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Subject: Lord Byron on Newfoundlands

My friend, Joe, sent me these wonderful poems about Lord Byron's dog. Enjoy.
To: Laura, Kevin, Briancc: From: Joseph Freeman/ARRB
Date: 01/09/97 01:15:53 PM
Subject: Lord Byron on Newfoundlands
Byron had a much-beloved Newfoundland companion who lived only 5 1/2 years. Byron buried the dog at Newstead Abbey and inscribed on the pedestal marking the grave the following:
Near this spot
Are deposited the remains of one
Who possessed beauty without vanity
Strength without insolence
Courage without ferocity
And all the virtues of man without his vices.
This praise which would be
Unmeaning flattery
If inscribed over human ashes
Is but a just tribute to the memory of
Boatswain, a dog, Who was born at Newfoundland, May 1803, And died at Newstead Abbey, November 18, 1808
In addition to this inscription, Byron also wrote a poem, entitled Inscription on the Monument of a Newfoundland Dog (it's unclear to me whether the text of the poem is actually inscribed on the monument, or just what is written above):
When some proud son of man returns to earth
Unknown to glory, but upheld by birth,
The sculptur'd art exhausts the art of woe,
And stoned urns record who rest below;
When all is done, upon the tomb is seen,
Not what he was, but what he should have been;
But the poor Dog, in life the firmest friend,
The first to welcome, foremost to defend;
Whose honest heart is still his master's own,
Who labours, fights, lives, breathes, for him alone
Unhonour'd falls, unnoticed all his worth,
Denied in Heaven the soul he held on earth;
While man, vain insect, hopes to be forgiven,
And claims himself sole exclusive of Heaven!
Oh, man, thou feeble tenant of an hour,
Debas'd by slavery, or corrupt by power,
Who knows thee well must quit thee with disgust,
Degraded mass of animated dust!
By nature vile, ennobled but by name,
Each kindred brute might bid thee blush for shame.
Ye who, perchance, behold this single Urn
Pass on -- it is none you wish to mourn:
To mark a Friend's remains these stones arise,
I never knew but one, and here he lies.
Newstead Abbey, November 30, 1808
[Of course, Byron was a bit on the bitter, maladjusted side (though brilliant). Still, I like "beauty without vanity/strength without insolence/courage without ferocity" --- pretty cool. "Vain insect" is also pretty good!]

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