

The Cockney Romantics

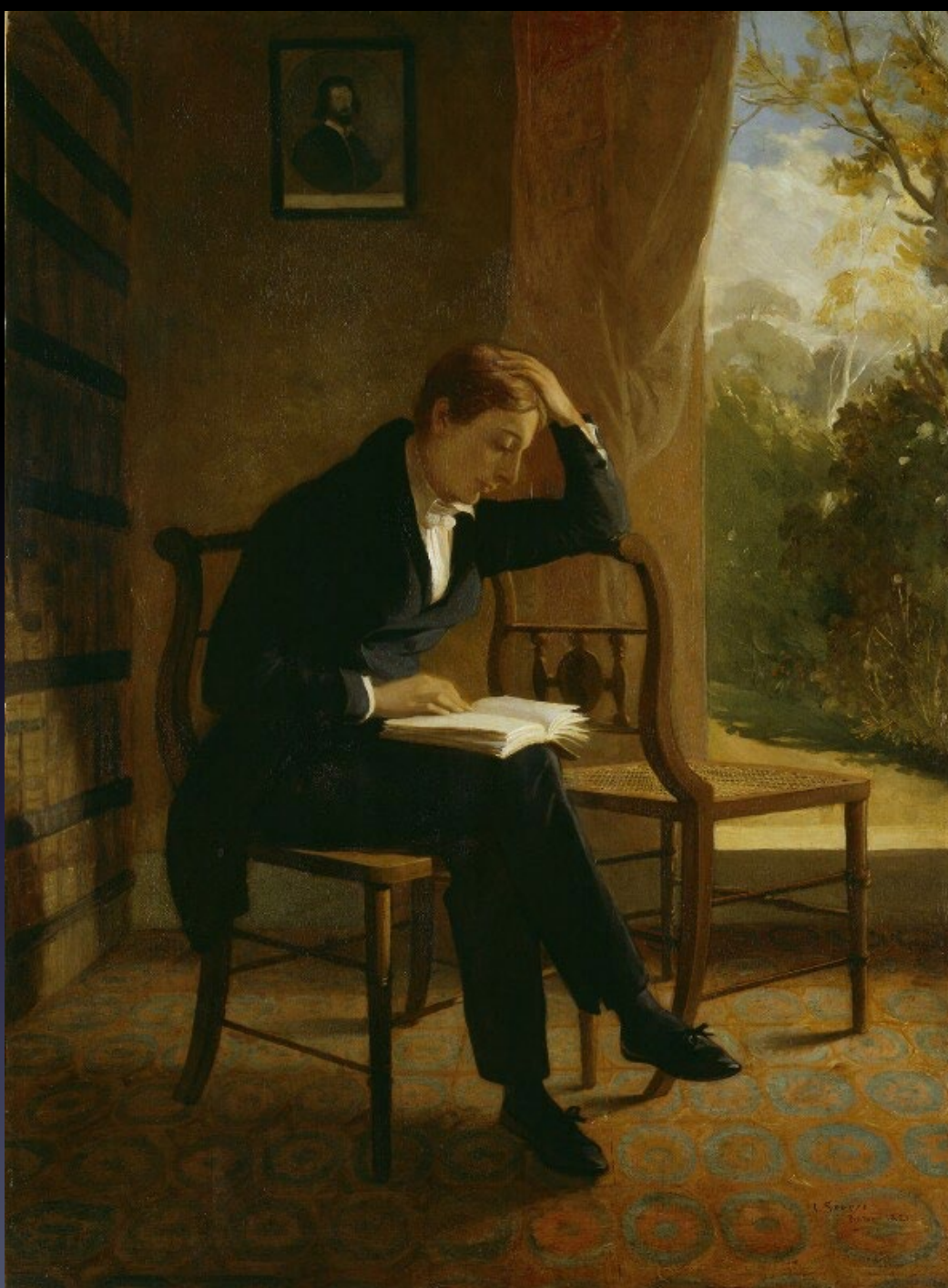
JOHN KEATS AND HIS FRIENDS

JONATHAN BATE













LYRICAL BALLADS,

WITH

A FEW OTHER POEMS.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY BIGGS AND COTTLE,
FOR T. N. LONGMAN, PATERNOSTER-RROW, LONDON.

1798.

LYRICAL BALLADS,

WITH

OTHER POEMS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

By W. WORDSWORTH.

Quam nihil ad genium, Papiniane, tuum!

VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION.

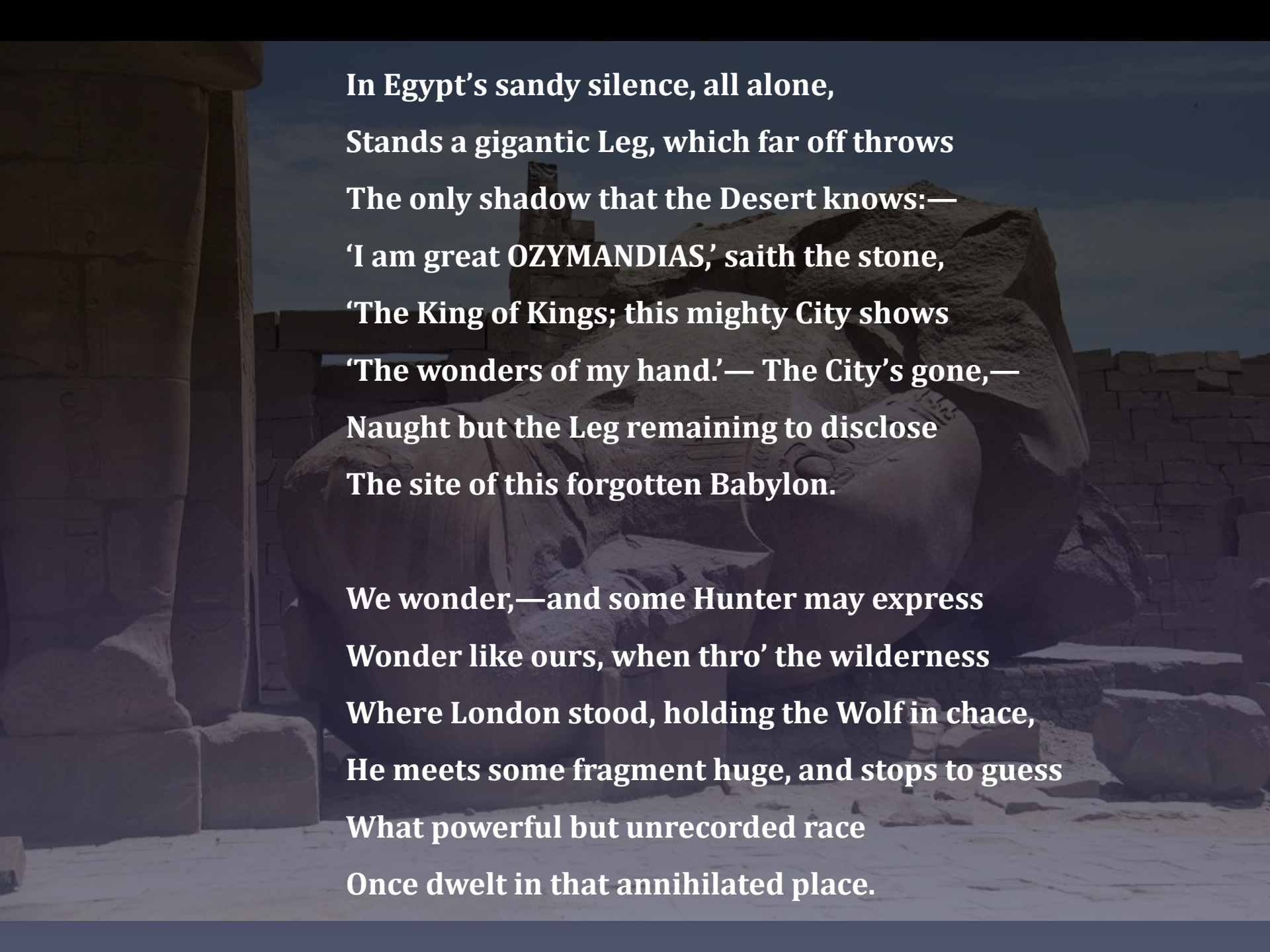
LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. N. LONGMAN AND O. REES, PATERNOSTER-ROW,

BY BIGGS AND CO. BRISTOL.

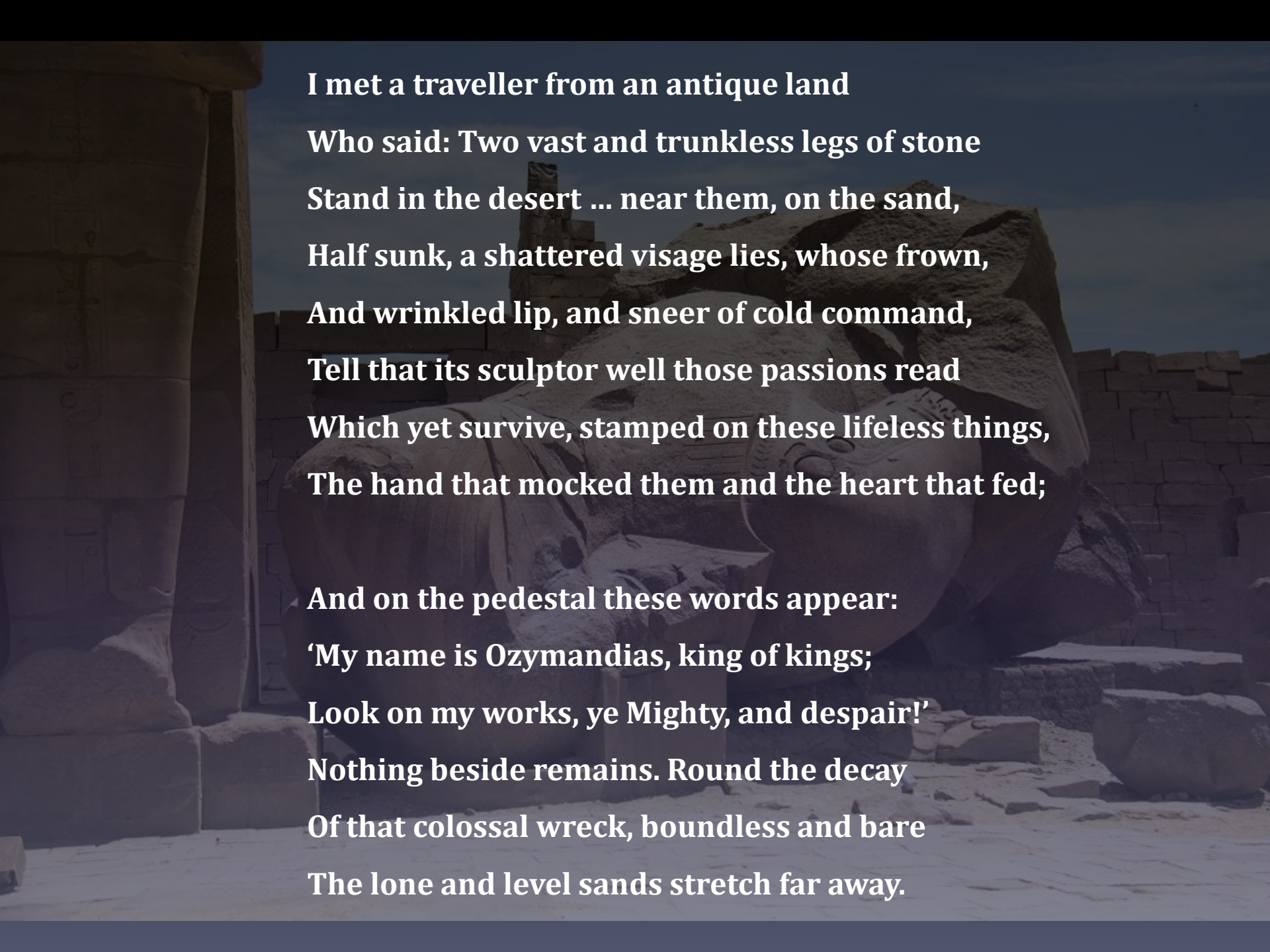
1800.

We were in the woods beyond Gowbarrow Park we saw a few daffodils close to the water-side. We fancied that the sea had floated the seeds ashore, and that the little colony had so sprung up. But as we went along there were more and yet more; and at last, under the boughs of the trees, we saw that there was a long belt of them along the shore, about the breadth of a country turnpike road. I never saw daffodils so beautiful. They grew among the mossy stones about and above them; some rested their heads upon these stones, as on a pillow, for weariness; and the rest tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind, that blew upon them over the lake; they looked so gay, ever glancing, ever changing. This wind blew directly over the lake to them. There was here and there a little knot, and a few stragglers higher up; but they were so few as not to disturb the simplicity, unity, and life of that one busy highway. We rested again and again. The bays were stormy, and we heard the waves at different distances, and in the middle of the water, like the sea ...



In Egypt's sandy silence, all alone,
Stands a gigantic Leg, which far off throws
The only shadow that the Desert knows:—
'I am great OZYMANDIAS,' saith the stone,
'The King of Kings; this mighty City shows
'The wonders of my hand.'— The City's gone,—
Naught but the Leg remaining to disclose
The site of this forgotten Babylon.

We wonder,—and some Hunter may express
Wonder like ours, when thro' the wilderness
Where London stood, holding the Wolf in chace,
He meets some fragment huge, and stops to guess
What powerful but unrecorded race
Once dwelt in that annihilated place.



I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert ... near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed;

And on the pedestal these words appear:

‘My name is Ozymandias, king of kings;

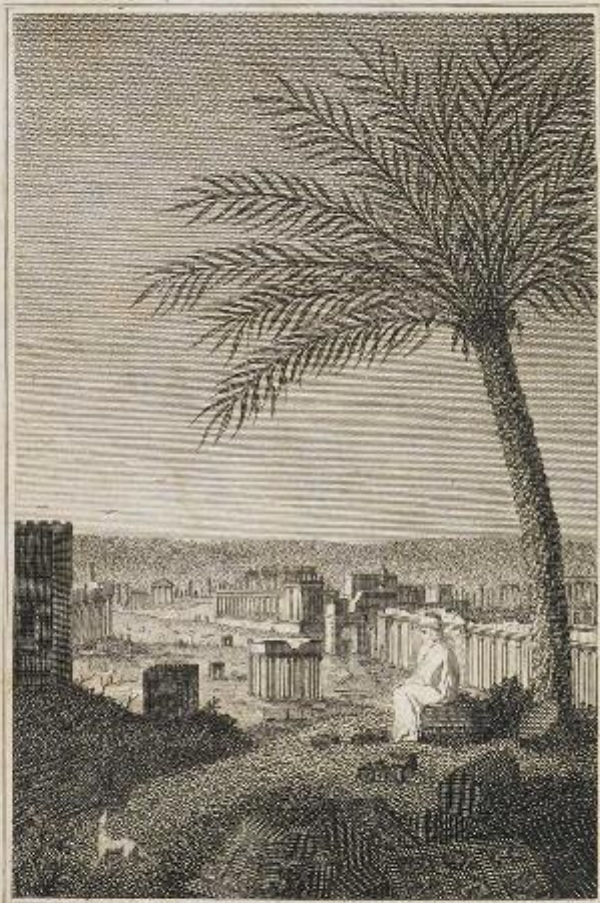
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!’

Nothing beside remains. Round the decay

Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare

The lone and level sands stretch far away.

FRONTISPIECE.



*Here an opulent City once flourished: this
was the seat of a powerful Empire. — Yes,
these places, now so desart, a living Multitude
formerly animated &c.*

Chap. II.

MR
THE
R U I N S :
OR
A SURVEY
OF THE
R E V O L U T I O N S
OF
E M P I R E S :

BY M. VOLNEY,

ONE OF THE DEPUTIES TO THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF 1789;
AND AUTHOR OF TRAVELS INTO SYRIA AND EGYPT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

I will dwell in solitude amidst the ruins of cities: I will enquire of the monuments of antiquity what was the wisdom of former ages: I will ask the ashes of legislators what causes have erected and overthrown empires: what are the principles of national prosperity and misfortune: what the maxims upon which the peace of society and the happiness of man ought to be founded. Ch. iv. p. 24.

L O N D O N .

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

MDCCKCII.

To Benjamin Robert Haydon.
[London,] November 20, 1816.

My dear Sir — Last evening wrought me up, and I cannot forbear
sending you the following —

Yours unfeignedly,

John Keats.

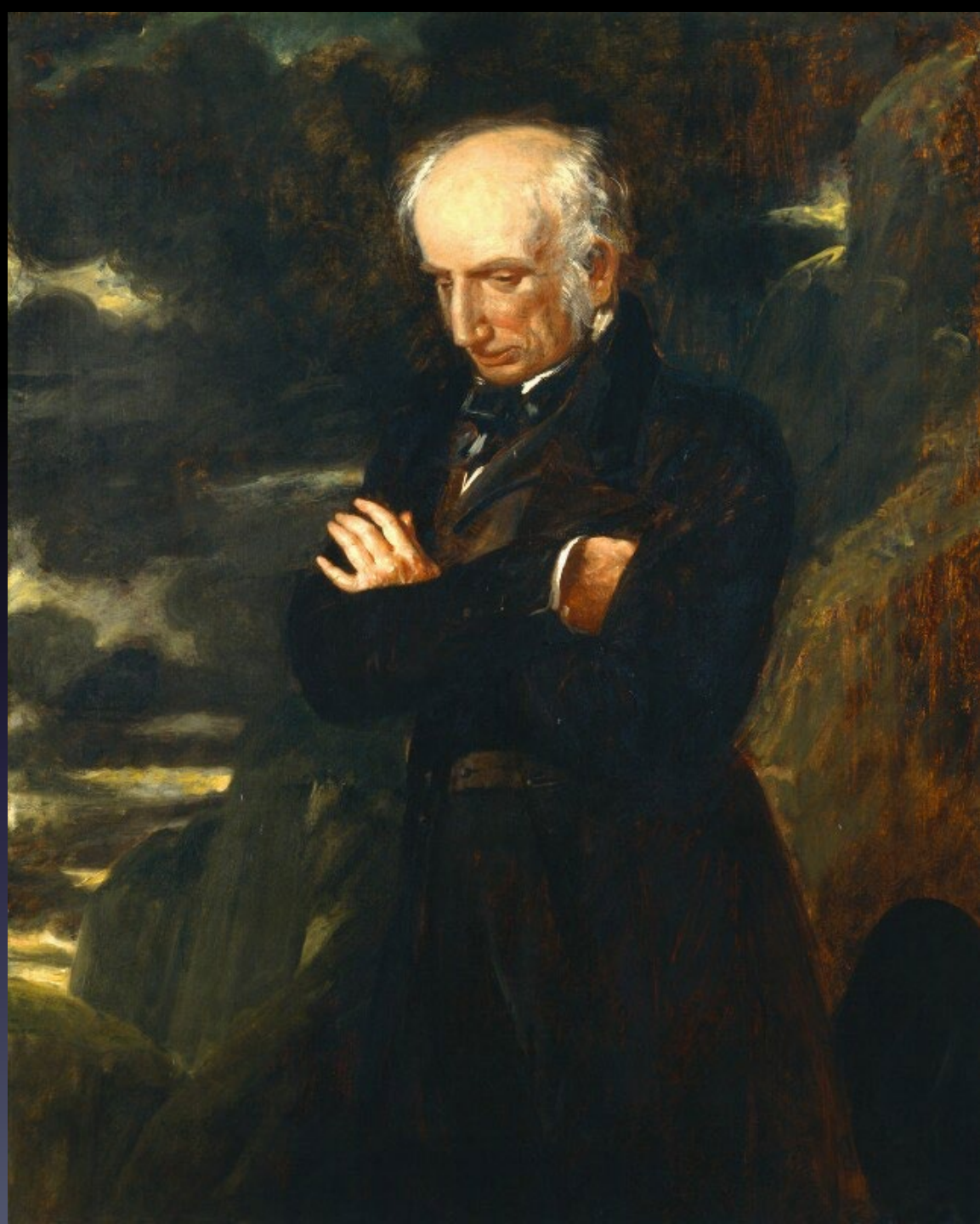
Removed to 76 Cheapside.

Great spirits now on earth are sojourning;
He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake,
Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide awake,
Catches his freshness from Archangel's wing:
He of the rose, the violet, the spring,
The social smile, the chain for Freedom's sake:
And lo! — whose steadfastness would never take
A meaner sound than Raphael's whispering.
And other spirits there are standing apart
Upon the forehead of the age to come;
These, these will give the world another heart,
And other pulses. Hear ye not the hum
Of mighty workings in the human mart?
Listen awhile ye nations, and be dumb.



Keats

Wordsworth



FLORA DOMESTICA,

—

THE PORTABLE FLOWER-GARDEN;

WITH

DIRECTIONS FOR THE TREATMENT OF

PLANTS IN POTS;

AND

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE WORKS OF THE POETS.

Kent, Elizabeth

"How rapidly come
This rich display of flowers,
This airy wild of fragrance
So lovely to the eye,
And to the sense so sweet."

ANDREWS'S BARD.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND HESSEY,

91, FLEET-STREET,

AND 13, WATERLOO-PLACE, Pall-mall.

1821.

LONDON
NEW YORK
BOSTON



THE EXAMINER.

No. 590. SUNDAY, DEC. 14, 1817.

THE POLITICAL EXAMINER.

They is the madsons of many for the gain of a few. Para.

No. 505.

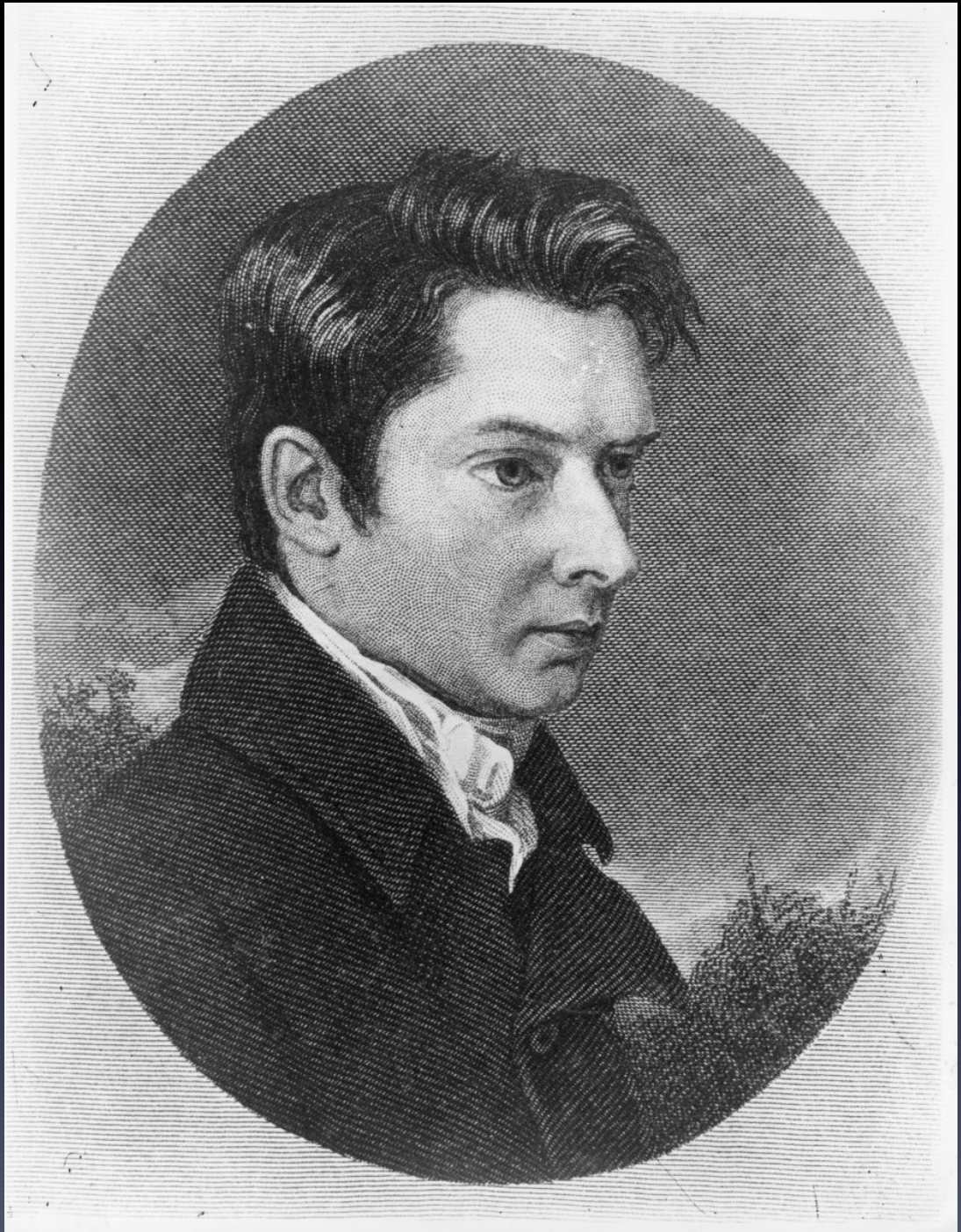
LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.
(CONTINUED FROM LAST WEEK.)

The reader was presented in our last with an extract from the *Courier* announcing certain "measures" that were "in contemplation" for suppressing what it called "moderately liberal" and for "the extinction of those writings, which aim," it tells us, "only to unsettle all our notions in religion, morals, and politics." He also had a pretty little aside and abating paragraph brought before him

this country was sufficient, and the late troubles in the manufacturing districts were owing, as was asserted, to those very writings, why were the former not prevented and the latter allayed long ago?

The *Courier* replies, that "the laxity" with which "the publications of COSSERTY and others were sent forth" last year, and "the laxity of the law at that period, it must confess, did occasion it."

But the law, as the public well remembers, was not inactive. It was expounded in circular letters, and inflected, where it could be, in ex-officio informations; and yet in the midst of all this, and of every other possible symptom of a vigor not only within the pale of the law but beyond it, the Ministers themselves told us, that the Crown Lawyers had in vain examined the writings in question—*namely*, "had been unable, after the most dili-



84.



M.^r KEAN as IAGO,
I bleed, sir, but am not kill'd.

Engr'd as the Act directs by J. Roach. Kniffel Court, Drury Lane June 4. 1814.

2942

But though we cannot weave over again the airy, unsubstantial dream, which reason and experience have dispelled –

What though the radiance, which was once so bright,

Be now for ever taken from our sight,

Though nothing can bring back the hour

Of glory in the grass, of splendour in the flower:—

yet we will never cease, nor be prevented from returning on the wings of imagination to that bright dream of our youth; that glad dawn of the day-star of liberty; that spring-time of the world, in which the hopes and expectations of the human race seemed opening in the same gay career with our own; when France called her children to partake her equal blessings beneath her laughing skies; when the stranger was met in all her villages with dance and festive songs, in celebration of a new and golden era; and when, to the retired and contemplative student, the prospects of human happiness and glory were seen ascending, like the steps of Jacob's ladder, in bright and never-ending succession.

WHILE the whole critical world is occupied with, balancing the merits, whether in theory or in execution, of what is commonly called THE LAKE-SCHOOL, it is strange that no one seems to think it at all necessary to say a single word about another new school of poetry which has of late sprung up among us. This school has not, I believe, as yet received any name; but if I may be permitted to have the honour of christening it, it may henceforth be referred to by the designation of THE COCKNEY SCHOOL. Its chief Doctor and Professor is Mr Leigh Hunt, a man certainly of some talents, of extravagant pretensions both in wit, poetry, and politics, and withal of exquisitely bad taste, and extremely vulgar modes of thinking and manners in all respects. He is a man of little education.

The great poets of our country have been men of some rank in society, and there is no vulgarity in any of their writings; but Mr Hunt cannot utter a dedication, or even a note, without betraying the *Shibboleth* of low birth and low habits. He is the ideal of a Cockney Poet. He raves perpetually about 'green fields,' 'jaunty streams,' and 'o'er-arching leafiness,' exactly as a Cheapside shop-keeper does about the beauties of his box on the Camberwell road. Mr Hunt is altogether unacquainted with the face of nature in her magnificent scenes; he has never seen any mountain higher than Highgate-hill, nor reclined by any stream more pastoral than the Serpentine River.

The extreme moral depravity of the Cockney School is another thing which is for ever thrusting itself upon the public attention, and convincing every man of sense who looks into their productions, that they who sport such sentiments can never be great poets. How could any man of high original genius ever stoop publicly, at the present day, to dip his fingers in the least of those glittering and rancid obscenities which float on the surface of Mr Hunt's Hippocrene? His poetry resembles that of a man who has kept company with kept-mistresses. His muse talks indelicately like a tea-sipping milliner girl. Some excuse for her there might have been, had she been hurried away by imagination or passion; but with her, indecency seems a disease, she appears to speak unclean things from perfect inanition. Surely they who are connected with Mr Hunt by the tender relations of society, have good reason to complain that his muse should have been so prostituted. In Rimini a deadly wound is aimed at the dearest confidences of domestic bliss. The author has voluntarily chosen—a subject not of simple seduction alone—one in which his mind seems absolutely to gloat over all the details of adultery and incest.

How such an indelicate writer as Mr Hunt can pretend to be an admirer of Mr Wordsworth, is to us a thing altogether inexplicable. One great charm of Wordsworth's noble compositions consists in the dignified purity of thought, and the patriarchal simplicity of feeling, with which they are throughout penetrated and imbued. We can conceive a vicious man admiring with distant awe the spectacle of virtue and purity; but if he does so sincerely, he must also do so with the profoundest feeling of the error of his own ways, and the resolution to amend them. His admiration must be humble and silent, not pert and loquacious. Mr Hunt praises the purity of Wordsworth as if he himself were pure, his dignity as if he also were dignified ... For the person who writes Rimini, to admire the Excursion, is just as impossible as it would be for a Chinese polisher of cherry-stones, or gilder of tea-cups, to burst into tears at the sight of the Theseus or the Torso.

The phrenzy of the 'Poems' was bad enough in its way, but it did not alarm us half so seriously as the calm, settled, imperturbable drivelling idiocy of 'Endymion.' ...

The absurdity of the thought in this sonnet is, however, if possible, surpassed in another, 'addressed to Haydon' the painter, that clever, but most affected artist, who as little resembles Raphael in genius as he does in person, notwithstanding the foppery of having his hair curled over his shoulders in the old Italian fashion. In this exquisite piece it will be observed, that Mr Keats classes together WORDSWORTH, HUNT, and HAYDON, as the three greatest spirits of the age, and that he alludes to himself, and some others of the rising brood of Cockneys, as likely to attain hereafter an equally honourable elevation. Wordsworth and Hunt! what a juxtaposition! The purest, the loftiest, and, we do not fear to say it, the most classical of living English poets, joined together in the same compliment with the meanest, the filthiest, and the most vulgar of Cockney poetasters ...

We had almost forgot to mention, that Keats belongs to the Cockney School of Politics, as well as the Cockney School of Poetry.

Live thou, whose infamy is not thy fame!

Live! fear no heavier chastisement from me,

Thou noteless blot on a remember'd name!

But be thyself, and know thyself to be!

And ever at thy season be thou free

To spill the venom when thy fangs o'erflow;

Remorse and Self-contempt shall cling to thee;

Hot Shame shall burn upon thy secret brow,

And like a beaten hound tremble thou shalt—as now.

He is made one with Nature: there is heard
His voice in all her music, from the moan
Of thunder, to the song of night's sweet bird;
He is a presence to be felt and known
In darkness and in light, from herb and stone,
Spreading itself where'er that Power may move
Which has withdrawn his being to its own;
Which wields the world with never-wearied love,
Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above.

30144

THE
LONDON MAGAZINE.

JANUARY TO JUNE,
1820.

Why should not divers studies, at divers hours, delight, when the
variety is able alone to refresh and repair us?
BEN JONSON'S Discoveries.

VOL. I.

London:
Printed for
BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY.
—
1820.



 NATIONAL GALLERIES SCOTLAND

multiple artists

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