But bless you, it's dear—it's dear! fowls, wine, at double the rate.
They have clipped a new tax upon salt, and what oil pays
passing the gate.
It's a horror to think of. And so, the Villa for me, not the city!
Beggars can scarcely be choosers: but still—ah, the pity, the pity!
Look, two and two go the priests, then the monks with cowls
and sandals,
And the penitents dressed in white shirts, a-holding the yellow
candles;
One, he carries a flag up straight, and another a cross with
handles,
And the Duke's guard brings up the rear, for the better
prevention of scandals:
Bang-whang-whang goes the drum, tootle-te-tootle the fife.
Oh, a day in the city square, there is no such pleasure in life!

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON

GEORGE GORDON, Lord Byron, was another of England's exiles who found
a haven in Italy. From 1816 to 1822 Byron lived in Italy, championed
Italian nationalism, and often took part in its crusades. In 1819 he won
the affections of a twenty-year-old married countess, Teresa Castelli of
Ravenna, Teresa and the radical Italian separatist movement, the Carbonari,
inspired Byron's passion and poetry. During this period he wrote the
epic poems "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," "The Cenci," and
"Don Juan." While there, Byron often lived with Percy Bysshe
Shelley, his wife Mary Shelley, and her half-sister Claire, who became
Byron's lover. Shelley and Byron spent many afternoons together sailing
off the Ligurian coast, until Shelley's death in 1822.

Byron's enthusiasm for Italy waned with the end of the Carbonari
movement. He took up a new cause, Greek liberation from Turkey, and
joined the Greek revolution. In 1823, after nearly a year in Greece, he
returned to England, where he died of pneumonia.

The following four stanzas are from Byron's poem "Childe Harold's
Pilgrimage," published in 1811. The quotation in the opening lines of
the third stanza are from Gibbon's history The Decline and Fall of
the Roman Empire.
On Rome
from CHILDE HAROLD'S PILGRIMAGE,
CANTO IV

A ruin—yet what ruin from its mass
Walls, palaces, half-cities, have been rear'd;
Yet oft the enormous skeleton ye pass,
And marvel where the spoil could have appear'd.
Hath it indeed been plunder'd, or but clear'd?
Also developed, opens the decay,
When the colossal fabric's form is near'd:
It will not bear the brightness of the day,
Which streams too much on all—years—man—have reft away.

But when the rising moon begins to climb
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there,
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,
And the low night-breeze waves along the air
The garland-forest, which the gray walls wear,
Like launch on the bald first Cesar's head;
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,
Then in this magic circle raise the dead:
Heroes have trod this spot—'s on their dust ye tread.

'While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
'When falls the Coliseum, Rome shall fall;
'And when Rome falls—the World.'
From our own land

To the Hon. Douglas Kinnaird
Venice, April 25th, 1829

... I have fallen in love, within the last month, with a Roman
...