

***The Black Vampyre;  
A Legend of St. Domingo (1819)***  
“Uriah Derick D’Arcy”

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In April of 1819, a London periodical, the *New Monthly Magazine*, published “The Vampyre: A Tale by Lord Byron.” There had been earlier Anglophone accounts of vampires, often in poetry, but this tale, actually written by Byron’s erstwhile friend and physician John Polidori, was a literary sensation. Notice of its publication quickly appeared in papers around the United States. Typical was this short note which appeared in late April, in the *Rhode-Island American*:

Lord Byron has published a new prose tale, called “The Vampyre.”—  
It is said to be of the most horrifick nature.

Byron was at the time enjoying remarkable popularity in the United States, where his writings frequently appeared in local editions.<sup>1</sup> A new prose tale supposedly by the famous poet garnered great attention. Reviews positive and negative appeared by June, as did reprintings, for instance in Boston’s *Atheneum* (Jun 15) and Baltimore’s *Robinson’s Magazine* (Jun 26). By July, Byron’s denial of authorship was being reported as well, by August Polidori’s authorship was being asserted, and a dramatic adaptation would soon appear. The vampire concept was also beginning to appear as a metaphor for economic or emotional exploitation. The celebrated Irish lawyer Charles Phillips, whose speeches were praised and reprinted, used the image of “the human vampyre” in a famous courtroom speech in March of 1819—shortly before Polidori’s tale appeared. Phillips’s speech was widely circulated in US newspapers, and Philadelphia’s *Franklin Gazette* (June 24, 1819) prefaced this long oration with a summary highlighting the metaphor:

The penalty inflicted by the jury, though an inadequate punishment for the detestable deed, marked their execration of the avaricious and atrocious vampyre, whose abandoned conduct, spread desolation over an earthly paradise.

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<sup>1</sup> *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage* appeared in Philadelphia, New York, Boston, and Baltimore in 1812; editions of *The Giaour*, *The Corsair*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *Lara, a Tale*, *Hebrew Melodies*, *Manfred*, *Beppo*, and *Mazeppa*, not to mention some multi-volume compilations, were published through the 1810s.

In the meanwhile, an American response, *The Black Vampyre*, attributed to one Uriah Derick D’Arcy, appeared.<sup>2</sup> Readers seem to have been entertained but also perplexed. As one review put it, the new publication

does not seem intended as a regular burlesque [of the European text], but merely to ridicule the superstition in general; and the absurdity of supposing that any sane woman could fall desperately in love with the character of a Vampyre. Some particular passages are well burlesqued. The superstition, however, does not seem to be conformed to, in every respect.<sup>3</sup>

We don’t know how popular the US text was—many texts at the time circulated primarily in their publication locale, though this one was advertised as far away as Charleston, SC—but it appeared in a second edition within two months.<sup>4</sup> We also do not know who the author was. An 1845 reprinting attributed the work to a Robert C. Sands, but Katie Bray convincingly suggests the author is Richard Varick Dey (1801-1837), who in the summer of 1819 would have been a recent graduate of Columbia.<sup>5</sup> Whoever D’Arcy was, he was quick to use vampirism as a metaphor for a number of concerns of 1819 New York.

Like Polidori’s story, *The Black Vampyre* quotes under 20 lines about vampyres from Byron’s earlier “The Giaour,” a fragmentary, orientalist poem that, after its London publication, appeared in US editions in 1813 (Philadelphia and Boston) and 1816 (Philadelphia). The poem’s narrative follows a European of uncertain origin—“giaour” is a Turkish slur for a non-Muslim—in the Ottoman Empire. The giaour is in love with a woman in the harem of the Turkish ruler Hassan; the ruler has the woman killed in punishment. The giaour eventually kills Hassan, and at poem’s end he recounts the events and his response in a Christian monastery. Again, the poem includes only a brief passage about vampires—lines 747-786—but the motif of the dead-as-undead appears

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<sup>2</sup> A notice of pending publication appeared in the June 21, 1819 *New-York Daily Advertiser*. The bookseller C. Willy & Co., at No. 3 Wall-Street in New York, was advertising the book for sale by the June 23 issue of the *New-York Evening Post*.

<sup>3</sup> *New York Commercial Advertiser*, Jun 28, 1819, 2.

<sup>4</sup> The August 30 *New-York Columbian* declared the second edition published “this day.” For the South Carolina ad, see the *Southern Patriot* for July 9, 1819.

<sup>5</sup> For Bray, see Further Readings, below; she discusses authorship on 19-20n4. Uriah Derick D’Arcy is an anagram of Dey’s name (with the *v* reappearing as a *u*), and the claim of Robert Sands’s authorship maintained that the pseudonym was created as a false clue and satire of Dey. It’s worth noting that Dey’s father Anthony was from Passaic, New Jersey, that Dey began attending the New Brunswick (NJ) Theological Seminary in 1820, and that he married Lavinia Agnes Scott, also from New Brunswick: *The Black Vampyre* contains several important references to New Jersey.

repeatedly throughout the poem, frequently as a way of talking about geopolitical conflicts. Most obviously, “The Giaour” takes up the cause of Greek independence: Greek-speaking peoples were subjects within the Ottoman Empire. “The Giaour” describes the Greek situation as “Greece, but living Greece no more” (line 91), as exhibiting “loveliness in death,/ That parts not quite with parting breath” (lines 94-95), as evidencing “The graves of those that cannot die!” (line 135). What’s more, the Greek situation was explicitly presented through the metaphor of slavery: modern Greeks “Now crawl from cradle to the Grave, / Slaves—nay, the bondsmen of a Slave” (lines 150-51).

In a similar vein, D’Arcy makes slavery central to his work, most obviously by making his titular vampire black and specifically an African brought to New World enslavement. Anti-slavery sentiment was strong and growing in New York throughout the 1810s, becoming particularly acute in the early months of 1819 as controversy spread around the granting of statehood to Missouri. In February, Representative James Tallmadge, Jr. (Democratic-Republican, NY-4) proposed an amendment to the Missouri admission legislation banning the expansion of slavery in the state and proposing freedom for every enslaved person upon reaching the age of twenty-five. In the congressional debates that followed, New Yorkers were prominent in denouncing the smuggling of slaves in the decade after the Constitution had prohibited further importation of enslaved people, in decrying the “three-fifths clause” and the unfair power it gave southern states, in pointing out the Constitution’s obscurities on matters of slavery, and in suggesting that violent revolution might be the necessary outcome of slavery’s continuation.<sup>6</sup>

Such fears might have influenced the presentation of *The Black Vampyre*’s titular character as Haitian. The Haitian Revolution, the hemisphere’s first successful colonial revolution against slavery, had, after more than a decade of violent conflict, culminated in independence in 1804. (US newspapers continued to use the older colonial names of Saint-Domingue or St. Domingo.) Works about Haiti and the Caribbean were extremely popular, and D’Arcy drew in particular on one by Bryan Edwards, a Jamaican plantation owner, supporter of the slave trade, and British colonial politician. Edwards authored a popular and influential

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<sup>6</sup> New York’s *National Advocate* for May 22, 1819 published the following notice: “The Augusta Crucible of the 10<sup>th</sup> confirms the account of the conspiracy which we published on Wednesday. One of the ringleaders, named Coco, was an active brigand in the insurrection and massacre at St. Domingo in the year ’93. He was on the 8<sup>th</sup> inst. found guilty and ordered for execution on the 17<sup>th</sup>.”

history of the British Caribbean possessions, the *History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies*, first published in 1793, and appearing thereafter in numerous editions and translations. Four years later, he published *An Historical Survey of the French Colony in the Island of St Domingo*, an account of the unfolding, then still unresolved, Haitian Revolution. Edwards died in 1800 (before the revolution's end), but from 1801 on, his history of the West Indies appeared combined with his study of St. Domingo. A five-volume edition appeared in 1819, in London, Dublin, and Edinburgh—this is the edition used by D'Arcy.<sup>7</sup> Edwards was so influential in part because he popularized a branch of obeah, a group of creole religious and medical practices associated with enslaved Africans in the British Caribbean. In late 18C and early 19C texts, colonial writers used obeah (obi) as an umbrella term for a broad range of practices, in which empowered Africans negotiated with supernatural powers and made use of medicinal plants to heal or harm community members.<sup>8</sup> Obeah practices were said to solidify oaths among conspiring Africans, to resolve romantic disputes, to police community boundaries, and sometimes, to foment rebellion among enslaved Africans, as in the widely circulated stories about Jack Mansong, the former enslaved person whose raids on plantations terrorized Jamaican planters in the late eighteenth century.<sup>9</sup>

*The Black Vampyre* draws on this obeah literature to enmesh it with vampirism, sprinkling the already well-established conventions common to representations of obeah throughout its vampire plot. Obeah fictions, for instance, recounted enslaved Africans' abilities to imbue inert objects with animating power—as they assembled little bags or amulets that held the power to harm those who crossed their path—and their ability to transform the living into the seemingly temporarily dead by

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<sup>7</sup> Two four-volume editions also appeared in the United States, in 1805-06 (Philadelphia) and in 1810 (Philadelphia, Charleston, and Baltimore).

<sup>8</sup> Obeah, as a catchall term, comes into print in the Anglophone west as a colonial construction. Legal, ethnographic, and fictional texts sought to render diverse medical and religious practices undertaken by enslaved Africans into a coherent whole named “obeah.” Yet obeah practices have their own histories beyond these texts. As Diana Paton notes, “[o]beah in the Anglophone Caribbean was produced through a process of unequal dialogue among a wide range of actors—including ritual specialists, poor and struggling people, members of many churches, colonial officials, missionaries, and members of the Caribbean resident elite—in transnational exchange with people and groups in the United States, Britain, other parts of the Caribbean, and . . . West Africa” (Paton, “Obeah Acts: Producing and Policing the Boundaries of Religion in the Caribbean,” *small axe* 13.1 [March 2009]: 4).

<sup>9</sup> See especially William Earle's *Obi; or the History of Three-Fingered Jack* (1800; Broadview edition, 2005).

administering narcotic potions that, for a time, made the living appear dead. *The Black Vampyre* takes the representation of the obeah practice of a “fetish oath” and the use of narcotic potions to make the living appear dead,<sup>10</sup> retooling it for the vampire plot. In the process, *The Black Vampyre* drafts obeah into the “MORAL” that appears at the story’s end: that the true vampires are the shysters, the leeches, and the myriad other grifters who profit from other’s hard work and responsible behavior. The lurid grave-snatching, oath-making, and blood-stealing that dominates the plot heightens the stakes of the ending moral’s otherwise bloodless financial and property crimes, making them matters of life and death. But if obeah and vampirism, as metaphors, are meant to reveal the truth of life in an Atlantic world driven by the profit motive, they also importantly conceal some of that truth. While initially it seems that Mr. Personne gets his just deserts for his treatment of the African boy, obeah and vampirism have only transient power in the story’s imagination. State power arrives to put down the rebellion that the African Prince plans, and Mrs. Personne’s canny apprehension that she should steal the African’s obeah preparation allow the story’s mechanisms, at the end, to put the colonial world mostly back to rights. In the end, *The Black Vampyre*’s turn to obeah practices stands as an example of how early nineteenth century Atlantic cultures sought to treat superstitions, enchantments, and other forms of traffic with the supernatural. The pleasurable play with life, death, and the living dead encourages readers to see financial crimes among white people as forms of vampirism, while cautiously side-stepping the most obvious form of financial and life-predation present in the story: the enslavement of Africans. In this, the story turns to superstition not necessarily to dupe its readers, but rather to redirect their attention toward some crimes and away from others.<sup>11</sup> *The Black Vampyre* lets its readers have just enough superstition to reveal some of the ground truths of the Atlantic world, but not so much that they might actually overturn the structures that made those enchantments necessary.

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<sup>10</sup> See, for instance, Maria Edgeworth’s “The Grateful Negro” (1805), which concludes with both a band of enslaved conspirators taking a fetish oath and an obeah worker administering a narcotic potion that creates a sleep like death.

<sup>11</sup> For an explanation of this process, see Emily Ogden’s *Credulity: A Cultural History of US Mesmerism* (Univ. of Chicago Press, 2018). As Emily Ogden puts it, “enchanted states . . . were tools to be used in secular projects, not modes of being that were excluded from a secular age” (*Credulity* 21). “Enchantment . . . was not a radical or fringe practice; it was a management strategy” used to guide populations toward useful or appropriate behaviors (*Credulity* 20).

The steady references to the economy throughout the narrative were responses to what has come to be called the Panic of 1819, one of the worst recessions of nineteenth-century America.<sup>12</sup> Foreign markets for US goods contracted, banks failed, mercantile firms went bankrupt, unemployment rose dramatically, wages plunged, and deflation became widespread. “collapse of foreign markets for American commodities” (Haulman 33) combined with bank and commercial failures a national contraction of financial and commercial markets resulting from capitalist speculation and “the collapse of foreign markets for American commodities.” *The Black Vampyre* opens with references to a recent anonymous play, “Wall-Street” that appeared in the summer of 1819: its plot focused on characters scrambling around New York City trying to get payments and extend loans to prevent bankruptcy and ruin. D’Arcy also references “the Auction Room,” alluding to the practice of auctioning imports, something done “to dispose of excess goods quickly,” thereby “enabl[ing] manufacturers to increase output on speculation” (Haulman 12-13).<sup>13</sup> In spelling out the “MORAL” of *The Black Vampyre*, D’Arcy mentions the “fraudulent trafficker in stock and merchandize,” the “corrupted and senseless Clerk” at financial institutions, and “Brokers, Country Bank Directors, and their disciples”—all characterized as vampires. And the poem in the second edition amplified, if anything, these economic references:

Lo! thro’ the bustling world of trade,  
What monsters march in long parade; ...  
The bubble burst, and credit fled,  
The money’d quack proclaims them dead;—...

The developing forms of capitalism are emphatically linked with both the vampire’s violence in sucking life from the living and the horror of dead-but-undead institutions. And while the vampirism metaphor also extends to fashion and literature, D’Arcy arguably sees the logic of the marketplace encroaching further into art and everyday life practices. Speculators suck the life from merchants, who suck the life from producers, just as the world of fashion must constantly move on to its next source to drain it as well. So too with literary artists, who

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<sup>12</sup> Clyde A. Haulman says that the 1819 panic and 1839-43 depression were the worst contractions of the century. See *Virginia and the Great Panic* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008), 33. Chapter 2 provides a valuable “Overview of the Panic of 1819.”

<sup>13</sup> Auctions also “provided a mechanism through which false invoices could be used to circumvent tariffs,” thus artificially lowering prices (Haulman 12-13). The newspaper editor Mordecai Noah identified a “Mr. Mead” as the author of the play in the September 29, 1819 issue of *The National Advocate*.

constantly feed off the resources around them, just as D'Arcy has fed off Byron and Polidori.

When *The Black Vampyre* appeared in its second edition, it added a nineteen-stanza poem, "Vampyrism," exploring this metaphor, reflecting too on the ostensibly rational origins of the United States that have prompted a different turn to mythology and monstrosity. The second edition also turned more directly to New York's literary scene. The poem has a prefatory note addressed to Solomon Lang and Launcelot Langstaff. John "Solomon" Lang (1770-1836) was the editor of the *New York Gazette*, a paper dedicated primarily to shipping news for merchants. Launcelot Langstaff was the pen-name used by James Kirke Paulding (1778-1860), a well-known and controversial figure on the literary scene, and an associate of the increasingly respected and internationally prominent author Washington Irving. Irving, Paulding, and some others had been associated with the satirical periodical *Salmagundi; or, the Whim-Whams and Opinions of Launcelot Langstaff, Esq. and Others*, which appeared irregularly from January, 1807 to January, 1808, and was revived in the fall of 1819. It appears that Paulding had panned *The Black Vampyre* in Lang's newspaper in August—this notice is reproduced at the end—so D'Arcy attacked Lang and Paulding (who used the pen-name Launcelot Langstaff). These attacks positively referenced the well-known conservative periodical *The Port Folio*, while also attacking a leftist newspaper editor (Thomas Wooler) in Britain, so it possible that D'Arcy was using the second edition to emphasize an alignment with political and cultural conservatives. (Paulding had also written anti-British commentary around the time of the War of 1812 [1812-14], and D'Arcy mocks this as false patriotism.)

The result is a complicated, highly allusive text intensely engaged with the cultural scene of the time. In the opening pages, he not only references Polidori's story and Byron's poetry but he also quotes a recent London burlesque and the aforementioned "Wall-Street." The text references classical authors (Lucan, Virgil, Aeschylus, Homer), contemporary histories (Edwards, Raynal), theology (Tillotson, Toplady), celebrated British authors (Shakespeare, Milton, Burton, Pope, Defoe) and popular contemporary figures (Lady Morgan, Walter Scott, Thomas Moore, Thomas Campbell, and others). He likewise alludes to contemporary newspapers and stories, NY businesses, artistic figures and booksellers, orators and magicians, and local attractions and legends. To compound this complexity, the tone of the narrative—as the original reviewers noted—is hard to assess, at times sympathetic to the black vampire, at times dismissive, at moments serious, at others frivolous.

Two hundred years later, it serves as a record of sorts of a racially-charged moment of economic crisis, and an early attempt to play with the powerful figure of the vampire.

After 1819, the first edition of *The Black Vampyre* was reprinted in the January and February, 1845 issues of *The Knickerbocker*, where Robert C. Sands was attributed authorship, probably incorrectly. More recently, the first edition was also reproduced in *The Best Vampire Stories 1800-1849: A Classic Vampire Anthology*, edited by Andrew Barger (Bottletree, 2012). Apparently because of its scarcity, the text was not included in Ralph R. Shaw and Richard H. Shoemaker's *American Bibliography, a Preliminary Checklist for 1801-1819*. We reproduce here, we believe for the first time in two hundred years, the second edition of *The Black Vampyre*. We're grateful to the American Antiquarian Society, and particularly Caroline Stoffel, for assistance in preparing this edition.

**Suggestions for further reading:** To date, Katie Bray remains the only critic to engage extensively with *The Black Vampyre*, and she argues that the novella is both highly intertextual and difficult to classify using the traditional model of national literary development. By exploring how *The Black Vampyre* was originally marketed alongside volumes by Washington Irving and Lord Byron, Bray argues that the novella exemplifies “the era’s interest in different forms of the gothic” (1). Bray describes *The Black Vampyre* as a “hemispheric gothic” text, and concludes that it “questions not only putatively pure racial lines but also uncomplicated US national narratives as it exposes the contaminated power relations that shape family life and the intertwined histories of the United States and Haiti”; see Bray, “‘A Climate . . . More Prolific . . . in Sorcery’: *The Black Vampyre* and the Hemispheric Gothic,” *American Literature* (2015) 87.1: 1–21.

On the surface level, *The Black Vampyre* was a cagey attempt to capitalize on the transatlantic popularity of John Polidori's *The Vampyre*, first published just a few months before D'Arcy's text. In their introduction to their edition of *The Vampyre*, D.L. Macdonald and Kathleen Scherf provide an in-depth account of the creation of Polidori's text and of its somewhat convoluted reception history; see, John William Polidori's *The Vampyre and Ernestus Berchtold*, ed. Macdonald & Scherf (Broadview, 2008), 9-31. As Macdonald and Scherf detail, Polidori transforms the figure of the vampire away from its original depictions in Eastern European folktales. In these traditional folktales, vampires often resembled contemporary representations of zombies—they were typically depicted as putrefying corpses, which had been

reanimated by some external force. Polidori was responsible for transforming this folk figure into the more familiar modern version of the vampire as an “articulate, aristocratic, and seductive” rogue (9), and he largely did so by constructing his vampire as a “caricature” of his former employer Lord Byron (11). Polidori’s text quickly became a bestseller on both sides of the Atlantic, proving successful enough to go through “seven English editions in the first year” (11). In the U.S. print public sphere, the first edition of *The Black Vampyre* was advertised for sale alongside Byron’s *The Vampyre* since news of Polidori’s authorship did not reach North America until shortly before the publication of the second edition of *The Black Vampyre* (now sold alongside various volumes of Byron’s poetry).

Byron himself had deployed vampire-like figures in several of his poems (most notably “The Giaour”), which in part fueled the sense that he had authored Polidori’s text. Moreover, Byron’s verse played an important role in shaping the early Anglophone understanding of vampires, even as his larger-than-life persona helped popularize representations of vampires as erotic, scandalous, wandering figures. For more information about the connections between Byron and the rise of vampires in Anglo-American literary culture, we recommend (in addition to the Macdonald and Scherf introduction): Conrad Aquilina’s “The deformed transformed; or, from bloodsucker to Byronic hero – Polidori and the literary vampire,” in *Open Graves, Open Minds: Representations of Vampires and the Undead from Enlightenment to the Present Day* (Manchester Univ. Press, 2013) 24-38; Mariam Wassif’s “Polidori’s *The Vampyre* and Byron’s Portrait,” *Wordsworth Circle* (2018) 49.1, 53-61; and, Andrew McConnell Stott’s *The Poet and the Vampyre: The Curse of Byron and the Birth of Literature’s Greatest Monsters* (Pegasus Books, 2015).

Other scholarship of note on Polidori’s text includes J. P. Telotte’s “A Parasitic Perspective: Romantic Participation and Polidori’s *The Vampyre*,” in *The Blood is the Life: Vampires in Literature* (Bowling Green State Univ. Press, 1999) 9-19; and, Carol Senf’s “Polidori’s *The Vampyre*: Combining the Gothic with Realism,” *North Dakota Quarterly* (1988) 56.1, 197-208. For a perceptive discussion of how Polidori’s vampire represents the inherent dangers of unregulated self-interest, we recommend Lauren Bailey’s “Gothic Economies: Capitalism and Vampirism,” in *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Economics* (Routledge, 2018) 89-95.

For a cultural history of the evolution of the vampire across the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, please see Nick Groom, *The Vampyre: A New History* (Yale Univ. Press, 2018). For those interested in

how figurations of vampirism circulated in trans-Atlantic nineteenth century literature, James B. Twitchell's *The Living Dead: A Study of the Vampire in Romantic Literature* (Duke Univ. Press, 1981) is a useful (albeit largely canonical) resource.

As many critics have noted, the Gothic stands as one of the most important and widely circulating genres of late eighteenth and early nineteenth Anglo-American print culture, and in many ways the intertextuality of *The Black Vampyre* exemplifies this central motif of the genre. In his trans-Atlantic study of the evolution of gothic tropes and motifs, Fred Botting argues that at its core the "Gothic signifies a writing of excess," noting that "gothic atmospheres – gloomy and mysterious – have repeatedly signaled the disturbing return of pasts upon presents and evoked emotions of terror and laughter"; see Botting, *Gothic* (Routledge, 1996), 1. In her incisive overview of the history of American gothic criticism, Siân Silyn Roberts argues that while "the Gothic is notoriously resistant to generic classification," it has remained fundamental to studies of early American literature since it has long been privileged as the key genre for encoding "in narrative form, the 'special guilts' of American experience, chiefly slavery, land dispossession, and revolutionary patricide"; see Silyn Roberts, "A Transnational Perspective on American Gothic Criticism," in *Transnational Gothic: Literary and Social Exchanges in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Ashgate, 2013) 21 and 19.

Other useful entry points to the importance of the gothic in early American print culture include Leonard Tennenhouse's "Is There An Early American Novel?," *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 40:1-2 (2007), 5-17; Leslie Fiedler's *Love and Death in the American Novel* (Vintage, 1960); Donald A. Ringe's *American Gothic: Imagination and Reason in Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (Univ. of Kentucky Press, 1982); Teresa A. Goddu's *Gothic America: Narrative, History, and Nation* (Columbia Univ. Press, 1997); and Siân Silyn Roberts's important new book *Gothic Subjects: The Transformation of Individualism in American Fiction, 1790-1861* (Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

In an intriguing essay on gothic serial publications, Douglass H. Thomson and Diane Long Hoeveler argue that "shorter versions of the Gothic," especially chapbooks and serialized magazine tales, "were far more affordable than a multi-volume Gothic novel," and that these shorter texts were therefore intentionally aimed at "the newly literate working class" and thus often featured plots which highlight the struggles of working class individuals plagued by the machinations of wealthier protagonists; see, Thomson & Hoeveler, "To Make A Long Story Short: Varieties of Shorter Gothic Tales and Ballads," in *Romantic*

*Gothic: An Edinburgh Companion* (Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2016), 148-166. For more information on how the gothic has often been used to represent the horrors of capitalism, we recommend David McNally's *Monsters of the Market: Zombies, Vampires and Global Capitalism* (Brill, 2011).

For more information on non-Christian religious practices in the Caribbean, we recommend Toni Wall Jaudon's "Obeah's Sensations: Rethinking Religion at the Transnational Turn," *American Literature* (2012) 84.4: 715-741; Diana Paton's "Obeah Acts: Producing and Policing the Boundaries of Religion in the Caribbean," *small axe* (2009) 13.1, 1-18; and Elizabeth Maddock Dillon's "Obi, Assemblage, Enchantment," *J19: The Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists* (2013) 1.1: 172-178. For a discussion of obeah and colonial forms of knowledge, we recommend Kelly Wisecup, "Knowing Obeah," *Atlantic Studies* (2013) 10.3: 1-20. Finally, for an overview on recent work on the cultural importance of Obeah and especially for the ways in which it charts the ambiguous collisions "between enlightened European rationality and savage African superstition," we recommend Tim Watson's "Mobile obeah: a response to 'Obeah: knowledge, power, and writing in the early Atlantic World,'" *Atlantic Studies* (2015) 12.2, 244-250.

THE  
BLACK VAMPYRE;

A

*LEGEND OF ST. DOMINGO.*

BY **URIAH DERICK D'ARCY.**

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So have I seen, upon another shore,  
Another Lion give a grievous roar;  
And the last Lion thought the first—A BOAR!  
*Bombast. Furios.*<sup>14</sup>

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SECOND EDITION, WITH ADDITIONS.

NEW -YORK:  
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.  
1819.

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<sup>14</sup> The lines rearrange a portion of the English writer William Barnes Rhodes's *Bombastes Furioso: A Burlesque Tragic Opera*, first performed in London in 1810, and first published in Dublin in 1813. The play was performed in New York City in October and November of 1816 (see the *Evening Post* for Nov. 11, 1816), with a revival in 1819, where it is advertised from February to July. K. Meira Goldberg notes that Thomas Dartmouth Rice, the early blackface minstrel performer known as "Daddy Rice," who popularized the racist persona of Jim Crow, first performed as an extra in the New York City production of *Bombastes Furioso* (*Sonidos Negros: On the Blackness of Flamenco*). In Rhodes's play, the lines read: "So have I heard on Afric's burning shore, / Another lion give a grievous roar, / And the first lion thought the last a boar." The play concludes with a number of dead (hanged) characters leaping to their feet, singing "But, if some folks please,/ We'll die again to-morrow."

TO THE  
AUTHOR OF "WALL-STREET."<sup>15</sup>

MY DEAR SIR,

CHARMED with the success of your anomalous drama, which, without aspiring even to the character of nonsense, has already seen three editions, I have been myself induced to venture on publishing; with the sanguine hope of also scraping together a few shillings, in these hard times. Permit me to inscribe this tale to you, with a fellow-feeling for your lack of genius; and a fervent hope, that our names may be encircled by the same evergreen in the temple of the Muses; and that we may long flourish together, on the same pedestal, embellishing and elevating the literature of the Auction Room.

I remain,  
My dear Sir,  
Your affectionate Friend,  
And obedient Servant,  
THE AUTHOR.

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<sup>15</sup> For more on "Wall-Street," see the introduction.

## INTRODUCTION.

IF any person should have patience to read the following narrative, and can discover the Author's drift, it is more than he can do himself. If it be thought exquisite nonsense, it is more than the writer dares hope: and if it be pronounced simple, stupid, and unadulterated absurdity, his own private opinion will perfectly coincide with that of the public. He began to write without any fable, and before he had found any had spun out the thread of his ideas.

This tangled skein of absurdities is now exposed to criticism, from the laudable motive of showing, of how much nonsense an individual may be delivered, in the short space of two afternoons; without any excuse but idleness, or any object but amusement.

The prominent descriptions, which it is here attempted to ridicule, are fresh in the memory of all who have read the "White Vampyre;" and to those who have not, the Superstition must be so familiar, that it is unnecessary to make useless extracts.

That the Author may not, however, be misunderstood, it may be necessary to state, that in the speech of the Vampyre, he had no design of descending to that meanest of all intellectual exercises, a travestie on authors who are justly admired: but meant, if any thing, simply to show how passages, which were fine in their original use, when garbelled by the ignorant and tasteless, become a melancholy rhapsody of nonsense.

“But first on earth, as Vampyre sent,  
Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent;  
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,  
And suck the blood of all thy race;  
There from thy *daughter, sister, wife,*  
At midnight drain the stream of life;  
*Yet loathe the banquet, which perforce*  
Must feed thy livid living corse.  
Thy victims, ere they yet expire,  
Shall know the demon for their sire;

As cursing thee, thou cursing them,  
Thy flowers are withered on the stem.  
But one that for *thy crime* must fall,  
The youngest, best beloved of all,  
Shall bless thee with a *father's* name—  
That word shall wrap thy heart in flame!  
Yet thou must end thy task and mark  
Her cheek's last tinge—her eye's last spark,  
And the last glassy glance must view  
Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;  
Then with unhallowed hand shall tear  
The tresses of her yellow hair,  
Of which, in life a lock when shorn  
Affection's fondest pledge was worn—  
But now is borne away by thee  
Memorial of thine agony!  
Yet with thine own best blood shall drip  
Thy gnashing tooth, and haggard lip;  
Then stalking to thy sullen grave,  
Go—and with Gouls and Afrits rave,  
Till these in horror shrink away  
From spectre more accursed than they.”

BYRON.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Polidori's *The Vampyre*—here called “White Vampyre”—quotes the same lines from Byron's “The Giaour.” Slight variations in the fourteenth and twenty-seventh lines (“most beloved” changed to “best beloved”; “Wet with thine own” changed to “Yet with thine own”) suggest that *The Black Vampyre's* source was Polidori, not an edition of Byron. In the final lines, “Gouls”—from the Arabic—are evil spirits that rob graves; “Afrits” are powerful demons in Arabian mythology. For more information about the popularity of Polidori's text and the initial confusion over its authorship see the introduction.

## THE BLACK VAMPYRE.

\* \* \*

MR. ANTHONY GIBBONS was a gentleman of African extraction. His ancestors emigrated from the eastern coast of GUINEA, in a French ship, and were sold in ST. DOMINGO remarkably cheap;<sup>18</sup> as they were reduced to mere skeletons by the yaws<sup>19</sup> on the passage; and all died shortly after their arrival, except one small negro, of a very slender constitution, and fit for no work whatever. The gentleman who purchased *him*, charitably knocked out his brains; and the body was thrown into the ocean. The tide returning in the night, it was washed upon the sands; and the moon then shining bright, the gentleman was taking a walk to enjoy the coolness of the evening; judge of his surprise, when the little corpse got up, and complaining of a pain in its bowels, begged for some bread and butter!

The PLANTER supposing his business to have been but half done, kicked him back in the water. The element seemed very familiar to him; and he swam back with much grace and agility; parting the sparkling waves with his jet black members, polished like ebony, but reflecting no single beam of light. His complexion was a dead black;—his eyes a pure white;—the iris was flame colour;—and the pupils of a clear, moonshiny lustre;—but so peculiarly constructed, that, though prominent, they seemed to look into his own head. His hair was neither curled nor straight; but feathery, like the plumage of a crow. Having paddled again on shore, he came crawling crab fashion, to the feet of Mr. PERSONNE.<sup>20</sup> The latter gentleman, in con-

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<sup>18</sup> *ST. DOMINGO* was renamed Hayti in 1804, but was called St. Domingo in the US press for years after.

<sup>19</sup> *Yaws*: an infectious, disfiguring tropical skin disease, also known as framboesia.

<sup>20</sup> *Personne* can translate, from the French, as “person” or “individual,” but the most common meaning would be “nobody.”

siderable alarm, (not knowing whether it was Satan, Obi<sup>21</sup>, or some other worthy, with whom he had to deal,) mustered up sufficient resolution, to tie a large stone round the boy's middle: then, with a main exertion of strength, he hurled him into the sparkling ocean. He fell where the reflection of the moon was brightest, and sunk like lead; but immediately rose again like cork, perpendicularly, with the stone under his arm; while the radiant lustre of the planet retreated from his dark figure, exhibiting in its most striking contrast its utter blackness!

In this predicament, he came buoyant to land; surrounded, as he seemed, by a sphere of magic lustre. He now walked up to the Frenchman, with his arms a-kimbo, and looking remarkably fierce. Mr. PERSONNE'S particular hairs stood up on end,

\_\_\_\_\_ Tunc perculit horror  
Membra ducis, riguere comæ, gressumque coercens  
Languor in extrema tenuit vestigia ripa. LVC.<sup>22</sup>

but being ashamed that a little negro of ten years old, should put him in bodily fear, he knocked him down. The Guinea-man rose again, without bending a joint; as fast as Mr. PERSONNE could upset him, he recovered his altitude; just like one of those small toys, fabricated from pith, tipped with lead,<sup>23</sup> called witches and hobgoblins by the rising generation!

The PLANTER, in utter amazement and despair, took hold of the child by both his extremities; and pressing him to the earth, set down upon him! Then, halloing for his attendants, he ordered a tremendous fire to be kindled on the sand!! This was accordingly done. The GAUL<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> *Obi*: Obi (sometimes spelled Obeah, Obeya, or Obia) is a system of spiritual and healing practices developed among enslaved West Africans in the West Indies Here the author seems to be conflating a set of practices with a singular deity. For more information about Obi and of D'Arcy's likely sources for this information, see the introduction.

<sup>22</sup> The lines are from the 1C CE Roman poet Lucan's *De Bello Civili (On the Civil War)*, Book I, lines 192-94 ("LVC." is an abridgement of Lucan). J. D. Duff's Loeb translation renders these lines: "Then trembling smote the leader's limbs, his hair on end, a faintness stopped his motion and fettered his feet on the edge of the river-bank."

<sup>23</sup> *Those small toys*: this appears to be a toy sometimes called "the posture master." The toy was a figuring carved from the lightweight pith of an elder tree, then weighted on the bottom with lead, so the figure, if tipped, stands up again. See the description in *The Pleasing Preceptor* (London, 1800).

<sup>24</sup> *Gaul*: Frenchman.

congratulated himself on his perseverance and sagacity; and as he had never heard of ignaqueous<sup>25</sup> animals, was confident that though the water fiend was so expert in his own element, he could not stand the fiery ordeal. The boy, meanwhile, lay perfectly passive, as if he had been a mere log; but presently, when the pile was all in a light blaze, with a sudden expansion, like that of a compressed Indian Rubber, he popped Mr. PERSONNE up into the air many yards, and he alighted head-foremost into the fire, where he had intended to have dedicated the sable brat, with his nine lives, to Moloch!!!<sup>26</sup>

Whatever the negro was, it is notorious that Mr. PERSONNE was no salamander.<sup>27</sup> He was rescued from the pyre, which, like Hercules, he had, (though unwittingly,) erected for himself; looking like a squizzed cat, and having apparently no life left in his body.<sup>28</sup> The attention of the domestics was drawn entirely to their master; who soon betrayed signs of animation, though he exhibited a most awful spectacle: being one continual sore and blister. “His whole body was one wound,” as Virgil or some other poet has hyperbolically expressed himself.<sup>29</sup>

Mr. PERSONNE, when he perfectly recovered his senses, found himself in his own bed, wrapt in greasy sheets, and smarting as if in a Cayenne bath.<sup>30</sup> He called for a glass of brandy,—his dear wife EUPHEMIA,—and his infant son, who had not yet been christened. His lady, with

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<sup>25</sup> *Ignaqueous*: able to live in fire and water; *Indian Rubber* was an elastic substance, or fabric made with this substance, tapped from trees.

<sup>26</sup> In Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Moloch is one of the fallen angels in Hell, and associated with child sacrifice.

<sup>27</sup> *Salamander*: Since antiquity a variety of folklore traditions have promulgated the idea that salamander’s are fire proof.

<sup>28</sup> In Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Book 9, Hercules, after flinging his adversary Lichas in the water, lies down on a funeral pyre, on which his mortal aspects burn away, leaving only the immortal parts. *Squizzed* seems related to squeezed.

<sup>29</sup> *One wound*: possibly an illusion to a scene in Lucan’s *De Bello Civili* (see note 22), in which a “Haemorrhoids,” a type of poisonous snake, bites a young man, forcing the blood of that individual to gush out of his body.

<sup>30</sup> *Cayenne bath*: a blend of lemon juice, salt, and cayenne pepper was sometimes used immediately after harsh punishments inflicted on the enslaved in Saint Domingue; see “The Enslaved Healers of Eighteenth-Century Saint Domingue” by Karol Kovalovich Weaver, *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 76.3 (Fall 2002), 440-41.

streaming eyes, presented herself before him; and, after tenderly inquiring into the state of his health, told him, (with a voice interrupted with sobs and hiccups,) that when she went in the morning to see her baby, whom she had left in the cradle, there was nothing to *be* seen, but the *skin, hair, and nails!!!* She declared that there never was such another object; except, indeed, the exsiccation in Scudder's Museum!<sup>31</sup>

On the receipt of this horrid intelligence, Mr. PERSONNE was seized with a violent spasmodic affection; and shortly after expired, muttering something about *sacre*, and the Guinea-negro!<sup>32</sup>

The amiable, but unfortunate Euphemia, was thrown into several hysterical convulsions; as well she might be, poor woman! when her husband had been made a holocaust,<sup>33</sup> and served up like a broiled and peppered chicken, to feed the grim maw of death; and her interesting infant, the first pledge of her pure and perfect love, had been precociously sucked, like an unripe orange, and nothing left but its beautiful and tender skin. The disconsolate widow caused her husband to be embalmed; and he was buried amid the lamentations and tears of all the funeral; much regretted by all who had the honour of his acquaintance, particularly by his negroes; who could not soon forget him; as he had left too many sincere marks of his regard upon their backs, to be ever obliterated from their recollections.

Time, as all the Greek tragedians, Solomon, and others have remarked, is a benevolent deity. Mrs. PERSONNE'S grief yielded to the soothing hand of the consoling power; and her bloom and spirits returned with more lustre and elasticity than they had before exhibited: as the rose, that had drooped in the fury of the passing storm,

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<sup>31</sup> *Scudder's*: Scudder's American Museum was a New York attraction from 1810 to the 1840s. After 1814, it notoriously displayed a purported "Indian mummy" found in a Kentucky cave—the "exsiccation" (result of drying) mentioned here.

<sup>32</sup> *Sacre*: the meaning is unclear, as "sacre" in French could mean "holy" or "cursed"; a *Guinea-negro* would have been an African enslaved from the Guinea coast of western Africa.

<sup>33</sup> *Holocaust*: a burnt sacrifice; *embalming*, mentioned later in the paragraph, was a still relatively rare practice at this time.

erects its blushing honours, and shows more beautiful and vivid tints, when the squall is over!

Many years after these occurrences took place, while EUPHEMIA was in second mourning<sup>34</sup> for her third husband, she was indulging in the luxury of solitary grief; and reading Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and *The Melancholy Poems of Dr. Farmer*, in an orangerie.<sup>35</sup> The refreshing breezes from the ocean, which now tempered the sultry heats of the declining day,—the soft perfume of the opening blossoms;—and the mellow tints of the evening sky, shedding that holy light, so dear to sensitive hearts, diffused a calm over her soul, wrapt in the contemplation of departed days. While lost in this pensive reverie, she perceived two strangers approaching her, in the extremity of the long vista of the grove. One of them was a coloured gentleman, of remarkable height, and deep jetty blackness; a perfect model of the CONGO Apollo.<sup>36</sup> He was drest in the rich garb of a Moorish Prince; and led by the hand a pale European boy, in an Asiatic dress; whose languid countenance, slender form and tristful gait, were strongly contrasted with the portly appearance and majestic step of his conductor!

They both saluted the lovely widow, and after an interchange of compliments, accepted her polite invitation to set down, and take tea with her in the bower. She learned from the elder stranger, that he had brought out a cargo of slaves, whom his subjects had lately taken prisoners in war; and whom he had resolved to dispose of

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<sup>34</sup> *Second mourning*: a period of mourning after a death, often marked by special requirements for clothing.

<sup>35</sup> *Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy* (first ed. 1621, but revised and reprinted numerous times after that) was an encyclopedic exploration of melancholy that regained popularity in the early 19C. It is unclear to what text the *The Melancholy Poems of Dr. Farmer* alludes; one Hugh Farmer (1714-1787) published an *Essay on the Demoniacs of the New Testament* in 1775, which does discuss the ancient belief that melancholy was attributed to possession by demons. An *orangerie* is an orange grove.

<sup>36</sup> *CONGO Apollo*: The Apollo Belvedere is a much-touted marble statue from antiquity that, in the long 18C, was popularly imagined to epitomize the ideal masculine form. A copy of the statue had just been brought to New York (see note 129). It seems that here, rather than a specific reference, the phrase riffs on the Apollo Belvedere to suggest an ideal of aesthetic perfection for a diasporic African.

himself; as he was desirous of seeing the world. His Page, he said, was an orphan, left by a slave merchant in Africa.

The manners and conversation of the PRINCE had an irresistible charm. The regal port<sup>37</sup> was manifest in his gigantic and well proportioned frame; and majesty was conspicuous on his brow, without its diadem.<sup>38</sup> The turban and crescent had never graced a nobler front; but the winning condescension of his tones and language, while they could not banish the feeling of the presence of royalty, removed every restraint incident to that consciousness. He criticised the works, which EUPHEMIA had been perusing, with masterly precision; and displayed more knowledge than even the accomplished ideologist of Lady Morgan; with infinitely more discretion and good sense.<sup>39</sup>

It is remarked by the Abbe Reynal, that there is a peculiar elegance and beauty in the complexion of the Africans, (when the eyes and nose are accustomed to their hue and odour.)<sup>40</sup> This truth was realized by EUPHEMIA, as she gazed on the open visage of her illustrious guest. She thought surely that in him Nature might stand up and say “This was a man!” And certainly it is only the weakness and imperfection of our human senses, which, penetrating no further than the surface, is for ever deceived by superficial shadows. The empyrean is always blue, whatever vapours may float in our contracted atmosphere. And if we gaze on the rows of skulls, which festoon and garnish Surgeon’s Hall,<sup>41</sup> we can apply no standard, to determine their relative beauty. They are all equally ugly; and the block of Helen

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<sup>37</sup> *Port*: personal bearing, demeanor, as in comportment or comportment of one’s body.

<sup>38</sup> *Diadem*: a crown.

<sup>39</sup> “Ideologist of Lady Morgan”: Sydney, Lady Morgan was an Irish novelist who became popular in the first two decades of the 19C; the ideologist may be the character De Vere in the *Florence Macarthy: An Irish Tale* (1816), a caricature of an intellectual, and one who “believed that ‘nothing is, but thinking makes it so’” (Vol. 1, Ch. 1).

<sup>40</sup> *Reynal*: Guillame Thomas François Raynal, commonly known by his clerical title Abbé, was a French philosophe best known for compiling the *Histoire Philosophique des Deux Indes*, a radical, multi-volume, collaboratively-written history of the world with an emphasis on European exploration and colonization. The work was widely translated and appeared in many different editions, sometimes expanded, sometimes abridged. We haven’t been able to determine which edition *BV* cites, but here the passage in question is probably from Volume 3, Book 11, which focuses on European encroachments in Africa to procure slaves.

<sup>41</sup> *Surgeon’s Hall* designates the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh, Scotland.

might be mistaken for that of Medusa. Shakspeare, true to nature, has also remarked, "Black men are pearls in beauteous ladies' eyes."<sup>42</sup>

The beauty then, the royalty, gentility, and various accomplishments of the BAMBUCK<sup>43</sup> monarch, made captive the too sensible heart of the French widow. She forgot her ogles, graces, and even her loquacity; rooted to her seat, and fixed in immoveable contemplation of the AFRICAN'S face. What peculiar feature or lineament attracted her attention, she knew not: his eyes, though bright, did not sparkle; and the iris, though of a more vivid red than the roseate line in the rainbow, emitted no scintillations. In fact, *his whole countenance seemed to look, and to perambulate her own.*<sup>44</sup>

The conversation gradually assumed a more impassioned and amorous complexion; and the little page, (who, though meagre and emaciated, evidently showed that he was no gump<sup>45</sup> for his years,) taking certain broad hints, cast a mournful and intelligent look on the widow, said he would fetch a short walk in the plantation, and left the orangerie.

The PRINCE then spreading his glittering sash upon the grass, went down on his knees upon it; and broke out into the most ardent exclamations, of love and admiration; and professions of constant attachment. He said that the flat-nosed beauties of Zara; the scarred, squab figures of the golden coast; the well proportioned Zilias, Calypsos, and Zamas on the banks of the Niger;<sup>46</sup> and even the great

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<sup>42</sup> *Shakspeare*: the line is from *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, V.ii.12. Shakspeare, as some early 19C editions noted, may follow the proverb, "A black man is a jewel in a fair woman's eye." The earlier line, "This was a man!" is also from Shakspeare, and appears in *Julius Caesar*, V.v.75.

<sup>43</sup> See Reynal, Vol. III. p. 392. [Note in original. Raynal's text notes that the "pretty large country, known by the name of Bambuck," "[i]s not subject to a particular king, but governed by village lords, called Farims." So the reference to a "BAMBUCK monarch" here is either erroneous or perhaps a spoof of Raynal.]

<sup>44</sup> *Perambulate*: to travel across.

<sup>45</sup> *Gump*: a fool.

<sup>46</sup> See Reynal, Vol. III. pp. 385 and 387. [Note in original. Raynal's text reads: "On the banks of the Niger, the women are generally handsome, if beauty consists in symmetry of proportion and not in colour. Modest, affable and faithful, an air of innocence appears in their looks, and their language is an indication of their bashfulness. The names of Zilia, Calypso, Fanny, Zama, which seem to be names of pleasure, are pronounced with an

Hottentot Venus<sup>47</sup> herself, had never for a moment made the least impression on his heart! His passion was a mystery to himself; its origin secret as the sources of the Nile ; but full and impetuous as its ample channel, when replenished from the celestial fountains of ABYSSINIA<sup>48</sup>; while if Mrs. DUBOIS would shine upon its waves, its enlivened currents would fertilize his vast dominions, in the luxuriant realms of central Africa; making them to fructify yet more abundantly, with burning gold, and radiant diamonds!!!

What female heart could resist such pleadings, and the compliment implied in such a preference? When ZEMBO<sup>49</sup> (the page) returned, the parties had agreed to be privately united on the same evening. The ceremony was accordingly performed, on the spot, by the family chaplain of Mrs. DUBOIS: not without many remonstrances on his part, as to the impropriety of marrying a negro. The PRINCE did not see to resent the affront; which, by the by, he had no right to do; as the priest got nothing for the job. ZEMBO, too, was extremely restless; till Mrs. DUBOIS gave him some sweetmeats<sup>50</sup>, which seemed to quiet his conscience; after which he took some stiff punch, and fell asleep!

About midnight, the PRINCE came to him; and, shaking him by the ears, bad him rise and follow him. His bride was hanging on his arm, in an enchanting dishabille;

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inflection of voice, of the softness and sweetness of which our organs are not susceptible” (Volume 3, Book 11).]

<sup>47</sup> *Hottentot Venus*: Sara Baartman, often called "Saartjie," was born sometime in the 1770s likely in the eastern part of what is now South Africa. In 1810, she traveled to England where she performed on the London stage as a human curiosity. Her large buttocks and supposedly disproportionate genitalia transfixed period commentators, and she became a symbol of overly sexualized Africans across the nineteenth century. After her death, Baartman was dissected and portions of her body as well as a cast of her body were kept on display in a Natural History Museum in Paris until 2002; then her remains were returned to South Africa where she is now buried.

<sup>48</sup> *ABYSSINIA*: the European name for modern Ethiopia in the long eighteenth century.

<sup>49</sup> *ZEMBO*: this seems a variant of Sambo or Zambo, a name often applied by Europeans to persons of mixed race. Edwards noted that “A *Sambo* is the offspring of a Black Woman by a Mulatto Man, or *vice versa*.” “Zembo and Nila: An African Tale,” a popular poem by the Scottish poet-reformer James Montgomery (17712-1854), appeared in Boston’s *Monthly Anthology, and Boston Review* in 1807.

<sup>50</sup> *Sweetmeats*: sugary foods, possibly here either candied fruit or sugared nuts.

and did not seem to be in perfect possession of her right senses. ZEMBO mournfully followed the new married pair.

They went silently out of the back door, with cautious steps, and proceeded through the orangerie. No breath of wind was stirring. The moon was on the zenith, surrounded by a pale halo of ghostly lustre. When they had crossed the plantation, they came to a place of sepulture; where the dark cypresses, and lugubrious mahogany, admitted but sparse and glimmering streaks of funereal light; which, falling on the rank foliage, the white monuments and broken ground beneath, presented a thousand dusky shapes, flitting in the dim uncertainty dear to superstition.

Vague terrors seized on the mind of the bride; and she began very naturally to inquire, what was the use of getting out of a comfortable bed, and trailing through the heavy dew, in her undress, to such an unusual spot for midnight recreation.

They now stood near the spot, where her three husbands, several children, and the *skin, hair* and *nails* of her first baby, were deposited in a row. At the foot of a tamarind,<sup>51</sup> lay her third son; whose christian name was SPOONER, and who died, according to the tombstone, in a fit of intoxication, aged seven years and six months. On him she had bestowed a greater share of tenderness, than any of her other offspring; and his loss had caused her most affliction.<sup>52</sup> The African, making observations on the grave, began to strip himself very expeditiously, assisted by ZEMBO; who seemed to recover from his blues; and by his activity and eagerness, manifested his expectation of soon seeing some fine sport.

Presently the two genii<sup>53</sup>, or gentlemen, or whatever they were, turned towards the East, and performed certain

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<sup>51</sup> *Tamarind*: a large tropical tree producing fruit pulp used in many cuisines; the tamarind is African in origin but was also common in Caribbean and southern US cooking.

<sup>52</sup> This Spooner Dubois having never been heard of since, it is probable that he has been roaming about the world; and it is possible, that he may be the same Lord Ruthven, whose adventures have been recently related. [Note in original. We have not identified any historical Spooner Dubois. Lord Ruthven is the vampire character in the Polidori story.]

<sup>53</sup> *Genii*: supernatural beings or spirits.

antic prostrations; throwing handfuls of earth three times over their heads.<sup>54</sup> Then returning to the tomb, they tore up the sods with ravenous fury; and soon drew out the last-mentioned son of the Lady, and threw him on the grass, beside the grave. ZEMBO fell as fiercely upon the corpse, as a hungry dog upon his dinner; but was arrested by the AFRICAN, who lent him a severe box on the ear, which sent him blubbering to a corner of the cemetery.

What added both to the mother's horrors and admiration, was, that the body of her child was perfectly fresh, and the olfactory nerves experienced no unsavoury sensation from its proximity; while its cheeks were diffused with so deep a tinge of scarlet, that they shone like ruddy fireballs in the darkness of the spot.<sup>55</sup> Her husband drew a golden goblet from beneath a large stone; then, bending over the corse, he scooped out the heart, with his long and polished nails; and, having pressed the blood into the chalice, mingled with it some dark particles, gathered from the newly turned up earth. From the pure and scanty lymph, which gushed near by and flickered like a streak of quicksilver-light in the moonbeam, he added a third ingredient of the potion. Then seizing his passive and trembling spouse by the throat, and presenting the unnatural mixture to her lips; he cried in a hollow voice, whose very inflection thrilled through each fibre of its victim,—“Swear, or if that is against your principles, affirm, by this dirty blood,—and bloody dirt;—by this watery blood,—and bloody water;—by this watery dirt, and dirty water;—that you will never disclose in any manner, aught of what you have seen and shall see this night. Call them all to witness your wish, that in the moment when you even

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<sup>54</sup> *Throwing handfuls...*: this appears to be an inexact reference to the Islamic burial practice of throwing three handfuls of soil into the grave after the deceased has been properly washed and bound. This entire sentence confuses a variety of Islamic practices around prayer and conflates them into a set of nineteenth century Anglo-American stereotypes.

<sup>55</sup> “The universal belief is, that a person sucked by a Vampyre becomes a Vampyre himself, and sucks in his turn.”—*Ed. New Mon. Mag.* [Note in original. *BV* here quotes from London's *New Monthly Magazine*; the April issue in which Polidori's “The Vampyre” first appeared.]

conceive the thought of perjury, your bowels may burst out, and your bones rot! Swear and drink!”<sup>56</sup>

The affrighted woman murmured, (as articulately as the iron gripe of the monster would suffer her,) that she was not thirsty; and had not breath enough to aspirate such a terrible conjuration. “No trifling;” roared the fiend, “you have not a moment to deliberate.” But his bellowing and threats were vain; and he found to his mortification that he had gotten the wrong sow by the ear, or rather by the throat. She stuttered out, in the most pitiful accents, which would have softened any heart (but a Vampyre has none,) that though she was by no means partial to the delectable confectionary of the pharmacopeia, calomel and jalap, ipecacuanha, rhubarb, and tartar-emeti,<sup>57</sup> she would rather take them all, collectively and individually, than the unchristian decoction<sup>58</sup> he held against her teeth.

Foaming with madness, till the white slaver<sup>59</sup> flowed down his sable limbs, the African hurled MRS. PERSONNE, DUBOIS, &c. &c. on the grave of her first husband, and stamping violently on the earth, it seemed to heave as with the throes of an earthquake. Immediately the tumuli yawned. The ponderous stones and slabs were shaken from their ancient sockets; and the ghastly dead, in uncouth attitudes, crawled from their nooks; with their hair curling in tortuous and serpent twinings; and their eyeballs

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<sup>56</sup> See Edwards, vol. II. p. 86. “Among their other superstitions also, must not be omitted their mode of administering an oath of secrecy or purgation. Human blood, and earth taken from the grave of some near relation, are mixed with water, and given to the party to be sworn, who is compelled to drink the mixture, with an imprecation, that it may cause the belly to burst, and the bones to rot, if the truth be not spoken.” [Note in original. *BV* cites Edwards, Volume 2, Book 4 “Present Inhabitants,” Chapter 3, which discusses Mandingoes, Whidah, Nagoes, etc. from Africa. The chapter includes a long discussion of African religious beliefs, which are used selectively here.]

<sup>57</sup> *Pharmacopeia, calomel and jalap, ipecacuanha, rhubarb, and tartar-emeti*: A pharmacopoeia is an authoritative treatise containing information on the various healing properties of medicinal plants and herbs. Calomel and jalap were a combination of tinctures that acted as a purgative. A combination of ipecacuanha, rhubarb, and tartar emetic was also a common 19C purgative. Many of these plants are of African or South American origin.

<sup>58</sup> *Decoction*: a liquid mixture produced by adding various powders to boiling water and dissolving them.

<sup>59</sup> *Slaver*: saliva falling from the mouth; *Tumuli*: a mound covering a grave; *Incarnadined*: red-colored.

of fire bursting from their heads; while, as they extended their withered arms, and tapering fingers, furnished with blood-hound claws, their gory shrouds fell in wild drapery around them, transiently revealing their forms, bloated as if to bursting, and often incarnadined with clotted blood, yet warm and dripping!!!

The Lady, (as those who have been in similar predicaments may suppose,) soon lost her recollection; not, however, before she had seen ZEMBO busily employed in tearing up the grave of her first husband; she saw herself surrounded by the spectres, and lost all consciousness.

When reason and sense returned, she found herself in the same place; and it was also the midnight hour. She was laying by the grave of Mr. PERSONNE, and her breast was stained with blood. A wide wound appeared to have been inflicted there, but was now cicatrized.<sup>60</sup> Imagine if you can, her surprise; when, by a certain carnivorous craving in her maw, and by putting this and that together, she found she was a—VAMPYRE!!! and gathered from her indistinct reminiscences, of the preceding night, that she had been then sucked; and that it was now her turn to eject the peaceful tenants of the grave!

With this delightful prospect of immortality before her, she began to examine the graves, for subject to a satisfy her furious appetite. When she had selected one to her mind, a new marvel arrested her attention. Her first husband got up out his coffin, and with all the grace so natural to his countrymen, made her a low bow in the last fashion, and opened his arms to receive her!

What were the emotions of this fond couple, when, after a lingering separation for sixteen years, they again embraced each other, with the ardour of an affection equal to their earliest transports, and which their long divorce<sup>61</sup> served only to increase; tenderly inquiring into the state of each other's health; and the accidents which had befallen them during their disjunction. They forgot even their hunger and thirst; and sitting down on a tombstone, made a thousand inquiries; which, however, they related to family

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<sup>60</sup> *Cicatrized*: healed over with scar tissue.

<sup>61</sup> *Divorce*: separation.

concerns, might not be as interesting to the reader as they were to the parties concerned.

Mr. PERSONNE, however, looked rather glum, when he learned that his Lady had been thrice married, since his decease. But she assured him, that she would never more tolerate the addresses of another suitor: and as for the two husbands, they were rotten enough by this time; as she was confident they had not attended the Vampyre Ball, on the preceding night. As for her sable spouse, she trusted that he would never again appear to interrupt their happiness. But while she was expressing this hope, the gentleman in question, (like his relation below, according to the old proverb,) came upon the ground, with ZEMBO. Mr. PERSONNE, having neither sword nor pistols at hand, armed himself with a gigantic thigh-bone; and warned the BLACK PRINCE to stand upon his guard as he meant to punish him severely.

But ZEMBO, rushing between the parties, raised his hands in a supplicating posture; while the generous monarch, making a Salam<sup>62</sup> to his antagonist, begged him, keep himself quiet, and look behind him. They both turned round on this intimation, when, to the utter confusion of the Lady, her second and third husbands, Messieurs MARQUAND and DUBOIS, arose from the graves, where they had been lovingly deposited by the side of each other. They both advanced to salute their wife; but Mr. PERSONNE, brandishing his thigh-bone, warned them to stand off, as he had the first title to the Lady. Much confusion would have ensued, had not the African Prince interfered. He told the gentlemen that so delicate a point could only be settled in an *honourable* way; and proposed that Mr. MARQUAND and Mr. DUBOIS should first settle their difference in a personal encounter; after which Mr. PERSONNE might give the survivor *gentlemanly satisfaction*. To this all parties assented.

As they were already stripped, the combatants shook hands, to show their mutual good-will; and proceeded to action, without further ceremony. Mr. DuBois soon

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<sup>62</sup> *Salam*. (more commonly salaam) from the Arabic for “peace,” more figuratively cast as a deferential greeting.

brought claret from Mr. MARQUAND; who, in returning the compliment, fibbed<sup>63</sup> Mr. DUBOIS so severely in the bowels, that he lost his wind; and gasping for breath, smote the air on all sides, without any of his blows telling. He came to the ground, and his bones rattled as he fell. But soon recovering his breath, he made a desperate attack on Mr. MARQUAND'S sconce; and favoured him with so terrible a facer under the gills, that he fell incontinently like a bull smitten in his front; but entangling his own heels with those of Mr. DUBOIS, they both came simultaneously to the ground; striking their heads against different tombstones; and knocking out their own brains.

They rose again, refreshed like the giant of old, by their grappling with the earth,<sup>64</sup> and all the better for the loss of their wits, which, indeed, was a mere trifle. But the AFRICAN, who had no time to see more sport, fixed them to the sod by his superior strength; and ZEMBO dexterously pinned them fast, by driving stakes through their hearts, with a large sledge hammer, (which he carried about his person for such emergencies.) During the operation, their roaring surpassed that which is performed by the Lioness, when bereft of her whelps; but as soon as they were fairly nailed to the counter, they lay motionless and breathless—a horrible pair of spectacles of sin and misery!

The AFRICAN assured the Lady, that she need never fear their second resurrection; and Mr. PERSONNE politely offered to settle their controversy, in any mode most agreeable to the PRINCE:—either to box with him on the spot, or appoint a meeting in future, with pistols, rifles, small or broad sword; or else they might toss up, who should set fire to a barrel of gunpowder. The PRINCE said that quarrelling was all nonsense, and offered his hand; but Mr. PERSONNE refused, saying, “Don’t be too familiar, Blackey;” and renewing his threats of cracking him over the noddle<sup>65</sup> with the thigh-bone.

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<sup>63</sup> *Fibbed*: repeatedly beat; *Sconce*: a lantern with a protective screen, here used humorously to describe Marquand’s head; *Facer*: a punch in the face.

<sup>64</sup> *The giant of old*: Antaeus, a giant who gained strength from contact with the ground, and who was defeated by Hercules when the latter held him aloft in the air (see Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, Book 9).

<sup>65</sup> *Noddle*: head.

The generous monarch pocketed the affront. “You have been,” he said, “sufficiently rewarded, for the cruelties you practised upon my person, several years ago. I forgive you, my dear sir, what you performed, and intended to perform on me. Here is your son, who has grown considerably, as you may observe; and I assure you that his education has not been neglected. To his exertions last night you are indebted for your revivification. And as, you may remember, you were embalmed, you have kept quite sweet and fresh ever since your interment. Amiable and virtuous VAMPYRES! may you long enjoy that tranquillity and contentment, which your merit and accomplishments so eminently deserve! A vessel lies in the port, ready to sail for Europe in an hour. The Island is no longer a place for you. Here is money to pay your passages, and all I have to say, is, that the sooner you’re off the better.—Farewell!” So saying he departed, without waiting for the acknowledgments of the party.

Mr. PERSONNE and his Lady, whom we shall again call by her first marriage name, did not exactly comprehend what their dingy benefactor meant, by bidding them take French leave<sup>66</sup> of the Island, like pickpockets and outlaws; but, as they were yet wondering at their own existence, like Adam and Eve, the first day of their creation, and as they had reason to believe the PRINCE a potent magician, who could rouse the dead from their searments, and turn the planets from their courses;—for these reasons, they concluded to follow his bidding, without any impertinent scruples. But as the keen edge of their hunger had been whetted by delay, they would fain have taken supper, and digested a little something wherewithal to strengthen them, before they set out.

ZEMBO, who had filled his own breadbasket very lately, and was in no such urgent necessity, protested with all the vehemence which filial reverence would permit, against the unseasonable gratification of their unnatural craving; and recited with just emphasis and good discretion, an extract from Counsellor Phillips’s harangue, about “the

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<sup>66</sup> *French leave*: to flee or depart without notice.

cannibal appetite of his rejected altar;<sup>67</sup> which his parents did not understand, and of course thought very sublime! But even this master-piece of mystical eloquence would have been delivered in vain; had not the boy given other reasons of such cogency, that they licked their lips—cast a longing, lingering look at the grave-yard,—and followed him without more opposition.

They prosecuted their nocturnal march, through closely woven and solemn groves; until they descended into a profound valley, where the light of the pale planet of magic adoration, streamed and quivered on serried<sup>68</sup> files of bright armoury. The leader of the band seemed to have expected their arrival; and mutual tokens of recognition passed between him and ZEMBO. The whole company then set forward their array in silence;—

No cymbal clash'd, no clarion rang,  
Still were the pipe and drum;  
Save heavy tread, and armour's clang,  
The sullen march was dumb.<sup>69</sup>

By continual descent, they seemed to have penetrated the bowels of a cavern,<sup>70</sup> whose ramifications ran under the sea; as they heard a murmuring roar, as of the ocean, above their heads. The party, by the instructions of ZEMBO, dispersed themselves in different directions; until they had enclosed the interior of the rock where its largest chamber

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<sup>67</sup> Charles Phillips (1787?-1859), an Irish Protestant barrister known for his oratory; a published volume of his speeches appeared in 1817. In one of the transcribed speeches, addressed to “An Aggregate Meeting of the Roman Catholics of Cork,” Phillips defines “the Bigot” (in this instance a Protestant Briton who hates Irish Catholics) as “a wretch, whom no philosophy can humanise, no charity soften, no religion reclaim, no miracle convert; a monster, who, red with the fires of hell, and bending under the crimes of earth, erects his murderous divinity upon a throne of skulls, and would gladly feed even with a brother's blood the cannibal appetite of his rejected altar!” For his use of the vampire image, see the introduction.

<sup>68</sup> *Serried*: closely pressed together.

<sup>69</sup> The lines are from Scottish poet Walter Scott's extremely popular “The Lady of the Lake,” published in 1810; the poem appeared in US editions that year, in Boston, Philadelphia, and New York.

<sup>70</sup> “The ring-leaders held their meetings in certain subterranean passages or caves, in the parish of the La Grande Riviere,” &c.—Edwards, Vol. III. p 52. [Note in original. The passage quoted, from Edwards's *Historical Survey of St. Domingo*, Chapter 4, describes a plan imputed to Vincent Ogé, a free person of color executed for leading a revolt in Saint-Domingue in 1790.]

was, to speak catachrestically,<sup>71</sup> so artfully concealed by nature, that no one, not instructed by an adept in its subterranean topography, could ever have detected the secret of its existence. It had been, in former days, a place of deposit and asylum for the Buccaniers; and its situation had been since known only to the Professors of the OBEAH art, who held here their midnight orgies.

Mr. and Mrs. PERSONNE, guided by their son, were placed in a situation, where, through the crevices of the inner partition of the rock, they could observe what was passing in the interior.

It seemed, at first view, a vast hall of Arabian romance; supported by immense shafts, and studded with precious stones; so various and beautiful were the hues, which the different spars assumed, in the light of an hundred torches, blazing in every quarter, and illuminating the farthest recesses of the cave. The walls were decorated with other appendages, which added to the mystery, if not to the embellishment of the scene; being irregularly stained with blood; decorated with rude tapestry of many coloured plumage;—and stuccoed with the beaks of parrots;—the teeth of dogs, and alligators;—bones of cats;—broken glass and eggshells; plastered with a composition of rum and grave-dirt, the implements of NEGRO witchcraft!<sup>72</sup>

At one extremity of the extensive apartment, on a kind of natural throne, sat several blackamoors<sup>73</sup> in sumptuous Moorish apparel; whom, by their swollen forms, and remarkable eyes, Mrs. PERSONNE knew to be

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<sup>71</sup> *To speak catachrestically*: to misuse imagery or description; *Buccaniers*: generally synonymous with pirates, though the origin of the term—a French adaptation of a term from St. Domingue—is the practice of smoking wild meat in the native fashion. The Abbé Raynal describes the Buccaneers in the section on French settlements at St. Domingue: “They were called Buccaneers, because they imitated the custom of the savages, in drying the food they lived upon by smoke, in places called Buccans.”

<sup>72</sup> See Edwards, Vol. II p. 111. [This description is almost entirely lifted from Edwards, Volume IV, Chapter 3: “The *Obi* is usually composed of a farrago of materials, most of which are enumerated in the Jamaica law, viz. Blood, feathers, parrot’s beaks, dog’s teeth, alligator’s teeth, broken bottles, grave-dirt, rum, and egg-shells.”]

<sup>73</sup> *Blackamoor*: a black African, with emphasis (as here) on the ancient north African region of Mauretania; *Black-guards*, later in this paragraph, is a slightly amorphous derogatory term used interchangeably to mean criminal, servant, camp follower, guards dressed in black, and villainous attendant.

GOULS; and among whom she recognised her late husband. The whole range of this vast amphitheatre, sweeping from before the throne, was occupied by slaves, rudely attired, and imperfectly armed with clubs and missiles; a decent platoon of black-guards were posted before the Vampyre monarchs; and, in the centre, a band of musicians performed an exquisite symphony. The soft strains of the MERRIWANG;—the lively notes of the DUNDO;—and the martial accompaniment of the GOOMBAY, made, with their united noises, a discordant harmony, whose powers the lyre of Orpheus could not equal; and which would certainly be enough to frighten all the hosts of Pandemonium.<sup>74</sup>

The oratorio being finished, the AFRICAN PRINCE arose, and making an obeisance to the company,—cleared his throat, and began to address them as follows:—“Gentlemen and Vampyres!”—but the VAMPYRES expressing their resentment against this breach of etiquette, he corrected himself: —“Vampyres and Gentlemen!”—but the NEGROES were no more willing to come last, than the Vampyres, and a loud growl accompanied by a slight hiss, again interrupted the orator. He was not, however, disconcerted, but like Mr. Burke, thundered out an iteration of the offensive sentence.<sup>75</sup>

“Yes,” said he, “I repeat it, Vampyres and Gentlemen? Shall not the immortal precede the mortal?—Shall not those whose diet surpasses the nectar and ambrosia of celestials, precede the ephemeral race, who fatten on the unclean juice of brutes,—the rank essence of esculent<sup>76</sup> productions,—or the nauseous liquor of the

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<sup>74</sup> This account also draws on Edwards, Vol. IV, Ch. 3: the Merriwang “is an imperfect kind of violincello; except that it is played on by the finger like the guitar; producing a dismal monotony of four notes. The Dundo is precisely a tabor [a small drum]; and the Goombay is a rustic drum; being formed of the trunk of a hollow tree, one end of which is covered with a sheep’s skin. From such instruments,” Edwards adds, “nothing like a regular time can be expected, nor is it attempted.” All of these instruments are African in origin. *Pandemonium* is Hell’s capital in Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, and *Orpheus* was a figure of Greek mythology known for his ability to charm anything with his music.

<sup>75</sup> *Burke*: an allusion to the Irish MP Edmund Burke (1729-1797), famous during his lifetime for his oratorical skills.

<sup>76</sup> *Esculent*: edible.

distillery? (*applause—hear! hear! and see-boy! from the Vampyres—groans from the negroes!*) Gentlemen of colour! I appeal to yourselves; shall not the descendants of the Gods be named before the offspring of the earth-born image, whom Titan impregnated with celestial fire?—For Prometheus was the first Vampyre. You must all know, as you have undoubtedly read Æschylus, that the vulture, who preyed on his liver, was neither fish, flesh, nor fowl.<sup>77</sup> He is called a dog, which makes him a quadruped;—he is represented as ερπῶν, creeping, which proves him an insect; and is said to have wings, which shows that he was a bird. Now, from this amphibious monster have descended the Crows,—the Jackalls,—and the Bloodhounds;—the pirate Bat of Madagascar,—and the man-killing Ivunches of Chili;—the Sharks;—the Crocodiles;—the Krakens;—the Horse-leeches;—the Cape-cod Sea Serpents;—the Mermaids;—the Incubi;—and the Succubi!!!<sup>78</sup> (*loud cheering from the Vampyres.*) From Titan himself, descended the Cyclopes, and all other ancient and modern Anthropophagi; and, in lineal descent, the Moco tribe of our own EBOES,<sup>79</sup> to whom I have the honour of being related. Those of you, too, are his posterity, who, after your deaths, return to your native land—the true Elysium; where the balmy bowl of the Coco, the soft bloom of the ANANA, and the coal-

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<sup>77</sup> See Prometheus Vincit. [Note in original: *Prometheus Vincit*, or *Prometheus Bound*, was a Greek tragedy attributed to Aeschylus, describing the Titan known for his efforts to uplift human beings. There were numerous translations of Aeschylus in the early 19C, many with pedantic annotations, for instance trying to determine what creature would daily eat Prometheus's liver. The Greek word ερπῶν, below, commonly translated as “creeping” (and with connotations of sneaking and groveling) was sometimes mentioned to affirm that the creature in question was not an eagle (as many translations had it).

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein*, published in 1818, was subtitled *Or, The Modern Prometheus*.]

<sup>78</sup> *Crows*: etc....: A variety of real and mythic creatures often associated with occult practices.

<sup>79</sup> See Edwards, Vol. II. p. 90, and Reynal, Vol. III. p. 388. [Note in original. The passage from Edwards—again Vol. IV, Ch. 3—reads, “The depression of spirits which these people [enslaved Eboes] seem to be under, on their first arrival in the West Indies, gives them an air of softness and submission, which forms a striking contrast to the frank and fearless temper of the Koromantyn Negroes. Nevertheless, the Eboes are in fact more truly savage than any nation of the Gold Coast; inasmuch as many tribes among them, especially the Moco tribe, have been, without doubt, accustomed to the shocking practice of feeding on human flesh.” The Raynal reference appears to cite a philosophical discussion of “anthropophagy” (the practice of eating human flesh) in Volume III, Book 10.]

black beauties of the clime of love, shall for ever reward your fortitude, and steep in forgetfulness the memory of your wrongs.<sup>80</sup> (*hear! hear! from the negroes.*) But none of these genera or species of our order, must longer engage your dignified and charitable attention. I come to ourselves, full-blooded—unadulterated—immortal bloodsuckers!—To ourselves—whether Gouls,—or Afrits,—or Vampyres;—Vroucolochas,—Vardoulachos,—or Broucolokas<sup>81</sup>—To ourselves—the terror of the living and of the dead, and the participants of the nature of both;—To ourselves—the emblems at once of corruption and of vitality;—blotted from the records of existence, and replenished to repletion with circulating life;—abandoned by the quick, and unrecognised by the dead:—‘at once relics and relicts;—rocked on the bases of our own eternities;—the chronicles of what was—the solemn and sublime mementoes of what must be!’ *unqualified approbation from both sides of the house.*)<sup>82</sup>

“The estate of Vampirism is a fee-tail, and may be docked in two different ways.<sup>83</sup> The first mode is the sanguinary practice of perforating the subject with a stake; and this is final. The other is produced by the gentler operation of the narcotic potion you behold in this phial; by whose lenient and opiate influence, the individual is restored to the plight, in which he was previous to his death, or his becoming a Vampyre, and belongs to the OBEAH mysteries.

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<sup>80</sup> *Elysium*; the abode of the blessed after death in Greek mythology; *Coco*: a reference to the coconut milk; *ANANA*: a reference to the pineapple.

<sup>81</sup> *Gouls*...: these terms appear in contemporary texts as synonyms for vampires. One note to Byron’s *The Giaour* states, “The Vampire superstition is still general in the Levant. Honest Tournefort tells a long story, which Mr. Southey, in the notes on *Thalaba*, quotes about these “Vroucolochas,” as he calls them. The Romaic term is “Vardoulacha.”...I find that “Broucolokas” is an old legitimate Hellenic appellation—at least is so applied to Arsenius, who, according to the Greeks, was after his death animated by the Devil...” The term *Vardoulachos* appeared in *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801, rev. ed. 1809), a long work by English poet Robert Southey, which included several long notes about vampires.

<sup>82</sup> *Relics and relicts*: mementos and survivors, *relict* here referring to widows or widowers; the last line here, “*the solemn and sublime mementoes...*” is adapted from a well-known speech by Charles Phillips (see note 67 above).

<sup>83</sup> *Fee-tail*: a legal term for an inheritance limited to particular persons; a fee-tail is docked if the line of succession is broken.

“But to come to the object of our present meeting. Sublime and soul-elevating theme!—The emancipation of the Negroes!—The consecration of the soil of ST. DOMINGO to the manes of murdered patriots in all ages!—No matter whether the bill of sale was scrawled in French or in English;—No matter whether we were taken prisoners, in a battle between the LEOPHARES and the JAKOFFS,<sup>84</sup> or in a skirmish between the SAMBOES and the SAWPITS;—No matter whether we were bought for calico and cotton, or for gunpowder or for shot;—No matter whether we were transported in chains or in ropes—in a brig, or a schooner, or a seventy-four—the first moment we come ashore on ST. DOMINGO, our souls shall swell like a sponge in the liquid element;—our bodies shall burst from their fetters, glorious as a curculio from its shell;—our minds shall soar like the car of the æronaut,<sup>85</sup> when its ligaments are cut; in a word, O my brethren, we shall be free!—Our fetters discandied, and our chains dissolved, we shall stand liberated,—redeemed,—emancipated,—and disenthralled by the irresistible genius of UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION!!!” (*Unparalleled bursts of unprecedented applause!!!*)

Such was the report of this oration, taken down in short hand by ZEMBO; of whose extraordinary sagacity so many proofs have been exhibited; and who was never unprovided with materials for any emergency. The fiery oratory of the Prince communicated such inspiration to the auditors, that the whole mass of their thick blood leaped up with the quickening pulse of anticipated freedom; they danced and sung, with violent gesticulations, like perfect Corybantes;<sup>86</sup> but unfortunately, their Phyricks were in-

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<sup>84</sup> *LEOPHARES*...: this is likely another Edwards reference, as in Book IV, Ch 2, he cites an account of Cape Verde, on the Senegambian coast, of Leophares fighting neighboring Jaloffs (misprinted as Jakoffs here). The *SAMBOES* and *SAWPITS* reference is unclear.

<sup>85</sup> *Aeronaut*: balloonist; *discandied*: dissolved; *UNIVERSAL EMANCIPATION*: English translations of the 1794 declaration from the revolutionary French government ending slavery in its Caribbean territories used this phrase, which appeared again and again in US newspapers.

<sup>86</sup> *Corybantes*: priests of ancient Phrygia (in what is today western Turkey) who worshipped through wild dance and music; *Phyricks*: Greek war-dances performed in armor; *chevaux-de-frise*: spiked barriers used to contain adversaries.

terrupted by the glittering bayonets of the soldiery; who poured in upon them from every quarter, and hemmed them in, with a bristling chevaux-de-frise of steel. The Vampyres, surprised but undaunted, unsheathed their sabres, and drew up in a gallant style, as if determined to die game; being, indeed, assured, that like so many Phœnixes, they would rise from their own ashes, as often as they might be cut down.

A desperate conflict ensued, during which Mrs. PERSONNE observed the phial, mentioned by the Prince, lying on the ground; and very thoughtfully put it in her ridicule.<sup>87</sup> The slaves, seeing how the business was likely to terminate, prudently sneaked off, while the attention of the military was occupied by the Vampyres. The former were violently exasperated to find all their labour so unprofitable; since while they themselves were wounded by every blow of their opponents, the latter, like so many ninepins, were set up, as fast as they were bowled down; bending to the storm, like masts on a tempestuous ocean, and rising again upon the billow in perpendicular triumph.

But, being instructed by ZEMBO, the soldiers pinioned them as fast as they fell; and prevented their rising, by sitting in great numbers on their bodies; though the task was somewhat like that of detaining quicksilver beneath the fingers. The PRINCE, however, still fought desperately. Brandishing a huge scimitar in either hand, he swayed his arms like the sails of a windmill; while limbs, heads, and bodies flew about him, curvetting<sup>88</sup> and dancing in the air; as when the ingenious Mr. MAFFEY<sup>89</sup> pulls to pieces a coach, or an old woman, children, chickens, friars, and petticoats dance about in wild confusion, till the artist's

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<sup>87</sup> Likely a misspelling of the French word *reticule*, meaning a small handbag.

<sup>88</sup> *Curvetting*: prancing like a horse.

<sup>89</sup> *Mr. MAFFEY*: a performer and illusionist active in New York. An 1818 advertisement describes his show like so: "Mr. MASSEY, artist, mechanic, proprietor and investor of this Grand Representation, will present...his Brilliant Representations; to commence with a variety of Dances and Allegorical Metamorphoses, accompanied with different comic scenery, and the extraordinary powers of Harlequin. Among the metamorphoses will be particularly distinguished the Table changed into a Flying Dragon. Harlequin will transform himself five different times in presence of his attendants—he will have his head cut off and replaced three separate times..." See the *New-York Gazette*, June 27, 1818.

hand again brings order out of chaos:—Or, as when the renowned knight of the BED-CHAMBER, whose name eternal vases shall record, saw the ungenerous caricature on the wall, wielding a ponderous jug, he smote the innocent tables, chairs, and bed-posts, and strode victorious over the gory field: So fought the PRINCE; till being neatly pricked in the spine, unexpectedly, he soused (as Johannes Porco Latinus remarks) “in principia fundamentalia,” and was immediately set upon by a host. So when a Gætulian lion is pierced by the light bamboo, overpowered by the hunters, he struggles in his thrall like an Enceladus under Ætna, and dies at last with heart-wrung tears of anguish, and reverberating roars of hatred!!!<sup>90</sup>

Stakes were immediately procured, and the whole infernal fraternity securely disposed of: as their compeers, described by Homer,

With burning chains fixed to the brazen floors  
And lock'd by hell's inexorable doors.<sup>91</sup>

With their bellowings, the vast chambers of the subterranean rung like the caverns of Delphos,<sup>92</sup> when the inflammable air was fired by the crafty priests. The Inhabitants of the Island started up from their slumbers in

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<sup>90</sup> The allusions in these passages are not always clear. The “renowned knight of the BED-CHAMBER” seems a reference to *Don Quixote*, perhaps the scene in Part 2, Chapter 26, where Quixote, imagining that a puppet show is reality—becomes agitated and destroys the puppet stage and props. The reference to “Johannes Porco Latinus” (which translates as John Pig Latin) is unclear, but may be a reference to the 16C Spanish poet Juan Latino (1518-1590s), enslaved as a child in Spain but by the 1560s a professor of Latin Grammar at the Granada Cathedral; in the early 19C, Latino, whose Latin signature would have been Johannes Latinus and who is mentioned in the opening pages of *Don Quixote*, was frequently cited in discussions about the intellectual abilities of Africans, for instance in the French author Henri Grégoire’s *Enquiry concerning the Intellectual and Moral Faculties, and Literature of Negroes...* (reprinted in Brooklyn in 1810). On Juan Latino, see Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Maria Wolff, “An Overview of Sources on the Life and Work of Don Latino, the ‘Ethiopian Humanist,’” *Research in African Literatures* 29.4 (Winter, 1998), 14-51. *Soused* means “fell heavily,” and “in principia fundamentalia” seems a joke about falling on his “fundamental principles” or behind. The *Gætulian* (or Gaetulian) *lion*, from northern Africa, was proverbial for ferocity; *Enceladus* was a giant of Greek mythology, ultimately buried under the volcano Mt. Etna in Sicily; there is a possible reference here to the metaphor of the rumbling volcano as the threat of a slave rebellion.

<sup>91</sup> From Homer’s *Iliad*, Alexander Pope’s translation, Book 8.

<sup>92</sup> *the caverns of Delphos*: a reference, from Greek mythology, to the Oracle of Delphi and the temple of prophecy located there.

shuddering terror, and believed that an earthquake was rumbling beneath their feet.

Mr. and Mrs. PERSONNE and ZEMBO lost no time in trying the effects of the African's stolen prescription. Being thrown into a tranquil slumber they were conveyed to their plantation; and awoke the next morning, perfectly well, excepting slight colds in the head. Mr. PERSONNE, having been in statu quo,<sup>93</sup> for sixteen years, was now much younger than his lady; a circumstance, for which she was not at all sorry; and which he himself declared by no means displeased him. The remainder of their life was serene as a tropic night; —illumined by the mild effulgence of domestic love;—fanned by the soft aspirations of peaceful bosoms;—and enlivened by the fire-fly scintillations of rapture!!!

ZEMBO, to whose taste and ingenuity they were indebted for their happiness, and who was baptized with the Christian name of BARABBAS,<sup>94</sup> after an uncle of his mother's, recorded what the reader has perused. One only circumstance, like one of those claps of thunder, frequently heard in the unclouded sky, passed over the tranquillity of their bosoms. Mrs. PERSONNE'S fourth husband's child was a mulatto, and of Vampyrish propensities; of which his mother and Mr. PERSONNE were never able entirely to cure him, having used up all the African's preparation.

The intelligent reader, (if any such there be,) will remember that this narrative commenced with the name of Mr. ANTHONY GIBBONS, of whom nothing has since been said; and whose adventures (to use a FORUM trope)<sup>95</sup> “must remain buried in the bowels of futurity,” until a more convenient opportunity. He is a lineal descendant from the last-mentioned mulatto; and the manuscript, which is now given to the public, was transmitted to him from his ancestors. He is a resident in Essex county, New-Jersey; and candour requires us to state, that he is no

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<sup>93</sup> *in statu quo*: in the same state, in this case without aging.

<sup>94</sup> *BARABBAS*: In the New Testament, Barabbas is named as an insurrectionary figure who is held captive by the Romans at the same time as Jesus. At the Passover feast in Jerusalem, Pontius Pilate frees Barabbas and keeps Jesus as a prisoner.

<sup>95</sup> *a FORUM trope*: possibly a reference to the New York Forum, a public assembly of mostly young men practicing their oratorical skills, and held regularly at the City Hotel.

relation to his celebrated namesake at ELIZABETH-TOWN; as it is notorious to all who have had the pleasure of witnessing the size of the latter gentleman's waist, that he has too much bowels for so diabolical a profession;<sup>96</sup> and it is to be hoped in charity, that though he is such a delicate morsel, when he is laid in the sepulchre of his fathers, he may not prove a titbit, to GLUT THE THIRST OF A VAMPYRE!!!

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<sup>96</sup> *Anthony Gibbons*...We have been unable to locate further information about this figure.

## MORAL.

IN this happy land of liberty and equality, we are free from all traditional superstitions, whether political, religious, or otherwise. Fiction has no materials for machinery;<sup>97</sup>—Romance no horrors for a tale of mystery. Yet in a figurative sense, and in the moral world, our climate is perhaps more prolific than any other, in enchanters,—Vampyres,—and the whole infernal brood of sorcery and witchcraft.

The accomplished dandy, who in maintaining his horses,—his taylor, &c.—absorbs in the forced and unnatural excitement of his senseless orgies, the life-blood of that wealth which his prudent Sire had accumulated by a long devotion to the counter,—What is he but a Vampyre?

The fraudulent trafficker in stock and merchandize, who, having sucked the whole substance of an hundred honest men, is consigned for a few weeks to the sepulchre of the jail; and then, by the potent magic of an insolvent law, stalks forth, triumphant with bloated villany, more elated in his shameless resurrection to renew his career of iniquity and of disgrace,—what is he but a Vampyre?

The corrupted and senseless Clerk, who being placed near the vitals of a moneyed institution, himself exhausted to feed the appetite of sharpers, drains, in his turn, the coffers he was appointed to guard,—is *he* not, I appeal to the Stockholders,—is *he* not a Vampyre?

Brokers, Country Bank Directors, and their disciples—all whose hunger and thirst for money, unsatisfied with the tardy progression of honest industry, by creating fictitious and delusive credit, has preyed on the heart and liver of public confidence, and poisoned the currents of public morals, are they not all Vampyres?

The whole tribe of Plagiarists, under every denomination;—The Critic, who, by eviscerating authors, and stuffing his own meagre show of learning with the pilfered entrails, ekes out his periodical fulmination against public taste;—the Forum Orator, who, without compunction, barbarously exenterates Burke, and Curran, and Phillips,<sup>98</sup>—the Second-handed Lawyer,—Scholar,—Theologue,—who quote from quotations,

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<sup>97</sup> *Machinery*: plot contrivances, particularly of a supernatural nature.

<sup>98</sup> *Exenterates*: disembowels; Burke, John Philpot Curran (1750-1817), and Phillips were Irish political figures renowned for their oratorical skills. See note 75 for Burke, note 67 for Phillips.

and steal stolen property:—the Divine, who preaches Tillotson and Toplady;<sup>99</sup>—what are they all but Vampyres?

The Empiric, who fills his own stomach, while he empties his shop into the bowels of the hypochondriac;—the Bibliopolist, “who guts the fobs” of the whole reading community, by ascribing to Lord Byron works which that author never saw; the philanthropic Contractor for the Army, who charges more for lime and horse-beef, than his quantum-meruit<sup>100</sup> for the best provisions; who sets up his carriage and his palace, by blistering the mouths and destroying the intestines of thousands,—what are these but Vampyres?

The Professors and Disciples of Surgeon’s Hall, who, when a fine fat corse is rolled out of the resurrectionist’s budget, set up a howl of horrible transport, like the anthropophagous Caribs in Robinson Crusoe;—glut their gloating eyes with the pinguidity and unctuousness of the subject; and whet their blades like Shylock, impatient to attack the *ilia*,<sup>101</sup>—what are they but Vampyres?

And I, who, as Johnson said of an hypochondriac Lady, “have spun this discourse out of my own bowels,” and made as free with those of others<sup>102</sup>—I am a VAMPYRE!

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<sup>99</sup> *Tillotson and Toplady*: John Tillotson (1630-1694), Archbishop of Canterbury, whose collected sermons were posthumously and repeatedly published into the 19C; Augustus Toplady (1740-1778), an Anglican theologian notable for his attacks on Wesleyan Methodists.

<sup>100</sup> An *empiric* is a physician, a *Bibliopolist* a bookseller; one “*who guts the fobs*” is pick-pocketing, and the author here is likely quoting the Irish poet (and Byron biographer) Thomas Moore’s *Tom Crib’s Memorial to Congress*, a comic poem full of urban slang; a *quantum-meruit* is a reasonable sum for goods provided, here in reference to the gouging of military contractors.

<sup>101</sup> *Surgeon’s Hall*: see note 41; a *resurrectionist* is a bodysnatcher selling *corsets* (corpses); the *anthropophagous Caribs*... are the cannibals who appear near the end of the first part of Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719); *pinguidity* and *unctuousness* refer to greasiness; *Shylock* is the Jewish moneylender of Shakespeare’s *The Merchant of Venice* (c. 1600), who demands a pound of flesh for a defaulted loan; thus he is sharpening his blades to make a flank cut (*ilia*) under the ribs.

<sup>102</sup> *Johnson*: Samuel Johnson (1709-1784), the influential English writer and literary critic.

# Vampyrism;

A POEM.

Utrum horum mavis accipe.<sup>103</sup>

TO

SOLOMON LANG<sup>104</sup>  
 & -  
 LAUNCELOT LANG } STAFF, Esquires.

GENTLEMEN,

FROM the Gazette of August 17th,<sup>106</sup> I am happy to learn, that you have entered into an alliance, offensive and defensive. The ties of kindred and the attraction of sympathy, one would think, ought to have brought about this union much sooner. You are, I believe, of one family;—although I am ignorant from whence LAUNCELOT has taken the Agnomen of STAFF: and I am equally unable to divine, why you have both docked the Nomen of your ancestors, which hath been written LANGEARS from time immemorial.<sup>107</sup> Whatever may be your reasons for disowning your consanguinity to the great GENTILE family, the literary and political worlds rejoice, at least, in this consolidation of the talents of their two most distinguished members. The parity of intellect,—the similarity of taste,—the pungency of sarcasm possessed by both parties, justify the expectations formed by the public, from this conjunction of two such great luminaries. Both are imbued with that modest confidence, connected with the consciousness of superior talent. SOLOMON is formed, perhaps, of more impenetrable stuff: LAUNCELOT has more of the irritability and exquisite sensibility of genius.—*Ira quidem communiter urit utrumque;*<sup>108</sup> but SOLOMON taketh the driest knocks with a good grace; LAUNCELOT is sooner thrown into a fever, and frets, to use a classic quotation of his own, “like a bear, with a

<sup>103</sup> *Utrum*...: Latin, take whichever you prefer.

<sup>104</sup> On Solomon Lang and Launcelot Langstaff, see the introduction.

<sup>106</sup> *Gazette of August 17<sup>th</sup>*: the 8/17/1819 issue of the *New York Gazette* is not extant, but it appears the notice mentioned here is reprinted at the end of the subsequent poem.

<sup>107</sup> *LANGEARS*: this appears to be a joke about the practice of docking ears (cutting off part or all of the ear), an old punishment for various crimes in Britain and the US; here the ancestors of Lang and Lang(staff) have had their “-ears” “docked,” suggesting they come from a criminal background. An agnomen is an ancient Roman term for an honorary fourth name or title, here deployed as a joke which perhaps suggests that Lang is now a “staff” member of the *Gazette*; nomen is a Roman term used to indicate the gens (extended family group) to which a person belonged.

<sup>108</sup> *Ira quidem*...: roughly, they both indeed have anger in common; the quotation is from Horace’s *Epistles*.

sore head.”<sup>109</sup>—SOLOMON is the better grammarian:<sup>110</sup> LAUNCELOT hath, occasionally, greater command of language. Solomon, as he states, composes ideas and types simultaneously, *a la mode de Wooler*;<sup>111</sup> Launcelot has the advantage of seeing his ideas embodied in black and white, in their flight from his brains to the printing office.—LAUNCELOT the FIERY, may be likened to the mad ORESTES: SOLOMON the PATIENT, to the faithful PYLADES.<sup>112</sup>—SOLOMON is original in his own way: LAUNCELOT purloins from Swift, and Rabelais and others.—SOLOMON, pilloried in his own press, with no ally but the *gray mare*,<sup>113</sup> bravely receives the missiles of the whole legion of editors; LAUNCELOT has only to open his mouth, or saw the air, or make a leg, on the literary stage; and all the gods of the Philadelphia gallery, pipe their shrill catcalls in discordant unison.—The castigation of both is equally dreadful. SOLOMON, with his “Good morning, Mr. Coleman,” and “Rot the serpent,” condenses all his wrath into a laconic sarcasm: LAUNCELOT elaborates books, to the great terror and discomfiture of Gifford, Southey, and Scott.<sup>114</sup> The Quarterly Reviewers received a death blow, because they could not find out the wit

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<sup>109</sup> See “John Bull and Brother Jonathan.” [Note in original. The quoted phrase was idiomatic for bad-temperedness, and appears in Paulding’s *The Diverting History of John Bull and Brother Jonathan* (1812), chapter 24, where John Bull “growled like a bear with a scaldhead...” John Bull was a stock personification of England, while Brother Jonathan, a kind of forefather of Uncle Sam, personified the United States.

<sup>110</sup> We understand that a subscription paper is open at the New-York Free School house, for the benevolent object of giving Launcelot a quarter’s instruction in the sublime Institutes of English Grammar. [Note in original.]

<sup>111</sup> *A la mode de Wooler*: an allusion to the radical British publisher Thomas Wooler, who controversially wrote under many different personas in his newspaper *The Black Dwarf*. *The New York Gazette*, for instance, referred to Wooler as one of the leaders of “seditious meetings” (see the August 27, 1819 issue).

<sup>112</sup> ORESTES/PYLADES: figures from Greek mythology, these cousins were frequently presented as close friends, sometimes with erotic undertones.

<sup>113</sup> *Gray mare*: proverbial for a domineering wife.

<sup>114</sup> See “Letters from the South,” and “Scottish Fiddle.” [Note in original. William Gifford (1756-1826) was an English satirist and editor, and widely known for his translation of the Roman poet Juvenal; Paulding’s *Letters from the South* (1817) asserted that Gifford adopted anti-US positions because he’d been beaten, as a boy, by a Yankee sailor (see Letter 33); such was “the secret of his origin” mentioned below. Robert Southey (see note 81) was criticized in *The Lay of the Scottish Fiddle* (note 9 to Canto 3) for his discussions—“novel, stupendous, and incomprehensible”—of near east mythology, apparently a reference to “Thalaba the Destroyer” and its account of vampires, among other beings. *The Lay of the Scottish Fiddle* (1813) was Paulding’s spoof of Scott’s popular “Lady of the Lake” (1810), its title page stating “Supposed to be written by W— S—, Esq.”]

of the Scottish Fiddle;<sup>115</sup> and the translator of Juvenal has never dared to show his face, since Mr. LANGSTAFF promulgated to the world, the secret of his origin.<sup>116</sup> Poor Mr. Hall, the editor of the Port Folio,—because he criticised that Poem,<sup>117</sup> (than which, in the language of Croaker, “nothing can be flatter or funnier;”) according to the canons of Martinus Scriblerus,—said Hall has been severely bemaused for his temerity. Many a heart-burning hath he experienced, from the caustic of Salmagundi Redivivus—Godwot!—*magni nominis umbra!*—On the whole, “none but yourselves can be your parallels.”<sup>118</sup>

Allow me to dedicate the following rhymes to your firm; which will, I have no doubt, stand secure, amid all the present wreck of matters, and crashes of credit. Profound ignorance, bolstered by vanity, sits firmly on its own fundamental principles. Farewell, Gentlemen, accept the considerations of my high esteem—

Fortunati ambo—si quid mea carmina possunt,  
Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet aevo!<sup>119</sup>

URIAH DERICK D’ARCY.

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<sup>115</sup> Yet far be it from me to insinuate, that *private pique*, not patriotism, inspired that tremendous diatribe— “The United States vs. England.” [Note in original. D’Arcy refers to a harsh review of Paulding’s *The Lay of the Scottish Fiddle*, by the critic John Wilson Croker, in the 1814 issue of London’s *The Quarterly Review*, which complained of “a kind of tiresome drawl, rendered yet more oppressive by an affectation of smartness, a miserable detail of petty squabbles in huts and hamlets...” Paulding responded to the review with a long critique in *The United States and England: Being a Reply to the Criticism of Inchiquin’s Letters Contained in the Quarterly Review* (1815).]

<sup>116</sup> See “Letters from the South.” [Note in original. See note 114.]

<sup>117</sup> Backwoodsman. And see Port Folio for January 1819. [Note in original. John E. Hall, editor of the conservative literary periodical *The Port Folio*, published in Philadelphia and New York, published a critical review of *The Lay of the Scottish Fiddle* in the September, 1813 issue. *The Port Folio* published a critical review of Paulding’s long poem *The Backwoodsman* (1818), at one point quoting “Martinus Scriblerus”: “A suppression of the very worst poetry is of dangerous consequence to the state.”] *Martinus Scriblerus* was a collective pseudonym adopted by the renowned poets Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift, among others.

<sup>118</sup> *Godwot*: God knows; *Magni nominis*...: the shadow of a great name (Lucan); *None but*...: here the author echoes Alexander Pope’s mockery, in *Peri Bathous, or The Art of Sinking in Poetry* (1728), of a similar line in a Lewis Theobald play, “Double Falshood” (1727). Pope ridiculed the line as a model of fake profundity.

<sup>119</sup> *Fortunati*...: The lines from Virgil’s *Aeneid*, Book 9, translate “Happy pair! If my poetry has any power, no day shall ever blot you from the memory of time” (Loeb translation by H. Rushton Fairclough).

VAMPYRISM;  
A POEM,

I.

IN this blest land, where valour burst  
The links which bound his children erst,<sup>120</sup>  
And rent the veil whose darkness hid  
Legitimacy's monstrous creed;—  
Where all that since the world began  
Had sway'd the sacred rights of man,  
With ancient dreams had past away,  
And bare in all its weakness lay;—  
Here reason, in triumphal hour,  
Asserted too her conquering power:  
From mountain, valley, plain and flood,  
She exorcised the shadowy brood.

II.

When freshening gales had swept the mists,  
That wildly wreath'd the mountain crests,  
No cloudy spectre o'er the storm  
Reveal'd the terrors of his form;—  
When evening breezes curl'd the wave  
No wraiths disturb'd the wandering brave,—  
When lost in darkness, down the side  
Of craggy mount their path they tried,  
And stunn'd by torrents deafening roar,  
Downward were hurl'd, to rise no more;  
Men said their balance they had lost,  
But never laid it to a ghost.

III.

No more, around the guarded gold,  
Their wake were pirates seen to hold;—  
No elves the midnight circle tript;  
No fairies lunar vigils kept;

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<sup>120</sup> *Erst*: once.

Genii nor devils rose—except,  
Indeed, that once in godly Salem,<sup>121</sup>  
Blue laws and preachings seem'd to fail 'em;  
Bed bugs and rats their slumbers broke,  
On Beelzebub<sup>122</sup> they laid the joke;  
Took brandy to expel the fiend,  
Which answered quite another end!  
Old ladies then to swim were taught,  
In amorous league with Satan caught;—  
And some were hang'd:—but now no more  
'Tis fit to rake up that old sore.

IV.

Of late the pole its fiends has sent,  
The *'arnal* Yankees to torment;  
By water witchcraft long distress,  
In vain with all their might they *gwest*;  
Till when their *gumption* seem'd to fail  
One captain got him by the tail;  
But metamorphos'd, (such their story,)  
The wizard gave the man the go-by  
Turn'd out a tunny fish<sup>123</sup> to be,  
The “shallowest monster” of the sea.

V.

And now they swear with might and main,  
That Monsieur Tonson's come again:<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> This stanza references the Salem witch trials of 1692-93; the allusion to swimming refers to the practice of dunking, putting accused witches under water where, if they drowned, they were proved innocent.

<sup>122</sup> *Beelzebub*: in the biblical tradition Beelzebub is known as the prince of the devils.

<sup>123</sup> *Tunny fish*: a large food fish, usually referring to the smaller type of tuna found in the Atlantic Ocean well-known as bottom feeders who stayed close to shorelines.

<sup>124</sup> *Monsieur Tonson*: in a 1795 comic poem by the British writer John Taylor (1757-1832), a prankster visits the home of a French refugee in the middle of the night asking for a Mr. Thompson; the Frenchman answers that “no Monsieur Tonson lodges here.” The prankster repeats this late night inquiry for days, driving the Frenchman and his wife mad with rage and fatigue, until he leaves Britain for a six-year period. Upon his return, he visits the Frenchman's house asking again for Mr. Thompson: the Frenchman exclaims “here's Monsieur Tonson come again!” and disappears into the night.

And Marshal Prince, his wife and daughters,  
Off Nahant, saw him walk the waters.  
The coachman there and Mrs. Prince  
Got at the odd fish several squints;  
But Mr. Prince, for weak his eye was,  
Look'd at him through a mast-head spy-glass;  
And took, lest men his word should doubt,  
An ugly likeness of his snout,  
With all the bumps the monster bore—  
He says, thirteen—his wife, two more.<sup>125</sup>

VI.

In Morristown<sup>126</sup> we've heard a ghost  
Wrought wonders to the people's cost.  
'Tis not long since, on New Year's night,  
The devil gave three bad boys a fright;  
Who o'er their whiskey took to cursing,  
Spoke disrespectfully of his person,  
His government began to libel,  
And on the back-log put the bible.—  
But these things are of little moment,  
Unworthy of a further comment.

VII.

Yet SUPERSTITION! though thy throne  
Be rear'd in wilds and woods alone,  
Where the rude wanderer of the glen  
Invokes the souls of martial men;—  
Adores the torrent thundering loud;  
Calls on the spirits of the cloud;—  
And o'er the black and bursting heaven,  
Sees Ariouski's chariot driven;<sup>127</sup>—

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<sup>125</sup> See "New-York Daily Advertiser" of August 23d, 1819. [Note in original. The cited article describes District Marshal J. Prince and family's sighting of a sea serpent some sixty feet in length near Nahant, Massachusetts.]

<sup>126</sup> *Morristown*: there were well-known ghost sightings, dating back to at least the American Revolution, in this New Jersey community. A pamphlet titled *The Morristown Ghost, or Yankee Trick, being a true, interesting, and strange narrative!*, purporting to debunk some of the ghost legends, appeared in 1815.

Yet, queen of terror's sheetedband!  
Fiends worse than thine affright our land,  
While, stalking from their ghastly homes,  
The VAMPYRE host infuriate roams!

VIII.

Behold that EXQUISITE divine,  
Fit to hang up for fashion's sign.  
In classic mould his wig is shear'd—  
SO SAUNDERS<sup>128</sup> says—by all rever'd—  
(Yet much, with deference, due I doubt  
If Saunders' science could make out  
Apollo's nob, if slic'd off well,  
From J—n G. B—t's bust to tell—  
Both are stuck up in the Academy<sup>129</sup>—  
Yet for this query think not bad o' me.)  
But to the Dandy—'neath his chin  
Hog's bristles fiercely fence him in;  
One corset back his shoulders throws;  
His bowels other bones enclose;  
His *ample* chest is bullet proof,  
With cotton cram'd and such like stuff;  
And for his clothes—but here's enough.  
For ere the printer's tardy imp,  
Shall bid in type this doggrel limp,  
The swifter ninth part of a man  
Shall change the passing mode again;  
And waists now short shall then be long.  
All that's now right shall then be wrong!

IX.

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<sup>127</sup> *Ariouški*: the extremely popular “Gertrude of Wyoming” (1809) by Scottish poet Thomas Campbell (1777-1844) popularized the figure of Arcouski as the “Indian God of War.”

<sup>128</sup> SAUNDERS: this appears to be George Saunders, who advertised shaving equipment in New York papers in the late 1810s. Much of this stanza refers to dandyism and fashion culture; the “bones” refer to corsets used to change figures.

<sup>129</sup> J—n G. B—t: John G. Bogert, serving on the board of the American Academy of the Fine Arts, quartered in New York, procured cast copies of major European sculptures, including a large number of well-known busts and the well-known Apollo Belvedere (see note 36).

How came that puppy<sup>130</sup> by his gig?  
What taught him how to look so big?  
For this behind the measur'd board  
His father scrap'd the growing hoard—  
Like him the pyramids who rear'd,  
To leave behind no name rever'd  
For, on the bowels of the heap,  
His revels shall this Vampyre keep;  
Till vigils late—and generous wine,  
And—things that suit no lay of mine,  
Have left him soon to die and rot,  
Be laugh'd at, pitied, and forgot!  
His species and his line to trace,  
And count the honours of his race,  
Let Mr. Wynkoop soar as high,  
As Scythia's Cynocephali,<sup>131</sup>  
And Mr. Langstaff dive as low  
As he, and he alone, can go;"

Let this quote Greek—that crack stale jokes,  
The theme is worthy of such folks.

X.

Lo! thro' the bustling world of trade,  
What monsters march in long parade;  
Gorg'd with the substance of a host,  
Swelling they strut with empty boast;  
The bubble burst, and credit fled,  
The money'd quack proclaims them dead;—  
Bailiffs in haste the corpse escort;—  
The turnkey says his service short;—

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<sup>130</sup> *Puppy*: insult for a foolish young man.

<sup>131</sup> Alluding to an Oration, delivered at the last commencement; and the natural history of the Dandies, in the fourth number of *Salmagundi Redivivus*. [Note in the original. Richard Wynkoop was one of the commencement speakers at his 1819 graduation from Columbia, and gave a satirical address titled "Kunokephaloi of Herodotus, and the probability of their being the ancestors of our modern dandies." Dandy is a negative term for a fashion-conscious young man; dandies were favored targets of satire at this time. The kunokephaloi (or Cynocephali) were legendary beings with human bodies and dogs' heads; Scythia was the Greek name for a region of Central Eurasia. The note also references a "Natural History" of dandies that appeared in *Salmagundi, Second Series*, by "Launcelot Langstaff" (James Kirke Paulding) in 1819.

Awhile in jail their bones repose,  
Till lo! the dungeon doors unclose!  
Insolvent laws, with potent spell,  
Have wrought the wondrous miracle;  
Their words of might the dead restore;  
And even more bloated than before,  
From that deep sepulchre, to prey  
On all the gudgeons<sup>132</sup> in his way,  
Of shameless resurrection vain,  
The VAMPYRE BANKRUPT stalks again!

XI.

Temples of Mammon!<sup>133</sup> O beware  
What priests the golden chalice bear!  
And let not hands profane approach  
The tempting, costly shrines to touch!  
Have we not seen what secret stealth  
Has suck'd the vitals of your wealth,  
When the weak dupe, quite drain'd himself,  
Grew hungry for the luscious pelf;  
Nor did his secret orgies end,  
Till fail'd a whole year's dividend.  
And now once more in open air,  
Have we not seen the Vampyre *pair*,  
Stalk forth, from jails and juries free,  
In all the pride of infamy?

XII.

O HERMES of these latter times,  
I hail thee in unworthy rhymes!<sup>134</sup>  
Great ALCHYMIST, whose art alone  
Has found the philosophic stone!  
Thou arch magician! to whose hand

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<sup>132</sup> *Gudgeons*: small fish frequently used as bait, and here slang for the gullible who will swallow anything.

<sup>133</sup> *Mammon*: a demon of greed: here *Temples of Mammon* would refer to banks or other institutions of capitalism. *Pelf*, a few lines lower, is here a negative term for wealth, usually indicating money dishonestly gained.

<sup>134</sup> *HERMES*: Hermes Trismegistus, a legendary alchemist.

Alone is given the hazel wand,  
That finds the veins of glittering ores,  
Great DOUSTERSWIVEL<sup>135</sup> of conjurors!  
What though thine art itself despair,  
And all the pageant fade in air?  
While harmless mobs thy doors assail,  
And blustering butchers curse and rail,  
Above thine own Flaminian<sup>136</sup> roll'd,  
Shall thy triumphal chariot hold  
Its course majestic along,  
Before the whole admiring throng!

XIII.

O JACOB! JACOB!<sup>137</sup> thou art keen,  
As thy great namesake;—him, I mean.  
Who manag'd for himself to keep  
The best of crafty Laban's sheep.  
Immortal VAMPYRE of our age!  
O might this unassuming page  
Be read by all, whose fobs<sup>138</sup> must bleed,  
Thy ravenous appetite to feed,  
Behind thy coach and four might I  
Roll in an humbler tilbury;<sup>139</sup>  
Beneath thy wings might D'ARCY's name  
Soar to the solar blaze of fame!

XIV.

Plumb from the giddy height I fall,  
Amid whole herds of Vampyres small,  
CRITICS, who worn out common place  
With Author's pilfer'd entrails grace;

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<sup>135</sup> The Conjuror in the Antiquary. [Note in the original. Dousterswivel is a con-man masquerading as a magician in Walter Scott's 1816 novel *The Antiquary*.]

<sup>136</sup> *Flaminian*: a well-known road in ancient Rome.

<sup>137</sup> *JACOB*: probably John Jacob Astor (1763-1848), one of the wealthiest men in New York; the reference to the "great namesake" is to the Old Testament Jacob. The story of Laban's flocks appears in Genesis 29-31.

<sup>138</sup> *Fobs*: a watch-pocket also used for cash; bleeding fobs are pockets giving up their money.

<sup>139</sup> *Tilbury*: a light two-wheeled carriage; a coach and four is a larger carriage drawn by four horses.

The FORUM spouter—barbarous Turk!  
Who rips up Curran, Phillips, Burke,<sup>140</sup>  
And thunders forth bombastic centos,  
Of wasted time the sad mementoes;  
All those who QUOTE at second hand,  
And what they quote don't understand;  
The PARSON who in sleepy tone  
Evangelizes Tillotson;<sup>141</sup>  
All PLAGIARISTS,—concise to be,—  
Are GOULs of high or low degree.

XV.

The QUACK with brick dust who provides,  
Wherewith to line his own insides;  
Who fills up all his hungry chinks,  
While to a ghost his patient shrinks;  
THOMAS who vends as Byron's own  
The works of doggrelists unknown;<sup>142</sup>  
Honest CONTRACTORS, who are able  
To cheat both government and rabble;  
Who, worthy of the scourge and gallows,  
Set up their equipage and palace;  
While blister'd mouths deep curses pour  
And tortur'd soldiers writhe and roar,  
Who eat the beef of horses dead,  
And craunch corroding lime for bread<sup>143</sup>—  
These, as the sufferers all agree,  
Are of the GOULE fraternity.

XVI.

There are whose tongues around them throw

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<sup>140</sup> *Curran, Phillips, Burke*: see notes 98, 67, and 75.

<sup>141</sup> *Tillotson*: see note 99.

<sup>142</sup> *THOMAS*: Moses Thomas (1787-1865), a New York bookseller and son of the prominent New England printer Isaiah Thomas; Moses published many of Byron's poems as well as an 1819 edition of Polidori's *The Vampyre*, signed with Byron's name.

<sup>143</sup> *Craunch*: munch on; the reference here is to wartime contractors selling contaminated and corrupted food, in this case with the substitution of horse meat for beef and the substitution of the alkaline mineral lime for flour in the baking of bread.

The gall with which their hearts o'erflow,  
Like those from old Medusa's head,  
Where'er its venom'd drops are shed,  
Earth's verdure fades;—rank poison springs;  
Snakes hiss, and dragons spread their wings.  
Pale Dian's hopeless votary old,  
Crabb'd, ancient dames, and bachelors cold,  
Nay e'en the blooming maid—will hie  
To the foul feast of calumny;  
On wisdom, worth, and reverend age,  
Beauty and wit, they glut their rage;  
And fondly hope, that as they tear  
The limbs of murder'd character,  
Their own fair fame shall prouder swell,  
Fatten'd upon the feast of hell!

XV.

There is a spot,<sup>144</sup> unknown to fame,  
Where Vampyres haunt their hold of shame  
When ENVY left her noxious cave,<sup>145</sup>  
Along Passaic's winding wave,  
(Though Ovid has this fact forgot,)  
She linger'd by one cherish'd spot;  
She left her benediction here,  
The ground became for ever sere,<sup>146</sup>  
Infected by her scatter'd slime  
And tainted to all after time;  
Whoever tastes its baleful food,  
A Vampyre longs to feed on blood—  
The blood of honour, virtue free,  
Fame, confidence and chastity!

XVIII.

But wouldst thou, in thy purpose bold,

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<sup>144</sup> Newark, N. J. [Note in original. The Passaic River flows through Newark, Passaic, and Paterson.]

<sup>145</sup> ENVY: Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book 2, tells the story of Envy, often depicted in illustrations in a cave.

<sup>146</sup> *Sere*: extremely dry.

The demon orgies foul behold—  
Mark where the SONS of SURGEON'S HALL<sup>147</sup>,  
Upon their foul purveyor call;  
And lo, the plunderer of the tomb  
Brings up his budget in the room;  
Rolls out, their ardent gaze before,  
A huge, fat negress on the floor;<sup>148</sup>  
Then with a savage howl they roar!  
Like cannibals, prepar'd to roast  
Their pris'ners on some barbarous coast;  
Like Shakspeare's Jew, the joyous band  
Whet their keen blades with eager band;  
While all the putrid limbs excite  
Their foul and Vampyre appetite.—

XIX.

And what am I, whose spider skill<sup>149</sup>  
Has thus contrived this sheet to fill;  
From my own bowels spun the lay,  
Until I find no more to say?  
Before to all I bid adieu,  
Confess,—I AM A VAMPYRE TOO!

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<sup>147</sup> *SURGEON'S HALL*: see note 41; the scene here depicts grave-robbers stealing the body of a black woman; *Shakspeare's Jew* is a reference to Shylock (see note 101).

<sup>148</sup> I have been informed by an amateur, that this is incorrect; as fat subjects are not best calculated for dissection; but this alludes to a matter of fact. [Note in original.]

<sup>149</sup> *Spider skill*: Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man* refers to "The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine, / Feels at each thread, and lives along the line" (I, 217-18); the lines are referenced in an essay by Oliver Goldsmith, speaking of "the spider's skill." A *lay*, below, is a narrative poem meant to be sung.

## NOTE.

The following lines appeared in the *Evening Post* of August 14th.<sup>150</sup>

FOR THE EVENING POST.

*To the anonymous Gentleman, who says he is the author of the "Black Vampyre."*

"Ubi dolor, ibi digitus—one must needs scratch where it itches."—  
Burton's *Anat. of Mel.*

Dear sir, since jackall-like you prowl,  
    Preying on carrion in the dark,  
Unseen, I only hear you howl,  
    And know you only by your bark;

I send my shot thus in the air,  
    Aimless, and eke<sup>151</sup> uncharg'd by wit;  
Yet knowing, it must fall somewhere,  
    And where it happens, it must hit.

Though thus like rotten-wood to shine<sup>152</sup>,  
    Only through night's uncertain cloak,  
With sickly lustre—I opine.  
    Is "Low Ambition's"<sup>153</sup> stalest joke—

Yet men have always had strange ways,  
    Like thee, of picking up stray laurels,  
When e'en like mine, the wither'd bays  
    Unworthy were of serious quarrels.

And from Vesputius' mighty theft  
    Even to thy lowest pitch of pride,  
Thousands from other brows have rest  
    The wreaths, fate to their own denied.

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<sup>150</sup> This poem, asserting the authorship of "D'Arcy," did appear in the *Evening Post* on August 14, but we have not found a notice of anyone else claiming authorship in print.

<sup>151</sup> *Eke*: also.

<sup>152</sup> *Rotten-wood*: a number of 18C chemical scientists had conducted experiments on the phosphorescence of rotten wood.

<sup>153</sup> *Low Ambition*: the phrasing was proverbial, low having the meaning of common or base.

So P—g’s Muse, by Irving boosted<sup>154</sup>,  
Above the brush-wood scrambled soon;  
High in the upper branches roosted,  
And chanted something like a tune.

Now floundering in the bogs alone,  
With sullen scream she frights our ears,<sup>155</sup>  
And all, with sympathetic groan,  
Lament the boast of former years.

So at Commencement have I seen  
Full many in borrow’d plumes array’d;  
While but a scurvy show, I ween,  
The motley mimickry display’d.<sup>156</sup>

Shade of a shadow! now good night!  
Ghost of a lie! invok’d in vain!  
Flit through the dim uncertain light,  
Be nothing—and thyself again!

URIAH DERICK D’ARCY.

LAUNCELOT, it appears, not relishing the great moral truth alluded to in the above lines, inserted the following low-lived scurrility, in the New-York Gazette of August 17th:

### COMMUNICATION.

*Fortunate Escape!*—The absence of the worthy editor of that “excellent journal” the Evening Post, already begins to be felt in the city. Several small dogs,<sup>157</sup> supposed to be mad, taking advantage of their old

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<sup>154</sup> *P—g’s Muse*...: James Kirke Paulding and his literary friend and mentor, Washington Irving; see introduction.

<sup>155</sup> See the "New Series of Salmagundi," for a rare specimen of all that is execrable in bad grammar—pointless in satire--stale in sentiment—miserable in diction—and dear at half price! [Note in original. See the introduction.]w

<sup>156</sup> Commencement: this is possibility another joking reference to Wynkoop’s satirical critique of dandies at the Columbia 1819 graduation (see note 131).

<sup>157</sup> The “small dogs” joke here plays on the common 18-19C insult “puppy”; see note 130.

enemy's back being turned, have lately ventured out, in spite of the vigilance of the police, and molested several citizens of good credit and reputation. We understand, that last Saturday afternoon, a small puppy, either mad or very angry, sallied out of the office of that "excellent journal" the New-York Evening Post, and snapped at a peaceable gentleman who was going about on his lawful occasions, but who, for reasons best known to themselves, is very much disliked by the little dogs. Luckily, being an exceeding<sup>158</sup> small pug, he only reached the heel of the gentleman's boot, the which he gave a fearful wound, which obliged him to go immediately, not to a surgeon, but a cobbler. It is not ascertained whether the gentleman took occasion to kick him or not, but it is said the little animal ran back in the office, howling very much, and took shelter between Mr. B—'s legs.

P. S. The angry little dog wore a brass collar, on which was engraved the name of URIAH DERICK D'ARCY in large capitals.—The public is warned *not* to beware of him.

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<sup>158</sup> Should be "exceedingly."—By the by, to say that a dog is exceeding small, reminds me of the Irishman's ideas of space; who said, "that he was small, and his brother was small, but his father was smaller than both of them put together." As this is the only flagrant outrage on the propriety of speech in the above communication, it is presumed that SOLOMON corrected the manuscript: and, as there is more point in the piece than LAUNCELOT usually exhibits, it is probable that "the *gray mare has proved the better horse*," and contributed a little of her caustic. [Note in original.]