

## 17. THE TOWN OF COLOGNA VENETA



*Cologna*<sup>[p. 207]</sup>, who want a long bridge to sport on,  
 and are ready to dance, though you fear  
 the useless bridge-props with their  
 much-patched standing timber,  
 lest they tumble and lie in deep mud:  
 let a good bridge be made for you as you desire  
 where even leap-frogging priests are safe: but  
 Cologna, give me that greatest gift, a good laugh.  
 I want a fellow-citizen of mine to go head over heels  
 straight into the deep mire from your bridge,  
 since truly the whole pool and the putrid marsh  
 is the blackest and deepest of chasms.  
 The man's totally dull, knows no more than  
 a two-year-old child, asleep in its father's trembling arms.  
 Who, though he's married a girl in her first flowering,  
 a girl more delicate than a pretty little kid,  
 needing to be tended more carefully than choicest grapes,  
 let's her play as she wishes, doesn't care a fig,  
 hasn't risen to the occasion, but like an alder  
 in a Ligurian ditch, crippled by the axe,  
 feels as much of it all as if there were no woman there:  
 Such is his stupor he doesn't see, or hear me, he,  
 who doesn't know who he is, or whether he is or not.  
 Now I want to toss him headlong from your bridge,

## The Poems

if it's possible suddenly to raise that stupefied dullness,  
and abandon that indolent mind in the heavy bog,  
as mules cast shoes into tenacious depths.

*Note: Nos: 18-20 are considered spurious and are omitted here.*