

**NAPOLEON.  
IN 6 CANTOS**

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Napoleon. In 6 Cantos by Richard Whiffin

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**RICHARD WHIFFIN**

**NAPOLEON.  
IN 6 CANTOS**



*J. 1829*

# NAPOLEON. 9

IN SIX CANTOS.

BY RICHARD WHIFFIN.



Quench'd, in dark clouds of slumber, lie  
The terror of his beak, the lightning of his eye.

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## ODE TO NAPOLEON.

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### CANTO I.

O thou, 'midst awful fissures dwelling,  
Round which the sea-god's terrors roll,  
Say, will the Muse's whispers, telling  
Thine exploits, sooth thy captive soul ?  
Thy foes from former joys debar,—  
The trophied field, the pomp of war ;—  
But what, against the Muse, their arts avail ?  
Or surges bellowing on the em'rald deep ?  
Or mounds, emboss'd on many a threat'ning steep ?—  
Nor these, nor floating forts, can still the shell,  
Which Helen shall resound, thro' ev'ry winding dell.

Muse, the lofty lay begin !

What, tho' his power and state be flown ?

Shall music's stream be pour'd alone to him,

Who wears secure a crown ?—

Pamper'd princes, whose sole fame

Is on their country's ruin grav'd,

Yet find, within a court deprav'd,

Some venal son of song to raise their name :

Sing Thou the MAN, who fame and throne

Ow'd to no merit but his own ;

Who drew from darkness each hid spark of fire,

And, kindling, bade aspire

To greatness' hallow'd seat, its proper zone.

In vain misfortune spreads her veil ;

In all their pride thy early conquests rise.

See o'er the giant Alps, which brave the skies,

Their toilsome march thy length'ning legions trail.

Round hanging summits, capp'd in white,

Or where the yawning abyss scares the sight,



No sound disturbs their fleece-spread way ;  
 Save when the wintry monarch throws,  
 From off his ice-crown'd brows, a weight of snows ;  
 Sad, mournful echoes burst, and sighing, die away.  
 What wonder thee, Bernard, assail'd,  
 To find thy height-protected ramparts scaled,  
 Ere well thy watch had shook their drowsy brows ;  
 But, vainly would their arms have sped  
 Against the YOUTH, when Winter's rage had fail'd,  
 Upon his proper reign, and ice-incrusted bed.

He comes ; Italia, bow thy neck ;  
 Like Alexander, young and brave.  
 Wurmser, secure that mountain's break,  
 Or all thy army finds a grave !  
 Trust not, trust not Mantua's walls !  
 The hero comes ;— the city falls ;—  
 The grey-hair'd chieftain waits his beardless lord ;  
 He passes on, nor takes th' astonish'd suppliant's sword.  
 Lo ! the triumphant troops, late perch'd on high,  
 Like famish'd eagles, gazing at the sky,

O'er the soft vale, and elmy vineyard spread,  
 And change, for costly feasts, uncertain bread;  
 Rags, for rich habits, at th' Italian's cost,  
 And the poor native pays what Austria lost.

Now, antique Husband of the deep!  
 Thy wife divorced but mocks thy sleep,  
 Thy argosies a fire-pile's heap,  
     Thy glories lost!

And, thro' thy houses' empty tier,  
 No sounds salute the vacant ear,  
 But sullen oar of gondolier,

    A stranger's cost!

Who has not heard of Venice? who shall hear,  
     When, from its Lagunes, stalks infection wan?  
 Some wave-lash'd shaft the sea-mew's lonely nest may bear,  
     But man shall shun the pestilence of man.

Now, Rome, (thy very name has something great,  
     That sensitive from aught ignoble flies,)—

Now, Rome sacerdotal, pour forth, in state,  
 To greet the modern Cæsar at thy gate,  
     The gaze of myriads, tho' he shuns their eyes,  
 As did the old, a crown, at Lupercalia's fête :  
 Tho' change the times, still man remains ;  
     The very same, he lives, he dies ;  
 Tho' doff'd the toga, he retains,  
     In vesture short, the heart's disguise,  
         Oppressing all he can :  
 Till, sudden 'rous'd, Ambition's instrument, he bies,  
 The drudge and dupe of Genius he would else despise ;  
     Such paradox is man !

Say, Daughters of the mighty Jove,  
     From heaven's ambrosial bow'rs descending,  
 To spread the arts of social love,  
     And soften man, his species rending,  
     Inflam'd by lust of gold, worst lust unbending,  
     Muses, best, sweetest, influences lending,  
 Say ye, who from Neapolis remove,  
     And to ignoble fear, and Frenchmen yield ?