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Travels in France, Spain, Italy, and Germany

in the years 1818, 1819, and 1820

Vol. 4th

tXLV, 6

[6. December. 1819]

Rome

... went with Captain Gordon and Mr. Pell and 2 others to Canova's Studio.... Canova and I had much talk as the rest do not speak Italian. We saw all the beauties of his Studio again -- the 2 dancing Nymphs, the Venus's, the Magdalen, and at the other Studio the equestrian statue of Charles 3^d of Naples, changed from that of Napoleon. He is soon to make one of Ferdinand. These are not his forte. The group of the Centaur is very fine, and Washington a noble figure.

In the evening I went to Rufini's music. ... The music was better than last week. La Tresmondi was in better voice and there was a good

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flute and violin and bass trio, and 2 harp pieces by the Marchesa Moroni -- some fine tros by Mayer.

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[11. December. 1819]

... We went next to the Studio of Thorwaldsen, who is now in Denmark -- he is making the whole frieze of Alexander's triumphs for the Count Sommariva in* marble -- it will be the most beautiful bas relief as well as the longest in the world. His Shepherd Boy sitting, Mercury sitting, his Mars, his Medallions of Night and Day, &c., are beyond all praise.

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His Venus is lovely, but, though he has more force, character, and expression than Canova, he has not quite his beauty and grace. We next visited the Studio of Schadow, the Prussian, and saw his lovely filatrice, 2 bas reliefs for the Duke of Bedford of the

Anger of Achilles and Priam at his feet, and a large group of Achilles and Penthisilea, all most inimitably fine -- full of spirit and elegance. ... We called on Pinelli and saw a most capital scene of a Roman Dance in October, full of life and character, in oils. We called on Gabrielli and saw some pretty landscapes, and one very fine view of the Forum in a bright sun, magnificently done. ... He shewed us the fine frescoes painted by Zuccari, in whose house he lives, and we also saw the houses of Claude Lorraine, Poussin, and Salvator Rosa, which are close by the Trinita da Monte.

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[16. December. 1819]

...I went ... to Sirletti's music in the Piazza di Spagna -- it is sacred.

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... Maroni, Ceccarini, and 8 or 9 others sung -- the only Lady was La Marconi, whom I was very glad to meet again. ... She and her husband asked me to call to see his paintings -- he is a landscape painter. She sung most divinely, full of soul and expression, and with great power. The music was chiefly by Marcello. It was all over before 8. We went to Torlonia's at 9. There was the largest collection of people I have seen since I came to Rome ... Lord and Lady Elgin, Lord Templeton, &c. I had a long conversation with Sir Thomas Lawrence about painting, of which he was kind enough to say he had met with no one here who felt so much as he did on the merits of the pictures here, as myself, and that he thought much more highly of my ideas than those of Mr. Carr, whose notions only arise from great familiarity and study of great works, and not from original feeling.

[18. December. 1819]

... In the evening Christie and I went to Mrs. Ellison's party. ... We had Signora Nobili, who sings at Princess Borghese's, and Taci and Moroni and Ceccarini -- the buffo duets and trios with Taci's inimitable face and excellent acting were most delightful, the 2 duets of the Turco in Italia especially. Nobili sung "Pensa al Patria" very finely indeed.

tXLV, 23

[19. December. 1819]

... Called and left cards for Sir Charles and Lady Morgan, who are just arrived. In the evening I went to the Marchesa Sagrati to accompany her and Peltrinieri and Castelnova to an academi di music at Signor Bonladosi's. ... The music was really

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delightful. Signora Bonladosi is a fine singer, with much power and execution. She and La Nobili, Maroni, and Ceccarini sung delightfully. The music was chiefly by Rossini, and from La Cenerentola, Turco in Italia, Inganno felice, Tancredi, &c.

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[26. December. 1819]

... Captain Gordon and I went to the Teatro Argentino, for which we had tickets to the pit -- it was very full -- the ladies were all much dressed in Feathers, &c. The Prince and Princess of Denmark were there. The Theatre is as large, shabby, and ugly as ever. The opera was Otello by Rossini. When I saw it at Naples, David was Rodrigo -- which was now performed by Curioni, a tenor with a good voice -- and David, who is engaged here for the Carnival, performed Otello -- which was done at Naples by Nozzari -- but David, though a poor figure, has more power: his voice is astonishing and he has great flexibility and execution. Desdemona by Dardanelli -- she has great power, but not much flexibility, and her upper notes are screamy; she sings well in tune and is a pretty

woman, but very inferior to Monbelli or Camporese. The music of the 2^d

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act is most exquisite. Otello's solo, the duet with him and Rodrigo, and the trio of them and Desdemona, for composition are indeed sublime. The ballet given for our punishment at the end of the first act of the opera was called Elivige, and is something like the English story of Elgiva, but it is in Poland -- the scenery of both opera and ballet good -- La Conti is a charming actress of Pantomime, and a lovely woman, but not a great dancer -- the rest all bad -- Serpos, the chief male dancer, is tolerable -- but the ballet was truly tiresome.

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[29. December. 1819]

... In the evening went ... to the Teatro Valle ... and saw the opera of Il Gabbamondo, which was admirably acted and sung by Taci (the Cheat), Monbelli (the young Lady), Remorini (the Father), and Passanti (the Lover). Taci tries to persuade the Father he is a man of fortune and family, and the Father is deceived and will not hear of his Daughter marrying the Count -- but at last his tricks are discovered. It is lively and amusing, and with good music would have been delightful, for the performers are charming. Remorini's voice is as fine as ever, and Taci is all life and air -- and the new tenor, Passanti, is a genteel looking man, but no great musician, and his voice is weak, or rather he seems new to the stage and does not yet know how to manage it. The second act is better than the first -- a fine quintett, and the finale has some fine singing by Monbelli, who is as airy and graceful and captivating as ever. We had besides

the comedy of I Pazzi per Progetti, in which the Quack Doctor, the Husband and Wife, each feigning to be mad, and the old Maid were comical -- but their comedy always gets to the extravagance of farce and nature is quite forgotten in an excessive violence of tone and gesture, which makes them appear as if really Pazzi -- when they do not intend it.

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[31. December. 1819]

... In the evening I went to the Princess Borghese's and found a much larger circle than usual -- 6 or 7 Cardinals and all the beauties of Rome. ... We had the harp and pianoforte, and a duet of 2 harps, 2 songs by David, with

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whom I had much talk, but his singing is not so great as I expected it would have been; he has much falsetto, but not many powerful natural notes, and the break is great -- nor does he sing with equal ease the entire compass he possesses, from B^b to b^{''}, tho' with taste and great flexibility and much real feeling. I thought he promised more at Naples 3 years since -- but he was not in voice to-night. I came away with Lady Morgan and Sir Charles and Colonel Caniac, who took me to the Duchess of Devonshire's, where there was an immense crowd -- and singing by Madame Renandant, Delavan, and Ceccarini. ... The Prince and Princess of Denmark and their suite were at the Duchess's, and are really most pleasant, good humoured, unaffected people. There is something so new to the World, and so unused to company, yet not awkward, and a very pleasing ingenuousness of countenance about the Princess in particular, that she is really interesting -- she has some little look of the lamented Princess Charlotte.

Here ends the year 1819. I am so uncertain in my health and prospects that it is very possible I may not see another year elapse -- but one may live long not in the best of health; and as I have already had much amusement and seen much of the World, I must not repine at beginning my journey down the hill.

tXLV, 60

[7. January. 1820]

... In the evening I went to the Princessa Borghese's. ... David and Moroni sung and played. David sung the duets well, but his voice alone is dull and his manner bad. He is nothing like what I expected he would have been 3 years since -- a duet by Mayer and another by Farinelli were beautiful.

... Sir Charles and Lady Morgan and I went for an hour to the Marchesa Sagrati's, and soon after arrived (also from the Borghese party) the Prince of Saxe Gotha, who is grown quite gracious to me: he is more silly and stupified than ever.

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[17. January. 1820]

... I went alone to the Teatro Valle and saw the 1st act of Il Finto Molinaro, music by Tadolini -- it is lively and well acted by Taci, Monbelli, and Remorini, and very bad by the tenor. We then had the first act of a comedy called Il Ciarlatano, taken from a novel by Pigault-Lebrun I read at Aix, less licentious on stage than in print, and very comic. After this we had the exquisite piece of L'Inganno felice, which however is not quite as well sung

tXLV, 75

as before Christmas, as the tenor is inferior to the one we had then. Remorini in the bass is very good, and Taci and Monbelli are as charming as ever -- it is such exquisite music I could listen to it for ever.

[18. January. 1820]

This being the Fest of the Cattedra of Saint Peter, there was a grand mass in St. Peter's to commemorate the building of the Church.

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... The Orchestras were full. There were above 60 voices -- and instruments. I never heard such fine music there before -- the choruses were most delightful, chiefly Psalms. David sung two very difficult & grand arias with great force and effect. He is a very unequal singer -- and today displayed great powers and energy and flexibility. He only wants a more equal voice and pathos to be great indeed -- but his low notes are weak and his falsetto not good. On the whole the music was truly solemn, striking, and magnificent, and in some parts very beautiful.

tXLV, 91

[23. January. 1820]

... No party tonight at the French Ambassador's, he being ill, so I took the opportunity to go to the Teatro d'Apollo, where there was a most immense crowd, but I by chance got a ticket and good place in the pit. It is a noble Theatre, much larger than the Argentina, and beautifully painted in chiaroscuro with imitation of bas reliefs. It is 6 tiers high and 29 boxes round. The first piece was a farce called Convulsioni di Donne -- as usual silly, but the convulsions were cured by the stick and firmness of the husband. Next came Filippo il crudele -- a grand spectacle with battles and horses, &c., which was so tiresome I left it.

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[25. January. 1820]

... went to the Valle Theatre -- the first act of Il Finto Molinaro was over and the 1st act of Il Bagordo of Goldoni was just finishing, so I was in good time for the charming little opera of L'Inganno felice, which I could listen to for ever. Remorini's

song, his duet with Taci, the duet of Taci and Monbelli, and above all the trio of them and the tenor, and the finale are all most exquisite, and admirably performed -- except by the tenor, who is dull.

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[29. January. 1820]

... Christie and I went to the Argentina Opera, where was performed for the first time the new opera composed by Basili called Isaura e Ricciardo, in which David as a Turk was very extravagant.

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La Dardanelli as Isaura was beautiful, and her voice charming, but she wants a little more soul -- she improves, however, and is really lovely. Curioni sings with much feeling and speaks plain. The others are bad as usual, but if all the performers had been like Billington and Braham, it would have been a vain attempt to make such insufferable stupid music, without a new idea and even without any of the old common Italian combinations, prettily arranged -- the most tiresome varieties of dullness, without the slightest melody or even harmony -- the overture, the first cavatina by Curioni, and the duet by him and David were all that was tolerable -- the parts sung by David and Dardanelli, meant to be fine, were insupportable. The music of Generali and Tadolini we had lately at the Valle Theatre was lively and well put together, though just what has been heard, only with more accompaniment, for 50 years past, but this is the nadir of liveliness or the acme of sleepiness, and after much attempt at applause and disapprobation at first, everybody went to conversation and sleep, and ceased to regard the music, so the opera ended in perfect indifference, as if it had been done 20 times. Its life cannot be long. I wish it was prohibited to sing any other living composer's music except Rossini, Paer, Mayer, and Carafa; and I should by no means object to be confined to

the first. To make amends for the opera, we had a new ballet, which came out 3 or 4 nights since, on the subject of conspiracy against Peter the Great, in which the 4 chief dancers, especially La Conti and the Frenchman danced beautifully. She is a charming actress and beautiful dancer, and acted the Mistress to Peter, who is the daughter to the chief conspirator, with great feeling, clearness, and effect -- her horror at her father's plans, and her fear for his life, and her

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love for Peter were exquisitely done.

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[2. February. 1820]

... We went to the Academia Tibernia, which I was never at before, and where were lots of Italians, the Duchess of Devonshire, Miss Fanshaw, Lady Charlotte Bury, &c. We got capital places and were much amused in hearing Ferretti give a very poetical address to Pegasus rather burlesque in lines, on the recovery of Canova in a most spirited praise, in verse on Monbelli in all her great characters, in a fine imitation of Petrarch in an address to the Virgin on the day of Purification, and in a curious account of the Carnival in ancient times. The different productions were read by their authors, some well, and some ill, but often in such a tone of recitative it was not easy to make it out. The Praise of Monbelli, Pegasus, and the Virgin were the best.

... then all went to the Hanoverian Ambassador's, the Baron de Reden. ... about 80 and much music by Ceccine, Trentanove, Madame de Reden, and Madame Marconi, who sung a grand air of Rossini, introduced by her and composed for her in the opera of Quinto Fabio, which is not one of Rossini's, but Cherunini's. She sung it with admirable power, force, and effect.

[5. February. 1820]

... I went to the Valle to see the beautiful opera by Rossini of *La Cenerentola*, of which the music is most original and fine, though a little unequal, yet the first duet between Monbelli and the tenor, the quintett and finale of the first act, and the sestett and finale of the 2^d, and the duet of Taci and Remorini are all delightful. The overture is most exquisite, especially the latter part. It is impossible to do justice to the excellent singing of Monbelli in *La Cenerentola*, especially her sweetness, sensibility, and elegance, and her feeling and execution in the final scene, where she pardons the Sisters and her Father. She is indeed most exquisite. Taci in the Father is comic -- and Remorini very lively in the friend of the disguised Prince -- the Sister did very well -- the Prince (tenor) was the worst and is certainly terribly dull and with a very poor voice.

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[11. February. 1820]

... Lady Morgan and Sir Charles fixed to go with us on Wednesday for Naples, or rather to meet us in the evening at Velletri, as the first day there is no danger. The music tonight [at the Princess Borghese's] was extremely good. David sung 2 songs, and 2 duets with Monbelli, but the great delight was her 2 solos and her duet with Taci. She sung the air from *La Gazza Ladra*, and the fine air of "Una voce poco fa" from the *Barbiere di Siviglia*.

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[16. February. 1820] Velletri

... We passed several other Vetturino coaches which were stopping at Albano, where we did not stop at ^uall, and got to Velletri at 1/2 past 2 -- a dull rainy afternoon. I got rooms for our party and Sir Charles and Lady Morgan. ... Lady Morgan,

Sir Charles, and I had a great deal of conversation with a pleasant Italian family -- without knowing who they were -- but in course of conversation it came out that it was La Dardanelli, going back from the Argentina to Naples. She is very lovely, pretty, and conversible.

[17. February. 1820] Terracina

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... La Dardanelli was most lovely and charming. ... She gave us much theatrical intelligence of Naples, and is to begin on Monday or Tuesday at St. Carlo

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in a new opera by Raimondi. She and I sat an hour with Sir Charles and Lady Morgan.

[20. February. 1820] Naples

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... Sir Charles and Lady Morgan are lodged in a house on the Mole, where we lodged when we were here before -- but they are with an English family on a higher piano and very comfortable. We are in a miserable dark dull place, which is indeed truly wretched and seems to me much worse than when I was here before.

... we went to the Opera at St. Carlo, where we had places in the pit, not so near as I could have wished. It was begun before we arrived -- the music of the 2^d act is delightful -- it is all good, but the duet by Nozzari and Ambrogio (Osiride and Faraone) is truly fine; and the grand air of Colbran, full of grief and despair after Osiride is killed by the thunderbolt for attempting the life of Moses, is one of the finest scenes of acting I ever saw -- her spirit and feeling and pathos are wonderful,

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and her powers astonishing. She is as fine as ever. The machinery of the Israelites walking through the Red Sea is clumsy and poor, but the painted scenes are lovely. ... The

opera of Mosè in Egitto is one of Rossini's finest works and has some noble choruses and part music, and besides the duet I have mentioned, and Colbran's air, is her fine duet with Nozzari. Altogether I was excessively delighted, especially with the 2^d act.

[22. February. 1820]

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... I went to the Teatro Fondo to

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see Otello, which was done as originally written by Rossini and as I saw it 3 years since at San Carlo -- the only difference was that now Dardanelli was the Desdemona instead of Colbran whom I saw before. Nothing could be more delightful than the music. David is much better in Rodrigo than in Otello. Nozzari sings with the greatest taste and feeling and fine manner, but getting old is apt to save himself and be tame, and rather wants powers. Dardanelli, our charming fellow traveller, though far from equal to Colbran, was in fine voice and looked lovely.

[23. February. 1820]

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... Leigh and Christie went to the Teatro Fondo to see the Morte di Adelaide, the music by Fioravanti, maestro di cappella at St. Peter's. I did not wish to join them, as he is so poor a composer, and there were no first performers but Dardanelli.

... I was introduced to Mr. Mathias, author of the Pursuits of Literature and who was a great friend of

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Charlotte's when she was at Rome with William. I recollect meeting him at Dr. Clarke's at Cambridge some years since -- he is excessively good humored, cheerful, and pleasant. I was also lucky in meeting my old Edinburgh and Harrogate acquaintance, Miss Young. ... Her father, the Professor, is alive and well at Glasgow.

[25. February. 1820]

... Christie and I went to St. Carlo, where we sat next a pleasant genteel young Frenchman, who told us the news of the assassination and death in consequence of the Duke de Berry by a servant or madman (no political conspiracy) as he was coming out of the Opera. The King of England is dead and the Duke of Kent also, and the new King George the 4th just proclaimed is said to be dangerously ill. The King of Spain is fled from his capital and the Kingdom is in confusion. In what a state are these 3 Courts which I have so lately seen all gay and tranquil!

... Otello went off with great effect. I never heard it so well sung. Every part told to its full effect, and Nozzari, David, and Dardanelli were delightful.

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[26. February. 1820]

... We then went to the Teatro delle Marionette, where was performed the Virgin of the Sun by marionettes mixed with Polichinello, indispensable in all popular Neapolitan Theatres, and who beat and kicked about the Priests most terribly. After that was a short comic ballet -- altogether it was ridiculous and amusing enough. The Theatre is very small of wood. We had a box to ourselves for 3 Carlines -- 1 shilling & 3 halfpence -- and it was airy, having a wooden back which opened and gave us a view of the Street on one side, and in front of the Pit and Stage -- the Street with all its bustle and confusion, the puppets, Punch, speaking, music, and audience formed a very odd medley all jumbled together.

As there is no society at present and I know few

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people, I shall make a Giro of all the Neapolitan Theatres, great and small. When I was here before, I only saw the 4 chief ones, viz. St. Carlo, Teatro Nuovo, the Fiorentini, and the Fondo.

[28. February. 1820]

... In the evening I went with Captain Neill and Colonel Plenderleath to the Academia Reale, where a great crowd was assembled. The vocal music was in the smaller room, and the seats formed a semicircle around the pianoforte. Rubini is a most delightful, but not a powerful tenor, with a fine toned, equal, natural voice of great compass and flexibility most astonishing. His song and a duet with Ambrogi (a fine bass) were delightful. Ambrogi is a capital basso buffo with a much finer voice than Taci at Rome, but I should not think so good an actor, for he is gifted neither with an exuberance of person nor with an elasticity of countenance, tho' his voice is of finer tone, and quite as deep and powerful as Remorini. Nozzari sung with great taste and feeling, but he is going off and has little power: his duet with Colbran was not good, as he was too weak -- his song was better. The 3 men and Colbran sung some duets, trios, &c., but the best of all was "O dolce concerto" by Colbran, which for execution, flexibility, and taste quite equals Catalani, though the voice is inferior -- more like Billington, but not so good. Her "Ombra adorata aspetta" was a wonderful effect of execution, but it was not quite the style of the song, though most captivating, as is every thing she does. She is a very fine woman, though quite 40, and of a most fascinating countenance, and is an admirable musician and a singer of great power, feeling, and execution. As an actress she is much

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before Billington, but, as a singer very like her. We went all into the large room at the end of the vocal music -- it is very handsome, with seats round it for the ladies. The instrumental orchestra performed some of Haydn's overtures.

[7. March. 1820]

... Christie and I went to the Teatro Nuovo, where we saw the comic opera by Mercadante of *Violenza e Costanza*, in which the siezing by a Tyrant of a Lady and separating her from her lover, with the prisons, spectres, prisoners, and silly country boys, is a combination much like our *Castle Spectre* and equally edifying. The music is, some of it, very good and all lively and amusing, though not in a high style of excellence. La Brizzi is a German and handsome, but very cold, though her voice is pretty. Guglielmi, the tenor, is much passato, but sings with great taste. Tambonardi, the bass, is rather dull, but has a good face and voice. The old buffo Luzio and his son Luzio are both very comic and good singers. The father is 75, but still acts and sings with great spirit. On the whole the opera is lively, amusing, and well acted. This operatic company does not belong to Barbaia, who has only the St. Carlo and Fondo Theatres, at which his performers, Madames Colbran, Dardanelli, and Chabrand, Mess^rs Nozzari, David, Rubini, Bendetti, Cecciamarra, and Ambrogi, act at both as he chuses.

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[11. March. 1820]

... I went to execute Mrs. Nicholson's commission of seeing David and Dardanelli to get them to come to her some evening. I found them both at San Carlo and was admitted on the stage, where were also Colbran, Nozzari, Barbaia and Barbaia Jun^r -- they were all rehearsing a new sacred opera for Wednesday. It is *Ciro in Babylonia*, music by Raimondi. I staid above an hour and heard some exquisite music, especially a fine air by Dardanelli and a coro and finale by the whole. Young Barbaia, who has been long in England, paid me great attention and introduced me to Rossini, whom I well recollected meeting at Rome 3 years since. He is a

delightful man, most pleasing, elegant, and with a face full of genius. Dardanelli, David, and I had a great deal of chat -- they will be happy to come to Mrs. Nicholson, but young Barbaia said they expected a present, or each the sum of 6 ounces (18 ducats), which is not above £3 each. Young Barbaia took me before 2 to the Teatro Fondo to their box, where he introduced me to his father, a very civil, obliging, lively man, whose history is singular, being a Milanese of no property or education, a garçon in a café, but who has contrived by activity and successful speculations to be the first man in Naples. The Fondo and St. Carlo are in his hands, and he directs the gaming tables at St. Carlo and at the other houses, receives all their profits, and pays a rent to the King.

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[12. March. 1820]

... Dressed and went to St. Carlo to the box of Barbaia. ... There was much pleasant talk, and I experienced the greatest civility, attention, and politeness from all. I had the best place and the box is No. 1 of the Pit tier, close to the stage, so I heard Mosé in Egitto to great advantage. Colbran sung magnificently. The music is most exquisite, especially the duet of Nozzari and Ambrogio, the duet of Nozzari and Colbran, of Colbran and her attendant, the finale of the 1st act, and Colbran's song after Osiride dies. It is altogether a noble work indeed.

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[13. March. 1820]

... I went away before the playing at Rouge et Noir began, and proceeded to the Duke and Duchess of Noja's, which is close by my lodgings. ... It stands in a Giardino Inglese full of trees and shrubs and the whole of which was most brilliantly lighted up with lamps and flambeaux on the trees and in the ground.

It was very pretty, with crowds of liveried servants and handsome carriages in the illuminated garden. The largest room was for music, but there was only a pianoforte, at which Rossini presided. La Colbran, La Dardanelli, Rubini, and Ambrogio sung most delightfully indeed. Rubini, for taste, fine tone, and flexibility, far exceeds all the other tenors I have heard. His song was the best thing we had. The music was chiefly from Paesiello's Olympiade, &c. I would much rather have had Mozart, Cimarosa, or Rossini, but the latter had selected the older compositions as favorites of the Duke's, who is musical.

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[14. March. 1820]

... I dined at the Corona di ferro and then joined Captain Neill at the Parigi, where I sat some time with him and Mr. Elmsley. Neill and I went to the Fondo Theatre and saw La Morte di Adelaide, a comedy with music, or rather a tragedy, for it ends with her death. It is taken from a novel called Adelaide

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de Comines, and a story not unlike the Stranger, only the husband is killed and the lovers meet after as Capucins, unknown to each other -- they sing a duet, the lover faints, and then at the end of the 3^d act Adelaide dies, disclosing her sex to the astonished Capucins, who of course never suspect it -- it is absurd and not dramatic at all, but there are some good songs in it, and the duet of Dardanelli and Rubini is delightful. She sings very well in this opera -- but Rubini's sweetness of voice and exquisite taste and execution are most pleasing -- in a small Theatre I never heard so perfect a singer -- he acts with much feeling, though rather deficient in personal appearance.

[16. March. 1820]

... Mr. Mathias called for me at near 8, and I went with him to the Margravine of Anspach's, where there was a crowd. ... Sir W. Acourt, Sir Charles and Lady Morgan, Prince Pettinaro, Prince Yablanowski, and the Prince and Princess of Denmark, always easy and pleasant. The Margravine did the honors well. There were 2 pieces acted in a room very elegantly fitted up as a Theatre. There was a room with refreshments between the pieces and after the last.

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... The first piece, La Somnambule, was very pretty and well done. The Sleepwalking Lady by Madame D'Ascalon, the Lover by Prince Torella, the Officer she is contracted to by Keppel Craven, the Father by Marchese Salvo, and the Servant of Frederick the Officer by Conte Giraci, and the femme de chambre by the Principessa Torella. They were all good. The next piece was Les Ricochets by the same actors, except that Madame Acton, the sister of Madame D'Ascalon, did the young Lady and was most lively and full of talent -- they are two French sisters, one is wife of General Acton here and a very fascinating, tho' not handsome, woman. Keppel Craven as the Valet and Giraci as his lackey were good, and the Principessa Torella as the femme de chambre was excellent, but the Prince Torella as the Colonel and Madame Acton were both capital. Very much more amused than I expected, I walked home with Mr. Mathias.

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[19. March. 1820]

... I went off in a carriage ... to St. Carlo and went to Barbaia's box. He and his son, Campredi, Beau _____ (the Secretary to Prince Castalcicala), and last and best Rossini, with whom I had a great deal of conversation and who promised to get me some of his best pieces written out for the pianoforte and voice. He

is a delightful man, full of genius. The opera of tonight was the first representation of *Ciro in Babilonia* by Raimondi. The part of the Scythian Warrior Queen was sung with great force and effect by Colbran, who was in very fine voice. David was good in *Cambise*. Nezzari looked well in *Ciro*, and Dardanelli was good in the *Widowed Queen of Babylon* -- but it was dull and different far from the magnificent combinations in the music of *Mosé in Egitto*. The best things were a duet by David and Dardanelli in the 1st act, Colbran's first song, and the finale to the first act. Her air in the last act was admirably sung, but very ugly and without air, and the end was so flat that the composer was not called for, and the opera hissed, tho' at the duet in the first act they made him come on the stage. Rossini sat by me and applauded whenever it was possible. I only longed to be hearing the *Turco in Italia*, *Barbiere di Sivigli*, *Inganno felice*, *Otello*, *Mosé*, *Ellisabetta*, *Dorliska*, *Tancredi*, *Gazza Ladra*, *Cenerentola*, or any of his exquisite works which I knew. *Ciro in Babilonia* is by Raimondi, and what makes it more absurd is that Rossini has a very fine opera on the same subject.

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[21. March. 1820]

... Christie and I went to the Teatro Fiorentini. We saw *Medea*, translated from Corneille. It is a noble tragedy, and the character was well conceived by Signora Tessari, who played it, tho' her figure and appearance are trifling, not without dignity even in her vengeance, not without restraint even in her violence, and she let not pathos be lost even in her atrocities. Jason by Visetti was very poor, and Creon and his daughter also, but yet on the whole it was interesting. The situations are very fine, and the last scene, and the scene where she begs for mercy to obtain her revenge was finely done.

[24. March. 1820]

... I went ... to the Church of San Ferdinando, which was very full, this being the Festa of Nostra Signora della Dolorata. There was a grand orchestra -- Rossini presided, and a magnificent Mass was performed, in which the amazing voice (Soprano) and brilliant execution of Tarquinio, the most celebrated Castrato in Italy (very superior to any at Rome) was heard to great advantage. The music by Rossini was most beautiful -- an overture, and then choruses, duets, trios, and solos -- the solos of Tarquinio and Rubini were most exquisite -- those of Ambrogio, Benedetti, and Cicimarra also good. Altogether I was highly pleased, and never heard more excellent composition than all the first part of the music. The Stabat Mater and Credo in the last part were not so fine.

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[9. April. 1820]

Rome

... [I] heard the music at St. Peter's ... had some talk with one of the Soprano singers, a very sensible pleasing man of remarkably good manner and language, but a pensive and unhappy look -- yet tho' his hair was grey, his face looked young for a man of 37. One cannot help feeling compassion for beings thus excluded from the appearance of men, and too sensible of their deficiencies, for Ginstinelli is the only one I ever saw who looked or seemed happy. The Pope has very few of them, and no good ones, none at all to be compared with Tarquinio at Naples.

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[18. April. 1820]

... Llewellyn and I went to the Valle Theatre, where I had not been since I came back from Naples -- it is the only one open -- and is very bad as an opera. La Lettera di scusa, musica di Griesbach, is very poor. Signora Brizzi is the prima donna,

who was at the Teatro Nuovo at Naples. She is a dull singer. The tenor is weak -- but sung with taste -- the buffo poor -- the bass, Biondini, very good. We had next the comedy of Il Figlio bandito. It is now Vestris' Company who perform here. I have seen them at

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Naples and Florence before, 3 years since. They are by much the best I have seen in Italy. It was so very late we came away at the end of the first act of 3 -- it was near 12 -- but it was very well acted throughout, with much nature and feeling and no extravagance -- the prodigal Son, the young Lady, the Country Boy and Servants all were capital, and the Father also.

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[25. April. 1820] Siena

... the Theatre, which I recollect seeing once before by daylight, is very neat and handsome. The play was Il Argentiere di Brema, a serious comedy. It was begun when we arrived and I did not stay it out. The actors are not as good as Vestris' Company at Rome, but seem tolerable. One humorous man in a Doctor was very droll, and Rochetti, the first Tragedian, though violent and extravagant, has much feeling. One of the ladies was pretty, but the prima donna, who is famous in tragedy, did not act.

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[27. April. 1820] Florence

... Called and left Christie's card, and Llewellyn's, and my own at Lord Burghersh's -- he sent back very soon his own cards and an invitation from Lady Burghersh for the evening. Llewellyn and I walked about a little -- he introduced me to Miss Masterson, a Lady who lives here with her Uncle and is a great favorite with Lady Burghersh, and is said to be rich -- she acts in the amateur plays. ... in the evening went to Lord and Lady Burghersh's.

... After the play was over the performers (Lord and Lady Normanby, Lord Francis Conyngham, Lady Burghersh, Miss Masterson, Lord and Lady Rendlesham, Mr. Hobbyn, &c.) came among the part. The Theatre is not so neat as that of the Margravine at Naples, and it is not so well managed. ... The play was 3 or 4 scenes of Henry 8th: the trial, Wolsey's fall, and Catherine's death. Lord Normanby in Wolsey looked it tolerably, and gave some of Kemble's tones, but was monotonous. Fitzclarence in Henry was very comic -- he is so like his mother, Mrs. Jordan, it is quite ridiculous -- he has in him, I am sure, great comic powers, but is idle and never perfect. Hobbyn in Cromwell played with feeling, and Lady Burghesh has a fine face and speaks with feeling -- but too rapidly -- she is much agitated -- if she was not, she would be the best. Lady Normandy as her attendant looked pretty. We had Raising the Wind -- but it was bad except Laurelia by Lady Rendlesham. Lord Normanby's Sam was poor -- and Hobbyn's Didler indifferent -- he had animation and action, but

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no humor -- his forte would be genteel comedy or tragedy. I regretted not seeing Fitzclarence, whose fat figure and real humor in some farces would be capital. On the whole an English play and farce is an agreeable novelty -- and the dresses are very fine -- and the acting as good as can be expected.

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[28. April. 1820]

... Christie and I went to the Opera at the Pergola. ... Adelaide de Bergogna is by Rossini, and composed for this Theatre. There is much brilliancy and spirit, but it has been a hasty work, and is not of his first order. The 2 men singers, tenor and bass, were vile. The lady, Marchesini, is old and is not a fine singer, but has a tolerable voice. The best is Signora Mariani, a high

contralto and a nice looking woman, if she had not a defect in one eye -- she played the Emperor very well and her last song was beautiful. The ballet of Saffo is a most beautiful and picturesque combination of scenery and dancing, and is finely done, especially the part of Signora Torelli -- it was really beautiful.

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[1. May. 1820]

... went with Miss Pigott to Lord and Lady Burghersh's, where met the usual set of Grandees. ... We had 2 plays, or rather farces. The first was Matrimony, which was indifferently well done. Lady Burghersh as Clara gave some parts well. Lord Normanby was very good in Delaval, very like Elliston and certainly plays genteel comedy with spirit and elegance. Lord Rendlesham a very good Governor. Mr. Irvine looked like Johnstone in O'Clogherty and sung tolerably. Lady Normanby looked well in Lisette. The next piece, a new piece called a Roland for an Oliver, was vulgar and bad and ill acted. It is taken from Une Visite à Bedlam, and that pretty vaudeville is quite spoiled by its English dress. It was very dull, though Lady Normanby in Maria looked and acted very charmingly.

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[4. May. 1820]

... Miss Pigott, Christie, Llewellyn, Mr. Maxwell, and I went in our carriage to Lord Burghersh's. ... The play was the Gamester. Lady Burghersh was rather dull and cold in Mrs. Beverly. Lady Normanby very natural and much better than I expected in Charlotte. Dawkins not amiss in Lewson, only he looked like a shop apprentice. Hobbys in Stukely was tolerable at first, but made little of the latter part, and the scene between him and Mrs. Beverly was very bad on both sides. Lord Rendlesham was good in

Jarvis, but the only person of real genius in the business, or who really feels his part and acts it with nature and effect, was Lord Normanby. His Beverly was really good -- animated, feeling, and forcible, and not too violent -- his action and manners elegant, and his distress most forcibly depicted -- his dying was admirable indeed. He has studied much, and has a real genius for the stage, and very much resembles Elliston in face and manner. His forte is tragedy of feeling and genteel comedy. I was highly pleased and even affected by his acting, which produced a great sensation. It is the second time he has done it. After the play I had a theatrical talk with Miss Masterson, who though rather vulgar is very intelligent.

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[6. May. 1820]

... I went to the Countess of Albany's, which was very full. I had a long conversation with Lord Normanby ... about plays. He has a real passion for the stage, as well as a knowledge of its science, and a true tact of what is good upon it -- and feels most strongly the beauty of English tragedy.

... I was very much amused tonight, and the Countess of Albany was very lively and entertaining, and joked much about Lady Morgan complaining of growing old in a way as if she thought a new Law of Nature should be made for her alone.

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[10. May. 1820]

Bologna

... went to the Opera ... at the Grand Theatre, which has been repaired and repainted, with a new proscenium, very elegant, added to it. It was full of well dressed ladies, well lighted, and the scenery most magnificent and all quite new. The opera was *Semiramide riconosciuta*, by Meyerbeer, a new German composer.

The music in some parts pretty and rich, but not fine -- most splendid in scenery and processions. The ballet was the celebrated ballet of La Vestale, composed by Vignano of Milan, and La Vestale was played by Pallerini, who is such a capital actress and whom I saw at Milan. She is the original Vestale and her pantomime is really inimitable.

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[13. May. 1820]

... We stopped at the Villa of Crescentini, the famous soprano singer, now rich and retired. He received us most kindly indeed and shewed us round his pretty gardens.

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... he is ... full of animation and conversation and of great spirit and talent, and most amiable and elegant manners, and what is odd, tho' a soprano and above 60, still upright and handsome with a very fine countenance and eyes. We had a great deal of musical talk, and he was very kind in observing how strong and just a taste I had for the art. His ideas of all the singers and composers of the day are admirable. He did great justice to Billington, Braham, Catalani, Grassini, Monbelli, &c. He went with us to the Villa Sampieri. ... Crescentini sat down to the pianoforte and sung a short cavatina of his own, "O teneri piaceri." I never heard such tones, such taste, such soul, and can conceive what he must have been -- indeed it is a style so exquisite, soft yet powerful, bold yet full of feeling, and with such a silver tone that I can only regret I have never heard him in public; that there never was such another soprano is certain.

... I stopped at the opera, and the rest soon followed.

Sampieri

took me to the box of the Marchesa Lepri, which being in front I saw the ballet to perfection. Pallerini's acting in the Vestale is perfect. The first scene of the Campo Marza with the games, chariot races, wrestling, and spectators and grand procession is admirably combined and really beautiful. The whole scenery, both of opera and ballet, is most admirable for effect, beauty, and fine perspective -- and the last scene with the Campo Saelerato, the Aqueduct, the Gates of Rome, and the burial alive of the Vestale is astonishingly fine. The groups are combined most admirably & altogether for scenery and pantomime it is the finest I almost ever saw. The dancing is not very great, but pretty. In the opera of Semiramide by Meyerbeer, the music gains much by repetition -- it is original and the second act very fine, especially the duet of Signora Bassi and Bonoldi, the tenor, and the air of Signora Boroni, the seconda donna, which she sung with a flexibility, extent, and neatness of execution (tho' very difficult) quite delightful, but the finest thing is the ground air and chorus of Bassi which finishes the act. Her strength and power of voice, great execution, and fine tonation are admirable. In point of powers she is far beyond Colbran, and is said to be almost as good a musician. She is not light and elegant like Monbelli, being not young, but for powers is far the finest I have heard in Italy.

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[14. May. 1820]

... The music of the opera gains very much by repetition. ... Bassi's last air, the finale to the first act, the duet of Bassi and Bonoldi, and the fine solo of Boroni are all most delightful indeed. The opera is with some alterations taken from the Semiramide of Metastasio and is very interesting, and the music, if not of the genius of Rossini, is always pleasing and often original.

[15. May. 1820]

... death ... has been at work since I was at Bologna -- & in so sudden and shocking a manner as to stop all music for some time. Poor Signor Rudicati, the Leader of the Opera Band when I was here before, and of whom in consequence of knowing his wife, La Bertinotti, I saw a good deal when here before, was very fond of driving -- about 6 weeks since he was driving 2 young horses he had lately bought -- they took fright, ran away, and he was thrown out, or threw himself out of the carriage, and fractured his skull against the pillars of the arcades near the Florence gate. He was a most respectable man,

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a good composer, and capital violin player. The present leader, though very good, is certainly far from being equal to Radicati. This sad event has been much felt at Bologna and poor Madame Bertinotti has yet been nowhere, but has spent a month at the Villa of Crescentini ... so of course this evening we had not her great talents at Sampieri's party. We had a fine trio for the harp, bassoon, and french horn, composed by Sampieri and very well performed by a young lady and 2 of the opera band. Another lady played part of the Creation of Haydn, arranged for the pianoforte and bassoon -- and the duo had a good effect. She also sung an air very well. Crescentini was there and we had much talk -- but he never sings in large parties.

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[17. May. 1820]

Arqua

... to the west lies, blue tinged, the chain of the Euganean hills, woody and fine, among which we penetrated to go to Arqua. A lovely valley, rich with fruit trees of all sorts, timber, brushwood, corn, vines, and surrounded with rocky hills, around the hedges of which the road winds, looking over the vale, amongst them. On the

steep slope of one of them, and surrounded by fine conical points, one of which has a Church on it and is called Monte Ferro, stands the Church and Village of Arquia, the residence of Petrarch during the last part of his life and the scene of his death. We left the carriage at the foot of the village and walked up to the top of it, where still stands the Casino of Petrarch, an old house belonging to a Marchesa of Modena whose name I forgot -- peasants live at one end, but the 4 rooms inhabited by Petrarch are kept empty. They have curious carved ceilings and the upper parts of the walls are painted in fresco, representing Petrarch and Laura ... she bathing, and dying, he writing, &c. They are so old they must have been done soon after his death -- the woman of the house said during his life, but buon fresco painting was then scarcely known, for he died on the 18th of July 1374. The 4 rooms consist of an anti-room, saloon, bedroom, study and light closet. In the study are preserved his chair and closet and inkstand, and above the door of the study, but in the bedroom, are the following cut in stone by him:

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Etruscus gemino vates exarsit amore
 Maximus ignis ego. Laura secunda erat
 Quis cides? divinae illam si gratia forma
 Me dignam eximio fecit amante fides
 Si numeros genuimque sacris dedit ille libellis
 Causa ego ne saevis muribus esca forent.
 Arcebam sacro vivens a limine mures
 Ne domini exito Scripta diserta daret
 Inentio trepidis cadem dependa gravorum
 Et Viget exunimi in corpore prisca fides.

He died in the bedroom of this villa -- it commands a lovely view of the gardens, woods, rocky hills, and the towers and steeples and rich vegetation of the extensive plain to the south, seen through a vista of fine hills. Another room has a fine view up a rocky deep recess behind the house. On lower ground than the entrance and the suite of rooms is the garden formerly cultivated by him -- and the marble well in it, which he made -- and where he left the carriage is a plain arched large fountain of common marble, below the arch of which is a reservoir of most capital fine clear water, which as well as the white rocky hills, green with vegetation around, altogether put me in mind of the other favorite retreat of Petrarch and Laura at Avignon. In a square space in front of the Church ... stands a very large red marble sarcophagus, supported by 4 little pillars resting on 2 bases of red marble. This is the tomb of Petrarch and contains his body, brought from the Villa above.

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[18. May. 1820]

Padua

... The Piazza d'arme with the Guardia and Casa di Citta is handsome, and near it is just finished the New Theatre, which is to open on the 10th of June next with Grassini, and the ballet of Barbe Bleu by Vestris. We, as strangers, got admission to see it, and found Vestris teaching the dancers and some music on the stage. The ceiling is beautifully painted with a Triumph of Music and Painting, &c., and the fronts of the boxes (of which there are 5 tiers of 31 in each tier) are most elegant. The proscenium is magnificent and tasteful. The Theatre is quite finished, and most of the scenes are painted though not suspended. The Theatre is designed by Giappoli, a Padovese, who built one at

Bassano. It is of a most elegant form and finely painted.

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... The Theatre now in use till the new one opens is nearly as large, but very ugly and gloomy -- the house was not full -- the Company is very good one the whole -- and I was delighted with the music of Rossini's *Barbiere di Siviglia*, which I once heard entire at Florence 3 years since, and have often heard detached pieces of it. ... The trio of Rossina, Figaro, and Almaviva, the 2 airs of Rossina, the finale of the first act, the turning out of Basilio and shaving of Bartolo in the 2^d act are all most delightful and the accompaniments delicious indeed. It is in the very highest

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style of Rossini. Signora Buonsignori is rather pretty and sings agreeably, and is so young she will improve. The tenor (Almaviva) was weak and poor. Figaro was done by Tauani, a man of 76, full of air and life and voice and action as vigorous as if 30 only -- an excellent actor. Basilio was tolerable, but Bartolo was richly comic. I shall never forget his sleeping and faces when Basilio was giving Rossina her music lesson -- his face and action were inimitable. Altogether we were much delighted and I rejoiced we staid at Padua all day. ... the most celebrated Pachierotti, the finest soprano (even superior to Crescentini) lives here, and, though above 80, is in good health & spirits, and is the Impresario of the Theatre.

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[20. May, 1820] . Venice

... We went in the Gondola to the Teatro di San Luca and got good places in a sort of numbered orchestra behind the orchestra. The house is very large, but not handsome, though

clean and prettily painted. The first piece was L'Inganno felice. The prima donna, La Passarini, is rather cold and plain, and has nothing like the soul and exquisite acting of Monbelli, but it must be allowed her voice is superior, and is indeed one of the clearest,

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finest, and most extensive sopranos I ever heard. She sung the grand air most admirably indeed. The bass was passable, but poor after Remorini. The tenor was the same dull man we had during the Carnival at Rome. The buffo was good, but not equal to Taci. The second piece was the 2^d act of the Prova d'un opera seria, music by Gnecco, and was very sweet and fine -- not commonplace -- and very brilliant -- in this the buffo as composer was good, and his air was very comic, and the finale with chorus very fine, but the most delightful thing was the grand scene and air of Passarini, which she gave most exquisitely, with a force, power, & clearness superior to any thing I have heard for a long time -- it was really delightful.

[21. May. 1820]

... I sat some time with the Prince & Princess of Larderia, and agreed to meet at the Isola degli Armeni. Plenderleath, Christie, and I went to San Marco, where was high mass and music -- the Arabian mosaics and curious architecture of it gave a fine effect to the scene. We did not stay long, but rowed to the Isola St. Lazaro to the Armenian Convent, where we were received by Pasquale Aucher, whom I well recollected. ... The Marchese Serpos, an Armenian, accompanied by the Princess Lardaria, her son, and tutor, soon

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arrived. We all went into the Church, which was not very crowded, but this being Pentecost there was a grand mass,

and the Church was most splendidly ornamented with wreaths of artificial flowers and draperies, and the dresses of the old Archbishop, the higher and lower Priests, were all most splendid, of the richest flowered and gold and pearl ornamented Turkish brocades, & ornamented on the shoulders with nobs, crosses, hearts, and little images of silver gilt in very rich Turkish work. They are all made of the very finest embroidered silk at Constantinople. The service was not an hour, and before the end a rich gilt curtain was drawn before the altar, inclosing the Archbishop and higher Priests, and his dress was changed to one less splendid -- the curtain opened, and he and the rest came out -- and his silver crosier was brought before him and they made a circle round him and said some prayers -- the language sounds harmonious, but their chanting is ugly. I was glad to see the service, having never before seen an Armenian Ceremony. ... Pasquale Aucher told us that Lord Byron

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(until he left Venice some months ago) still took Armenian lessons, and read it well but cannot speak it.

... We rowed out to the Lido, and walking across it, surveyed the Adriatic. ... Christie and I had some talk with 4 Milanese, who had been bathing and who are dancers or chorus at the Teatro San Benedetto, but they complain that the Theatres here are very inferior to those of Milan, which is certainly true.

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... We went soon after 6 to the Chiesa degli Afanelli and heard the overture to Tancredi and some singing in parts performed by the Lorpham girls, who among themselves form a complete instrumental band of violins, bass, and wind instruments.

The music was good, but not great. We did not stay to the end, but it is curious at least to see, though the view is imperfect, they being behind a grating and very high -- I remember it well when here before. We went next to the Passeggio at the Gardens made by Napoleon. I walked about with the Larderias and Cavaliere Vandramini, who was with them. He is Proprietor of the Teatro San Luca.

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[22. May, 1820]

... I went with Christie and Plenderleath to the Opera at St, Benedetto and sa La Cenerentola. It was not very full. The prima donna, Cavalli, is plain and vulgar, though young. She sings with flexibility, but has a poor weak voice. The tenor, Cassioletto, was not bad, though weak. The bass, Botticelli, the best, and very animated, though a bad voice. But the music in itself is a real treat, and I liked it even more than when I heard it before, as the music of Rossini gains so greatly by repetition.

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[23. May. 1820]

... I then sat some time with Mrs. Hopner, who lent me the English paper and Lord Byron's Poem of Don Juan, which is written in the same quaint comic style as Beppo, but with a more vigorous narrative manner, more mocking and burlesque.

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... I returned home and paid a visit to the Prince and Princess Lardaria, who wished me much to go to a Societa this evening at the Contesa Latour, and the Cavaliere Aglietti ... called on me just as I left the Prince and Princess and offered to take me there. ... He sat with me near an hour, giving me a most amusing account of Lord Byron and his way of living here,

which is none of the most respectable, but he is now gone to Ravenna and has been there sometime with the Contesa and her husband -- the latter is very tolerant -- but every body here is glad of the connection, as before this, he lived with all sorts of most disreputable people. Aglietti is a most

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genteel, easy, pleasant man, about 50, and describes Lord Byron's conversation and manners as very lively and pleasant, natural and full of humor, unless a shade of melancholy sometimes comes over him. Aglietti went with him the last time to Ravenna and suggested to him the subject of the Tomb of Dante (who is buried there) for a poem -- he was at once struck, and spent all the night in thinking of it and even wrote some of it before next day, and said it should be in triple rime like the verse of Dante himself. The subject thus suggested by Aglietti might and would doubtless have occurred to himself -- it has since grown on him pp and he has written 3 cantos of his "Dante," which is not yet published -- but both Mr. Hopner and Aglietti heard from him yesterday from Ravenna, where he is as usual busy writing and making love.