on those performances, in answer to the priest who had recommended history. " Before God, your worship should have read what I have read, concerning Felixmarte of Hyrcania, who, with one back-stroke, cut asunder five giants in the middle, as if they had been so many bean-cods."

JARVIS'S Don Quixote, Vol. I. B. iv. C. v.

From

From many a neck his falchion lops the head ;  
Oft o'er the hips, sheer through the body sped,  
It parts the trunk : now five the rapid steel  
Severs at once—and more I fear to tell, 170  
Lest truth should falsehood seem : but Turpin fam'd,  
Who knew the truth, and what he knew proclaim'd,  
Leaves men to credit or reject his page,  
Which blazons deeds unknown in this degenerate age.

Alike appear'd Marphisa's martial ire, 175  
Her foes all frozen, and herself all fire !  
While she no less attracts Rogero's gaze,  
Than he before might claim the virgin's praise :  
And as she deem'd him Mars, so, had he known  
His partner's sex, to equal wonder won 180  
Of her great deeds, he sure had styl'd the fair  
The dread Bellona, patroness of war !  
Caught each from each, their kindling ardour rose,  
Dire emulation for their wretched foes !  
On whom they thus their mutual prowels show'd, 185  
On nerve, on bone, on limbs all drench'd in blood.  
Full soon the might of these resistless four  
Dispers'd each camp, and broke their strongest power.  
Who hop'd to 'scape, his limbs from armour freed,  
And stript in lighter vesture, urg'd his speed. 190

Happy the man whose courser swiftest flies ;  
 No common pace his safety now supplies :  
 While he, who wants a steed, laments the harms  
 That more on foot attend the trade of arms.

The field and plunder to the conquering band  
 Were left ; nor guard nor muleteer remain'd. 196  
 There fled Maganza's force, here fled the Moor,  
 Those left the prisoners, these their wealthy store.  
 With joyful looks, and with exulting mind,  
 The noble kinsmen hasten'd to unbind 200  
 Vivian and Malagigi, whilst a train  
 Bore heaps of treasure from the loaded wain ;  
 Vases of silver wrought (the victor's prize)  
 And female vests that flam'd with costly dyes ;  
 Viands, on which their hunger might be fed, 205  
 With generous wines, and all-sustaining bread.

Each helm unlac'd, the noble warrior-maid  
 Appear'd confest : her golden locks display'd

Ver. 207. ————— *the noble warrior maid*  
*Appear'd confest : — ] So Britomart disarms in*  
*Spenser.*

With that her glittering helmet she unlac'd,  
 Which doft her golden locks that were upbound  
 Still in a knot, unto her heels down trac'd.

FAIRY QUEEN, Book III. C. iv. St. 13.  
 Both poets compare their respective heroines to Bellona.

Her hidden sex, and on her lovely face  
Bright shone the charms that female features  
grace. 210

With rapture all the generous virgin view'd,  
And now to learn her glorious name they su'd :  
She, with her friends, to mild deportment us'd,  
Complacent heard, nor what they wish'd refus'd.  
On her, whose deeds so late their wonder rais'd, 215  
Each ardent knight with eye infatiate gaz'd :  
She on Rogero ; him alone she heard,  
With him alone she stood, with him conferr'd.

But now the pages call'd her to repair  
Where, by a fountain's side, the feast to share, 220  
In the cool shelter which a hill display'd,  
Her friends repos'd beneath the grateful shade.  
This fountain, rais'd with art, was one of four  
Which Merlin made in France by magic lore ;  
Of purest marble was the structure bright, 225  
With dazzling polish smooth, and milky white ;  
Here Merlin, by his skill divine, had brought  
Expressive forms in rising sculpture wrought.  
Thou would'st have said they seem'd in act to  
strive, 229  
And breathe, and move—in all but speech alive !

There, sculptur'd, from the woods a monster came,  
Of fearful aspect, and of mingled frame :

Ver. 231. *There, sculptur'd, from the woods a monster came,*] Most of the commentators have explained this monster to mean Avarice, which had over-run all the Christian world, and brought scandal on the professors of the faith. Sir John Harrington, who lived in an age of allegory, says, that Ariosto describes this vice very significantly ; he makes " her ugly, because of all vices it is most hateful ; ears of an ass, being for the most part ignorant, or at least careless of other men's good opinions ; a wolf in head and breast, namely, ravenous and never satisfied ; a lion's grisly jaw, terrible and devouring ; a fox in all the rest, wily and crafty." See notes to Sir John Harrington's translation of this book.

Lavezziola, a commentator, extols this description of Ariosto, as far superior to Dante, who simply represents Avarice in the form of a lean and hungry wolf.

E una lupa, che di tutta brame,  
Scontra carca con la sua magrezza,  
E molte genti fè già viver grame.      **INFERNO, Cant. I.**

— Inflam'd with every fierce desire,  
A famish'd she-wolf like a spectre came,  
Beneath whose gripe shall many a wretch expire.

HAYLEY.

Mr. Upton thinks, that by this monster is characterised Superstition, as ignorant, ravenous, cruel, and cunning. See his note to *Fairy Queen*, Book I. C. viii. St. 48.

The different explanations prove the uncertainty that often attends allegorical description ; though I cannot but think, from many circumstances, that Ariosto means to represent Avarice. Spenser, whose work is one continued allegory, would sometimes be totally unintelligible, but that he generally gives the names to his personified characters.

An

An ass's ears, a wolf's stern front he wore,  
With ravening teeth, as long undrench'd with gore ;  
A lion's rending paws : in all the rest 235  
His shape and hue the wily fox express'd.  
With rage untam'd he travers'd Gallia's land,  
Spain, Italy, and England's distant strand :  
Europe and Asia had his force o'er-run,  
And every clime beneath the rolling sun. 240  
Where'er he pass'd, the wounds or deaths he dealt,  
The low, the proud, in every station felt :  
But most the last—his fellest wrath he pour'd  
On king, on prince, on potentate, and lord.  
The Roman court his worst of furies knew, 245  
There popes and mitred cardinals he slew.  
This beast the hallow'd seat of Peter spoil'd,  
And with lewd scandals the pure faith defil'd.  
Before the monster's rage in ruins fall  
Each strong-built fort and well-defended wall. 250  
To honours even divine he dares pretend ;  
He makes th' insensate crowd in homage bend ;  
Bids servile tongues his impious glories swell,  
And boasts to keep the keys of heaven and hell.

Behold

Ver. 254. *And boasts to keep the keys, &c.*] It is not easy  
to say how far Ariosto meant to carry his satire, but a Protestant

Behold a warrior near, who round his hairs 255  
 The sacred wreath of regal laurel wears :  
 Three youths beside, whose kingly vestments hold,  
 Inwrought with silk, the fleur-de-lys of gold :  
 With these a lion the like signal shows ;  
 And all combin'd the raging beast oppose. 260  
 Of one the name is graven o'er his head,  
 The name of one is in his garment read.  
 Behold the chief, who to the hilt has gor'd  
 The monster's bowels with his crimson'd sword ;  
 Francis the First of France—and near him stands  
 Great Maximilian, lord of Austria's lands ; 266  
 The emp'ror Charles (the fifth that bears the name)  
 Has pierc'd his ravenous throat with deadly aim.  
 Henry the Eighth of England next succeeds,  
 Pierc'd by whose shaft in front the savage bleeds :  
 Leo the Tenth, the name yon lion bears, 271  
 Who fastening on his ears the monster tears :

commentator might very easily deduce from this passage a severe reflection on the sale of pardons and indulgencies, in order to feed the avarice of the Romish clergy.

Ver. 271. *Leo the Tenth*,—] Pope Leo X. here figured under the similitude of a lion, in which manner the poet often speaks of him ; a kind of punning allusion to his name.

Close

Close and more close these four the foe invade,  
And others now advancing join in aid.

Pale terror seems to fly from every place, 275  
While, ready to retrieve each past disgrace,  
The nobles, though but few, united strive,  
And the dire pest at length of life deprive.

    Marphisa with the knights impatient sought  
To know the chiefs at full, whose arm had wrought  
A deed so brave, by whom the beast lay dead, 281  
That far and wide such desolation spread ;  
Since the fair fount, with figures sculptur'd o'er,  
The names discover'd, but reveal'd no more.

    On Malagigi Vivian turns his eyes, 285  
Who near in silence fate, and thus he cries :  
'Tis thou must speak what all request to learn,  
For in thy looks thy knowledge I discern :  
Say, what are those, whose weapons, well employ'd,  
Have, with yon lion's aid, the beast destroy'd. 290

    Then Malagigi—Think not you behold  
A past event in story'd annals told ;  
Know first, the chiefs you see are yet unborn,  
The chiefs whose deeds the marble fount adorn. 294  
Seven hundred years elaps'd, their matchless worth  
Shall gladden, in their age, the wondering earth :

Merlin, the magic sage, this fountain made,  
 What time the British realm king Arthur sway'd.  
 From hell this monster came to plague mankind,  
 When lands were first by stated bounds confin'd; 300  
 When commerce, weights, and measures first began,  
 When written laws were fram'd 'twixt man and man.  
 As yet his power no distant realm attaih'd,  
 But various countries long unhurt remain'd :  
 He troubles, in our age, full many a place, 305  
 And spreads his mischiefs through the human race.  
 Since first on earth appear'd th' infernal beast,  
 We see, and still shall see, his bulk increas'd  
 Beyond the worst of plagues; not that so fam'd  
 In ancient page, terrific Python nam'd, 310  
 Can equal this!—What carnage shall be spread!  
 In every part what baneful venom shed!  
 Whate'er the sculpture shows, his rage exceeds ;  
 Unutterable and detested deeds !  
 Long shall the groaning world for mercy sue, 315  
 When these, whose names are read, these chosen few,

Ver. 310. — *terrific Python*—] Python was a monstrous serpent, said by the ancient poets to have been engendered from the slime of the earth after the deluge. He was killed by the darts of Apollo; in commemoration of which event were instituted the Pythian games.

Whose

Whose fame must shine like Phœbus' beams dis-  
play'd,

At utmost need shall bring their glorious aid.

Not one shall more the cruel beast appall, 319

Than Francis, whom the Franks their sovereign call,

He first of men!—with happy omens led,

The crown scarce settled on his youthful head,

Shall crest th' opposing Alps, and render vain

Whate'er against him would the pass maintain; 324

Impell'd by generous wrath t' avenge the shame,

Which from the rustic folds and sheep-cotes came, }

With sudden inroad, on the Gallic name.

To Lombardy's rich fields he then descends,

The flower of Gallia on his march attends.

Th' Helvetian power he routs, as never more 330

To raise its pride to what it rose before:

Ver. 320. *Than Francis,—*] The poet, in this allegory, celebrates the liberality of the most magnanimous king Francis I. the successor of Lewis XII. who, for the unbounded generosity of his disposition, may not only be said to have deeply wounded, but in a manner destroyed, the monster Avarice. He was a munificent patron of art and genius.

Ver. 326. *Which from the rustic folds and sheep cotes came,*] The poet means the Switzers, who at that time followed no employment in their own country but that of shepherds and herdsmen.

Then

Then to the church's scandal, to the stain  
 Of either camp, of Florence and of Spain,  
 He storms the castle, which till then was held, 334  
 Through strength of bulwark, never to be quell'd.  
 Where'er he wields his weapon, prostrate lies  
 Each hostile standard, or before him flies :  
 Nor fosse nor rampart can his force oppose,  
 And strongest walls in vain the town inclose.  
 This glorious chief shall every gift possess 340  
 By Heaven decreed the happiest prince to bless :  
 As Cæsar brave ; his prudence far renown'd,  
 As his at Thrasymene and Trebia found ;  
 Him Alexander's fortune shall attend :  
 On every deed in vain our toil we bend, 345  
 Unless good fortune our designs befriend. }

Thus Malagigi spoke, and new desire  
 In every knight was kindled, to enquire  
 The names of other chiefs, whose arms could quell  
 The dreadful beast by whom such numbers fell. 350

Ver. 336. *Where'er he wields, &c.*] He means the emperor Charles V. whom he compares to Cæsar for his valour, to Fa-bius Maximus for his prudence, and to Alexander the Great for his success.

There,

There, 'midst the first, was read Bernardo's name,  
 Whom Merlin's sculpture chronicled to fame :  
 By him shall Bibiena gain renown,  
 With neighbouring Florence, and Sienna's town.  
 No foot shall step before Giovanni's place ;      355  
 Ghismond or Ludovico's deeds efface.  
 Francisco see, nor from his generous fire  
 Brave Frederico shrinks : an equal fire

His

Ver. 351. — *Bernardo's name,*] This Bernardo was surnamed Divitio, though he was generally called Bibiena, from the town of that name near Florence, where he resided. He attached himself to the fortune of Giovanni di Medici, afterwards Leo, and was by him created cardinal of Santa Maria, in Portico. He wrote the comedy called *Callandra*, and caused it to be represented at Rome by the young nobility, in honour of Isabella duchess of Mantua. He died at no advanced age, having conceived hopes of obtaining the popedom on the decease of Leo.

Ver. 355. — *Giovanni—Ghismond—Ludovico—*] Three cardinals : Giovanni Salviati, one of the most ancient and illustrious families of Florence ; a man of profound learning and virtue : Ghismondo Gonzaga, created cardinal by Julius II. : the third was Ludovico of Arragon, likewise a cardinal.

Ver. 357. — *Francisco see,—*] Francisco Gonzaga, second of the name, and fourth marquis of Mantua : he succeeded to the possessions of his father Frederic at eighteen years of age, and fought against Charles VIII. of France ; he was a general of consummate

His kinsmen feel : alike each dauntless look ;  
 Ferrara's there, and here Urbino's duke : 360  
 From one of these brave Guidobaldo sprung,  
 Pursues his fire, with love of glory stung :  
 With Ottobon there Sinabaldo drives  
 The raging beast, and each for conquest strives.

Lewis

summate skill and intrepidity ; and Charles, enamoured of his worth, in vain endeavoured to corrupt his faith, and detach him from the Venetians.

FORNARI.

Ver. 358. — *Frederico*, — ] Frederico Gonzaga, son of Francisco, after the death of his father, was by Leo X. made captain-general of the Roman church, and of the republic of Florence. He was magnificent, liberal, just, and a great patron of virtue and learning.

FORNARI.

Ver. 360. *Ferrara there, and here Urbino's duke* :] Alphonse of Este, and Francisco Maria delle Rovere.

Ver. 361. — *Guidobaldo*, — ] Guidobaldo the Second, afterwards duke of Urbino, son of Francesco Maria.

Ver. 363. — *Ottobon—Sinabaldo*, — ] Of these names were two noble youths, brothers, of the family of Flischi at Genoa. Ottobon was an ecclesiastic. These retired into voluntary exile, that they might not, by a private enmity which they had incurred, draw a war upon their country. There were likewise two pontiffs of the same name. One was Innocent IV. first called Sinabaldo of Genoa, of the family of the Flischi. He ordered the cardinals to wear a red hat, and was a liberal and munificent pontiff. The other, Adrian IV. before called Ottobon, nephew of

B. XXVI. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 269

Lewis of Gazalo, with speeding art, 365

Warms in the monster's neck the feather'd dart:

His dart and bow had Phœbus' gift supply'd,

When Mars the falchion girded to his side.

See two Hippolitos of Este's breed;

Two Hercules, and next of kindred seed 370

Another Hercules, and near him shine

A third Hippolito; this last the line

Of Medicis; the first Gonzaga's race:

All these with equal warmth the monster chase.

of pope Innocent IV. of the same family and country, created cardinal by his uncle. He was a man of great ability and application, but lived only forty days after he came to the papal chair.

FORNARI.

Ver. 365. *Lewis of Gazalo*,—] Luigi Gonzaga, surnamed Rodomont from his valour, was the son of Ludovico Gonzaga, and called Gazalo from a castle which he held. This person is further spoken of in the succeeding notes.

Ver. 369. ——*two Hippolitos*—] One, to whom the poet dedicates his book; the other, son of Alphonso duke of Ferrara, likewise a cardinal.

FORNARI.

Ver. 370. *Two Hercules*,—] Hercules, the father of Alphonso duke of Ferrara, and his son afterwards duke of Ferrara.

FORNARI.

Ver. 371. *Another Hercules—a third Hippolito*—] Hercules Gonzaga, cardinal of Mantua: Hippolito of the honoured family of Medicis, cardinal of St. Lovenza. He died by poison, much lamented for his many virtues.

FORNARI.

Not Julian's son above his fire prevails, 375  
 Nor in his brother's steps Ferrantes fails :  
 Unconquer'd Dorea shows an equal mind :  
 By none Francisco Sforza left behind.  
 See two appear, whose blood illustrious flows  
 From noble Avolo, whose banner shows 380  
 The rock which whelm'd beneath Typhæus bore,  
 Typhæus fell with serpents cover'd o'er.

Ver. 375. *Not Julian's son*—] The brother of Lorenzo of Medicis was called Julian, and lost his life in a popular insurrection ; but his death was afterwards severely revenged by the Florentines. His son was Pope Clement VII. born a few days after his father's death. FORNARI:

Ver. 376. —*Ferrantes*—] Ferrantes Gonzaga, brother to the duke of Mantua, at one time viceroy of the island of Sicily, and afterwards lieutenant of the duchy of Milan, and general of the army for the emperor. FORNARI.

Ver. 377. *Unconquer'd Dorea*—] See Book xv. note to ver. 218, where his character is displayed at large.

Ver. 378. —*Francisco Sforza*—] He means the second Francisco Sforza, son of Ludovico il Moro, who having married the daughter of Christiern king of Dacia, and sister to Charles V. obtained the duchy of Milan. FORNARI.

Ver. 379. —*two appear, whose blood illustrious flows  
 From noble Avolo, —*] This noble family of the Avoli came from Spain, well known at Toledo, and of great repute and antiquity. FORNARI.

Scarce

Scarce one so prompt as these in noble deed,  
Scarce one so prompt to make the monster bleed.  
See here Francesco of Pescara fam'd, 385  
And there Alphonso see, of Vasco nam'd.  
Where is Gonsalvo next, whose acts shall raise  
The Spanish realm with never-dying praise?  
Of him would Malagigi gladly tell,  
Whom none, in this intrepid band, excel. 390

Ver. 385. —*Francesco of Pescara*—] Marquis of Pescara, and son of Alphonso. He was a great commander, and prosperous in every undertaking, except at Ravenna, where, receiving many wounds, he was taken prisoner; but fortune from that time was ever favourable to him. To the study of arms he joined the embellishment of letters; and while prisoner with the French, addressed to his wife Victoria an elegant dialogue on love. At last, after many victories obtained over the French, his strength being wasted with fatigue, he died in the flower of his age, covered with laurels. FORNARI.

Ver. 386. —*Alphonso—of Vasco*—] Cousin to the before-named Francesco, and no less an ornament to the house of Avoli. FORNARI.

Ver. 387.—*Gonsalvo*—] Gonsalvo Ferrantes was born at Cordova in Andalusia, of an ancient and noble family. By his assistance Ferdinando conquered the city of Granada, and the kingdom of Naples. He gained the title of Great, and at last died of a fever in the seventy-second year of his age, in the year 1515. FORNARI.

William

William of Monserrato's name is read,  
 With those who come the monster's blood to shed ;  
 While 'midst the chiefs that thus th' assault maintain,  
 Lo ! some are wounded there, some here are slain.

Thus in discourse, the banquet of the mind, 395  
 Their hunger fled, on carpets rich reclin'd,  
 Beside the fount in bowery shades they lay,  
 And careless pass'd the sultry hours away ;  
 While Malagigi and while Vivian, drest  
 In shining steel, kept watch to guard the rest. 400

Now unaccompany'd behold a dame,  
 With looks impatient, to the fountain came :  
 Hippalca was she call'd, from whom the hand  
 Of ruthless Rodomont Frontino gain'd :  
 Him all the live-long day pursu'd the maid, 405  
 With threats to move him, or with prayers persuade ;  
 But when she found nor threats nor prayers succeed,  
 Direct for Agrismont she bent her speed,

Ver. 391. *William of Monserrato*—] He means William the third marquis of Monserrato. He was rich in every accomplishment of mind and body, and gained many victories in France. He died in the flower of his age. FORNARI.

Ver. 403. *Hippalca*—] See B. xxiii. ver. 277.

Since

Since there she heard (but how, remains untold)  
Rogero stay'd with Richardetto bold. 410

The place full well she knew, the ready way  
As well she knew that near the fountain lay.  
She came, and sudden there Rogero view'd;  
But as Love's prudent envoy, well indu'd  
With cautious thought, whatever chance might  
fall, 415

And prompt to change at meet occasion's call;  
Soon as her lady's brother she beheld,  
She check'd her bridle, and her haste repell'd;  
And 'midst the warriors coldly passing by,  
On young Rogero cast a stranger's eye. 420

Then Richardetto rose to meet the dame,  
And ask'd her whither bound, and whence she came.  
She then with heavy cheer, and eyes yet red  
From many a falling tear, thus sighing said;  
But spoke so loud, that brave Rogero's ear, 425  
Who stood beside, might every accent hear.

Late, at your sister's charge, o'er hill and plain  
I led a generous courser by the rein,  
In the swift race and fields of battle prov'd,  
Frontino call'd, and much the steed she lov'd. 430

Full thirty miles I unmolested pass'd,  
 And hop'd secure to reach Marseilles at last;  
 To which ere long she meant to bend her way,  
 And bade me there for her arrival stay

A few short days—and such my foad belief— 435

I thought the world knew not so bold a chief  
 To seize the beast, when I, t' oppose the deed,  
 Should say—"Rinaldo's sister owns the steed."

But vain my thoughts have prov'd, since yester's sun

A Pagan hand by force Frontino won; 440

Nor, when he heard his noble owner's name,  
 Restor'd the courser, or allow'd the claim.

With many a curse, with many a fruitless prayer,

Him I pursu'd; nor yet have left him far,

Where his stol'n courser, and his boasted might, 445

Can scarce defend him, closely press'd in fight

By one who seem'd to challenge all his skill,

And may, I trust, avenge the wrongs I feel.

Ver. 431. *Full thirty miles—*] In the xxiiid Book, Ariosto says ten miles only.

Ver. 447. *By one who seem'd, &c.*] After Rodomont had taken Frontino from Hippalca, she followed him till he met Mandricardo, with whom she left him engaged in single combat; to which circumstance she here alludes. See Book xxiv. ver. 694.

She

She said; and scarcely thus her speech could close,  
 Ere, starting from his seat, Rogero rose, 450  
 And, turning swift to Richardetto, pray'd  
 (The sole reward he ask'd for welcome aid  
 But late bestow'd) that he alone might go,  
 And with the damsel seek her daring foe,  
 The haughty Saracen, whose lawless force 455  
 Had from her guidance reft the warrior horse.

Though Richardetto deem'd it ill became  
 A courteous champion, at another's claim,  
 To quit the deed that on his honour lay;  
 Yet, now compell'd, he gave unwilling way 460  
 To good Rogero's suit, who bade adieu,  
 And with Hippalca from the rest withdrew;  
 Who, left behind, all silent with amaze,  
 Scarce found a tongue his valorous acts to praise.

Meantime at distance now from listening ears, 465  
 Hippalca to th' impatient knight declares  
 Her tender greeting, in whose gentle breast  
 His matchless virtues ever liv'd imprest,  
 Which late before her faithful lips had told,  
 But Richardetto's sight her speech control'd: 470  
 She said, the Pagan, as he seiz'd the steed,  
 This vaunt had added to the lawless deed:

“ Since 'tis Rogero's, I more gladly make  
 This courser mine, which, if he would retake,  
 Tell him, whene'er he dares assert his right,  
 I ne'er shall seek to hide me from his sight ; 475  
 That Rodomont am I, whose dauntless name,  
 Where'er I go, my noble deeds proclaim.”

Rogero heard, and by his features show'd  
 What deep resentment in his bosom glow'd : 480  
 Frontino much he priz'd, and more he lov'd,  
 As sent from her whose deeds her truth had prov'd :  
 He deem'd this outrage done in foul despite,  
 To stain the name and honour of a knight ;  
 And shame were his, unless his arm with speed 485  
 From Rodomont redeem the generous steed,  
 And on the Sarzan's head avenge th' ungentle deed. }

The dame Rogero led with eager pace,  
 To bring him with the Sarzan face to face.  
 They journey'd till they reach'd a double way ; 490  
 One down the plain, one up the mountain lay ;  
 And either to the neighbouring valley brought,  
 Where Rodomont with Mandricardo fought :  
 Short was the uphill path, but rough to tread ;  
 Longer, but smooth, the path that downward led. 495

Hippalca

Hippalca took the first, in zeal to gain  
 The lost Frontino; and revenge obtain.  
 The king of Algiers, with the dwarf, the dame,  
 And Tartar knight, the way less rugged came.  
 These knights, who fought but late each other's life,  
 With Doralis, the lovely cause of strife, 501  
 In friendship rode, descending to the plain,  
 And reach'd the fountain where the noble train,  
 Where Malagigi and where Vivian stay'd ;  
 Where Aldiger and Richardetto laid, 505 }  
 With bold Morphisa, rested in the shade.

Morphisa, at each noble knight's request,  
 Had cloth'd her person in a female vest,  
 With rich attire and costly ornament,  
 By Bertolagi to Lanfusa sent ; 510  
 And though but rare appear'd the martial maid  
 Without her cuirass, helm, and beamy blade ;  
 Yet, at their suit, she now her mail unbrac'd,  
 And shone a dame with every beauty grac'd.

Soon as the Tartar had Morphisa seen, 515  
 He purpos'd from her knights the dame to win,  
 And, in exchange for Doralis, bestow  
 Her youthful beauties on his rival foe,

As if the lover could such terms approve,

To sell a mistress, or transfer a love !

520

With joy he view'd Marphisa's mien and face,

That worthy seem'd the bravest knight to grace ;

And sudden every chief he there beheld,

He call'd to joust, and dar'd them to the field,

Vivian and Malagigi, ready drest

525

In helmet, plate, and mail, to guard the rest,

Upstarted from their seats, prepar'd to fight

With each advancing chief; but Sarza's knight,

Who came not thither in the jousts to run,

Stood still, and left the champions one to one. 530

First Vivian, with a heart unus'd to fear,

Firm in the rest declin'd a ponderous spear :

The Pagan monarch with superior force.

Appear'd well vers'd in every dreadful course :

Each aim'd his weapon, where he deem'd the blow

Might surest take—full on his helm the fae.

535

From gallant Vivian's hand receiv'd the stroke ;

But he nor fell, nor bow'd beneath the shock.

The Pagan king his tougher spear impell'd,

Which broke, like ice, the plates of Vivian's shield :

Hurl'd from his seat, amid the flowery way,

540

Stretch'd on his side the hapless warrior lay.

Then

Then Malagigi, rous'd at honour's call,  
 In haste advanc'd to avenge his brother's fall ;  
 But unadvis'd his haste—so ill he far'd, 545  
 He less avenge'd him than his fortune shar'd.  
 The third brave brother, eager for the fight,  
 Before his kinsman on his courser light  
 Leaps clad in arhs, the Saracen defies,  
 Throws up the reigns, and to the trial flies. 550  
 Fierce on the Pagah's temper'd helm, below  
 The vizor's sight, resounds the forceful blow :  
 Shiver'd in four, the spear to heaven ascends ;  
 Firm sits the knight, nor in the saddle bends.  
 The Tartar champion, in the furious course, 555  
 On Aldiger's left side with cruel force  
 His weapon drove—The shield oppos'd in vain,  
 And less the cuirass could the stroke sustain :  
 Through his white shoulder pass'd the ruthless steel,  
 And wounded Aldiger began to reel ; 560  
 Then falling, on the flowery turf lay spread,  
 All pale his features, and his armour red !

Next Richardetto to th' encounter press'd,  
 And coming, plac'd so huge a spear in rest,

Ver. 562. *All pale his features, &c.] Literal from the Italian.*  
*Rosso sù l'arme e pallido nel volto:*

And prov'd how justly (often prov'd before) 565

The name of Paladin of France he bore.

Well on the Pagan knight his spear he bent,

Had favouring fortune answer'd his intent;

But headlong on the ground he lay o'erthrown,

His falling courser's fault, and not his own. 570

No knight appearing more whose venturous hand

With Mandricardo in the joust might stand,

The Pagan deem'd his arms had won the dame,

And where she fate he near the fountain came,

And thus began—Thou, damsel, art my prize, 575

If in thy cause no other champion rise

To rein the steed—thy charms revert to me,

For so, thou know'st, the laws of arms decree.

Molphisa, raising with indignant pride

Her haughty looks—Thy judgment errs (she cry'd);

I grant the plea, nor should thy right decline, 581

That I by laws of war were justly thine;

Did I, of these thy spear to earth has thrown,

One for my lord or for my champion own.

I own no lord, to none have subject been,

And he who wins me, from myself must win:

I wield the buckler, and the lance sustain,

And many a knight by me has press'd the plain.

My

My arms and steed!—The fiery virgin said,  
 And, at her word, the ready squires obey'd. 590  
 Stripp'd off her flowing robe, in vesture light  
 She stands, with well-turn'd limbs reveal'd to sight;  
 Beauty and strength uniting in her frame,  
 All save her face the God of war proclaim.  
 And now with plate and mail encompass'd round, 595  
 Her sword she girts, and with an active bound  
 Besrides her steed, which, govern'd by her hand,  
 Rears, turns, and wheels subservient to command.  
 Now boldly she the Pagan prince defies,  
 Wields her strong lance, and to th' encounter flies.  
 Penthesilea thus, in battle prov'd, 601  
 Through Trojan fields to meet Achilles mov'd.

Close to the grasp, like brittle glas, were rent  
 The crashing spears; but neither rider bent  
 One foot, one inch—then fir'd with generous rage,  
 To prove how well her daring foe could wage 606  
 A closer fight, Marphisa bar'd the sword,  
 And rush'd intrepid on the Tartar lord.  
 The Tartar, who the dame unhurt espies,  
 Blasphemes each element, and threats the skies; 610  
 While she, who hop'd his shield to rend in twain,  
 Accuses heaven in no less angry strain.

Each

Each wields the gleaming sword, while batter'd  
round,

Their jointed arms like beaten anvils sound.

Alike in arms of fated steel attir'd, 615

Arms never more than on this day requir'd;

So strong the helm, the cuirass, plate, and greave,

No point could pierce them, and no edge could  
cleave.

The strife had lasted till the setting light,

Nor yet th' ensuing day had clos'd the fight, 620

But Rodomont rush'd in their rage to stay,

And chide his rival for ill-tim'd delay.

If war thou seek'st (the king of Algiers cry'd)

First let us two our late dispute decide :

Thou know'st (he said) our truce was made to give

Our monarch succour, and his camp relieve ; 626

Nor must we, ere our friends are freed from harms,

Engage in jousts, or mix in fiercer arms.

Then to Marphisa, with a courteous air,

He turn'd, and show'd the regal messenger, 630

And told her how from Agramant he came,

To ask their swords to save the Moorish name ;

And hop'd, at his request, her valour won

Would aid the cause of king Troyano's son :

By

By this 'twere better far, with generous aim, 635  
 To lift to heaven the pinions of her fame,  
 Than by low brawls defeat the great design,  
 Against the common foe their strength to join.

Long had Marphisa wish'd, with sword and lance,  
 To prove, in equal field, the peers of France, 640  
 Who fought for Charles; and hence the dame  
 agreed

To assist their sovereign at his greatest need,  
 Till from the Christian powers the camp was freed.

Meanwhile Rogero, with the guiding maid,  
 The rugged path, that up the hill convey'd. 645  
 Pursu'd in vain, for when the vale they gain'd,  
 No longer there fierce Rodomont remain'd.

Rogero thence, to reach the fount that stood  
 By Merlin rais'd, with eager speed pursu'd  
 The late-worn track that in the turf he view'd. 650

He will'd Hippalca then, without delay,  
 Should Mount Albano seek, that distant lay  
 A day's short journey—but a different road  
 The traveller to Merlin's fountain show'd.  
 He bade her trust in him, nor trust in vain, 655  
 His arm, ere long, Frontino would regain;

To

To her he gave the tender lines to bear,  
 Which late, at Agrismont, his anxious care  
 Had penn'd to ease the dear expecting maid,  
 And hither, in his breast conceal'd, convey'd. 660  
 To this he added many a gentle charge,  
 To speak his love, and plead his cause at large.

All these Hippalca promis'd to retain ;  
 Then bade adieu, and turn'd her palfrey's rein.

Swift on her way the trusty envoy goes, 665  
 And Mount Albano sees at evening close.

Rogero then the Sarzan prince pursu'd,  
 With anxious speed, till near the fount he view'd  
 The king, with Mandricardo at his side,  
 And Doralis, in peace and friendship ride. 670  
 Now to the place in haste Rogero drew,  
 And by Frontino well his rider knew :  
 Low o'er his spear the youth impatient bent,  
 And to the chief a stern defiance sent :  
 But less the suffering patience Job of old 675  
 Display'd, so full in hallow'd pages told,  
 Than Rodomont that day, who curb'd his pride,  
 His wonted fury, when to fight defy'd.

Ver. 666. *And Mount Albano sees, &c.]* He returns to Hippalca, Book xxx. ver. 548.

Deaf

Deaf to the combat ! he, whom danger's charms  
Had ever fir'd, who joy'd to mix in arms ! 680

Ne'er till this day, nor since, the Sarzan knight  
Was ever known to shun the proffer'd fight ;  
So much the wish to aid his king distress'd  
The ruling passion of his soul suppress'd.

So fix'd he stood, that had his prescient mind 685  
The certain issue of the strife divin'd,

As sure a prize, as when the leopard draws  
The fearful hare within his ravenous paws,  
Even then his prudence had declin'd the fray,  
Nor with a single blow prolong'd his stay. 690

Even that Rogero, who the battle claim'd,  
That champion, high o'er other champions fain'd,  
The man he wish'd to single from mankind,  
And through the world had gladly rov'd to find, 695  
Now fail'd to rouse him to the listed plain ;

And him Achilles had provok'd in vain ;  
So well his soul repress'd her wonted ire,  
So deep in embers slept the smother'd fire,  
He told Rogero why he shunn'd the fight, 700  
And ask'd his aid to guard their sovereign's right,  
As well besem'd a true and loyal knight. 701 ]

The

The siege once rais'd, full leisure would remain  
Among themselves their quarrels to maintain.

I give consent (to him Rogero cry'd)

To cease awhile our battle to decide,

705

Till Agramant is freed from hostile power,

So thou to me Frontino first restore.

Say, would'st thou have me till the camp's release

Delay the combat and confirm the peace ?

(The combat claim'd, to prove thy deed has stain'd

The name of knighthood, from a damsel's hand 711

To take my steed) Frontino now resign,

Else shall the powers of earth in vain combine

To make me for one hour the fight decline.

While thus Rogero from the Sarzan's hands 715

Frontino, or the instant fight, demands ;

And he, resolv'd, to neither will accede,

To give the battle, or restore the steed ;

Lo ! Mandricardo, on a different side,

New cause for contest in the field descry'd : 720

He sees for his defence Rogero bear

The bird, that reigns o'er others prince of air,

The argent eagle in an azure shield,

Which once the Trojan knight\* was seen to wield ;

\* HECTOR.

Which

Which now Rogero challeng'd as his due, 725  
 Rogero, who his line from Hector drew.

Fierce Mandricardo, at the sight inflam'd,  
 With anger rav'd to view the bird he claim'd  
 Usurp'd by other hands, and to his scorn  
 On other shields great Hector's eagle borne. 730

Like him intrepid Mandricardo wore  
 The bird that Ganymede from Ida bore,  
 Such as he won it that tremendous day,  
 When at the magic dome he seiz'd the dazzling prey.  
 Known is the tale, how from the fairy's land 735  
 This shield, with all the glorious arms, he gain'd,  
 Those arms by Vulcan forg'd, with skill divine,  
 To grace the knight of Priam's regal line.

For this before, in mutual strife engag'd,  
 Had Mandricardo and Rogero rag'd ; 740  
 Why then the conflict ceas'd, I leave to tell,  
 Nor longer speak of what is known so well :  
 Thenceforth till now they never met in field ;  
 But Mandricardo, when he view'd the shield,  
 Stept proudly forth, and, with a threatening cry—  
 Lo ! here, Rogero, I thy force defy. 746

Ver. 734. *When at the magic dome, &c.*] See note to Book  
 xiv. ver. 240, for the history of this adventure.

Thou dar'st for thy device my eagle take;  
 Nor is this day the first my claim I make :  
 Think'ft thou, as once my arm revenge forbore,  
 I still shall pass thy usurpation o'er ? 750  
 Since neither threats, nor gentle means addrest,  
 Suffice to drive this folly from thy breast,  
 Soon shall I prove thou better might'ft have weigh'd  
 The charge I gave, and in good time obey'd.

As in the crackling wood, when breath inspires  
 The sudden blaze to wake the sleeping fires ; 756  
 So to his ear when first the challenge came,  
 Rogero's anger burst to instant flame.

Thou think'ft t' o'erpower me now—(he cries,  
 enrag'd)

But though another has my arms engag'd, 760  
 They soon shall win (thou to thy cost shalt see)  
 From him Frontino, Hector's shield from thee.  
 For this but late before I wag'd the strife,  
 And late refrain'd to touch thy forfeit life ;

Ver. 763. *For this but late before, &c.*] Boyardo tells us, that when first Rogero and Mandricardo met, a dispute ensued between them for this shield of Hector, which Mandricardo had won at the Fairy's castle.

ORL. INNAM. Book III. C. vi.  
 As

As then no weapon at thy fide I view'd: 765  
Those deeds were sport, but these must end in blood.  
Ill fate for thee yon argent bird to bear,  
Which thou usurp'st, and I with justice wear; }  
Deliver'd down to me, the rightful heir. }

'Tis thou usurp'st my right—and at the word, 770  
Stern Mandricardo grasp'd his dreadful sword,  
That swōrd, which once in fight Orlando drew,  
And late in madness 'midst the forest threw.  
Rogero then, whose unexampled mind  
From courteous lore had never yet declin'd, 775  
Soon as he saw his foe the falchion wield,  
Let fall his spear as useless on the field.  
His sword, good Balisarda, then with haste  
His right hand seiz'd, his left the shield embrac'd;  
But Rodomont between them spurr'd his steed: 780  
Morphisa interpos'd with equal speed.

This, one; and that, the other knight repell'd;  
By prayers implor'd them, and by force withheld;  
While of the treaty Algiers' king complain'd,  
By Mandricardo twice so ill maintain'd; 785  
First, when to win Morphisa's charms, he mov'd  
Against her knights, and well his valour prov'd;

And from Rogero now his shield to take,  
Could thus the cause of Agramant forsake.

If strife thou seek'st—then let our swords (he cry'd)  
A quarrel nobler far than these decide : 791

With thee the combat done, my dauntless hands  
Shall answer him who now his steed demands :

If from my sword thy life survives the fight,  
Thou may'st with him dispute the buckler's right.  
Far other may the chance of arms provide, 796

(To Rodomont fierce Mandricardo cry'd)

When, like some fount that ne'er its current drains,  
My dauntless vigour unimpair'd remains,  
To meet Rogero, or a thousand foes, 800  
With all the world, should all the world oppose.

Words follow words, and wrath new wrath sup-  
plies;

Now here, now there, increasing tumults rise.

Fell Mandricardo, whom new rage inflames,

With Rodomont and with Rogero claims 805

At once the fight : unus'd affronts to bear,

Rogero spurns at peace, and breathes but war.

On either side Marphisa would restrain

The growing strife, that makes her labour vain.

As

As when, escaping from its broken shores, 810  
 The angry stream through various channels pours,  
 The peasant sees the waves the meads o'erflow,  
 And trembles for his promis'd crops below ;  
 While here his cares against the flood provide,  
 Thro' other breaches bursts the sounding tide : 815  
 Thus, while with Redomont Rogero rag'd,  
 And Mandricardo in like strife engag'd ;  
 Where each aspir'd, his brother-chiefs above,  
 Himself in courage, strength, and skill to prove,  
 Marphisa strove to calm each restless soul, 820  
 No words could soothe them, and no art control.  
 If one a moment from the fight she drew,  
 She saw the other chiefs th' assault renew.  
 The dame, who sought to calm each furious peer,  
 Thus spoke—Attend, my lords, my counsel hear :  
 O ! let us yet these vain debates compose, 826  
 Till Agramant is freed from Christian foes.  
 If each will thus neglect his country's right,  
 Then I with Mandricardo claim the fight ;  
 To prove how well (for such his boast has been)  
 He from myself in arms myself can win ; 831  
 But if our king demands our better care,  
 Then let us hence, and every strife forbear.

Not one shall aid our king with readier speed  
Than I—but let him first restore the steed, 835

(Rogero cry'd)—let him my words attend,  
Restore the courser, or himself defend.

Here will I fall in glorious combat slain,  
Or, with Frontino, victor quit the plain.

Then Rodomont—The first may well befall; 840

The last for other force than thine may call—

Then thus pursu'd—Hear what I now protest,  
If further ill betide our king distrest,

Yours be the blame, since here prepar'd I stand  
To act what duty and what fame demand. 845

Thus he—but little heedful of the word,  
Rogero furious grasp'd his shining sword :

Like some wild boar with Rodomont he clos'd,  
To shoulder shoulder, shield to shield oppos'd :

With sudden force the Sarzan prince he shook, 850  
One foot the stirrup unawares forsook.

Defer the combat (Mandricardo cry'd)

Or if thou fight'ſt, with me thy arm be try'd.

He faid, and now inflam'd with deeper spite,  
Struck on the helmet of the youthful knight : 855

Low to his courser's neck Rogero bent,  
Nor soon recovering rose, for swiftly sent

By

By Ulien's mighty son, the thundering steel  
With dreadful ruin on his head-piece fell :  
Of adamantine proof his helm was made, 860  
Else to his chin had cleft the reeking blade.  
Rogero's hands unclos'd with sudden pain,  
One lost the falchion, and one lost the rein ;  
The startled courser bears him o'er the land,  
And Balisarda glitters on the sand, 865

Morphisa, who that day in arms had stood  
With brave Rogero, now the warrior view'd  
By two at once in strife unequal press'd,  
And indignation fill'd her generous breast.  
On Mandricardo turning swift, she sped 870  
Her unsheathe'd falchion at the Tartar's head.  
The king of Algiers on Rogero drives—  
Frontino's won, unless some aid arrives.  
But Richardetto and bold Vivian bring  
Their friendly aid: while 'twixt the knight and king  
That spurs his steed, and this with ready sword 876  
Supplies Rogero, now to sense restor'd,  
T' avenge his late disgrace Rogero burns,  
And swift on Algiers' king indignant turns.  
So when by chance some ox a lion gores 880  
At unawares, the generous savage roars

With fury more than pain, while round he rings  
 His lashing tail, and swift to vengeance springs.  
 On Rodomont's proud head Rogerо pour'd  
 A storm of blows, and had his own good sword 885  
 Then arm'd his hand, the Afric knight had found  
 His helm, though tough, too weak to ward the  
 wound ;

That helm, which once for Babel's king was wrought,  
 When with the stars an impious war he fought.  
 Discord, who now beholds with joyful eyes 890  
 Strife follow strife, on tumult tumult rise ;  
 Exults that contest never more could cease,  
 By truce suspended, or compos'd by peace ;  
 Secure of ill, her sister Pride she calls,  
 With her to seek again the cloister'd walls. 895

But let them hence—while we attend the fight,  
 Where, on the forehead of the Sarzan knight,  
 Rogerо drove his weighty blade so well,  
 That backward on his steed the rider fell ;  
 His harden'd scales behind, his haughty crest, 900  
 And clanking helm, Frontino's crupper press'd ;  
 While thrice, and four times, here and there he  
 reel'd,  
 And seem'd just falling on the graffy field :

Nor had his open'd grasp the sword retain'd,  
But that a chain secur'd it to his hand. 905

With Mandricardo fierce Marphisa wag'd  
A dreadful fight, that all his force engag'd.  
Not less the Tartar fought with temper'd charms ; }  
Their corslets well secur'd each breast from harms, }  
And either equal seem'd in strength and arms. 910 }  
At length Marphisa's courser wheeling round  
In narrow circuit on the slippery ground,  
Fell fidelong down, and while to rise he strove,  
Fierce Mandricardo Brigliadoro drove  
Against his flank, forgetting knightly lore, 915  
And low to earth the struggling courser bore.

With grief Rogero saw the warrior-maid  
In evil plight, nor long his help delay'd :  
His arm at freedom, while the Sarzan foe  
Was senseless from his late inflicted blow, 920  
On Mandricardo swift the sword he sped ;  
The well-aim'd stroke had cleft the Tartar's head,  
With Balisarda had his hand been arm'd,  
Or the fierce Tartar's helm less strongly charm'd.  
The king of Algiers, now recovering, view'd 925  
Young Richardetto, whom he saw intrude

With daring aid the combat to molest,  
When late his powerful arm Rogero press'd.  
To him he turn'd, and came full well prepar'd  
His deeds of good with evil to reward : 930  
But Malagigi, deep in magic taught,  
A strange device to save his kinsman wrought.  
Though wanting here his book, whose potent force  
Could stop the sun in his meridian course,  
His mem'ry yet those awful words retain'd, 935  
Which the foul demons at his will restrain'd :  
On Doralis he prov'd his magic flight,  
And in her beast convey'd a subtle sprite :  
The beast, that Stordilano's daughter bore,  
Receiv'd th' infernal angel, which the power 940  
Of Vivian's brother from the realms of hell,  
Where Minos sits, had drawn by fated spell.  
The palfrey, late so gentle to command,  
That only mov'd by her directing hand,  
The sudden impulse of the demon found, 945  
And thrice ten feet he vaulted from the ground ;  
A dreadful leap ! yet though he seem'd to fly,  
The fair one kept her seat, while from on high,  
Trembling for life, she gave a fearful cry. }

Now

B. XXVI. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 297

Now lighting on his feet, the frantic steed 950  
Runs as the spirit drives; with furious speed  
He bears the damsel, shrieking with affright,  
And leaves behind the feather'd arrow's flight.

Rous'd at her voice, the son of Ulien stays  
His arm from combat, and the fair surveys. 955  
The fair he follows, rapid as the wind,  
And Mandricardo spurs as swift behind.  
The Tartar bent no more, with hostile arm,  
To work Rogero or Marphisa harm,  
Awaits not truce or peace, but where he views 960  
Stern Rodomont and Doralis, pursues.

Meantime Marphisa from the earth arose,  
(With rage and shame her generous bosom glows)  
And burning for revenge, too late beheld  
The Tartar champion distant on the field. 965  
Rogero, when he sees th' unfinish'd fray,  
Roars like a lion baffled of his prey.  
Both knew 'twas vain to chace, with either steed,  
Good Brigliadoro or Frontino's speed.  
Rogero deem'd disgrace must stain his name, 970  
In his Frontino to renounce the claim,  
The list untry'd—nor will Marphisa rest,  
Till prov'd in fight the Tartar breast to breast.

The

The martial virgin and the knight agree  
 To follow those on whom they wish'd to see 975  
 Their full revenge; and, if unsound before,  
 They hop'd to find them with the Turkish power;  
 Where, lest the siege might work the Pagans' <sup>wide</sup>,  
 The knights would haste t' attack the Christian fad.

Rogero, ere he yet his friends forsook, 980  
 A courteous leave of every warrior took;  
 And back returning to the fountain, came  
 Where the lov'd brother of his beauteous dame  
 Remain'd apart; to him the gentle knight  
 Firm friendship vows, in good or evil plight; 985  
 Then to his sister, by the youth, conveys  
 Fair thoughts and greeting, couch'd in cautious  
 phrase;  
 Such cautious phrase, as may her fears remove,  
 But no suspicion wake of secret love.

To Malagigi, Vivian, then in few 990  
 To wounded Aldiger, he bids adieu;  
 While these with good Rogero change no less  
 The grateful farewell, and their thanks express,  
 Again renew'd, with future service vow'd,  
 For ever due to aid so well bestow'd. 995

Ver. 995. —*aid so well bestow'd.*] Alluding to the deliverance  
 of Vivian and Malagigi, in the beginning of this book.

Marpheisa,

Molphisa, eager Paris' walls to find,  
Scarce bent a thought on those she left behind :  
But Malagigi and good Vivian, pres' d  
By friendly zeal, with distant signs address'd  
The parting maid : her Richardetto view'd, 1000  
And with like greeting her retreat pursu'd ;  
While hapless Aldiger, with recent wound,  
Unwilling lay reclin'd along the ground.

First Rodomont with Mandricardo fled ;  
Next these Molphisa and Rogero sped 1005  
Their course to Paris—deeds transcending thought  
Shall in th' ensuing book to light be brought ;  
Deeds of these noble four, whose matchless hands  
With rout and death o'erthrew the Christian bands.

Ver. 1002. *While hapless Aldiger,—*] We hear no more of  
Aldiger in the poem.

END OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH BOOK.

THE  
TWENTY-SEVENTH BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

## T H E A R G U M E N T.

RODOMONT and Mandricardo, following Doralis, are drawn near the Christian forces, where they are met by Gradaffo and Sacriant, and all together fall upon the camp of Charles. Rogero and Marphisa arriving next, join them in the attack. Great slaughter of the Christians, who are compelled to retire within the walls of Paris. The archangel Michael finds out ~~Discord in the monastery~~, and sends her again to the Pagans. Dissentions renewed amongst the leaders. Agramant commands that the contending knights should draw lots for the order of the combat. The first lot falls on Rodomont and Mandricardo. Preparations for the lists. While the knights are arming, a debate arises between Sacriant and Mandricardo for the sword Durindana. Rogero again asserts his claim to the shield of Hector. Agramant and Marsilius endeavour to pacify them. Another quarrel breaks out between Rodomont and Sacriant for the horse Frontino, which is likewise claimed by Rogero. Brunello is forcibly carried off by Marphisa in the face of Agramant and his whole court. Agramant persuades Rodomont and Mandricardo to refer their title to Doralis to her own decision: they agree, and Doralis decides in favour of Mandricardo. Rodomont leaves the camp with indignation. His invective against women. He is received and hospitably entertained by a country host.

THE  
TWENTY-SEVENTH BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

**A** MIDST the various gifts by heaven assign'd,  
With special grace, t' enrich the female kind,  
Be this the praise, where most the sex aspires,  
To counsel well when sudden need requires;  
But seldom man mature advice supplies,  
When time the means of long debate denies:  
Good Malagigi wrought with fair intent,  
And well it seem'd, but different was th' event:  
For while he kept, by force of magic charms,  
His kinsman Richardetto safe from harms, 10  
The fiend, obedient to his potent word,  
Convey'd the Tartar \* prince and Sarzan lord

\* MANDRICARDO and RODOMONT.

To

To distance far ; nor then the sage foreknew,  
 What mischief hence on Christian Charles he drew.  
 Had time allow'd him leisure to reflect, 15  
 Some safer means had offer'd to protect  
 His kinsman's life, nor would in evil hour  
 His spells have thus distress'd the Christian power :  
 Some wiser arts the demon had constrain'd,  
 To bear to furthest east or western land 20  
 Th' affrighted dame, for France no more to view,  
 Where both the lovers might her flight pursue.  
 But that malignant fiend, man's endless foe,  
 By heaven's high justice doom'd to realms of woe,  
 Contriv'd what most the faithful would dismay, 25  
 Since his dread master ne'er prescrib'd his way.

The palfrey, with the hidden demon, held  
 His rapid flight ; no crossing stream repell'd  
 His bounding course ; nor woods' entangled shade,  
 Nor fen, nor cliff, nor rock, his speed delay'd : 30

Ver. 26. *Since his dread master—*] Since Malagigi had not prescribed the rout which the demon was to take, but left him to his own disposal, he took that course with the damsel which would draw Mandricardo and Rodomont towards the Christian camp, and consequently bring distress on Charlemain.

Till

Till through the Franks and English camps he bore  
(And all th' unnumber'd host that Christ adore)

Th' affrighted dame, and safely had restor'd  
To her lov'd fire, Granada's royal lord.

Meanwhile the son of Agrican pursu'd 33

The flying fair, and soon no longer view'd ;  
With him was Ulien's son, but either knight  
Had lost her image from his straining sight :  
Yet, by the track, they follow'd still the chace,  
As nimble hounds the goat or leveret trace ; 41  
Till either lover certain tidings gain'd,  
That with her fire the princely dame remain'd.

Take heed, O Charles !—What clouds thy sky  
deform !

Hang o'er thy head, and threat the bursting storm !  
Not these alone, but king Gradaffo stands, 45  
With Sacripant, prepar'd t' assault thy bands ;  
While Fortune, to complete thy ruin'd state,  
Has robb'd thee of each glorious lamp, that late  
Of strength and wisdom beam'd thy purest light,  
And leaves thee now in long enduring night. 50

Ver. 45. ——*king Gradaffo*—] The last we heard of Gradaffo was at the enchanted palace of Atlantes, Book xii. from which place all the knights were released by Astolpho.

Orlando now, estrang'd to every thought  
 Of good or evil, roves, with wit distraught,  
 O'er hill and plain, unhous'd and naked lies  
 In heat or cold, in fair or stormy skies !

Rinaldo, scarce with better sense inspir'd, 58  
 Has left his prince, when aid was most requir'd,  
 Of fair Angelica the news to gain,  
 In Paris lately sought, but sought in vain :

An aged hermit, vers'd in magic art,  
 (As once I told) had play'd a fraudulent part; 60  
 And wrought th' unwary knight to fond belief,  
 That she, so lov'd, was won by Brava's \* chief.

At this, with jealous rage and grief distress'd,  
 That ne'er before a lover's heart oppress'd,  
 He enter'd Paris' walls, then voyag'd o'er 65  
 (So chance decreed) to Britain's distant shore.

The battle fought, in which such fame he won,  
 The Moors besieg'd and freed the regal town,  
 Paris again he view'd ; each convent there  
 And every dome explor'd with fruitless care ;

## \* ORLANDO.

Ver. 59. *An aged hermit*, — ] See Book ii. ver. 89, where the hypocritical hermit deceives Rinaldo and Sacripant with a lying vision, and parts the battle between the two rivals.

Ver. 67. — *such fame he won*,] See Books xvi. xvii. & seq.

He

He deem'd, with Brava's chief, the lovely maid  
To Brava or Anglante's seats convey'd,  
Now pass'd the hours ; and thither hastes the knight ;  
But there nor chief nor damsel meets his sight ;  
And thence to Paris' walls he turns anew, 75  
In hopes, ere long, the Paladin to view :  
No Paladin he views ; with rage he burns ;  
Again to Brava and Anglante turns.  
Alike he journeys on by night or day,  
In morn's cool breeze, or noontide's fultry ray, 80  
And many a time one path repeated tries ;  
The sun or moon, by turns, its light supplies.

But he, our ancient foe, through whom the hand  
Of hapless Eve transgress'd the high command,  
With livid eyes Imperial Charles beheld, 85  
What time vain love had from the camp expell'd  
Albano's knight \* : he mark'd, with horrid joy,  
What force might then the Christian powers annoy ;  
And now together brought against their host,  
The flower of arms the Pagan world could boast. 90  
He fires the king Gradaffo, fires the breast  
Of noble Sacripant ; who, since releas'd

\* RINALDO.

From old Atlantes' castle, where they shar'd  
 One common error, had companions far'd  
 Along the way : he these incites to aid      95  
 Their sovereign Agramant, and Charles invade.  
 Himself, by secret ways, their course attends,  
 And safely brings to join their Pagan friends.  
 Another fiend he bids with trusty speed  
 Fierce Rodomont and Mandricardo lead,      100 }  
 Where late the demon urg'd the damsel's steed.  
 A third he sent, that to the Pagan crew  
 Valiant Rogero and Marphisa drew ;  
 Nor yet so swiftly to the camp they pass'd,  
 But, of the six, these two arriv'd the last.      105  
 Th' infernal angel, who relentless sought  
 The Christians' loss, this subtle train had wrought,

Ver. 94. — *had companions far'd*] This seems to be a little slip of the poet's memory, as Sacriplant and Gradaffo did not leave the palace of Atlantes together; for Sacriplant (see Book xii. ver. 220.) when the ring had dispelled the illusion that so long detained him, had quitted the palace with Orlando and Ferrau, and followed the flight of Angelica; but it appears (see Book xxii. ver. 141.) that Gradaffo remained behind in the enchanted palace with Rogero, Bradamant, Iroldo, and others, till the enchantment was dissolved by Astolpho. Of this oversight of the poet the Italian commentators have taken no notice.

Left,

## B. XXVII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 309

Left, with Rogero Rodomont arriv'd,  
The late contention for the steed reviv'd  
Should cross his great design, for either knight 110  
Might then renew his undecided fight.  
The first brave warriors that together join'd,  
Beheld in distant prospect to the wind  
The banners wave, and saw the tents ascend,  
Where those besiege the works, and these defend. 115

And now, the council held, the dauntless four \*,  
In spite of Charles, and all his numerous power,  
To raise the siege with joint consent agree,  
And Agramant from threatening ruin free.  
Compact and firm they bend their daring way, 120  
Where deep encamp'd the Christian army lay ;  
While Africa and Spain aloud they cry,  
Now Pagans known to every ear and eye.  
Through all the host, to arms, to arms, resound  
A thousand tongues ; but ere their arms they found,  
The hostile steel invades them unprepar'd, 126  
And the first onset puts to flight the guard.  
The Christian chiefs, while thus the tumult spread,  
Scarce knew from whom or why their soldiers fled :

\* GRADASSO, SACRIPANT, RODOMONT, and MANDRIL-CARDO.

Some deem'd this daring insult they sustain 130

From the fierce Swiss or hardy Gascon train :

But, while uncertain whence th' incursion came,

They call the troops of every clime and name ;

Loud beats the drum, the trump its clangor poms ;

The sky re-echoes, and the tumult roars ! 135

Imperial Charles, amidst his gathering bands,

All, save his helmet, arm'd, intrepid stands.

He calls his Paladins, and bids them tell,

What sudden force could thus his legions quell.

By threats now these, now those, he stays from flight,

And others he beholds (too cruel fight !) 141

With heads disfever'd by the furious blade,

With bosoms pierc'd, and bowels open laid ;

While some return (escap'd from greater harms)

With bleeding limbs, with sever'd hands and arms. 145

Advancing still, he sees where, scatter'd round,

Unnumber'd wretches gasping bite the ground ;

Dreadful to view ! all weltering in their gore,

When leech or drugs shall ne'er avail them more.

Where'er this little band resistless came,

150

They left eternal monuments of fame ;

While Charles with wonder, grief, and shame, beheld

The fearful carnage of so dire a field.

So one, who suffers by the thunder's force,  
Explores the track of its destructive course. 155

These noble four the tents had scarcely gain'd,  
Where Afric's monarch still entrench'd remain'd;  
When, on a different side, th' assault to aid,  
Appear'd Rogero and the martial maid \*.  
Soon as the generous pair had darted round 160  
Their skilful fight, to mark the camp and ground;  
And saw how best the combat to maintain,  
And raise the siege; they gave their steeds the  
rein.

As, when the mine is fir'd, the straining eyes  
Scarce view the flame as thro' the train it flies, 165  
Till bursting forth, the fury levels all,  
Tears the firm rock, and shakes the strongest wall:  
So swift Rogero and Marphisa flew,  
Such was their rage amongst the warring crew.  
A slant, direct, their furious blows they dealt; 170  
Dissever'd scalps, lopt arms, and shoulders felt  
The trenchant steel, while, for escape too slow,  
Huge crowds divide before each gallant foe.  
Whoe'er has seen o'er hill or vale a storm  
Sweep fiercely on; with ruin part deform. 175

\* MARPHISA:

Part leave unhurt ; may judge how, scatter'd wide,  
 This warlike couple pierc'd the martial tide.  
 Those who from Rodomont's destructive hand  
 Had fled, and 'scap'd the first assailing band 179  
 Of four such warriors, gave their thanks to heaven,  
 That strength and swiftness to their feet had given :  
 But now with weapons brandish'd at their breast,  
 By bold Rogero and Marphisa press'd,  
 They see too late that him who stands or flies,  
 What fate has sentenc'd, fate to shun denies : 185  
 New danger follows one already past,  
 Who 'scapes the first, must doubly pay the last.  
 So fares it with the timorous fox, expell'd  
 From ancient seats which once she safely held,  
 Whom for her thefts the village hinds conspire 190  
 To chace with vapour of the smouldering fire,  
 Driv'n with her cubs upon the hound to run,  
 And meet that death she hop'd in vain to shun.

At length Marphisa and Rogero gain  
 The inmost trenches, whom the Pagan train 195  
 Joyful receive with eyes on Heaven intent,  
 In grateful thanks for aid so timely sent.

Ver. 180. *Of four such warriors,—*] Rodomont, Mandri-  
 cardo, Gradaffo, and Sacripant, who first attacked the camp of the  
 Christians, and were afterwards joined by Rogero and Marphisa.

No

No longer fear the meanest bosom knows,  
 Each Pagan arm defies a hundred foes ;  
 With one united voice their chiefs they call, 200  
 And burn with ardour on the camp to fall.  
 The Moorish drum, the horn, and timbrel blend  
 Their rattling sounds, that to the skies ascend ;  
 While streamers rais'd aloft, and banners join'd,  
 With mix'd devices tremble in the wind. 205  
 Not less the chiefs of Charles, with martial care,  
 The troops of Britanny and France prepare :  
 With these Italian, German, English, close  
 Their martial lines, and fierce the battle glows !  
 Stern Rodomont, of unrefisted might, 210  
 With Mandricardo, dreadful in the fight ;  
 Noble Rogero (virtue's constant stream)  
 And king Gradaffo, every nation's theme ;  
 Marphisa steel'd in arms, and with her join'd  
 Circassia's \* prince, who never lagg'd behind ; 215  
 All these at once the king of France assail'd,  
 And urg'd his vows that nothing now avail'd.  
 On John and Dennis (patron saints) he calls,  
 But soon compell'd retires to Paris' walls.  
 Th' o'erbearing valour of this matchless train 220  
 (The knights and dame) the muse, my lord ! in vain

\* SACRIPANT.

Attempts

Attempts to paint, nor can describe in speech  
What beggars fancy, and no words can reach.

Think then what numbers fell of life bereav'd,  
What loss that day unhappy Charles receiv'd ! 225

With these Ferrau demands his share of fame,

And with him many a Moor of gallant name.

For haste, what numbers in the Seine were lost,

The bridge unequal for the flying host !

Some wish, like Icarus, for wings to soar 230

From death, that threats behind and threats before.

What hapless Paladins were then enslav'd !

Vienna's marquis \* and Ugero sav'd

Alone from bonds : see Olivero stand,

Near his right shoulder by a hostile hand 235

The wound inflicted deep ; while at his side

Ugero's head pours forth a purple tide.

If, like Rinaldo or Orlando lost,

Brave Brandimart had left the Christian host,

In exile then might Charles have led his life, 240

Had fortune giv'n him to survive the strife.

Whate'er cool thought or strength of nerve supply'd,

Intrepid Brandimart had vainly try'd ;

Till forc'd at length to give the tempest way,

Slow he recedes, and scarce resigns the day. 245

\* OLIVERO,

Thus

Thus Agramant propitious Fortune view'd,  
 And once again the siege of Charles renew'd.  
 The cries of orphans, and the widows' means,  
 Sons for their fathers, fathers for their sons,  
 From earth ascending reach'd th' empyreal height,  
 Where Michael sat in realms of purest light. 251  
 He heard; and looking down with sad survey,  
 Beheld the food of wolves and birds of prey,  
 Stretch'd in their blood by thousands on the plain,  
 Of every nation, his lov'd people slain. 255

The blessed angel blush'd celestial red,  
 To find his great Creator ill obey'd :  
 To Discord late he gave his high command,  
 To kindle strife amidst the Pagan band ;  
 Far different now, he sees the Pagans' hate 260  
 All firmly join'd against the Christian state.  
 As when some faithful envoy, who at large  
 Receives commission for a weighty charge,  
 Chides his neglect, recalling to his thought  
 Some valu'd purpose, 'midst his zeal forgot ; 265

Ver. 256. *The blessed angel blush'd celestial red,*] Thus Milton makes his angel change colour :

To whom the angel, with a smile that glow'd.  
 Celestial rosy red—

PARADISE LOST, B. viii. ver. 618.

And,

And, ere he sees his lord, with eager care  
 Bends every power th' omission to repair:  
 The angel thus will not to God ascend,  
 Till future deeds his error past amend.

To where before, in hallow'd cloisters plac'd, 270

He Discord met, he ply'd his wings in haste:

Again he found where 'midst the monks she fate,  
 And at a chapter urg'd the dire debate:

Pleas'd with their strife she view'd with joyful eye,

Cast at each other, prayers and masses fly. 275

With holy wrath the heavenly angel burn'd,

Her by the locks he seiz'd, and seizing spurn'd;

Then in his hand a crozier swift he took,

And on her head, her arms, and shoulder, broke.

Mercy! ah, mercy!—(loud the fury yell'd, 280

While close the heavenly nunciate's knees she held)

But Michael set not yet the fiend at large,

Till to the Saracens, with weighty charge,

He thus dismiss'd her—Hence! nor more forsake

Yon hostile camp, my heavier wrath to wake. 285

Tho' Discord, sorely bruis'd, with back and breast

The livid marks of many a stripe confess'd,

Yet trembling more with fear of future harm,

From the strong power of that angelic arm;

Her

Her bellows swift she seiz'd with kindling fire, 290  
 And store of fuel that might well conspire  
 To increase the flame, with which her ruthless art  
 Lights up fell strife, that rankling in the heart,  
 To Rodomont and Mandricardo spread,  
 With good Rogero : these the fury led 295  
 Before the king ; for now each peril o'er  
 From Christian foes, their legions fear'd no more }  
 A new assault from Charles' defeated power. }

Their quarrels told, each to the monarch shows  
 The causes whence their late dissentions rose ; 300  
 And begg'd his voice the contest to decide,  
 By whom in arms their claims should first be try'd.  
 Marphisa, with the rest, attention won,  
 Eager to end her combat late begun,  
 Which first the Tartar urg'd ; nor would she yield 305  
 A day, an hour, her title to the field ;  
 But with a generous warmth enforc'd her right,  
 To meet with instant arms the Tartar knight.  
 Not less would Rodomont conclude the strife,  
 That to himself or rival gives the wife ; 310  
 The mighty strife, by joint consent delay'd,  
 To give their friendly camp and sovereign aid.

Rogero

Roger would annul his claim, and vow'd  
 That iH his honour Rodomont allow'd,  
 From him the steed unjustly to detain, 315  
 And not in battle first the deed maintain.

More to perplex their broils, the Tartar knight  
 Stept forth, and loud deny'd Roger's right  
 To bear the bird with silver wings display'd :  
 And, as he spoke, such rage his bosom sway'd, 320  
 He dar'd the three at once to combat call,  
 By one sole trial to determine all :  
 Alike the rest in mingled fight had elos'd,  
 But that the king his high commands oppos'd.

King Agramant, that further strife may cease, 325  
 With prayers and soothing words entreats the peace;  
 In vain he soothes and prays—with deafen'd ear  
 Each knight refuses peace or truce to hear.  
 And now his thoughts suggest, the warriors' names  
 Inscrib'd on lots shall fix their several claims : 330  
 He bids four scrolls the written names disclose ;  
 One Rodomont and Mandricardo shows ;  
 With Mandricardo one Roger bears ;  
 Rodomont with Roger one declares ;  
 One Mandricardo with Marphisa joins : 335  
 These to be drawn, as fickle chance inclines,

The king commands ; and lo ! the first that came  
 Bore Sarza's king \* and Mandricardo's name ;  
 Next, with Rogero Mandricardo stood ;  
 Rodomont and Rogero third were view'd ; 340  
 Last Mandricardo with Marphisa join'd,  
 Which sore displeas'd the martial virgin's mind.  
 Not better pleas'd his lot Rogero saw,  
 Lest he \*, decreed the foremost chance to draw, 344  
 Should wage such conflict with the Tartar knight,  
 Marphisa and himself might lose their right  
 To meet the son of Agrican in fight.

Not far from Paris' walls a tract of ground  
 Was seen, a little mile in compass round ;  
 Where, in theatric guise the seats dispos'd, 350  
 With gentle rise a middle space inclos'd.  
 There once a castle stood, but now o'erthrown  
 By wars and time, no more the place was known.  
 The lists were here design'd ; with busy care  
 The workmen clear'd the ground and form'd a square  
 Of large extent, and fenc'd on either hand 356  
 With two wide gates, as ancient rites demand ;  
 And at the barrier's end, the lists to close,  
 On either side a fair pavilion rose.

\* RODOMONT.

Now

Now came the day when swords must fix the right,  
 Nam'd by the king, and wish'd by either knight : 361  
 Plac'd in the tent that to the west appears,  
 His giant limbs the king of Algiers rears ;  
 There bold Ferrau and Sacripant assist  
 With scaly hide to arm him for the list : 365  
 And where the eastern gate its valves expands,  
 With king Gradaffo Falsirones stands ;  
 These for the son of Agrican \* employ  
 Their aid, to deck him with the arms of Troy.  
 High on a lofty throne, in royal state, 370  
 The king of Spain and king of Afric sate ;  
 Next Stordilano and the peers were plac'd,  
 Above the rest in rank and honours grac'd.  
 Happy is he who on some rising height,  
 Or tufted tree, can sit to view the fight ! 375  
 Great is the pres's, and deep on every side,  
 Through all the camp, was pour'd the mingled tide.  
 Castilia's queen was present ; many a queen  
 And princess fair, with noble dames, were seen,  
 From Arragon, Castile, Granada's land, 380  
 And near the bound where Atlas' pillars stand.

• MANDRICARDO,

There

B. XXVII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 321

There Stordilano's daughter, with the rest,  
Appears in robes of various colour drest :  
One vest was green, and one a paly red  
Of soften'd dye, like roses newly shed : 385

A garb Marphisa wore, that might proclaim  
(Succinct and simple) both the knight and dame.  
Like her apparell'd, near Thermodöon's flood,  
Hippolyta with all her virgins stood.

Already in his coat of arms array'd, 390  
That royal Agramant's device display'd,  
The herald enter'd, in the list to draw  
The bounds prescrib'd, and state the duel's law.

While now impatient throngs demand the fight,  
While oft their murmurs chide, and oft invite 395  
Each tardy champion ; sudden in their ear  
From Mandricardo's tent a noise they hear,  
Loud and more loud, deriv'd from wrathful words  
Between the Sericane and Tartar lords.

Soon as the king of Sericane had drest 400  
The Tartar monarch in his martial vest,  
He stood prepar'd to gird the sword, which try'd  
In battle oft, had grac'd Orlando's side,  
When DURINDANA on the hilt he views,  
And that device Almontes wont to use, 405

From whom, long since, beside a limpid brook  
 This sword, while yet a youth, Orlando took.  
 He saw, and knew full well the famous sword,  
 That arm'd the hand of great Anglante's lord ;  
 Which prize to gain he left his native shore, 410  
 With such a force as ne'er was seen before ;  
 And, some few years elaps'd, Castilia view'd,  
 And France itself beneath his arms subdu'd.  
 He marvell'd now, by what strange means obtain'd  
 He saw this sword in Mandricardo's hand ; 415  
 Then ask'd what chance had given the fatal blade,  
 And when and where he from the earl convey'd  
 The precious prize—The Tartar prince reply'd :  
 Erewhile in fight Orlando's force I try'd :  
 At length he feign'd a madness, to conceal 420  
 His dastard feelings, for he knew too well,  
 While this he wore, he still his trembling life  
 With me must risk in never-ending strife.  
 The beaver thus, who sees the woodland crew  
 Near and more near his hunted steps pursue, 425  
 Well conscious what they feek, behind him leaves  
 The sought-for treasure, and his life reprieves.

Ver. 407. *This sword, while yet a youth, &c.*] See Book I.  
 ver. 402. in the note.

Ver. 411. *With such a force—*] See Boyardo.

Ere

Ere yet he ceas'd, Gradafoso took the word :  
 To thee, nor any, will I yield the sword ;  
 Justly I claim what long I toil'd to gain, 430  
 My gold expended and my people slain !  
 Some other weapon seek—nor deem it strange  
 That this I challenge—let Orlando range  
 Frantic or wild, where'er this sword I hold,  
 The sword is mine—thou, as thyself hast told, 435  
 Found'st it far distant from its owner thrown,  
 But, found by me, I claim it for my own.  
 This falchion shall the right I plead maintain—  
 The list shall be my judge—prepare to gain  
 This sword by force, if this thou seek'st in fight  
 To wield on Rodomont ; since every knight 441 }  
 Who uses arms, should win them by his might. }

At this the Tartar rais'd his daring head :  
 What sweeter sound can reach my ears (he said)  
 Than aught that speaks of war ?—But first, in field,  
 To thee his turn the Sarzan prince must yield. 446  
 Procure with me the foremost fight to wage,  
 And let the second Rodomont engage :  
 Doubt not I stand prepar'd for thee—for all—  
 To answer thine and every mortal call. 450

Rogero then, increasing strife to breed :  
 Think not t' infringe the terms so late agreed.

Be Rodomont the first in list to join,  
 Or, if he change, his fight must follow mine.  
 Grant what Gradafio pleads, that in the field 455  
 A knight must win his arms who arms would wield ;  
 Shalt thou my bird with argent wings display,  
 Till from my grasp thou rend'st the shield away ?  
 Lo ! here I stand t' abide the lot's decree ;  
 The first to Rodomont—the next to me ! 460  
 If thou persist our treaty to confound,  
 I spurn all order, and despise all bound :  
 Nor will I for a moment wave my right,  
 But call thee forth this instant to the fight.  
 Let each of you be Mars, (then made reply 465  
 Fierce Mandricardo) each his prowess try :  
 What arm shall dare forbid me here to wield  
 The trusty falchion or the glorious shield ?  
 Then fir'd to wrath, with steely gauntlet bent,  
 At Sericana's king a stroke he sent, 470  
 Whose better hand at unawares it took,  
 And Durindana strait his grasp forsook.  
 Gradafio, bursting then with rage, beheld  
 The sword disputed from his hand compell'd.  
 Indignant shame, despite, and burning ire, 475  
 Flush'd all his face ; his eyeballs sparkled fire :

Fierce

Fierce for revenge a backward step he made,  
 And stood in act to draw the deadly blade :  
 But Mandricardo, ever unappall'd,  
 Him and Rogero to the battle call'd. 480  
 Come, both at once—come, Rodomont ! (he cry'd)  
 To make the third, and come all three defy'd.  
 Come, Spain and Afric ! all of human race,  
 No flight shall e'er my glories past disgrace.  
 Thus he who nothing fear'd ; and as he spoke, 485  
 In his right hand Almontes' weapon shook,  
 Firmly embrac'd his shield, for fight prepar'd,  
 And good Rogero and Gradafco dar'd.  
 Leave him to me, and soon this sovereign steel,  
 (Exclaims Gradafco) shall his frenzy heal. 490  
 Not so (Rogero cries) to me resign  
 Yon boasting chief—the combat first is mine.  
 Go thou—the fight is mine—by turns they cry'd—  
 Then all at once each other loud defy'd.  
 Nor this nor that would yield ; and now enrag'd 495  
 All three at once a medley war had wag'd ;  
 When numbers present, as the warriors clos'd,  
 With ill advice amidst them interpos'd ;  
 And to their cost had soon his fortune known,  
 Who for another's safety risks his own : 500

Not all the world their souls to peace had won,  
 But lo ! the Spanish monarch, with the son  
 Of great Troyano came, whose presence quell'd  
 Their frantic rage, and each in reverence held.

Now Agramant demands, what sudden cause 505  
 To new contention thus each warrior draws.

Th' occasion known, he strives with every art  
 To calm the rage of stern Gradaffo's heart ;  
 That he to Mandricardo might afford

One single day the loan of Hector's sword, 510  
 Till the dire fight was wag'd with Sarza's lord. }

While Agramant with soothing words addresst,  
 Essays by turns t' appease each angry breast,  
 New sounds of tumult in the western tent,  
 From Rodomont and Sacripant were fent, 515  
 Circassia's monarch stood with Sarza's knight,  
 (As late we told) to arm him for the fight,  
 And with Ferrau had on the champion brac'd  
 Those arms which once his proud forefather grac'd,  
 And now they came to where the courser stood, 520  
 Who dash'd around the whitening foam, and chew'd  
 The golden bit : this steed, Frontino nam'd,  
 Was that whose loss Rogero's wrath inflam'd.  
 Meanwhile the generous Sacripant, whose care  
 Must such a champion for the list prepare, 525

Observ'd

Observe'd the gallant steed with nearer view,  
 When soon his marks and faultless limbs he knew,  
 And own'd his Frontaletto, for whose sake  
 He went on foot, nor other steed would take :  
 Stol'n by Brunello, on that fatal day, 530  
 When from the fair \* he bore her ring away ;  
 When Balisarda and his horn he reft  
 From great Anglante's earl with impious theft ;  
 When from her side Marphisa's sword he bore,  
 And with his plunder reach'd Biferta's shore ; 535  
 Then gave Rogero Balisarda fam'd,  
 With this good courser, since Frontino nam'd.  
 Each certain proof the fierce Circassian weigh'd,  
 Then turning to the Sarzan king, he said :  
 Know, chief ! this steed is mine—by fraud purloin'd  
 Before Albracca—numbers left behind. 541  
 Could witness what I tell—behold my sword  
 Shall full conviction of the truth afford.  
 But since together for a while we far'd  
 In friendly sort, and mutual converse shar'd ; 545

## \* ANGELICA.

Ver. 532. —— *bis horn he reft*] This horn was won by Orlando from Almantes, when he slew him at the fountain. See Book i. ver. 202. Note.—For Brunello's thefts, see Boyardo.

And since thy want I know—to thee I yield  
 My generous courser for the listed field,  
 My right acknowledg'd first; else hope in vain  
 To keep a steed which only arms can gain.

Stern Rodomont, than whom no prouder knight  
 E'er wielded weapon in the list of fight,        551  
 Thus answer'd—Had another's lips declar'd  
 What thou, ill-judging Sacripant, hast dar'd,  
 He to his cost might find 'twere better far  
 That speechless born he breath'd the vital air; 555  
 But, as thou urgest, for the friendship late  
 Between us held, in this I wave debate,  
 To bid thee now (and heed what I advise)  
 Deser awhile thy arduous enterprize,  
 Till thou hast mark'd the issue of the fight,        560  
 This day, between me and the Tartar knight,  
 When his example shall thy prudence wake,  
 To beg me as thy gift this steed to take.  
 With thee 'tis courteous to be brutal (cries  
 Fierce Sacripant, with lightening in his eyes); 565  
 But mark me plainer now—henceforth take heed  
 How far thou dar'st usurp my trusty steed;  
 I here forbid thee, while this better hand  
 Can, grasp'd aloft, the vengeful sword command.

If other means should fail, unarm'd I fight, 570  
And stand with tooth and nail to guard my right.

Cries, threats succeed, and ire enkindles ire :  
Less swift through stubble runs the blaze of fire.  
Fierce Rodomont complete his armour wears,  
But Sacripant nor helm nor cuirass bears, 575  
Yet seems (so well he knew his sword to wield)  
Securely fenc'd as with a covering shield :

Though Rodomont excell'd in nerve of fight,  
No les in skill excell'd Circassia's knight. 579  
Not with more swiftness turns the kindling wheel,  
When from the stone is ground the whitening meal,  
Than Sacripant, with hand and foot untir'd,  
Turn'd, chang'd, and parry'd still as need requir'd.  
Their swords Ferrau and Serpentino drew,  
And 'midst the chiefs themselves undaunted threw :

Then Isolero, king Grandonio came, 586  
And many nobles of the Moorish name.  
Such was the tumult, such the noise combin'd,  
That reach'd the tent where both the princes join'd  
Effay'd to calm Rogero's wrath in vain, 590  
The Tartar lord and king of Sericane \*.

Now to king Agramant, perplex'd in thought,  
A messenger th' unwelcome tidings brought,

\* GRADASSO.

That

That Sacripant, with Rodomont engag'd,  
A cruel battle for his courser wag'd.

595

Then thus the king bespake the lord of Spain :  
Amidst these new alarms, thou here remain,  
Lest aught should worse among these chiefs befall,  
While I attend where yonder tumults call.

When Rodomont his royal lord beheld, 600

He stay'd his weapon, and his fury quell'd :

Not with less awe Circassia's prince retir'd,

When Agramant appear'd ; who now enquir'd,

With kingly looks, and with majestic tone,

From what new cause this sudden strife was grown.

The whole declar'd, he sought with fruitless care 606

T' appease each warrior, and the breach repair.

Unmov'd, Circassia's monarch still deny'd

The king of Algiers longer should bestride

The generous steed, unless by fair request, 610

For that day's use, he first his lord address'd.

But Rodomont, as wont, with fell disdain,

Reply'd—Nor thou, nor Heaven, so far shall gain,

That, what this arm can on myself bestow,

I ever to another's gift will owe.

615

The king enquir'd of Sacripant his right

To urge such claim, and if by force or slight

He

He lost the steed : the prince the truth display'd,  
 And, as he spoke, a blush his shame betray'd.  
 He own'd how well the subtle thief had wrought, 620  
 Who marking, while he fate entranc'd in thought,  
 Four stakes beneath his saddle plac'd, and drew  
 The courser thence, ere aught his rider knew.

Amidst the train appear'd Morphisa bold,  
 Who, while his courser's loss the warrior told, 625  
 In colour chang'd, for on the self-same day  
 A robber's hand \* had borne her sword away.  
 Advancing near, her eyes confess'd the steed,  
 On which Brunello once, with light-foot speed,  
 Escap'd pursuit : brave Sacripant she knew, 630  
 Till then unfound ; she mark'd the mingled crew  
 That crowded near, when numbers there appear'd,  
 That oft these thefts from base Brunello heard.  
 All turn'd to him, by whom they knew abus'd  
 The knight and dame, and by their looks accus'd.  
 Of each Morphisa ask'd, nor fail'd to find 635  
 That this was he whose hand her sword purloin'd.

\* BRUNELLO.

Ver. 620. *He own'd how well the subtle thief, &c.]* This ludicrous and extravagant incident is taken from Boyardo. The passage is wittily ridiculed by Cervantes, where Sancho, while asleep, loses his ass, which is stolen from him by Gines de Passamonte in the same manner.

She

She learnt, for this and many an impious cheat,  
 For which he well deserv'd a noose to meet,  
 By Agramant the shameless wretch was prais'd, 640  
 And (strange to tell) to regal honours rais'd.

Morphisa felt her former wrath to wake,  
 Determin'd, for her injur'd honour's sake,  
 On the foul thief a just revenge to take. }  
 }

Now by her squire she bade her helm be lac'd, 645  
 Her other shining arms already brac'd  
 Her martial limbs, for never yet the maid  
 Ten days was seen, but bright in mail array'd,  
 Since her fair person, brave beyond compare,  
 She first inur'd the weight of steel to bear. 650

Then, with her helmet clos'd, she went and found  
 Brunello seated midst the peers around.

Him, when she saw, the dame with furious heat  
 Seiz'd by the throat, and dragg'd him from his seat;  
 Easy, as grip'd within his hooky claws, 655  
 The ravenous eagle some weak chicken draws,  
 And bore him thus before Troyano's heir,  
 Then deep engag'd to heal intestine war.  
 Brunello, fearing worse might yet befall,  
 Ceas'd not to weep, and loud for pity call. 660

His

His cries were heard amidst the mix'd alarms  
Of shouts and tumults from the camp in arms.  
For mercy now he sues, now aid demands :  
Near as he drew, thick crowd the gazing bands :  
To Afric's king the dame her prisoner took, 665  
And thus address'd him with a haughty look :

This wretch, thy vassal, by my hand ere long  
Aloft suspended, shall atone the wrong  
My honour felt—for know his shameful theft,  
Him of his horse, me of my sword bereft. 670  
Should there be one who dares my purpose blame,  
Forth let him stand, and what he thinks proclaim :  
To prove my justice, I his might defy,  
And in thy presence give his tongue the lye.  
Since some may urge, ill-chosen time I take, 675  
When civil broils so many murmurs make ;  
When discord kindles now, with dire alarms,  
The bravest warriors of the camp to arms ;  
Three days I respite his determin'd fate :  
Meanwhile would any friend prolong his date, 680  
Let such appear—if not ere then releas'd,  
I give him to the birds a welcome feast.

Ver. 670.—*me of my sword*—] This is told in Boyardo.  
See Book xviii. note to ver. 732.

But

But three miles distant, by the wood's lone side,  
 To yonder tower behold my course I guide :  
 Without companion shall I there retire, 685  
 Save two, a damsel and a faithful squire.  
 If any dare this wretch's cause befriend,  
 There let him come, I there his arms attend.

She said ; and waiting no reply, pursu'd  
 Her destin'd way to reach the neighbouring wood :  
 Brunello on her courser's neck she cast, 691  
 And in his locks the martial virgin fast  
 Her hand secur'd, while loud he shriek'd and pray'd,  
 Invoking every friend by name for aid.

King Agramant, amid these tumults rost, 695  
 Where thought it self to find a clue was lost,

Above

Ver. 695. *King Agramant, amid these tumults—*] Nothing can be better worked up than the confusion in the camp of the Pagans, from these dissensions among their leaders. Cervantes humorously makes Don Quixote, in the midst of the quarrels at the Inn, thus allude to the above passage of Ariosto: “ Did I not tell you, Sirs, that this castle was enchanted, and that some legion of devils must certainly inhabit it. In confirmation whereof, I would have you see, with your own eyes, how the discord of Agramant's camp is passed over, and transferred hither among us. Behold how there they fight for the sword, here for the horse, yonder for the eagle—here again for the helmet ; and we all fight, and no one understands another. Come, therefore, my

Above the rest more sorely now displeas'd,  
 Beheld Brunello by Marphisa feiz'd :  
 Not that he still the treacherous caitiff lov'd ;  
 Who (some few days elaps'd) his anger mov'd. 700  
 Ere since the ring's late los', the king revolv'd  
 Brunello's fault, and oft his death resolv'd.  
 But now he deem'd a monarch's sacred name  
 Too boldly scorn'd, and, red with conscious shame,  
 He stood prepar'd to follow, with his hand 705  
 T' avenge th' affront that regal power sustain'd :  
 But grave Sobrino, present, soon inclin'd  
 To better thoughts the prince's wrathful mind.

It ill beseeim'd, in such a cause, (he said)  
 So great a king, of sovereign kings the head, 710  
 To wage a fight, where, should his arms succeed,  
 More blame than honour must attend the deed :

my lord judge, and you master priest, and let one of you stand  
 for king Agramant, the other for king Sobrino, and make peace  
 among us, &c."

See JARVIS's Don Quixote, Vol. I. B. iv. C. xviii.

Ver. 707. *But grave Sobrino, &c.]* This is the first appearance of Sobrino in Ariosto. His character is continued from Boyardo, where he makes a figure in the council held by Agramant, to debate on the intended invasion of France, and endeavours to dissuade the king from that expedition. Sobrino appears to be the Nestor of the poem.

When

When men would say—"Much has our king obtain'd,  
Who scarce hard conquest o'er a woman gain'd!"

Great is his danger, small his praise must prove 715  
Who dares against her arm to combat move.

'Twere best to leave Brunello to his death :  
Or if a word could save the culprit's breath  
From threaten'd noose, that word we should with-  
hold,

And leave the course of justice uncontrol'd. 720

Thou canst (he added) to Marphisa send,  
That she his sentence may to thee commend  
As king and judge—and first thy promise plight,  
The hangman's hand shall do her honour right.  
But should she this refuse—the contest cease, 725  
Leave him to her—and rest the maid in peace :  
So still to thee her love be firmly ty'd,  
Hang up Brunello, and all thieves beside.

Sobrino's words the monarch's warmth assuage,  
Who listens to his counsel just and sage ; 730  
Nor only leaves himself at large the maid,  
But wills that none should her retreat invade ;  
For public good, his feelings he suppress'd,  
And hop'd, by his example o'er the rest,  
To soothe to concord each contending breast. 735

But

But Discord laugh'd aloud, who knew no fear  
Of peace or friendship ever more to hear :  
Now here, now there, she travers'd o'er the plain,  
Nor could the tumult of her joy contain.  
No less exulting stalk'd her sister Pride, 740  
Who constant fuel to the fire supply'd ;  
And, with a shout that reach'd the firmament,  
The sign of victory to Michael sent.  
At that dread voice, at that tremendous sound,  
The Seine ran back, and Paris trembled round ; 745  
Through Arden's fable groves the echoes spread,  
And savage beasts in gloomy coverts fled ;  
Blaia, and Arli, Rhone's far-winding shore,  
The Alps, and mount Ghibenna, heard the roar ;  
This Rhodan, Soane, Garonna, Rhine confess'd ; 750  
While mothers clasp'd their infants to the breast.  
Each furious chief demands the fight to wage,  
And each will foremost in the list engage :

Ver. 744. *At that dread voice, &c.*] See Virgil.

Contremuit nemus, &c.

Et trepidæ matres prefèrre ad pectora natos.

ÆN. VII.

Young mothers wildly stare, with fears possest'd,  
And strain their helpless infants to their breast.

The woods all thunder'd —

DRYDEN.

VOL. III,

Z

Their

Their claims, so various, so perplex'd the noose,  
 Apollo's self could scarce the bands unloose; 755  
 Yet every art king Agramant would try,  
 And first the Gordian knot of strife untie  
 Between the African \* and Scythian † lord,  
 For beauteous Doralis, by both ador'd.  
 The king, by turns, would each to reason bend, 760  
 As prince, as brother, counsellor, and friend:  
 But when he saw that neither would incline  
 To truce or peace, or her he lov'd resign,  
 Fair cause of all their strife! he sought to find  
 Some middle course, to meet each rival's mind. 765  
 He meant the damsel should decide their loves,  
 And name the consort whom her choice approves;  
 So, at her sovereign bidding, might they cease  
 From further strife, and firmly bind the peace.  
 Each knight agreed, for each his love believ'd 770  
 With mutual passion by the dame receiv'd.  
 The king of Sarza, who long time had su'd  
 To gain her hand, ere Mandricardo woo'd;  
 Accustom'd in her presence still to live,  
 With every grace that fits a maid to give; 775  
 Securely hop'd her sentence would dismiss  
 His jealous pangs, and fix his future bliss.

\* RODOMONT.

† MANDRICARDO.

Nor he alone, but thus each Pagan thought,  
Who knew for her what deeds his arm had wrought,  
In tournament and field—not thus (they cry'd) 780  
Should Mandricardo by her doom abide.

But he, who love's soft hours with her had led,  
While Sol on worlds below his splendour shed ;  
Who knew what flame her gentle heart avow'd,  
Laugh'd at the judgment of the erring crowd. 785

Before his sovereign lord each peer confirms,  
With every solemn form, the stated terms ;  
Then to the dame appeals : with downcast eyes,  
While her fair face the bloomy colour dyes,  
She owns her bosom held the Tartar dear : 790  
With wonder all the soft confession hear.

Fierce Rodomont, as if each fense was fled,  
Scarce dares again exalt his drooping head ;  
But when his wonted fury had disspell'd  
The first surprize and shame, that silent held 795  
His faltering tongue, he call'd the doom unjust ;  
And, snatching from his side his surest trust,  
Before the king and camp the blade he draws,  
And swears that this shall win or lose the cause ;  
Not the light breath of woman's wayward will, 800  
Who what they least should value, favour still.

Swift Mandricardo answers to his call :  
 Act as thou wilt—I stand prepar'd for all :  
 Yet ere thy ship the harbour safely gains,  
 A mighty tract of sea unplough'd remains. 805  
 But Agramant here interpos'd, and blam'd  
 The Sarzan prince, who 'gainst all order claim'd  
 The fight anew—so far the king prevails,  
 He makes this rising fury strike her sails.

Now Rodomont, indignant to sustain 810  
 A two-fold shame before this princely train ;  
 First from his king, to whom his pride gave way,  
 And next his dame, in one ill-omen'd day—  
 No longer there will dwell ; but from the band,  
 That late in battle own'd his guiding hand, 815  
 Two squires alone he takes, and swift as wind  
 Departing, leaves the Moorish tents behind.  
 As when the surly bull, o'ercome in fight,  
 Resigns his heiifer for the victor's right ;

For

Ver. 818. *As when the surly bull,—*] See Virgil.

Nec mos bellantes unà stabulare, sed alter  
 Victus abit, longèque ignotus exulat oris,  
 Multa gemens, ignominiam, plagamque superbi  
 Victoris, tum quos amisit inultus amores ;  
 Et stabula spectans regnis exceffit avitis.

GEORG. Lib. III. v. 224.

Nor,

For woods and barren sands he leaves the mead, 820  
Where once he us'd the numerous herds to lead ;  
Loudly he roars, as night or day returns,  
While still his breast with inbred fury burns :  
So struck with rage, with frenzy, and despair,  
Goes Algiers' king, rejected by the fair. 825  
Him good Rogero had prepar'd with speed  
To follow, and regain his faithful steed ;  
But soon recalling to his generous mind  
The lift with Mandricardo next design'd,  
He checks his rein and turns to claim the fight, 830  
Ere king Gradaffo next assert his right  
To Durindana, with the Scythian \* knight : }  
Yet much he griev'd to see, before his eyes,  
Frontino lost, an undisputed prize :

Nor, when the war is o'er, their rage expires :  
To distant vales the vanquish'd wretch retires ;  
Weeps his disgrace, his conquering rival's boast,  
Yet more the fair, that unreveng'd he lost ;  
And oft with pensive looks, as he retreats,  
The parting exile views his ancient seats.

WARTON, ver. 290.

\* MANDRICARDO.

Z 3

Though

Though once his battle with the Tartar fought, 835  
Not long his generous steed shall rest forgot.  
But Sacripant, whom no such cause detain'd,  
For whom no other strife or list remain'd,  
In haste the course of Rodomont pursu'd,  
And soon had join'd him, but a chance withstood ;  
A sudden chance, that cross'd him in the way, 841  
And kept him wandering all the live long day.  
By fortune fall'n amidst the Seine he found  
A hapless maid, who in the stream had drown'd,  
But that he came to give her timely aid, 845  
Leapt in the flood, and her to land convey'd.  
He sought his steed, but loosen'd from his hand  
The steed awaited not his lord's command ;  
All day he fled, and scarce with setting light  
Resign'd his bridle to the weary'd knight : 850  
Two hundred miles o'er hill and plain he pass'd ;  
But where he found stern Rodomont at last,  
And how they met, I shall not here record,  
With small advantage to Circassia's lord ;

Ver. 844. *A hapless maid,—*] This adventure, just touch'd upon here by Ariosto, is nowhere else mentioned by him, or by Boyardo,

How

How there he lost his steed, and how he fell 855  
In captive bonds—I hasten now to tell,  
How fir'd with wrath, before the princes sham'd,  
Against his mistress and his king inflam'd,  
Far from the camp the king of Sarza went,  
And how on both he gave his anger vent. 860

Where'er the Saracen in frenzy griev'd,  
The ambient air his burning sighs receiv'd :  
In pity Echo from her cavern mourn'd,  
And to his plaints in plaintive notes return'd.

O female sex ! (he cry'd) whose worthless mind,  
Inconstant, shifts with every changing wind : 866  
O faithless woman, perjur'd and unjust !  
Most wretched those who place in thee their trust !  
Not all my service try'd, my love express'd  
By thousand proofs, could in one cruel breast 870  
Secure a heart, so soon, alas ! estrang'd  
From truth like mine, and to another chang'd.  
Nor have I lost thee now, because my name  
Is deem'd eclips'd by Mandricardo's fame :

Ver. 856. *In captive bonds*—] In another part, mention is made of Sacripant being vanquished by Rodomont at the bridge ; but no particular account is given of that incident.

Nor know I what my source of woe to call— 875  
 But thou art woman—that comprises all !  
 O sex accurs'd ! by God and Nature sent,  
 A deadly bane to poison man's content !  
 So hateful snakes are bred, the wolf and bear  
 So haunt the shades ; so nurs'd by genial air 880  
 Swarm gnats and wasps, the venom'd insect-train,  
 And tares are bred amidst the golden grain.  
 Why could not Nature (fostering nurse of earth !)  
 Without thy aid, give man his happier birth ?  
 As trees, by human skill engrafted, bear 885  
 The juicy fig, smooth plumb, or racy pear ?

Ver. 877. *O sex accurs'd !*—] This exclamation of Rodomont against the female sex, may recal to the mind of the reader the reflections of Adam on the transgression of Eve, particularly these lines,

—O ! why did God,  
 Creator wife, who peopled highest heaven  
 With spirits masculine, create at last  
 This novelty on earth, this fair defect  
 Of nature, and not fill the world at once  
 With men, as angels, without feminine,  
 Or find some other way to generate  
 Mankind.—

PAR. LOST, Book X.

But it must be frankly acknowledged, that the passage of Ariosto is, as too usual, debased by ludicrous images and expressions,

But,

But, ah ! can Nature aught that 's perfect frame,  
When Nature bears herself a female name ?  
Yet be not hence with empty pride o'er-run,  
To think, O woman ! man is born your son. 890  
On prickly thorns appears the blooming rose ;  
And from a fetid herb the lily grows.

Insidious, cruel sex ! whose faithless mind }  
No love can influence, and no truth can bind ; }  
Ingrate and impious, plagues of human kind ! 895 }

Complaining thus, the king of Sarza rode,  
Now murmur'd low, now rais'd his voice aloud,  
Heard far and wide ; with undistinguish'd blame  
At once involving all the female name.  
Rash ! unadvis'd ! though some our anger raise, 900  
For three found ill, a hundred merit praise.  
What if amidst the fair I yet have lov'd,  
Not one perchance I met that faithful prov'd ;

Shall

Ver. 888. *When Nature bears herself a female name ?*] Surely the poet has carried this conceit to the utmost, that Nature, being herself a female, and consequently imperfect, could produce nothing perfect.

Ver. 902. *What if amidst the fair, &c.*

*Ere creeping age shall change these locks to grey.*] The attachment of Ariosto to the fair sex, has been shewn in the account of his life, and appears in various parts of his works ; and this

Shall I the whole with general censure blot,  
 And not accuse my own unhappy lot ? 905  
 Such was my chance—if, 'midst a hundred, one  
 Were faithless found, on her my choice must run.  
 But still I trust, ere life with years decay,  
 Ere creeping age shall change these locks to grey,  
 Some happier hour may yet my hope renew, 910  
 And see my love repaid with love as true.  
 Should e'er such future bliss my vows befall,  
 That faithful she will make amends for all :  
 While to the height her honours I rehearse,  
 With pen or tongue, in prose, or numerous verse.

The Saracen, who thus his mistress blam'd, 916  
 As ill-advis'd against his king exclaim'd ;  
 And oft he wish'd some storm of adverse fate  
 Might fall unlook'd, to overwhelm his state ;  
 To make each wretched house in Afric mourn, 920  
 And to the lowest stone each pile o'erturn ;  
 That Agramant, expell'd his realm in grief,  
 Might rove a mendicant without relief ;

this passage in particular, amogh many others, seems to prove that his love had been divided by a number of objects, though, at the same time, it likewise seems to prove that he had been rather unsuccessful in the fidelity of his mistresses:

Till

Till once again his prowess should restore  
The exil'd monarch to the regal power ; 925  
And in his proof of loyal duty show,  
What to a faithful friend a friend must owe ;  
A faithful friend, whose merits should receive  
(Though worlds oppos'd) whate'er his prince could  
give. 929

The Pagan thus, as troubled passions wrought,  
Now on his king, now on his mistress thought :  
He spurr'd his steed, but ne'er to sleep address'd  
His watchful eyes, nor gave Frontino rest :  
Next day his course to Sonna's banks he sped,  
(That to Provence with winding current led) 935  
For Africa once more to cross the main,  
And see his long forsaken realms again.  
He view'd the river fill'd from side to side  
With barks and vessels floating on the tide,  
That from afar, with all provisions stow'd, 940  
To Pagan bands convey'd the welcome load.  
The country round was subject to the Moors,  
From Paris' walls to Acquamorta's shores ;  
A pleasing tract ! and all from plain to plain,  
Stretch'd on the right, that reach'd the bounds of  
Spain. 945  
Now

Now from the ships remov'd, the busy crowd  
 On many a beast and wain the burthens stow'd :  
 From different parts the banks were cover'd round  
 With well-fed herds, that graz'd the verdant ground ;  
 And near the river divers huts were kept, 950  
 Where all night long the hinds and drivers slept.

The king of Algiers here, surpris'd by night,  
 When damps and gloom succeed departing light,  
 Yields to a country host (there born and bred) 954  
 Who begg'd him for his guest at board and bed.  
 His steed dispos'd ; rich plenty crown'd the board,  
 With Greekish wines, and wines of Corfù stor'd :  
 In all the rest a Moor the Pagan show'd,  
 But in his drink preferr'd the Gallic mode.  
 The host, with welcome looks and sumptuous fare,  
 Would every honour for his guest prepare ; 961  
 Whom by his garb and mien he well divin'd  
 A knight of prowess high, and noble kind.  
 But he, at variance with himself (whose heart,  
 As if divided from its better part, 965

Ver. 958. *In all the rest a Moor, &c.*] By the law of Mahomet, his votaries are forbidden the use of wine ; but the poet, who meant Rodomont for a character of impiety, makes him pay no attention to the dictates of his own religion, and only observe the customs of a Moor when they did not combat his passions.

Still

Still to his mistress turn'd) with pensive look  
There fate, nor with a word the silence broke.  
Our jolly host, who better could advance  
His private good than any host of France;  
Who, 'midst a land with foreign foes o'er-run, 970  
Preserv'd his chattels, goods, and house his own  
Had call'd, in honour of his noble guest,  
His friends and kindred to partake the feast.  
Of these none dar'd to speak, but gaz'd with awe,  
While mute and sad the Saracen they saw; 975  
Who fate with head cast down in mournful wise,  
As if he fear'd to meet a stranger's eyes.  
Thus long he mus'd, till from his bosom broke  
A sigh, when sudden as from sleep he 'woke,  
Prepar'd to speak, his drooping lids he rais'd, 980  
And round the board with look compos'd he gaz'd;  
Then ask'd his host, and next to each apply'd,  
If any there the marriage state had try'd,  
And slumber'd with a confort at his side. }  
He said; the host and every guest he found 985  
In wedlock's law to female partners bound.  
He next enquir'd, if each believ'd his spouse  
Had duly kept her matrimonial vows:

When,

When, save mine host, they one and all declar'd,  
That none with them their wives' affections shar'd.

To this the host—Each as he will believes, 991

But sure am I that each himself deceives :

For this your credulous, uxorious mind,

I can but call you each with dotage blind ;

And so no less must say this noble knight, 995

Unless he means to tell you black for white.

For as t' enrich the world has Fate preferr'd

A single Phœnix (rare and only bird !)

So, is it said, one only man through life

Is giv'n to 'scape the falsehood of a wife : 1000

Each will himself that happy mortal call,

That hufband sole, who bears the palm from all !

Yet how can each the boasted treasure own,

When through the sex no two chaste wives are

known ? 1004

Like you I thought, and still perhaps had deem'd

All women virtuous, that were so esteem'd ;

But that a gentle squire, in Venice bred,

And late for my good fortune hither led,

Such stories told, all which full well he knew,

As from my thought the fond deception drew. 1010

Francis.

Francis Valerio was he call'd; whose name  
 Shall ever place in my remembrance claim.  
 Right was he learn'd in women, and could well  
 The frauds of marry'd and unmarry'd tell;  
 Tales new, and tales long since, of every kind, 1015  
 He told; with these his own experience join'd;  
 He fully prov'd, of high or low degree,  
 How vain the hope a virtuous dame to see:  
 Should ever one seem chaster than the rest,  
 'Tis that her art can veil her frailties best. 1020  
 From those (of which such number would he tell,  
 That scarce the third in my remembrance dwell)  
 One story fix'd within my mind remain'd,  
 And there engrav'd has still its place maintain'd;  
 Which all that hear shall like myself receive, 1025  
 And every falsehood of the sex believe:  
 And if it please thine ear, I, noble knight,  
 To their confusion will the tale recite.

Ver. 1011. *Francis Valerio*] Gian' Francesco Valerio, a Venetian gentleman, a great enemy to women: he lived in intimacy with the poet, and is mentioned by him with particular kindness at the beginning of the xlvith Book, and is here likewise, by a poetical anachronism, made to live in the time of Charlemain; and, from his hatred of women, Ariosto puts into his mouth this severe tale against the Sex.

What

352 ORLANDO FURIOSO. B. XXVII.

What better (cry'd the Pagan) canst thou find,  
To suit the present temper of my mind, 1030  
Than stories, where examples may display  
That worthless sex, accustom'd to betray ?  
Yet, ere thou speak'st, against me take thy place,  
So shall I better hear thee face to face.

But, in th' ensuing book, we see declar'd 1035  
What tale for Rodomont mine host prepar'd.

END OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH BOOK.

THE  
TWENTY-EIGHTH BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

VOL. III.

A 2

## T H E A R G U M E N T.

RODOMONT hears from his host the tale of Astolphe and Jocundo, a severe satire upon the female sex. The characters of women further discussed. Rodomont leaves his host, and pursues his intended journey for Algiers; but meeting with a pleasing spot, he takes possession of a chapel which the Christians had deserted, and resolves to fix his residence there. The arrival of Isabella and the hermit with the dead body of Zerbino.

THE  
TWENTY-EIGHTH BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

YE dames, and ye to whom each dame is dear,  
To this unhallow'd tale refuse an ear ;  
A tale mine host has caught from lying fame,  
To stain the lustre of the female name ;

Yet

Ver. 1. *Ye dames, &c.*] This celebrated tale, one of the severest satires that was ever written upon the female sex, has been imitated by several authors, particularly by the witty Fontaine, the Prior of France.

Boileau has compared this tale of Fontaine with the *Joconde* of M. Bouillon, and not only given the preference to the former, but endeavours to shew, that for pleasantry of narrative Fontaine is superior to the Italian author; at the same time he candidly speaks thus of Ariosto. “ *Donnez, si vous voulez, à l'Arioste toute la gloire de l'invention; ne lui denions pas le pris que lui est justement dû, pour l'elegance, la netteté, et la brevité inimitable avec laquelle il dit tant de choses en si peu de mots; ne ra-*

Yet such a tongue alike in vain' essays 5  
 To blot with censure or exalt with praise :  
 In blaming others, fools their folly show,  
 And most attempt to speak when least they know.  
 Pass o'er this part unread ; the story stands  
 Unhurt without it, nor the page demands. 10  
 What Turpin told before, I but rehearse ;  
 No envy prompts, no malice points the verse :  
 My better lines your matchless worth have shown,  
 My loyal faith to all your sex is known.  
 To seal this truth a thousand proofs I give, 15  
 That still in you, and you alone I live.

baiffons point malicieusement, en faveur de notre nation, le plus ingenieux auteur des derniers siecles." Dissertation sur la Joconde de M. Fontaine.

It must be confessed, that several parts of this tale are highly exceptionable in the original for licentiousness of idea and language ; yet, if we compare the passages with other writers of the early times, we shall find that Ariosto is by no means entitled to exclusive censure. A general grossness then prevailed among the poets, particularly of the humorous kind, as our own Chaucer will sufficiently prove ; and Spenser, in a later age, will scarcely incur less condemnation. The account of Hellenore among the Satyrs, is equal for indelicacy to any parts of Ariosto. To this we may add, that the poets of a much more refined time have given themselves such unjustifiable liberties, that the severe eye of decency may find numerous passages to expunge in Prior, Dryden, and even Pope himself.

Then

Then pass, or with a careless eye survey,  
Th' opprobrious tale, the fable of a day.  
But to resume my task—when every guest  
A due attention in his looks express'd, 20  
Mine host oppos'd against the Pagan fate,  
And thus began his story to relate.

Where Lombardy extends her fruitful plain,  
The young Astolpho held his peaceful reign,  
His brother's heir—renown'd for every grace 25  
Of manly person, and the charms of face.  
Scarce could Apelles, Zeuxis, or a name  
More fam'd in art, have sketch'd a lovelier frame.  
Thus fresh in blooming youth the monarch shone,  
Fair in all eyes, but fairer in his own. 30  
Much less he priz'd his state of kingly power,  
His numerous armies, his exhaustless store  
Of wealth and friends, in which he far excell'd  
Each boasted prince that near dominion held,  
Than beauty's gift, whose full perfection rais'd 35  
His form o'er every youth for beauty prais'd.  
Amongst the train that in their prince's sight  
Paid daily homage, was a Roman knight,  
Faustus his name, whom dear the king esteem'd,  
And oft with him would boast how high he deem'd 40

His person's charms, and bade him boldly tell  
 If one he knew to match, much less excel  
 Such manly grace : Thus he in vaunting pride,  
 And, as he little thought, the knight reply'd.  
 O king ! (faid Faustus) doubtless few there are, 45  
 Whose beauty can with Pavia's lord compare ;  
 But one I know may urge so bold a claim,  
 My brother he, Jocundo is his name :  
 Set him apart, your charms all charms efface ;  
 His equal yours, or boast superior grace. 50

Astolpho with surprize these words receiv'd,  
 And scarce such unexpected truth believ'd ;  
 Then felt a wish within his bosom rais'd  
 To see this youth unknown, so highly prais'd ;  
 And Faustus urg'd his sacred faith to plight, 55  
 To bring this wonder to his prince's sight.

Great king ! (the knight return'd) with truth I  
 fear,  
 Hard is the task to bring Jocundo here :  
 Pleas'd with his humble lot assign'd by Fate,  
 Scarce is he known to pass the city's gate ; 60  
 He lives content with his paternal store,  
 Nor squanders that, nor seeks to gather more ;  
 And

B. XXVIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 352

And he as distant Pavia's towers would deem,  
As some the banks of Tanais' icy stream ;  
But most I dread th' attempt the youth to tear 65  
From her whose love partakes his joy and care ;  
Th' enamour'd husband from a wife to draw,  
Whose every wish to him is more than law :  
Yet, gracious king, thy servant shall obey,  
And prove each art to speed him on his way. 70

The king adds royal gifts to earnest prayers,  
And for his embassy the knight prepares.

On wings of zeal observant Faustus flew,  
And soon imperial Rome arose in view :  
Then to his brother's humble roof he went, 75  
Told the king's wish, and gain'd his slow consent ;  
Implor'd the wife, and check'd each rising sigh  
With thoughts of mighty gifts and honours high, }  
And for his sake besought her to comply. }

At length Jocundo fix'd the parting day, 80  
And steeds and servants hir'd, and fair array  
To deck his manly form, for oft the grace  
Of costly vest improves a beauteous face.  
Meanwhile with heaving breast and flowing tears  
The dear companion of his life appears ; 85

Vows that his absence she shall ever mourn,  
And never live to see his wish'd return.

Cease, my lov'd spouse (the tender husband cries,  
While equal sorrows trickle from his eyes)

Cease thy dear plaints, so Fortune speed my way,  
As but two months I my return delay, 91

Nor Pavia's proffer'd crown should bribe my  
longer stay.

Ah me! (she sigh'd) and must I then sustain  
Such length of absence, such an age of pain?

Ah no! the grave will first my portion be, 95  
These fading eyes no more their lord shall see:

Then welcome, death!—To sorrow thus a prey,

Food she rejects, and groans the night away;

Touch'd with her grief he lifts his eyes to Heaven,  
Oft sighs, and oft repents his promise given. 100

Now from her lovely neck a cross she drew,  
Thick set with precious gems of various hue,

Which once a pilgrim of Bohemia bore,

When sick, returning from Judæa's shore;

Her sire the drooping stranger entertain'd, 105  
And at his death the hallow'd relick gain'd:

This cross she begg'd him at his neck to wear,

And in his mind her dear remembrance bear.

With

With joy the youth is seen the pledge to take,  
Not for memorial, but the giver's sake ; 110  
Since neither time nor place his faith could move,  
Nor fortune, good or ill, disperse his love ;  
Nor could her image from his thought depart,  
Or death's strong grasp divide it from his heart.

On that black evening, which fore-ran the day 115  
That her lov'd consort summon'd on his way,  
Increasing grief her tender soul oppress'd,  
And oft she fainted on her husband's breast.  
Not once they clos'd their eyes ; no tongue can tell  
How oft they kis'd, how oft they bade farewell ; 120  
Till breaking from her soft embrace he fled,  
And left her drown'd in sorrow on the bed.

Scarce two short miles he journey'd, ere his mind  
Recall'd the treasure to his care consign'd,  
The precious cross, which in his thoughtless haste  
He left behind beneath his pillow plac'd. 126  
Ah me ! (he cry'd) how fitly shall I frame  
A fair pretence to mitigate the blame ?  
Well may my wife my loyal truth suspect,  
Her gifts and love repaid with such neglect. 130  
He knew 'twere vain, with cold excuse to send  
A menial servant, or a nearer friend :

Himself

Himself in person must return to prove  
 His faith untainted, and her doubts remove.  
 He rein'd his steed, and cry'd—My Faustus, go 135  
 Tow'rds Pavia's court with gentle steps and slow,  
 I must again to Rome, but short my stay,  
 Soon shall my speed o'ertake you on the way :  
 No other can supply my wants—He said ;  
 Then bade adieu, and turn'd his courser's head : 140  
 Alone he cross'd old Tyber's yellow stream,  
 What time the shade retir'd from Phœbus' beam ;  
 When, hastening home, he found the darling fair  
 Fast lock'd in sleep (so poignant was her care !)  
 The curtain with a cautious hand he drew, 145  
 And view'd what little there he thought to view ;  
 For, lo ! his chaste, his faithful spouse he found  
 In wanton sheets, with amorous fetters bound,  
 Clasp'd by a youth, in whose adulterous face  
 He knew the author of his foul disgrace : 150  
 A low-born hind defil'd his master's bed,  
 Whose hand had rear'd him, and whose bounty fed.  
 Think what amazement chill'd his curdling blood,  
 As fix'd in stupid gaze he speechless stood :  
 Ne'er may your soul, by sad experience, know 155  
 The cruel anguish of Jocundo's woe.

Rage

Rage urg'd him on to draw the sword, and take  
A just revenge ; but Love, that still could wake,  
For this ingrate, soft feelings in his breast,  
Spite of himself the threatening stroke repress'd. 160  
All-powerful Love, that from his anger sav'd  
Her forfeit life, so far his heart enslav'd,  
He fear'd to chace the slumber from her eyes,  
And with the shock her tender soul surprize.  
Silent the room he left, with silent speed 165  
The stairs descended, and regain'd his steed ;  
Goaded by grief, he goads his fiery beast,  
And joins his brother ere the hour of rest.

All mark'd his change of cheer, his mournful look,  
That some near anguish at his heart bespoke ; 170  
Yet none, amidst so many, e'er divin'd  
The secret cause that rankled in his mind :  
All knew he left them to return to Rome,  
But he had made a trip to Cuckoldom.

Ver. 174. *But he had made a trip to Cuckoldom.* ] The Italian is,

—gito era a Corneto :—

Corneto, the name of a place near Rome. The word likewise means Cuckoldom ; but the humour of the original, arising from the double meaning of the word, could not be preserved in the same manner in the translation.

Each

Each deem'd that love lay festering in his thought,  
 But none could tell how love his sorrow wrought. 176  
 His brother deem'd he mourn'd his consort left  
 Of comfort and society bereft ;  
 But he had different motives to complain,  
 Her too much company had caus'd his pain. 180  
 He sighs, he weeps, while Faustus to his grief  
 (The cause unknown) can yield no kind relief :  
 In vain he seeks the healing balm to pour ;  
 What hand can heal, that cannot probe the sore ?  
 The healing balm is rankest venom found, 185  
 Which more inflames, and wider makes the wound.  
 His consort's once-lov'd name distracts his breast,  
 His appetite is gone, and lost his rest ;  
 While those fair features, that so late might claim  
 The prize of beauty, seem'd no more the same : 190  
 With deep-sunk eyes, and large projecting nose,  
 With wither'd flesh, a skeleton he shows ;  
 And, bred from grief, a fever on the way  
 At Arbia and at Arno forc'd his stay,  
 Till lost those charms that once such fame had  
 won, 195  
 Like gather'd roses fading in the sun.

B. XXVIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 365

Though Faustus, touch'd with deep regret, per-  
ceiv'd

His brother's woeful state, no less he griev'd  
To think the prince, to whom his faith he ow'd,  
Should doubt his truth for praise so ill bestow'd. 200

He promis'd one of matchless form and face,  
And one he brings depriv'd of every grace :

Yet with Jocundo still he journey'd on,  
Till now they enter'd Pavia's regal town :

But, fearful of disgrace, the Roman knight 205  
At first declin'd to meet Astolpho's sight,

Till to the king by letter he reveal'd  
That dire disease, and some distrefs conceal'd,  
Prey'd on his brother's ruin'd health, defac'd  
His rosy bloom, and laid each beauty waste. 210

Astolpho, gracious prince, well pleas'd to hear  
The man he long'd so much to see was near,  
Resolv'd his noblest welcome to extend,  
And greet Jocundo as his dearest friend.

No envy in his generous breast was known, 215  
To find a beauty that excell'd his own ;  
Since, but for pale disease, full well he knew  
His rival's charms must every charm subdue.

Superb

Superb apartments to the youth he gives,  
And only in Jocundo's presence lives ; 220  
His wishes to prevent all means applies,  
And every way to do him honour tries ;  
While he, unblest, in languor wastes his life,  
Lamenting still the falsehood of his wife :  
Nor song, nor dance, nor music's sprightly strains,  
Can drown remembrance, or assuage his pains. 226

In these apartments of the regal dome,  
An ancient hall was next his lonely room,  
The room where oft retir'd in grief he pines,  
And shows, and games, and company declines ; 230  
Broods o'er the deed that robb'd his soul of rest,  
And adds new scorpions to his tortur'd breast ;  
Yet, strange to tell ! a balsam here he found,  
Of sovereign power to close his rankling wound.

Far in the hall, where artificial night, 235  
With windows ever clos'd, expell'd the light,  
A chink appear'd, and thro' the mauldering flaw,  
Whence came a feeble ray, he thought he saw  
What few would hear, and fewer would believe,  
Nor from another would himself receive. 240  
There, thro' the opening chink, reveal'd was seen  
The secret chamber of Astolpho's queen ;

A sacred

A sacred privacy to all deny'd,  
 But those in whom the fair could well confide :  
 Here oft Astolpho's beauteous consort fate, 245  
 Forgetful of her lord and regal state ;  
 And here he view'd a dwarf of hideous face,  
 And shape uncouth, the wanton fair embrace.

Struck with the sight, yet doubting what he  
 view'd,

As in a trance awhile Jocundo stood : 250  
 But, when convic'd, no longer could he deem  
 The sight th' illusion of an idle dream ;  
 Ye gods ! (he cry'd) can she resign her charms  
 To the rude clasp of such a lover's arms ?  
 A queen, whose lord with every gift is crown'd, 255  
 In form unrivall'd, as in worth renown'd !  
 Reflection, that before so pain'd his heart,  
 Now took, by slow degrees, his consort's part.  
 What though she sought a young gallant to find,  
 Her fault was but the fault of all her kind ; 260  
 Whose favours none could ever singly prove ;  
 And if desire of change her breast could move,  
 At least no monster had enjoy'd her love. }

Next day, returning at th' accustom'd hour,  
 He found the lovers busy'd as before ; 265  
 Still

Still fearless of surprize, the dwarf and dame  
 The king dishonour'd with the deed of shame :  
 Day following day their mutual vigour proves,  
 And Sunday was no sabbath to their loves.

Yet most he marvell'd that the fair complain'd, 270  
 And thought th' ill-shapen cub her charms disdain'd.  
 One morn, when to the friendly chink he came,  
 He found dissolv'd in tears the amorous dame ;  
 Who twice already, by her trusty maid,  
 Had call'd the dwarf, and still the dwarf delay'd. 275  
 Again she sent : her maid these tidings brought :  
 The dice, my lady, take up all his thought ;  
 And rather than forego his gain at play,  
 He dares your gracious summons disobey.

At this strange sight Jocundo chang'd his cheer,  
 No more his cheeks receiv'd the falling tear ; 280  
 Joy lights his eyes, the clouds of grief are o'er,  
 And what his name imports, he looks once more ;  
 His manly front resumes its wonted grace,  
 And angel beauty brightens in his face. 285

The king, his brother, all the court, confess  
 The wondrous turn ; but none the cause can gues.

Ver. 283: *And what his name imports,—]* The word Gio-cundo in the Italian signifies cheerful, jocund.

If

B. XXVIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 369

If from the youth the monarch long'd to know  
What sudden comfort had assuag'd his woe,  
Not less the youth the secret wish'd to tell, 290  
And to the king his injuries reveal ;  
Yet will'd he should for such atrocious fact,  
Like him, no vengeance from his wife exact !  
Then by a sacred vow the prince he ty'd,  
Whate'er his ear receiv'd, or eye descry'd, 295  
Though the dire truth depriv'd his soul of rest,  
Though in th' offence fell treason stood confess'd,  
That, soon or late, he never would engage  
The guilt to punish, but restrain his rage ;  
Nor let a single word or deed evince 300  
The crime detected by an injur'd prince.

The king, who little dreamt his wrong sustain'd,  
By solemn plighted vow himself restrain'd.  
Jocundo then began the cause to show,  
Whence sickness, sprung from soul-consuming woe,  
Prey'd on his health ; and how his wife, debas'd 305  
To sordid lust, had with his slave disgrac'd  
Her husband's bed ; how, near his death, he found  
An unexpected salve to close the wound :  
And know, O monarch ! to my secret grief 310  
Thy palace has supply'd the strange relief ;

For while I mourn'd my fortune, chance disclos'd  
 A mightier far to equal fate expos'd.  
 He said, and to the place the monarch drew,  
 That gave his hideous rival to his view, 315  
 Whose charms had taught his faithful wife to yield,  
 And now was ploughing in another's field.

There needs not here an oath t' enforce belief,  
 If stiffen'd at the sight with rage and grief  
 The monarch stood, while scarcely he repress'd 320  
 The mingled passion struggling in his breast :  
 As one distraught of every sense he far'd,  
 With open lips for issuing words prepar'd :  
 But soon remembrance of his vow repell'd  
 The rising tempest that within rebell'd. 325

Then to Jocundo—Say, what course remains ?  
 Direct me, brother, since thy will restrains  
 My just resentment, and forbids this haad  
 To take the just revenge my wrongs demand.  
 Faith (said Jocundo) let us these forsake, 330  
 And prove if others more resistance make ;  
 With every art assail the wedded fair,  
 And plant on others brows the fruits we bear.  
 What woman shall our form and rank disdain,  
 When such base paramours can grace obtain ? 335

Grant

B. XXVIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 37

Grant that sometimes our youth and beauty fail,  
The power of riches ever shall prevail :  
Nor let us here return, till female smiles,  
Won from a thousand, crown our amorous toils.  
Long absence, while in foreign lands we roam, 340  
To prove that virtue, to our cost at home  
So fully prov'd, may sovereign balm impart  
To soothe the anguish of an injur'd heart.

The king assents, and for th' intended way  
With speed prepares, impatient of delay. 345  
Through fruitful Italy their course they bend ;  
Two pages only on their steps attend.  
And now they left the soft Italian land,  
To visit Flanders, France, and Albion's strand.  
Free to their love they found each melting fair, 350  
And found the loveliest of the kindest were :  
And while on some they costly gifts bestow'd,  
To others bounty equal gifts they ow'd.  
With siege of warm entreaty some they won,  
And others pray'd themselves to be undone. 355  
Here one short month, there two the lovers made  
Their amorous stay, and every proof essay'd ;  
While, like their virtuous wives, each female ty'd  
In nuptial fetters with their suit comply'd.

B b 2

At

At length both tir'd, where both alike pursue 360  
 Increasing dangers with adventures new,  
 Conscious what mischiefs oft on those await  
 Who knock too frequent at their neighbour's gate ;  
 Now deem'd it best to seek some gentle fair,  
 Whose charms, by turns, might either's passion share,  
 For each had try'd, and try'd in vain, to prove, 366  
 A female constant to his single love.

Since still some other must partake my bed,  
 The place be yours, my friend (the monarch said).  
 Of all the sex this certain truth is known, 370  
 No woman yet was e'er content with one :  
 Then let us with some female friend enjoy  
 A bliss unmix'd with jealousy's alloy ;  
 So shall our moments roll in sportive ease,  
 Nor shall our love disturb another's peace. 375  
 What better fortune can a woman claim,  
 Than two such husbands to return her flame ?  
 And while to one no wife will constant prove,  
 Yet surely two must gratify her love.

Thus spoke Astolpho ; and the Roman youth 380  
 Approv'd what then he deem'd the voice of truth.  
 At length the Spaniards ample realm they gain'd,  
 Where what they sought, Valenza's seats contain'd ;  
 A daughter

## B. XXVIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 323

A daughter of their host, of low degree,  
Of manners mild, of features fair to see; 385  
On her they fix'd—for on her blooming face  
The spring of youth diffus'd its earliest grace.  
With her the fire a numerous offspring rear'd,  
And thoughts of pining poverty he fear'd;  
He saw his means small portion could provide, 390  
And few, he knew, would take a dowerless bride:  
Hence to their wish he yields without delay  
His daughter's charms, the solace of their way;  
And on their love and plighted faith relies,  
To treat with tender care their gentle prize. 395  
They take the damsel, and in friendship prove  
The amorous warfare of alternate love.  
The Spanish region thence they travers'd o'er,  
And pass'd the realms of Syphax to explore.  
At noon they from Valenza took their way; 400  
Zattiva clos'd the labours of the day.

The strangers here, as strangers ever do,  
Proceed the wonders of the place to view;  
Where many a costly dome demands their praise,  
And reverend fanes their admiration raise. 405

Ver. 399. —*the realms of Syphax*—] By the realms of Syphax the poet means part of the kingdom of Africa.

Meantime the damsel sees, from room to room,  
All ready for her lords returning home :  
Some spread the couch, some tend and feed with care  
The wearied steeds, and some the meal prepare.

It chanc'd, that busied thus, the fair one spy'd 410  
A youth, who oft had slumber'd by her side  
In happier days, when with her father plac'd,  
He liv'd a menial by her bounty grac'd.

Each other well they knew, but fear'd to speak,  
Lest squint suspicion on their words should break, 415  
But, all the rest retir'd, the lovers meet,  
And, from discovery safe, each other greet.

The youth demands her whither she was bound,  
And which, of either lord, her favour found ?

Flammietta own'd the truth, for such the name 420  
The damsel bore ; from Greece her lover came.

Ah me ! (he cry'd) when Fortune seem'd to give  
The long'd-for day with thee in joy to live,  
My dear Flammietta seeks a foreign shore,  
And wretched I must ne'er behold her more. 425

Thou go'st—and others have thy charms possess'd,  
Sweet love is turn'd to poison in my breast ;  
In vain I hop'd, while still I strove to save  
My pittance, earn'd by what each stranger gave,

With

B. XXVIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 375

With thee my slender fortune to divide, 430  
And from thy father's hand receive my beauteous  
bride.

The sorrowing fair-one clasp'd him to her breast,  
And mourn'd his fruitless suit so late address'd.  
Sore wept the crafty Greek, and, with a sigh,  
Can't thou, inhuman, let thy lover die ? 435  
Give me, at least, ere we for ever part,  
To allay the flame that preys upon my heart ;  
One moment past in thy belov'd embrace,  
Will make me death without complaining face.

Not less my wish (the amorous girl replies, 440  
Consenting passion sparkling in her eyes)  
But how, with spies surrounded, can we prove  
Our mutual warmth, and give a loose to love ?  
Ah ! (said the Greek) too well convinc'd I know,  
Did half my ardour in thy bosom glow, 445  
Thy wit would ev'n this night some means employ,  
To snatch at least a momentary joy.

In vain (she answers) much-lov'd youth, you sue,  
Since I each night repose between the two.

Weak is th' excuse (the plaintive Greek rejoin'd) 450  
For if thou feel'st my woe, thy gentle mind

Will yield relief, and, spite of all, remove  
Whate'er may seem t' oppose the suit of love.

Awhile she paus'd ; then, smiling, bade him come,  
While all were slumbering, to the wish'd-for room ;  
Describ'd the way, and taught what course to take, 456  
How, undiscover'd, his return to make.

Well pleas'd he heard, and when the drowsy god  
Had laid on every eye his potent rod,  
He seeks her door, with long and silent strides ; 460  
The door admits him ; slowly in he glides ;  
Firm on his hindmost foot awhile he stays ;  
The other, rais'd, with cautious stealth essays  
A forward step ; and wide his hands are spread,  
On either side to find th' expected bed. 465  
He reach'd the feet, and made his artful way  
Beneath the covering where Flammetta lay.

Soon as the Greek, the night's short blessing o'er,  
Returning seeks the way he came before,  
And Phœbus' beams to light the east begin, 470  
Flammetta rising lets the pages in.

Now with his friend the king prepares to jest :  
Brother (he cry'd) it fits you sure to rest :  
Some leisure must recruit your weary sprite,  
Tir'd with the watching of so long a night. 475

Jocundo

Jocundo then replies in taunting vein :

Repose be yours, since you the toil sustain :

You use my words—fair rest betide your grace,

As to the huntsman weary'd in the chace.

I ! (said the king) I would in truth have try'd 480

The lover's suit, but found my suit deny'd.

Again Jocundo thus—Your slave am I,

'Tis yours to break, or with our terms comply :

But such dispute or taunts there needed none ;

You might have chid my love, and claim'd your  
own. 485

Words follow words, replies succeed replies,

Till oft repeated jests, grown serious, rise

To harsh debate : they call the girl to clear

The doubtful truth : the girl, with conscious fear,

Steps trembling forth, commanded to reveal 490

What each alike seem'd earnest to conceal.

Declare (with stern regard the monarch cry'd)

And fear not evil shall thyself betide,

Which of us two, so long in love's delight

Usurp'd with thee the pleasures of the night ? 495

Impatient both await the girl's reply,

And hope her words will fix on one the lye :

Flammetta,

Flammetta, lowly prostrate on the ground,  
 Of life despairing since her fault was found,  
 Implor'd forgiveness, and with tears confess'd, 506  
 That, urg'd by love, which long had sway'd her breast  
 Some pity on a faithful swain to take,  
 Who years had sigh'd, and sigh'd but for her sake,  
 That night she gave the tender frailty way, }  
 In hopes one error would alike betray 505 }  
 Each noble lover that beside her lay. }

Thus she : Jocundo and the king amaz'd  
 Long on each other's face in silence gaz'd :  
 Ne'er had they heard, nor through the world believ'd  
 Two like themselves by female guile deceiv'd. 510  
 Now sudden mirth the place of wonder took,  
 And either's fide convulsive laughter shok  
 With peals so loud, that scarcely could they breathe,  
 But sunk exhausted on the couch beneath. 514  
 So much they laugh'd, their bosoms ak'd with pain,  
 Nor could their eyes the gushing tears restrain :  
 At length they said—What man shall hope to stay  
 His wife from wandering the forbidden way ?  
 Since we, in one same bed, so closely join'd,  
 Between us both in vain this last confin'd ? 520

Were

B. XXVIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 379

Were numerous as his hairs a husband's eyes,  
A wife's deceit would every watch surprise,  
A thousand women we before have try'd,  
Yet found not one our amorous suit deny'd.  
A second thousand like the first would fall : 525  
But this last proof may well suffice for all,  
Then cease we more to blame our mates, or find  
Their thoughts less chaste than those of all their kind,  
And since they both are virtuous as the best,  
Let us return and live with them at rest. 530

This point resolv'd, they bade the lover come,  
(Call'd by Flaminetta) to receive his doom.  
With many a witness present, for his bride  
They gave the girl, with ample gifts beside ;  
Then both return'd contented to their wives, 535  
And led in peace the remnant of their lives.

Here ceas'd mine host his story to relate,  
While every guest with mute attention sat :  
Nor yet the Pagan knight his silence broke ;  
At length, the tale concluded, thus he spoke. 540

What

Ver. 537. *Here ceas'd mine host—*] This passage is copied by Spenser, in his account of the Squire of Dames, with no less severity on the fair sex, where the squire relates, that travelling through the world in search of a chaste woman, he finds only

What various frauds, of every artful name,  
 The wily heart of womankind can frame !  
 Not all the power of human wit can tell,  
 The thousandth part in which the sex excel.

But one of graver years, and reverend mien, 545  
 And better judgment, at the board was seen ;  
 Who inly wroth to hear the beauteous race  
 Thus roughly treated by a tongue so base,  
 And conscious of their worth, in secret burn'd,  
 And to the vile defamer thus return'd. 550

What cruel flanders every day supplies !  
 Detested tales—but thine the worst of lies !  
 only three to reject his suit, thus humorously characterised by  
 the poet.

The first that then refused me (said he)  
 Certes, was but a common courtesane,  
 Yet flat refus'd to have a-do with me,  
 Because I could not give her many a jape :  
 (Thereat full heartily laugh'd Satyrane)  
 The second was a holy nun to chose,  
 Which would not let me be her chapellane,  
 Because she knew (she said) I would disclose  
 Her counsel if she should her trust in me repose.  
 The third a damsel was of low degree,  
 Whom I in country cottage found by chance,  
 Full little weened I, that charity  
 Had lodging in so mean a maintenance :  
 Save her, I never any woman found  
 That chaste did for itself embrace, &c.

FAIRY QUEEN, B. III. C. vii. St. 58.

Whoe'er

B. XXVIII, ORLANDO FURIOSO. 381

Whoe'er thy author be, though on his tongue,  
In other points, ev'n gospel truths were hung ;  
Not fair experience of the female kind, 555  
But some offence late rankling in his mind,  
Urg'd him to speak ; his hatred of a few,  
On all the sex such blame unjustly threw.  
But let his wrath subside, and soon your ear  
Would more their praises than their censure hear.  
For one to blame, his lips might number o'er 561  
A hundred women fam'd for virtuous lore :  
Then cease to rail at all—if one has swerv'd  
From honour's laws, which thousands have preserv'd.  
And since thy friend Valerio other taught, 565  
Not judgment sway'd, but passion warp'd his thought.  
Say, which of you, in nuptial union ty'd,  
Has never from his consort stept aside ;  
And, when occasion call'd, refus'd to taste  
Forbidden pleasures, or his substance waste 570  
On alien charms ; while, save th' abandon'd crew  
Of hireling loves, no women men pursue ?  
Is there a husband will not leave his home  
(Though fair his wife) for other joys to roam ?  
Let smiling love, from wife or maiden, try 575  
With gifts to bend, what virtue would deny ?

To

To please the sex what lover will refuse,  
 Or stop his ear when charming woman sues?  
 And oft, I fear, from some injurious cause,  
 The fair are led t' infringe the nuptial laws: 580  
 Perchance, their beauty view'd with fated eye,  
 They see their lords to foreign beauties fly:  
 Love claims return—what we to others give,  
 We claim in equal measure to receive.  
 Could I a statute frame, each guilty wife, 585  
 In sinful commerce found, should yield her life,  
 Unless she clearly to the world could prove,  
 Her consort had indulg'd unlawful love:  
 But this once prov'd, the dame absolv'd should be,  
 From courts, and from her lord's resentment free:  
 For CHRIST has taught—“ To others never do, 591  
 That which yourselves would wish undone to you.”  
 Yet still incontinence, if this we call  
 Weak woman's crime, is not the crime of all.

Ver. 591. *For Christ has taught—*] The custom of introducing religious aphorisms, or allusions to texts of scripture, in compositions even of the familiar kind, was common with the writers of the early ages. Our Chaucer abounds with such instances, and many may be found in Shakespeare; which passages were not then deemed exceptionable, nor, it is probable, gave offence to the pious ear.

But

B. XXVIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 383

But even in this our sex's guilt is most, 595

Since not a man of chaste can boast :

All crimes are his, and crimes of deepest dye,

Usurious griping, pillage, blasphemy,

And crimson murder —— crimes, though rarely known

To woman's sex, familiar to our own. 600

Here the just sage his weighty reasons clos'd ;

And many a fair example had propos'd

Of virtuous dames ; but with averted ear

The Pagan king, who loath'd the truth to hear,

Aw'd him with threatening glance and brow severe.

Yet while in dread the sage from speech refrain'd, 606

The truth unshaken in his soul remain'd.

The Sarzan prince here bade the contest cease,

Then left the board, and hop'd to rest in peace

Till dawn of day : but all the sleepless night, 610

He mourn'd his changeful mistress' cruel flight ;

And thence departing with the morning ray,

Resolv'd by ship to take his future way ;

Yet, like a champion, who with prudent heed

O'erwatches all, attentive for his steed, 615

That steed so good, so fair, which late he bore

From Sacripant and from Rogero's power ;

And

And conscious that for two whole days he press'd  
 Too far the mettle of the generous beast,  
 He fix'd down Sonna's stream a bark to take, 620  
 For speed, for ease, and for Frontino's sake.

He bade the ready boatman from the shore  
 The cable loose, and stretch the dashing oar :  
 Before the wind the vessel lightly glides,  
 And the swift stream with swifter prow divides : 625  
 But Rodomont in vain, on land or wave,  
 From cruel care his anxious breast would save :  
 He mounts his steed, it follows close behind ;  
 He fails the bark, it breathes in every wind !  
 Still in his soul the fatal inmate dwells, 630  
 And every hope or comfort thence expels ;  
 While he, alas ! with cruel anguish pain'd,  
 Conscious his inmost fort the foe has gain'd,  
 Expects no friendly hand can aid impart,  
 While self-consuming thoughts distract his heart.  
 All day and night, the liquid road he press'd, 635  
 His king and mistress rankling in his breast :  
 In vain from shore or bark he hopes relief,  
 Nor shore nor bark can soothe his rage of grief.  
 Thus the sick patient seeks t' assuage his pain, 640  
 While the fierce fever throbs in every vein ;

B. XXVIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 385.

From side to side he shifts his place by turns,  
But unremitting still the fever burns.

Tir'd with the stream, again he sought the strand,  
And pass'd Vienna and Valenza's land. 645

The walls of Lyons next the Pagan view'd,  
And where Avignon's bridge stupendous stood.

These towns, and more, of semblance rich and gay,  
That 'twixt th' Iberian hills and river lay, 649

Paid to the Monarch-Moor \* and king of Spain

Allegiance due, as lords of that domain,

Won by their bands from Gallia's shrinking reign. ]

Thence on the right to Acquamort he bends,  
And straight for Afric's realm his course intends;

Till near a river he a town survey'd, 655

Which Ceres once and purple Bacchus sway'd;

Compell'd their favourite dwelling to forego,

From cruel inroads of a barbarous foe:

Here smile the fields, there roars the fury main,

And bright in vallies gleams the golden grain. 660

\* AGRAMANT.

Ver. 648. *These towns, and more, &c.*] By the river, he means the Rhodan; by the Iberian hills, he means the hills Jubaldo in Spain; by which he would infer, that Agramant and Marsilius, after the last defeat of Charles, had made themselves masters of Catalonia, and from Narbona (Narbonne) to Paris.

On this fair spot a chapel neat he found,  
 Built on a hill, and lately wall'd around :  
 This, when the flames of war their horror spread,  
 The priests deserted, and with terror fled :  
 Struck with the site, as from the camp remov'd,  
 The hated camp, and arms no longer lov'd, 666  
 The king resolv'd on this sequester'd shore  
 To fix his seat, nor dream of Afric more :  
 Pleas'd with this new abode and place of rest,  
 Algiers so lov'd was banish'd from his breast. 670  
 With their stern lord the squires attending dwell'd,  
 The walls himself, his train, and courser held ;  
 Not far his turrets proud Montpelier shows ;  
 And, near, another stately castle rose,  
 Which, seated on the river's gentle tide, 675  
 The town with stores for every need supply'd.

One day, while deep immers'd in penitive mood,  
 The king, as wont, a thoufand thoughts pursu'd ;  
 Along a path-way through th' enamell'd green,  
 Approaching nigh, a lovely dame was seen : 680  
 An aged monk, with beard descending low,  
 Beside her came, with solemn steps and slow ;  
 A warrior-steed he led, that proudly bore  
 A weighty bier with sable cover'd o'er :

E. D. 1800

But

B. XXVIII. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 387

But who the monk, and who th' afflicted fair, 685

Or what the load, 'twere useless to declare :

All know 'twas Isabella, hapless maid !

Who lov'd Zerbino's breathless corse convey'd :

Her in Provence I left, and at her side

This reverend fire, her comforter and guide ; 690

By whom confirm'd, she meant her future days

To dedicate for God's eternal praise.

Though on her cheek was spread a death-like hue,

Though to the winds her locks dishevell'd flew ;

Though sighs incessant speak her cureless woe, 695

And from her eyes unbidden fountains flow ;

Though every mournful sigh too well express'd

The anguish harbour'd in her gentle breast ;

Through all her grief such beauties were descry'd,

The Loves and Graces there might still reside. 700

Soon as the Saracen the mourner view'd,

Th' unlook'd-for sight his haughty soul subdu'd ;

No more he blam'd or loath'd that gentle race,

Whose charms inspire us, and whose virtues grace ;

While Isabella worthy seem'd to prove 705

The peerless object of his second love ;

Ver. 687. ——Isabella——] See Book xxiv. ver. 685.

And from his breast expunge Granada's dame,  
As pity yields to pity, flame to flame.

The Pagan saw, and kindling at the view,  
With eager step to meet the virgin drew ; 710  
And with demeanour fair, and mild address,  
Enquir'd the cause that wrought her deep distress.  
She told the sorrows of her secret breast,  
And how deny'd on earth a place of rest,  
Her soul had fix'd to bid the world farewell, 715  
And with her God in holy mansions dwell.  
Loud laugh'd the Pagan, who nor God would know,  
Nor own his laws, to every faith a foe !  
He blam'd her erring zeal, to keep confin'd  
Such beauty, form'd but to delight mankind : 720  
The sordid miser, brooding on his store,  
Thus hides (he cries) in caves his shining ore ;  
Whence nothing good he to himself derives,  
And others of his useful wealth deprives :  
Snakes, lions, bears are cag'd in fear of harms, 725  
Not guiltless maids who breathe but love and charms.

The man of God, who such vain converse fears,  
Like skilful pilot that the vessel steers,  
Attends his charge, lest lightly drawn astray,  
Her feet should wander from the rightful way : 730

And now the hoary fire, with grace indu'd,  
Prepares a splendid feast of holy food ;  
But the fierce Pagan, born with evil taste,  
Rejects the dainties of the rich repast.

At length, when oft he chid, oft strove in vain 735  
The preacher's hateful counsel to restrain,  
His patience wasted, with vindictive ire  
He rais'd his arm against that aged fire ;  
Yet, lest our story should too long appear,  
We, for your ease, will close the labour here ; 740  
And let this hapless monk th' example teach,  
To curb the licence of ungovern'd speech.

END OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH BOOK.

THE  
WIDOW OF  
TWENTY-NINTH BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

## THE ARGUMENT.

RODOMONT falls in love with Isabella, and endeavours to persuade her to break her vow: His behaviour to the hermit who opposes him. The fortitude of Isabella, and her device to preserve her chastity. Conflict between Rodomont and Orlando. Further account of the mad actions of Orlando. Medoro and Angelica, in their way to embark for India, meet with Orlando, when Angelica, with great difficulty, escapes from the madman's hands.

THE  
TWENTY-NINTH BOOK  
OF  
ORLANDO FURIOSO.

BEHOLD the state of man's unstable mind,  
Still prone to change with every changing wind!  
All our resolves are weak, but weakest prove  
Where sprung from sense of disappointed love.  
When late the Saracen, to wrath inflam'd,  
On womankind with bitterest gall exclaim'd,  
It seem'd as if no power could e'er control,  
Far less expunge such hatred from his soul.  
So much, fair dames, his words your bard provoke,  
Which ill-advis'd against your sex he spoke,  
That never will I leave him, till his breast  
Again has beauty's sovereign sway confess'd:  
Still shall my verse condemn his slanderous speech,  
That foully durst your spotless name impeach.

The

The shafts of rage he from his quiver drew, 15  
 And these at all, without distinction, threw ;  
 But Isabella, with a single look,  
 At once his firmest resolution shook :  
 And now to her he chang'd his former flame,  
 Though yet to him unknown her country, race, or  
 name. 20

Thus, as new passion fir'd his amorous thought,  
 With every eloquence of words he sought  
 To shake the purpose of her stedfast will,  
 That would to God her virgin vow fulfil.  
 The hermit, as a fencing shield, to arm 25  
 Her chaste intent against all worldly harm,  
 By pious reasons, strong and duly weigh'd,  
 With all his power stood forth to guard the maid.  
 Not long the impious Pagan could endure  
 The holy fire, who preach'd in zeal secure : 30  
 He bade him, in good time, his cell regain,  
 And leave the damsel; but he bade in vain :  
 Till rous'd at length, no longer he forbore,  
 But seiz'd his beard, whence by the roots he tore  
 The silver hairs; and with dire rage impell'd, 35  
 With savage grasp his aged neck he held,  
 And,

And, whirling round, some three miles thence he  
threw;

Swift tow'rs the sea the wretched hermit flew!

What then befel him, little I relate,  
For various tales are rumour'd of his fate: 40

Some say against a rock his limbs were thrown,

And dash'd to peacemeal on the craggy stone;

Some say, amidst the sea his death he found,

And, as he knew not how to swim, was drown'd

Spite of his orisons—Some say, the hand 45

Of his good Saint convey'd him safe to land:

But be it as it may—I pass it o'er,

Henceforth of him the story speaks no more.

When cruel Rodomont had thus remov'd  
The talking hermit, oft in vain reprov'd, 50  
With milder looks he turn'd, where, at his side,  
The damsel stood all pale and terrify'd;  
Whom now, in speech by lovers oft address'd,  
He call'd his life, of every good the best;

Ver. 37. *And, whirling round,—*] No partiality for the poet  
can apologize for the extravagance of such passages as these:  
wherever they occur, the translator freely gives them up to the  
critic, as lawful game; and means this for a general declaration  
of his opinion on the subject.

His balm of hope, fair comfort, smiling joy, 55  
 With each endearment amorous tongues employ.  
 Courteous he seem'd, as if he would disarm  
 Her thoughts of fear, that any force might harm  
 Her virgin vow; those graces that inflam'd  
 His cruel heart, his wonted pride had tam'd; 60  
 And though his hand could pluck the fruit, he chose  
 T' abstain at distance, and but touch the boughs.  
 He fondly hop'd by slow degrees to find  
 Fair Isabella to his wish inclin'd;  
 While she, subjected to a tyrant's laws, 65  
 (Like some poor mouse within her foe's sharp claws)  
 Unfriended and forlorn, would rather dare  
 The worst of ills than what she fear'd to bear;  
 Still pondering on the means, if such could be,  
 Herself and honour from his power to free; 70  
 With her own hand determin'd to prevent  
 Her shame by death, ere his abhor'd intent  
 Should make her wrong the knight, who, late en-  
 twin'd  
 By her lov'd arms, his parting breath resign'd;

Ver. 66. *Like some poor mouse, &c.*] Certainly too ludicrous  
 an image on so pathetic an occasion.

To

To whom, with heart devout, the mourning dame  
 Had vow'd to dedicate her virgin name. 76  
 She mark'd, and trembling mark'd, th'unhallow'd fire,  
 That warm'd the Pagan with impure desire.  
 What shall she do? how shape her dangerous course?  
 What way remains t' elude his brutal force? 80  
 Long time revolving in her fearful mind  
 A thousand schemes, at length her thoughts design'd  
 One that might save her chastity from blame;  
 Which here we tell to her eternal fame

The Pagan, by his words and deeds, confess'd 85  
 The lurking purpose of his impious breast:  
 Lost was the courtesy which first he show'd,  
 When fair his speech in gentlest accents flow'd.  
 To him the damsel—Would'st thou but ensure  
 My honour safe, a gift thou may'st procure, 90  
 Of far more worth than aught thou canst obtain  
 From what must fix on me eternal stain.

Ver. 89. —*Woul'st thou but ensure*

*My honour safe, &c.]* A similar story is told of a virgin in the time of Miryan, the caliph, in the eighth century; and of another named Brasilla (the time uncertain) related by Francesco Barbaro, in his book concerning the choice of a wife.

ZATTA.

Scorn

Scorn not a lasting prize, a prize to raise  
 O'er all the sons of war thy deathless praise.  
 A hundred and a hundred may'st thou find, 95  
 Fair dames the loveliest of our female kind ;  
 But who, like me, are fated to bestow  
 Th' invaluable good thou to my hand may'st owe ?  
 A herb I know, and late have seen, that boil'd  
 With rue and ivy o'er a fire, when pil'd 100  
 With cypress-wood, will (strange to tell !) produce,  
 By guiltless fingers squeez'd, a sovereign juice,  
 With which thrice bath'd, the body will be found  
 One moon secur'd unhurt from flame or wound :  
 That month elaps'd, the bathing we renew, 105  
 No longer time avails the powerful dew.  
 The proof of what I tell, thy wondering eyes  
 Shall witness soon—to thee a nobler prize  
 (Or much I err) than if this day had view'd  
 All Europe by thy conquering arm subdu'd. 110  
 In recompence for what I shall bestow,  
 I ask but this—here plight thy solemn vow,  
 Ne'er from this hour by word or deed to harm  
 My virgin honour, or my fears alarm.  
 The damsel thus the Pagan's suit repress'd, 115  
 Who now with new desire of fame possess'd,  
 Vow'd

Vow'd all she ask'd, impatient to be made  
 Alike impassive to the flame or blade ;  
 Resolv'd to curb his lust, till prov'd he view'd  
 The wondrous water with such spell indu'd, 120  
 Through which his limbs might scorn each weapon's  
 power,

As Cygnus or Achilles scorn'd before ;  
 But meant his compact should no longer bind :  
 No fear, no reverence, in his impious mind

Of

Ver. 122. *As Cygnus or Achilles*—] Ovid tells us, Metam. Book xii. that Cygnus, the son of Neptune, could not be wounded. The common story of Achilles is, that he was dipped in the river Styx by his mother Thetis, and thereby became invulnerable in every part except the heel by which she held him ; and that he was at last shot by Paris at the altar, in the only vulnerable place, at the instigation of Apollo, during the ceremony of his nuptials with Polyxena, the daughter of Priam. This fable is certainly of much later date than Homer, and not countenanced in the poems of Virgil, Horace, or Ovid. Homer represents him as being wounded in the battle of the river, by Asteropeus, who was ambi-dexter, and threw two darts at Achilles at the same time.

At once Asteropeus discharg'd each lance,  
 (For both his dextrous hands the lance could wield)  
 One struck, but pierc'd not the Vulcanian shield ;  
 One ras'd Achilles' hand ; the spouting blood  
 Spun forth—

POPE's Iliad, B. xxi. v. 182.

Achilles

Of God or Saint—for breach of faith the worst 125  
Of Afric's sons by perjur'd deeds accrû'd !

O'er

Achilles was not slain in the temple, but fell in the field of battle, according to Homer, as appears by the conversation between that hero and Agamemnon in the shades.

O son of Peleus ! greater than mankind !  
(Thus Agamemnon's kingly shade rejoin'd)  
Thrice happy thou, to pres' the martial plain,  
'Midst heaps of heroes in thy quarrel slain :  
In clouds of smoke, rais'd by the noble fray,  
Great and terrifick even in death you lay.

POPE's Odyf. Book xxiv. ver. 51.

Hesiod has no account of the modern fable of Achilles, nor any of the ancient Greek tragedians. Sophocles thus mentions his death in the tragedy of Philoctetes, Act ii. Scene i.

PHIL. Is then Achilles dead ?

NEOP. ——————He is, and not

By mortal hands, but by Apollo's shaft  
Fell glorious \*.

Bion, who lived 187 years before Christ, in a fragment of an epithalamium on the nuptials of Peleus and Thetis, makes no mention of the immersion in the Styx; neither does Catullus, in his poem on the same subject. Strabo, who died 65 years after Catullus, does not speak of this fable of the Styx, although he frequently alludes to the story of Achilles. Horace calls Achilles, " filius Thetidos Marinæ," in three places. He speaks thus of his death—" abstulit clarum cita mors Achil-  
" lem ;" and mentions him frequently, but never as having been invulnerable.

\* See Dr. FRANKLIN's elegant translation of Sophocles.

Ovid

O'er hanging cliffs, through vallies dark with shade,  
From towns and cities far the virgin stray'd,

Col-

Ovid gives no countenance to the story, though he particularly commemo rates the death of Cygnus, slain by Achilles; and tells us that the Grecian hero, to his great surprize, finding him invulnerable, was obliged to strangle him; that before his death he boasted to Achilles of his superior advantage derived from being the son of Neptune, alluding to this preternatural gift.

Nate deâ! (nam te famâ prænovimus) inquit  
Ille, quid a nobis vulnus miraris abesse?  
(Mirabatur enim) non hæc, quam cernis, equinis  
Fulva jubis cassis, neque onus cava parma sinistræ,  
Auxilio mihi sunt; decor est quæsitus ab ipsis:  
Mars quoque ob hoc capere arma solet: removebitur omne  
Tegminis officium, tamen indistrictus abibo.  
Est aliquid, non esse fatum Nereide, sed qui  
Nereaque, et natas, et totum temperet æquor.

METAM. Lib. xii. v. 86.

Goddes born!  
For ornament, not use, these arms are worn;  
This helm and heavy buckler I can spare,  
As only decorations of the war:  
So Mars is arm'd for glory, not for need:  
'Tis somewhat more from Neptune to proceed,  
Than from a daughter of the sea to spring:  
Your Sire is mortal, mine is Ocean's king.  
Secure of death, I could contemn thy dart  
Though naked, and impassible depart.

DRYDEN.

Collecting various herbs, while at her side

The Pagan watch'd, and every motion ey'd.

130

Such

The poet afterwards tells us, that Achilles was shot by an arrow from Paris, sent into the midst of the battle, but does not describe him as wounded in any particular part: speaking of Apollo standing by Paris, he says,

Dixit, et ostendens sternentem Troia ferro  
Corpora Peliden, arcus obvertit in illum;  
Certaque letifera direxit spicula dextrâ.

MET. Lib. xii. ver. 604.

He said, and shew'd from far the blazing shield  
And sword, which but Achilles none could wield;  
And how he look'd a God, and mow'd the standing field.  
The Deity himself directs aright  
Th' envenom'd shaft, and wings the fatal flight.

DRYDEN.

Virgil records the circumstance of his being slain by Paris, in the prayer of Æneas to Apollo; which Dryden translates with hasty inaccuracy, his mind being impressed with the popular fable.

Indulgent God! propitious power to Troy!  
Swift to relieve, unwilling to destroy!  
Directed by whose hand, the Dardan dart  
Pierc'd the proud Grecian's only mortal part.

For which the original gives no authority: the words of Virgil are,

Phœbe, graves Trojæ semper miserare labores!  
Dardana qui Paridis direxti tela manusque  
Corpus in Æacidæ—

ÆN. vi. 6.

5

Thus

Such store provided now as seem'd to suit  
Her present purpose, or with leaf or root,

Damp

Thus faithfully rendered by Pitt.

Hear, Phœbus, gracious god ! whose aid divine  
So oft has sav'd the wretched Trojan line,  
And wing'd the shaft from Paris' Phrygian bow,  
The shaft that laid the great Achilles low.

The story of Achilles being slain in the temple, at his nuptials with Polyxena, seems to have been of later invention than his dipping in the Styx : the author of both these fables is unknown; but the first may be traced back, if not to the inventor, at least as early as the Augustan age, when Hyginus, the freedman of Augustus, and friend of Ovid, relates the death of Achilles thus, and seems to speak of the incident of the heel as a current, but probably a vulgar story; and therefore not noticed by the classic writers of the time, who closely adhered to the authority of Homer.

“ *Hectore sepulso, cum Achilles circa moenia Trojanorum vagaretur, ac diceret se solum Trojam expugnasse, Apollo iratus, Alexandrum Paris se simulans, talum, quem mortalem habuisse dicitur, sagittâ percusit, et occidit.* ”

“ After the funeral of Hector, when Achilles was boasting before the walls of Troy that he singly would take the city, Apollo being incensed, took upon him the likeness of Paris, and wounding Achilles in the heel, in which he was said to be mortal, slew him.”

The histories now extant, under the names of Dictys Cretensis, and Dares the Phrygian, both said to have been present at the siege of Troy, have the story of Achilles with all the modern circumstances; but these histories are supposititious, the origi-

Damp evening rose, when to their home they came,  
Where she, the paragon of virtuous fame,

What  
nals being lost. Statius, who died 91 years after Christ, in his Achilleid, mentions the circumstance of the river Styx. Thetis, speaking to Chiron, says,

—Sæpè ipsa, nefas ! sub inania natum  
Tartara, et ad Stygios iterum fero mergere fontes.

LIB. I.

How oft this breast could hell's dire horrors brave,  
To plunge my offspring in the Stygian wave !

She says to her son, when she has taken him to Scyros,

Mox iterum campos, iterum Centaurica reddam  
Lustra tibi ; per ego hoc decus, et ventura juvenæ  
Gaudia, si terras, humilemque experta maritum  
Te propter, si progenitum Stygis amne severo  
Armavi (totumque utinam) cape tuta parumper  
Tegmina, nil nocitura animo.

LIB. II.

Soon shalt thou view (when eas'd my present fears)  
Those shades, where Chiron watch'd thy playful years,  
Again thy own—By all thy hop'd-for praise !  
By all the joys that wait thy youthful days !  
If, for thy sake, a mortal's bed I chose,  
And bear, for thee, a mother's anxious woes ;  
If Styx, by me, thy tender limbs could arm,  
(Why felt not ev'ry part the potent charm ?)  
Here bear, awhile secure, the female name,  
Nor think these robes can taint thy future fame.

Seneca, Plutarch, and Pausanias are silent on this head. Quintus Calaber, who lived about two hundred years after Augustus, and wrote a supplement to Homer's Iliad, represents

Achilles

What yet remain'd of night, with seeming care, 135  
 Employ'd the powerful mixture to prepare,

That

Achilles as wounded by Memnon, king of the Ethiopians. Lactantius, in his argument to the xiith book of the Metamorphoses, refers to the vulgar tradition of the heel; which is the more singular, as no such circumstance occurs in his author: and Servius, in his note on the vith book of the *Aeneid*, to the before cited passage, has the like reference. In the edition of Virgil by Masuicius, the commentator on the same place refers both to the story of the Styx and of Polyxena; and, speaking of the words here made use of by the poet, he adds: "Et benè ait direxti—quasi ad *solum vulnerabilem locum*." Dryden, in the preface to his translation of the *Aeneid*, refers to a passage of M. Segrais, where the French writer is defending Virgil for giving his hero enchanted arms. "This accusation (says Dryden) must fall on Homer ere it can reach Virgil. Achilles was as well provided with them as *Aeneas*, though *he was invulnerable without them*." He goes on thus: "In defence of Virgil, he has been more cautious than his predecessor or descendants, for *Aeneas* was actually wounded in the xiith book of the *Aeneid*." Thus far Dryden. But it is very extraordinary that so cool and judicious a critic as Segrais should take up this unclassical fable. Speaking of the enchanted arms given to the heroes of epic poetry or romance, he says, "Ces présens des Dieux sont même une preuve de la valeur du prince, à qui ils sont faits; et il ne se trouve point que les méchans et les hommes médiocres ayant obtenu des grâces pareilles, la providence ne les accorde qu'aux hommes rares qui meritent seuls, qu'elle les conserve dans les dangers où leur courage les porte. Autrement il faudroit dire qu'Achille n'étoit pas vaillant, puis qu'outre un pareil secours

That bubbled o'er the blaze, while still the knight  
With due attention mark'd each mystic rite.

Now with his squires, in sportive dice and play,  
The king of Algiers pass'd the hours away ; 140  
When from the kindled fire the heat, inclos'd  
In narrow bounds, to raging thirst dispos'd  
The lord and menials, who infatiate drain'd  
Two vases huge that Grecian wine contain'd,  
Which from some travellers the day before 145  
His squires had seiz'd, and to their master bore.

d'armes forgés par Vulcain, sa mère avoit encore ajouté des écharmes qui le rendoient invulnérable."

To conclude this subject, in the discussion of which I hope I shall not have been thought tedious—though the first inventor of the story is unknown, it is undoubtedly of considerable antiquity, and has been occasionally made use of or rejected by different authors; but ought certainly never to be alluded to in any criticism or observation on Homer, to whom the fable appears to be wholly unknown. But it is no wonder that a fiction of this kind, so consonant to the genius of romance, should be adopted by Boyardo and Ariosto.

Ver. 125. ————— *the worst*

*Of Afric's sons, by perjur'd deeds accurst—* ]

The ill faith of the Carthaginians was known to a proverb in the time of the Romans—*Punica fides*. Thus Addison, in the mouth of Juba :

Our Punic faith  
Is infamous, and branded to a proverb. CATO.  
Stern

Stern Rodomont, till then to wine unus'd,  
 Which to his sect the prophet's law refus'd,  
 Extoll'd the heavenly liquor far above  
 Celestial manna, or the drink of Jove; 150  
 And blaming now his country's ancient rite,  
 Huge bowls and goblets empties with delight:  
 From hand to hand, with foaming brimmers crown'd,  
 The wine swift circles, and the head turns round.

At length, removing from the crackling flame 155  
 The vase with herbs infus'd, the virgin dame  
 To Rodomont began—What best may prove  
 The words I speak, and every doubt remove,  
 Experience, that can sever truth from lies,  
 Instruct the learn'd, and make the vulgar wise, 160  
 Not on another, but on me, shall show  
 The wondrous power this unction can bestow.  
 Behold me now, while o'er my fearless head,  
 My neck, and breast, the potent charm I shed,  
 Thy force, thy sword, undaunted to receive, 165  
 And prove if that can strike, or this can cleave.

She said; and stooping as she spoke, display'd  
 Her neck uncover'd to the Pagan blade:  
 Th' unthinking Saracen (whose wretched sense  
 Wine had subdu'd, for which was no defence 170

From helm or buckler) at the fatal word,  
 Rais'd his fell arm, and bar'd his murdering sword ;  
 And, lo ! that head, where love was wont to dwell,  
 From her fair neck and breast divided fell : 174  
 Thrice from the floor the head was seen to bound,  
 And thrice was heard Zerbino's name to sound,

Ver. 176. *And thrice was heard, &c.—]* Corflambo, the giant's head in Spenser, speaks when cut off by Arthur.

His head before him humbled on the ground,  
 The while his bubbling tongue did yet blaspheme.

FAIRY QUEEN, B. iv. C. viii.

“ Poetry deals in the wonderful ; and nothing is so tame and prosaic as Scaliger's criticism on a verse of Homer IL. x. which Spenser had in view, “ *Falsum est a pulmone caput avulsum loqui posse.* ” It is false that a head can speak after separation from the lungs. Hear OVID, MET. v. ver. 104,

Demetit ensè caput ; quod protinus incidit aræ,  
 Atque ibi semianimi verba execrantia linguae  
 Edidit —

The trenchant falchion lopt his head away,  
 The gory visage on the altar lay ;  
 While on the lips imperfect accents hung,  
 And curses linger'd on the dying tongue.

“ And speaking of a lady's tongue (which may be less wonderful) when cut off and flung upon the ground, he says, ‘ *terre que tremens immurmurat.* ’

— And trembling murmurs on the ground.

So Homer, who is all wonderful, and the father of all poetical wonders, speaks of Dolon, whose head was cut off by Diomed. Mr. Pope's translation is admirable.

“ The head, yet speaking, mutter'd as it fell.” IL. x. 10.

See UPTON'S Notes on SPENSER.

For

For whose dear sake she found such way t' escape  
 The Pagan's hand ; nor fear'd, in such a shape,  
 T' encounter death, to follow him she lov'd.

Hail, spotless soul ! for purest faith approv'd, 180  
 Whose act has shewn how dear thy plighted spouse  
 By thee was held, how dear thy virgin vows :  
 Fair Chastity, on earth now little heard,  
 By thee to life and blooming years preferr'd.

Go, blessed soul ! depart in peace to Heaven ! 185  
 So to my feeble Muse such aid be given,  
 As may with every grace the song adorn,  
 And give thy name to ages yet unborn !

Go hence in peace to Heaven, and leave behind  
 Thy bright example still to womankind ! 190

At this stupendous deed, from purest skies  
 On earth the great Creator bent his eyes,

Ver. 180. *Hail, spotless soul !* —] On this passage Mr. Upton observes, that Ariosto, in admiration of the chastity and martyrdom of Isabella, breaks out into a most elegant apostrophe, which Spenser copies in his address to Florimel, when she is in prison tempted by Proteus.

Eternal thraldom was to her more lief  
 Than los of chastity, or change of love —  
 Most virtuous virgin ! glory be thy meed,  
 And crown of heavenly praise with saints above —  
 But yet, what so my feeble muse can frame,  
 Shall be t' advance —

FAIRY QUEEN, B. iii. C. viii. St. 42.

And

And said.—Thy virtue merits more renown,  
 Than hers whose death robb'd Farquin of his crown :  
 Henceforth I mean for ever, for thy sake, 195  
 Amidst my Saints a great decree to make,  
 Which by th' inviolable stream I swear,  
 To every future age thy praise shall bear :  
 Let every maid that holds thy name be bless'd  
 With genius, beauty, virtue, o'er the rest 200.

Ver. 197. *Which by th' inviolable stream I swear,*] Ruscelli, the Italian commentator, takes great pains to clear Ariosto from censure, for having introduced the Supreme Being, on this occasion, taking an oath like Jupiter in the *Iliad* or *Æneid*; though I fear that such passage can be defended by no argument adduced in its justification; but that it must in general be acknowledged that Ariosto, like the rest of his countrymen, often introduces the fictions of poetry on the most solemn occasions. But a heavier charge may be here brought against the poet, for making the Almighty approve the action of *Lucretia*, and thereby giving a sanction to suicide. This passage the Italian commentator has candidly confessed to be a gross breach of propriety and decorum.

Ver. 199. *Let every maid that holds thy name, &c.*] By this extravagant prophecy on all who bear the name of *Isabella*, the poet is said to make an eulogium on the duchess of Mantua, the daughter of Hercules duke of Ferrara, and wife of Ferrando king of Naples; the wife of Ferdinand, king of Spain, to whose wisdom is attributed chiefly the discovery of the new world by Columbus; the wife of Frederick, king of Naples; the wife of Ubaldo, duke of Urbino; but more especially a daughter of the king of Hungary, who was canonized by pope Gregory IX. for the sanctity of her life: all these ladies bore the name of *Isabella*.

PORCACCHI.

Of

Of woman's sex, but most the prize obtain

For chastity and faith without a stain;

While Pindus, Helicon, Parnassus' hill

Sound Isabella, Isabella still.

204

Th' Almighty spoke, the air was hush'd around,  
Smooth spread the waves o'er ocean's vast profound;  
To the third Heaven the virgin-soul withdrew,  
And in the arms of her Zerbino flew:

While, left behind, this second Brusus stood 209

Abash'd, confounded, stain'd with guiltless blood;

Who now, the wine's o'er-mastering fumes dispell'd,

Curs'd his dire rashness, and with grief beheld

The breathless body of the murder'd maid,

And ponder'd how t' appease her angry shade:

Since to her mortal part he death could give, 215

He hopes to make her name immortal live.

Ver. 207. *To the third Heaven*—] Ariosto here follows the fiction of some of the ancient poets, who taught that those lovers, who had been constant, were after death received into the third Heaven, the region of Venus the goddess of love.

PONCAEUS.

Ver. 209. *Brusus*—] Brusus, surnamed *without mercy*, a character in the romances of the Round Table. He is largely spoken of by Alamanni, in his poetical romance of *GRONE II. CORTESE*; and is mentioned by Pulci in his *MORGANTE*, Canto xiii. who calls him “Brusus *without pity*.”

For

For this intent, the place where late she dwelt,  
 Where her fair form his brutal fury felt,  
 He chang'd or built anew, with spacious room  
 Enlarg'd, converting to a stately tomb. 220  
 From various parts around him, far and near,  
 Artists he found for favour or for fear :  
 Six thousand men, with ceaseless labour, wrought  
 Huge massy stones, from neighbouring quarries  
 brought ;  
 With those he bade the stately building rise 225  
 Of wondrous bulk, that lifted to the skies  
 Its towering head, and in the midst inclos'd  
 The faithful lovers \* that in death repos'd.  
 Such was the structure which the world amaz'd,  
 By Adrian on the banks of Tyber rais'd. 230

\* ZERBINO and ISABELLA.

Ver. 230. *By Adrian on the banks of Tyber rais'd.*] An immense tower on the banks of the Tyber, built and magnificently adorned by the emperor Adrian, for his own tomb, opposite to that of Augustus, on the other side of the river: it is supposed to have served as a citadel in the time of Belisarius. The modern name of Castel' Sant' Angelo is derived from the figure of an angel on the summit, sheathing a sword; Pope Saint Gregory having told the Roman people that he had seen an angel there in that attitude, which announced the end of a plague with which they were afflicted.

Close

Close to the sepulchre a tower was join'd,  
 The spacious dwelling for himself design'd.  
 A narrow bridge, scarce two feet wide, he made,  
 Far stretch'd in length, which o'er the stream he laid  
 That ran beneath, and scarce the bridge supply'd 235  
 Space for two steeds abreast to cross the tide,  
 Or, meeting, pass : nor plac'd from end to end  
 Was rail or fence the stranger to defend.

Ver. 233. *A narrow bridge,—*] This fiction of Rodomont's bridge is truly in the spirit of romance. We often read of knights meeting with such adventures: in the old romance of Morte Arthur, Sir Launcelot encounters a churl who defended a passage over a river.

“ On the third day he rode over a great long bridge, and there started upon him suddenly a passing foul churl, and he smote his horse on the nose, that he turned about, and asked him why he rode over that bridge without his licence? and he struck at him with a mighty great club full of pins of iron. Then Sir Launcelot drew his sword, and put the stroke back, and clove his head unto the navel.” *MORTE ARTHUR*, Part i. C. cxi.

Spenser has a passage similar to this of Ariosto, where a bridge of this kind is described, and a combat ensues between Sir Arthegal and a Saracen.

Here beyond,  
 A cursed cruel Saracen doth wonne,  
 That keeps a bridge's passage by strong hand,  
 And many Errant Knights hath there fordonne.

*FAIRY QUEEN*, B. v. C. ii. St. 4.

Baptiz'd or Pagan, all that travel here, 239

He will'd henceforth should buy their passage dear;  
For with their spoils, t' atone the virgin's doom,  
He vow'd a thousand trophies at her tomb.

Ten days beheld the bridge complete; but more  
Requir'd to raise the sepulchre and tower:

Yet well the work advanc'd, and on the height 245  
A watch was plac'd to note each coming knight;  
And oft as near the bridge a warrior drew,  
The horn to Rodomont a signal blew.

Sudden he arm'd him for the course, and stood  
Now here, now there, on either side the flood. 250

Whene'er a warrior reach'd the fatal tower,

The king of Algiers took the adverse shore:

The slender bridge the dangerous tilt supply'd;

There if the steed but little swerv'd aside,

Down in the river's headlong depth he fell: 255

No fight, for peril, could such fight excel.

Thus often risk'd, the Sarazen believ'd

Whene'er he fell, the rushing stream receiv'd

In draughts compell'd, would purify his soul

For sins committed through th' inflaming bowl;

As if from water certain cure was brought 261

For wrongs, which wine by hand or tongue had

wrought.

Few

B. XXIX. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 45

Few days elaps'd, ere numerous knights were led,  
For Spain and Italy that path to tread.  
The thirst of fame, to some more dear than life,  
Brought many knights to prove the dangerous strife;  
While all who hop'd the victor's meed to gain,  
Resign'd their arms, and numbers there were slain.  
Of vanquish'd Pagans that the course had run,  
He kept their spoils alone, and armour won : 170  
Of these the names on tablets fairly trac'd,  
And hung on high, the polish'd marble grac'd :  
But every Christian close in durance pent  
He held, design'd for Afriq to be sent.

The work proceeding, on a certain day 175  
The mad Orlando thither bent his way.  
The frantic earl by fortune thither came,  
When Rodomont, beside the rapid stream,  
Urg'd on the task : as yet unfinish'd stood  
The tower and tomb, and scarcely o'er the flood 180  
The bridge complete, when thither came the knight  
Of wits distraught, 'what time' in constet bright  
The Pagan watch'd to guard the tomb and tower,  
And all his armour, save his helmet, wore.

Ver. 276. *The mad Orlando.* See Book xxiv. ver. 97.

Meanwhile

Meanwhile Orlando, as his frenzy led,      285  
 At once o'erleapt the bar with fearless tread :  
 Him Rodomont, who stood on foot, espy'd,  
 And thus from far—Forbear thy steps (he cry'd) ;  
 This bridge, thou slave ! was ne'er design'd for thee,  
 But noble knights, and lords of high degree.      290  
 Orlando, stranger now to reason's force,  
 Turn'd a deaf ear, and onward held his course.  
 I must chastise this fool (the Pagan cries) ;  
 And as he speaks with rapid feet he flies  
 To plunge him in the stream, nor thinks to try      295  
 A fall with one that could his strength defy.  
 And now it chanc'd a fair and gentle dame  
 T' attempt the passage near the river came ;  
 Her lovely form in courtly weeds array'd,  
 And all her mien a noble race display'd.      300  
 Lo ! this was she (if still your mind retain  
 The tale I told) who long had sought in vain  
 The steps of Brandimart, and far explor'd  
 Each part but that which now detain'd her lord.

Ver. 301. — *if still your mind retain*

*The tale I told—*] Flordelis is here again introduced, who last made her appearance in the xxivth book, ver. 535. and was present at the single combat between Mandricardo and Zerbino ; after which she continued her search of Brandimart till she came to this bridge.

Fair

Fair Flordelis, arriving near the flood, 310

Beheld where on the bridge the Pagan stood,  
Clos'd with Orlando, while each nerve he ply'd  
To hurl the madman headlong in the tide.

The virtuous dame, when, with a nearer view,  
She mark'd his features, well Orlando knew ; 315  
And, fill'd with grief, at such dire sight amaz'd,  
On him, thus naked and forlorn, she gaz'd.

Awhile she staid t' await the conflict's end,  
Where two such foes in matchless strength contend.  
They press, they gripe, their utmost nerve they show,  
Each strives the other from the bridge to throw ; 316

And, muttering to himself, the Pagan cries :  
What to this fool such unlook'd force supplies ?  
Now here, now there he struggles, shifts, and turns,  
With shame he reddens, and with wrath he burns :  
With either hand he seeks in vain to take 321  
Some firmer hold, that best the earl may shake ;  
And oft between his legs the furious knight  
The left foot now inserts, and now the right.

Orlando Rodomont entwines around, 325  
Like the fierce bear that struggles from the ground  
T' uproot the tree from which he fell, and deals  
His senseless rage on that which nothing feels.

Hapless Orlando, with his wits destroy'd, 330  
 Nor slight, nor art, but strength alone employ'd :  
 (Such wondrous strength, the world from end to end  
 No living chief to equal him could send !)  
 Himself now backward from the bridge he threw,  
 And with him, close embrac'd, the Pagan drew, 335  
 Both sink together to the depth profound,  
 Leap the dash'd waves, and loud the shores re-  
 sound !

The water soon divides their struggling limbs ;  
 Orlando, naked, disencumber'd swims :  
 Amid the stream he plies, as with an oar, 340  
 His strong knit joints, and safely gains the shore :  
 Then o'er the plain he speeds his course, nor stays  
 To mark how far he merits blame or praise.  
 The Pagan, whom his ponderous arms surround,  
 More slowly gains, at length, the distant ground. 345  
 Meanwhile securely o'er the bridge and tide  
 The dame had pass'd, and round on every side  
 Explor'd the tomb, if there her anxious eye  
 Might any spoils of Brandimart esp'y.  
 Yet while nor arms, nor mantle, there ~~she~~  
 view'd 350  
 Of him she lov'd—fond hopes she still renew'd  
 To

To meet her lord—but let us turn to find  
 The wretched earl, who fled with senseless mind,  
 And left the bridge, the stream, and tower behind. }

Wild were the thought t' attempr, in tuneful verse,  
 The madnes of Orlando to rehearse: 356

Such various feats—their number would excel,  
 What leisure could describe, or tongue could tell:  
 A few I chuse that best befit my song;

A few that to my story best belong: 360  
 Nor will I fail the wonder to recite  
 Wrought near Tolosa on Pyrene's height.

O'er many a tract of land the earl had pass'd,  
 And reach'd the range of craggy hills at last, 364  
 That sever France from Spain, whose lofty head  
 Receives the beams by evening Phœbus shed.  
 Here, while he pac'd along a narrow way,  
 That o'er a deep tremendous valley lay,

Ver. 352. ————— but let us turn to find  
 The wretched earl—] He returns to Florde-  
 lis, Book xxxi. ver. 429.

Ver. 354. ————— and tower behind.] He  
 returns to Rodomont, Book xxxi. ver. 461.

Ver. 355. Wild were the thought—] Concerning the  
 extravagant feats of Orlando in his madnes, the reader is  
 referred to the note on book xxiv. ver. 34.

Two village lads he met, who drove before  
 A laden ass that wintry fuel bore. 370

These, when they view'd the hapless champion lost  
 To every sense, as in their path he cross'd,  
 Aloud they call'd, and, threatening, bade him leave  
 The middle track, and free the passage give.

Orlando to their threats no word return'd, 375  
 But with his foot, beneath the belly, spurn'd  
 The wretched beast, with strength beyond compare,  
 And, rais'd from earth, dismiss'd to soar in air ;  
 Thence on the summit of a hill he fell,  
 That rear'd its head a mile beyond the dell. 380

The youths he next assail'd : one, less discreet  
 Than happy, chanc'd a strange escape to meet :  
 For, struck with terror, from the hanging steep  
 Twice thirty feet he took a venturous leap :  
 A thorny bush against the cliff's rough fide, 385  
 That in the mid-way grew, its aid supply'd  
 To break his fall ; and now unhurt he stood,  
 Save that his face the bramble's greeting show'd,  
 That raz'd the skin, and drew the purple blood.

His fellow seiz'd a jutting crag, and sprung 390  
 To scale the rock, but while aloft he clung,

The

The madman, on his swift destruction bent,  
 Grasp'd either leg ; these at his arms extent  
 He strain'd asunder, till, with dreadful force,  
 He tore in bloody halves the panting corse. 395

Thus, for his bird, the falconer oft prepares  
 The living meal, when limb from limb he tears  
 The fowl or heron destin'd for his food,  
 With entrails warm and flesh distilling blood.

Thrice happy he that in the vale beneath 400  
 Surviv'd a fall, that threaten'd instant death :  
 This wondrous chance he made to others known,  
 Which Turpin to our age delivers down.

Such deeds, and many far transcending thought,  
 The madman, as he pass'd the mountain, wrought ;  
 Till wandering far, descending to the plain, 406  
 He reach'd at length the southern bounds of Spain,  
 And bent his course along the sea, that laves  
 Fair Teracona's strand with briny waves.

There, with strange schemes his brain distemper'd  
 fill'd, 410

He meant a dwelling on the beach to build,  
 A shelter from the sun ; and, cover'd o'er  
 With parching sand, upon the burning shore

Conceal'd he lay ; when lo ! the princely dame  
Of rich Cathay with her Medoro came. 415

These late espous'd, by fortune thither brought,  
From the steep height the Spanish borders sought :  
Th' unthinking damsel near Orlando drew,  
Who, save his head, lay buried deep from view.  
The squalid look her frantic lover wore, 420  
No memory wak'd of him she knew before :  
For since the time his frenzy had begun,  
He wander'd naked in the shade or sun :  
His tawny members seem'd to speak his birth  
In hot Sienna, or the sultry earth 425  
Where Amon's fane in Garamantia stood,  
Or those steep hills whence Nile derives his flood :  
Deep in the socket sunk each gloomy eye,  
His visage pale, his features lean and dry ;

Ver. 425. *In hot Sienna, or the sultry earth*

*Where Amon's fane*—] Sienna, a city of Egypt, subject to the most intense heat of the sun. The temple of Amon was situated in Africa, and held in veneration by the Garamantians, a people inhabiting those parts.

Ver. 427. *Or those steep hills*—] Mountains of Ethiopia, called the mountains of the Moon.

His uncomb'd hair in fearful elf-locks hung ; 430

His squalid beard was matted, thick, and long.

Soon as Angelica, with startled look,  
The madman view'd, thro' every joint she shook :  
She shook with fear, while loud to Heaven she cry'd,  
And call'd for succour to her trusty guide : 435  
When mad Orlando view'd that lovely face,  
As if by instinct, starting from his place,  
He gaz'd, and with an ideot joy beheld  
Those heavenly charms that every charm excell'd ;  
Though all reflection that she once posses'd 440  
His soul's dear love was banish'd from his breast :  
He sees, he likes—and what he likes pursues :  
So the staunch hound, amid the tainted dews,  
Winds his fleet prey : the youth who view'd his dame  
Thus closely press'd, behind the madman came 445  
With trampling courser, and to rage inflam'd,  
Against his back the glittering weapon aim'd.  
Sheer through his neck he thought to drive the  
    sword,

But found the wondrous flesh no pass afford.

Orlando felt the stroke, and turning round, 450  
With hand unarm'd laid lifeless on the ground

Medoro's

Medoro's steed—then hasten'd to pursue  
 The trembling damsel that before him flew,  
 That spurr'd her mare, whose speed had seem'd too  
 flow,

Though like an arrow from the well-strung bow. 455  
 But now she call'd her last resource to mind,  
 Her wondrous ring, which still she us'd to find  
 Her sure defence, which held between her lips,  
 Conceal'd her person with a strange eclipse:  
 The charm she try'd, and vanish'd from the sight,  
 As with the whistling blast th' extinguish'd light. 461  
 Then whether fear, or whether eager haste,  
 Th' affrighted damsel in her seat displac'd;  
 Or whether then her mare, ill-fated, fell  
 By sudden trip—'tis doubtful here to tell: 465  
 But while the ring she from her finger drew,  
 And, in her mouth dispos'd, conceal'd from view  
 Her lovely form, the stirrups from her feet  
 She lost, and tumbled headlong from her seat:  
 And had she nearer fall'n, the madman's arm 470  
 Had surely seiz'd and wrought her further harm;  
 Her life perhaps had then the forfeit paid  
 For all her scorn—but Fortune gave her aid.

B. XXIX. ORLANDO FURIOSO. 425

Now must the damsel, of her mare bereft,  
Some other palfrey seek by fraud or theft: 475  
For this the Paladin with eager speed  
Pursues; and doubt not here another steed  
Will soon be hers—but let us now repair  
To him who, losing thus the vanish'd fair,  
Her beast pursu'd along the sandy plain: 480  
At length he feiz'd her by the flowing mane:  
With ease the Paladin her swiftness stay'd,  
As one with gentle hand the gentler maid.  
The bridle now he took, and with a bound,  
The frantic hero rising from the ground, 485  
Vaults in the seat, then drives her many a mile,  
Nor gives a moment's respite to her toil;  
Nor frees her from the saddle, bit, or rein,  
Nor lets her taste of grass, or hay, or grain.  
It chanc'd as o'er a fosse he urg'd her pace, 490  
Both beast and man fell headlong in the place.  
No hurt Orlando knew: but with the shock  
The wretched beast, misus'd, her shoulder broke.

Ver. 477. ————— *another steed*

*Will soon be hers—*] Angelica is mentioned  
again for the last time, Book xxx. ver. 111.

And

And here compell'd awhile Orlando stayes,  
 At length athwart his back the mare he lays, 495  
 And bears as far as, sent with vigorous art,  
 Thrice from the bow-string flies the feather'd dart;  
 Till by the weight oppress'd, with rein in hand,  
 He leads her limping o'er the shelly strand.  
 The crippled mare pursues his steps with pain—  
 Come on—come on—Orlando cries in vain. 501  
 At length the bridle, which a noose supply'd,  
 He took, and round her better leg he tied,  
 Then dragg'd along, and as he dragg'd, he said:  
 Well may'st thou follow now, so gently led. 505  
 Against the flinty road the covering hair  
 Was rent and torn, and all the flesh laid bare,  
 Till death ensu'd; nor yet Orlando ceas'd,  
 But onward drew the mangled lifeles beast.  
 Still tow'rds the west he pass'd, and in his course 510  
 Dwellings and towns he wasted, took by force  
 From trembling peasants all the food he sought,  
 Or fruit or flesh: of wretches whom he caught  
 Unhappy some he maim'd, and some he slew,  
 And on his way with rage ungovern'd flew. 515  
 Thus had it far'd with her whom once he lov'd,  
 But from her ring a better fate she prov'd.

Curs'd

Curs'd be the ring ! and evil chance betide  
The knight that with the gift her hand supply'd !  
Else had Orlando full revenge obtain'd 520  
For him, and each whom once her pride disdain'd,  
Not she alone, but would that all her kind  
Were to Orlando's frantic arm consign'd !  
All are ingrate ! nor 'midst the perjur'd race  
Is one whose merits claim the smallest grace— 525  
But hold—or, strain'd too far, my weary lyre  
May ill supply the sound my lays require.  
Here let us for a while the tale suspend,  
Till the pleas'd ear again attention lend,

END OF VOL. III.