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THE
P O E T I C A L W O R K S

OF

JOHN MILTON:

WITH A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR;

PRELIMINARY DISSERTATIONS ON EACH POEM; NOTES CRITICAL
AND EXPLANATORY; AN INDEX TO THE SUBJECTS
OF PARADISE LOST; AND

A VERBAL INDEX TO ALL THE POEMS.

BY

CHARLES DEXTER CLEVELAND,

AUTHOR OF THE COMPENDIUMS OF ENGLISH,
AMERICAN AND CLASSICAL
LITERATURE.

A New Edition. A

“It will not be too much to say, that of all uninspired writings, (*if these be uninspired,*) Milton's are the most worthy of profound study 'by all minds which would know the creativeness, the splendour, the learning, the eloquence, the wisdom, to which the human intellect can reach.'—*Str Egerton Brydges.*

“That fervid Genius, which has cast a sort of shade upon all the other works of man.”
Lord Erskine.

LONDON:
SAMPSON LOW, SON, AND MARSTON,
MILTON HOUSE, LUDGATE HILL.

1865.

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P R E F A C E.

ANY attempt, however humble, to make the Poems of Milton more widely circulated, intelligently read, and wisely appreciated, needs no apology. I may state, however, the simple incident to which the present edition owes its origin. Some years ago, when preparing my "Compendium of English Literature," I had occasion to look at Todd's "Verbal Index" to Milton, in connection with "Lycidas," and found the first two references to which I turned, to be wrong. Surprised at this, I soon after, at my leisure, compared every word in "Lycidas" with this Index, and found, in its references to that short poem of one hundred and ninety-three lines, SIXTY-THREE mistakes! This discovery made me resolve to prepare, as early as my numerous engagements would permit, an edition of Milton's Poems, with an Index subjoined on which some reliance for accuracy might be placed. But though I began the examination of Todd's Index more than three years ago, so laborious has been the work that I have been able but recently to bring it to a close. The result is, that, after two careful examinations, (in the first of which I was assisted, in some portions, by two or three literary friends,) there have been found THREE THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY-TWO mistakes! This I could scarcely believe, had I not marked the number on each page at its foot, and had not the careful addition of the figures brought about the astounding result; so that, on the whole, the work of examining and comparing Todd's Index has been about equivalent to that of making out, independently, an entirely new one. I need hardly say how richly I have been repaid for my labour, in my constant communings, day by day, with the mind of the immortal bard, whose astonishing learning and genius have continually excited in me fresh admiration and delight. No work could more amply bring with it its own rich reward.

———"While I sit with thee, I seem in Heaven;
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
Of sweet repast: they satiate, and soon fill,
Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine
Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety."

Par. Lost, viii. 210.

Great pains have also been taken to present a correct text. Sir Egerton Brydges' London edition, in six volumes, was put into the hands of the printer to "set up" from; but the proofs have, from the outset, been read and compared with three other editions, namely, Todd's, 7 vols., London, 1809; Mitford's "Aldine," 3 vols., London, 1845; and "Milton's own," as reprinted by Pickering, 6 vols., London, 1851. It was well that this care was taken, for numerous errors were found throughout in the text of Brydges. I claim not, of course, that my edition is immaculate: but I can truly say that great and unwearied pains have been taken to avoid errors both in the text and in the Index.

The notes, with the preliminary and subsequent "Remarks" to each poem, have mainly been selected from the numerous preceding annotators, with such discrimination, and I hope it may be thought with such taste, as a work like this demands. It would have been easy to swell these to any extent; but a book is not always valuable in proportion to its size, and my great aim in preparing this edition of Milton was, to have one that, while it would be critical enough for the scholar, full enough for the general reader, and beautiful enough for the table of the opulent, should, above all, be cheap enough for the school-room and for the dwellings of those whose limited means prevent them from buying expensive books.

It is now twelve years since my first edition of the Poetical Works of Milton was published. Though subjected, extensively, to the scrutiny of private scholarship and of public criticism, but a few trifling errors in the text and index—about a dozen in all—have been, from time to time, discovered. All these have, of course, been corrected; and the author hopes that his work, as now presented to the English public will meet still more fully the exacting demands of the student, as it has always seemed to gratify the tastes and fulfil the purposes of the general reader.

CHARLES DEXTER CLEVELAND.

Philadelphia, July 1, 1865.

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN MILTON.



P R E F A C E.

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Having thus aimed, not at originality, but simply to make the MOST USEFUL edition of England's and the world's greatest poet, I now commit it to an intelligent public to decide how far I have succeeded.

CHARLES DEXTER CLEVELAND.

Philadelphia, January 1, 1853.

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MILTON'S AUTOGRAPH.

Since the fifth edition was published, I have seen, in the hands of the Hon. Charles Sumner, the *Album Amicorum* of a Neapolitan nobleman, Camillus Cordoyn, at Geneva, who was wont to get the autographs of distinguished men who passed through that city on their way to or from Italy. There are many names of great interest in it, but that which outweighs them all is Milton's, of which I have had a facsimile taken, through the kindness of Mr. Sumner, and now present it here, as a gem of the rarest value:

— if Vertue feelle were
Heaven it selfe would stoope to her.
Caelum non animū muto dū trans mare
curro

Joannes Miltonius
Anglus.
Junij 10. 1639.

It will be observed that Milton changes the quotation from Horace from the third to the first person, which gives an increased interest to the beautiful lines of Comus,—published just before he commenced his travels:—"The sky, not the mind, *I* change when *I* cross the sea;" thus showing, in the language of the late William Ellery Channing, D. D., "That to Milton the words from Comus were something more than poetry—that they were a principle of life."

Philadelphia, July 1st, 1865.

C. D. C.

A SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE OF MILTON.

JOHN MILTON, "the greatest of great men," was born at his father's house in Bread street, London, December 9th, 1608.* The poet's grandfather was a rigid Papist, and disinherited his son, whom he had educated at Christ Church College, Oxford, because he embraced the Protestant faith. Thus deprived of his patrimony, the poet's father had recourse, for his support, to the profession of scrivener or writer, in the practice of which he proved so successful that he was enabled to give his children the advantages of a good education, and at length to retire with comfort to the country.

It is to be regretted that we have so little information respecting the early life of our immortal poet. His first instructor was Thomas Young, a Puritan minister of Essex, to whose worth Milton has borne testimony in an elegy and two Latin epistles. On Mr. Young's going to the Continent, Milton was sent to St. Paul's school, then under the direction of Dr. Gill, where he distinguished himself by almost incredible progress, and gave numerous indications of that gigantic intellect, the energies of which afterwards more fully developed themselves. Thence he was removed to Christ's College, Cambridge, which he entered on the 12th of February, 1624. Already, or about this time, he had commenced his poetical career, by paraphrasing two of the Psalms, (the 114th and 136th,) in which may be discerned the dawning of real genius. The next year, 1625, he wrote his poem "On the Death of a Fair Infant dying of a Cough."† Of this poem Warton remarks—"On the whole, from a boy of seventeen, it is an extraordinary effort of fancy, expression, and versification." While at Cambridge he wrote also many other poems, both Latin and English: among the latter is his "Address to his Native Language," at a "Vacation Exercise" in the college, written at the age of nineteen; and his grand and inimitable "Hymn on the Nativity," in his twenty-first year, and of which Sir Egerton Brydges remarks—"I cannot doubt that this Hymn was the congenial prelude of that holy and inspired imagination which produced the 'Paradise Lost' nearly forty years afterwards."

Milton was designed by his parents for the profession of divinity; but during his residence at the University he changed his intention. His own account is as follows:—"By the intention of my parents and friends I was destined, of a child, to the service of the church, and in mine own resolutions. Till, coming to some maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the church, that he who would take orders must subscribe Slave, and take an oath withal, which, unless he took with a conscience that he would retch, he must either straight perjure or split

* Bread street runs from Cheapside south, near St. Paul's Church. Old Anthony Wood tells us that the house and chamber in which the poet was born were often visited by foreigners, even in the poet's lifetime. The house, however, was destroyed in the great fire of 1666.

† Milton's only sister, Anne, was married to a gentleman by the name of Phillips, and had by him, besides the infant daughter immortalized by this poem, two sons, John and Edward, who were educated by the poet.

his faith; I thought better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing. This honest and ardent love of truth and freedom was his predominant characteristic through life.

Milton remained seven years in Cambridge, where he took the usual degrees, that of bachelor in 1628, and that of master of arts in 1632. He then left the University, and retired to his father's house in Horton, Buckinghamshire, where he wrote the most celebrated of what are called his "Juvenile Poems,"—his *Arcades*, *Comus*, *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and *Lycidas*. In 1637, having lost his mother, he felt himself at liberty to carry into effect a project which he had long meditated,—to visit foreign parts; and having obtained his father's permission, he set out for Italy. The account is, of course, best given in his own words. In his "Second Defence of the People of England," to refute the calumnies of his enemies, who had represented him as vicious in his youth, he thus gives a too brief autobiography:—

"I will now mention who and whence I am. I was born at London, of an honest family: my father was distinguished by the undeviating integrity of his life; my mother, by the esteem in which she was held, and the alms which she bestowed. My father destined me from a child to the pursuits of literature; and my appetite for knowledge was so voracious, that from twelve years of age I hardly ever left my studies, or went to bed before midnight. This primarily led to my loss of sight: my eyes were naturally weak, and I was subject to frequent headaches, which, however, could not chill the ardour of my curiosity, or retard the progress of my improvement. My father had me daily instructed in the grammar school, and by other masters at home. He then, after I had acquired a proficiency in various languages, and had made a considerable progress in philosophy, sent me to the university of Cambridge. Here I passed seven years in the usual course of instruction and study, with the approbation of the good, and without any stain upon my character, till I took the degree of Master of Arts.

"After this I did not, as this miscreant feigns, run away into Italy, but of my own accord retired to my father's house, whither I was accompanied by the regrets of most of the fellows of the college, who showed me no common marks of friendship and esteem. On my father's estate, where he had determined to pass the remainder of his days, I enjoyed an interval of uninterrupted leisure, which I devoted entirely to the perusal of the Greek and Latin classics,—though I occasionally visited the metropolis, either for the sake of purchasing books or of learning something new in mathematics or in music, in which I, at that time, found a source of pleasure and amusement. In this manner I spent five years, till my mother's death. I then became anxious to visit foreign parts, and particularly Italy. My father gave me his permission, and I left home with one servant. On my departure, the celebrated Henry Wotton, who had long been King James's ambassador at Venice, gave me a signal proof of his regard, in an elegant letter which he wrote, breathing not only the warmest friendship, but containing some maxims of conduct which I found very useful in my travels. The noble Thomas Scudamore, King Charles's ambassador, to whom I carried letters of recommendation, received me most courteously at Paris. His lordship gave me a card of introduction to the learned Hugo Grotius, at that time ambassador from the queen of Sweden to the French court. A few days after, when I set out for Italy, he gave me letters to the English merchants on my route, that they might show me any civilities in their power.

"Taking ship at Nice, I arrived at Genoa, and afterwards visited Leghorn, Pisa, and Florence. In the latter city, which I have always more particularly esteemed for the elegance of its dialect, its genius, and its taste, I stopped about two months; when I contracted an intimacy with many persons of rank and learning, and was a constant attendant at

their literary parties,—a practice which prevails there, and tends so much to the diffusion of knowledge and the preservation of friendship.

“From Florence I went to Sienna, thence to Rome, where, after I had spent about two months in viewing the antiquities of that renowned city,—where I experienced the most friendly attentions from Lucas Holstein and other learned and ingenious men,—I continued my route to Naples. When I was preparing to pass over into Sicily and Greece, the melancholy intelligence which I received of the civil commotions in England made me alter my purpose; for I thought it base to be travelling for amusement abroad, while my fellow-citizens were fighting for liberty at home.

“While I was on my way back to Rome, some merchants informed me that the English Jesuits had formed a plot against me if I returned to Rome, because I had spoken too freely of religion: for it was a rule which I laid down to myself, in those places never to be the first to begin any conversation on religion, but, if any questions were put to me concerning my faith, to declare it without any reserve or fear. I nevertheless returned to Rome. I took no steps to conceal either my person or my character, and for about the space of two months I again openly defended, as I had done before, the reformed religion in the very metropolis of Popery.

“By the favour of God I got back to Florence,^{Galileo}* where I was received with as much affection as if I had returned to my native country. There I stopped as many months as I had done before; then, crossing the Apennines, I passed through Bologna and Ferrara to Venice. After I had spent a month in surveying the curiosities of this city, and had put on board a ship the books which I had collected in Italy, I proceeded through Verona and Milan, and along the Lemman Lake to Geneva. The mention of this city brings to my recollection the slandering More,† and makes me again call the Deity to witness, that in all those places, in which vice meets with so little discouragement and is practised with so little shame, I never once deviated from the paths of integrity and virtue; and perpetually reflected that, though my conduct might escape the notice of men, it would not elude the inspection of God.

“Then, pursuing my former route through France, I returned to my native country, after an absence of one year and about three months. As soon as I was able, I hired a spacious house in the city for myself and my books, where I again with rapture renewed my literary pursuits, and where I calmly awaited the issue of the contest, which I trusted to the wise conduct of Providence and to the courage of the people.

“The vigour of the parliament had begun to humble the pride of the bishops. As long as the liberty of speech was no longer subject to control, all mouths began to be opened against the bishops; some complained of the vices of the individuals, others of those of the order. They said that it was unjust that they alone should differ from the model of other reformed churches, and particularly the word of God.

“This awakened all my attention and my zeal: I saw that a way was opening for the establishment of real liberty; that the foundation was laying for the deliverance of man from the yoke of slavery and superstition; that the principles of religion, which were the first objects of our care, would exert a salutary influence on the manners and constitution of the republic; and as I had from my youth studied the distinctions between religious and civil rights, I perceived that, if I ever wished to be of use, I ought at least not to be wanting to my country, to the church, and to so many of my fellow Christians, in a crisis of so much danger. I therefore determined to relinquish the other pursuits in which I was engaged, and to transfer the whole force of my talents and my industry to this one

* At Florence he also visited the great and injured Galileo, to whom he refers in Paradise Lost, book i. line 288.

† Alexander More.

important object. I accordingly wrote two books to a friend, concerning "The Reformation of the Church of England."

Upon his return to England, which was about August, 1639, Milton did not see any way in which he could immediately serve the cause of the people. He therefore hired a house in St. Bride's Churchyard, about a quarter of a mile west of St. Paul's, and renewed his literary pursuits, calmly awaiting an opportunity for him to enlist in the great struggle for civil freedom, on the side of the people. In the mean time he received as pupils his two nephews, John and Edward Phillips, and subsequently, yielding to the importunities of some intimate friends, he added to their number. Finding his apartments too small for him, he removed to a "garden-house in Aldersgate street, free from the noise and disturbance of passengers," where he received more boys, and instructed them in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, as well as in mathematics, history, and some of the modern languages. What a privilege, to have had a Milton for an instructor; to have received from such lips lessons of truth and wisdom, eloquently enforcing and illustrating the great principles of civil and religious liberty!

But the time was drawing near for him to enter the political arena. The tyrannical power of the king and the domineering and intolerant zeal of Laud were bringing matters to a crisis, and Milton determined to take an active part in the contest.

In 1641 appeared the first of his controversial works, entitled "Of Reformation touching Church Discipline in England, and the Causes that hitherto have hindered it,"—the object of which is to demonstrate the proposition that prelacy is essentially inimical to civil and religious liberty. In the prosecution of this grand object, "he displays a profundity of learning, a vigour of reasoning, an earnestness of purpose, an impassioned eloquence of style, and a comprehensive grasp of his subject, which must ever excite admiration: indeed, the work is, throughout, one continued strain of wisdom and eloquence."* To this, Hall, Bishop of Norwich, at the request of Laud, replied in "An Humble Remonstrance to the High Court of Parliament;" and about the same time, Usher, Archbishop of Armagh, published "The Apostolical Institution of Episcopacy." In answer to these able and learned works, Milton wrote two pieces, one of them entitled "Of Prelatiell Episcopacy," and the other, "The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty." These productions of Milton, distinguished by vigour, acuteness, and erudition, were unquestionably the most able, eloquent, and learned on the Puritan side of the controversy. But the publication which appears to have attracted most attention at the time, was a pamphlet, the joint production of five Presbyterian divines, under the appellation of SMECTYMNUUS, a word formed from the initials of the names of the authors.† To this production Bishop Hall replied in "A Defence of the Remonstrance;" and Milton's formidable pen, again employed in opposition to the prelates, produced "Animadversions on the Remonstrant's Defence." All these various publications were written in the course of one year, (1641,) when their author was only thirty-three years of age, and occupied with the arduous duties of an instructor of youth,—a circumstance which cannot fail to excite greater wonder at the unwearied industry, the ready application of various knowledge, and the exuberant fertility of mind which are displayed in their composition.

We now come to an event in Milton's life which materially affected his domestic comfort, and gave a new direction to his literary labours. This was his marriage, in 1643, when in his thirty-fifth year, to Mary, eldest daughter of Mr. Richard Powell, a high royalist, of Forest Hill, Oxfordshire. This was an eminent example of the unhappiness that must ever

* Encyclopædia Britannica, vol. xv. p. 91.

† Stephen Marshall, Edward Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow

ensue from the union in wedlock of those whose tempers, dispositions, and tastes are entirely uncongenial. The wife, who appears to have been a dull, unintellectual, insensate woman, though possessed of outward personal beauty, accustomed to the affluent hospitality of her father's house, and to the gay society found there, could not relish the calm and quiet philosophic abode of Milton; and having no mind to enjoy his conversation, and no sympathy in the cause in which his whole soul was enlisted, she early requested to return to her father's on a visit, and to remain there during the Summer. The request was readily granted; but when the time fixed for her return came, she did not go back. Milton wrote to her, urging her immediate return. This letter was unanswered. Others were sent, and similarly treated. He then sent a messenger to bring her home; but he was dismissed, and the wife remained with her friends. She was strengthened in this purpose by the fact, that victory up to that time had favoured the royalists, and the Powells wished to break off the alliance.

Milton was not the man to submit patiently to such injustice aggravated by insult. Accordingly, he repudiated his wife upon the grounds of disobedience and desertion; and to justify this step to the world, he published, in 1644, "The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce," in which he maintains, that "indisposition, unfitness, or contrariety of mind, arising from a cause in nature, unchangeable, hindering and ever likely to hinder the main benefits of conjugal society, which are solace and peace, is a greater reason of divorce than adultery, provided there be a mutual consent for separation." He next published "Tetrachordon," or "Exposition of the Four Chief Places in Scripture which treat of the Nullities in Marriage." Thirdly, "The Judgment of the famous Martin Bucer touching Divorce."* Fourthly, "Colasterion."† These tracts raised a great clamour against the author. The Presbyterian clergy, especially, unmindful of the important services he had recently rendered them, assailed him from the pulpit and the press with such violent and acrimonious hostility, that they alienated him irrevocably from their cause.

It must, however, in truth be acknowledged, that this "Doctrine of Divorce," as urged by Milton, is not defensible. With such a man as Milton, it would indeed be productive of no practical ill effects; but if it should be generally received and practised, it would doubtless open the way to a great amount of domestic unhappiness and immorality.

Milton, however, soon showed that he sincerely entertained these views, by paying his addresses to a beautiful and accomplished young woman, the daughter of a Dr. Davis. This alarmed his wife and her relations,—more especially as the royal cause was now desperate,—and they contrived to have his wife meet him. They watched his visits, and when he was at the house of a relative, the wife burst into the room, fell down at his knees, and with tears implored his pardon. At first he appeared inexorable; but his firmness soon gave way, and, yielding to his own generous nature, he consented to forgive the past, and took her to his home and his affections. Nor was this all: he took her family, in their danger and distress, when the royalists were entirely prostrate, under his own roof, and gave them his protection and support.

In 1644, Milton published his tractate on "Education," and his *Areopagitica*, or "A Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing." This Milton pronounces the finest production in prose from Milton's pen. For vigour and eloquence of style, unconquerable force of argument, majesty and richness of language, it is not to be surpassed. But the Presbyterians, now risen to power, speedily forgot the principles they had professed in adversity, and declared against unlimited toleration; and the very men

* Martin Bucer, a man of great learning, was one of the first promoters of the Reformation at Strasburg. He agrees with Milton, though the latter had not seen his book till after the publication of his own.

† From a Greek word meaning "adapted for punishment," as it was written in reply to a malicious adversary who abused Milton's first work.

who had so indignantly complained of restraints on the press, when imposed by prelacy, lost no time in subjecting it to the most rigorous censorship when it passed into their own hands. It was thus found, in the nervous language of Milton, that

~~"New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large."~~

In 1648-49, Milton published "The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates," in which he shows that the trial and execution of Charles I. was justifiable. Soon after this he began a new work, "A History of England," but was prevented from labouring long in this department, by being, unexpectedly to himself, appointed Secretary of State, March, 1649: he therefore immediately applied himself to the duties of his new avocation.

About this time, soon after King Charles' death, a book appeared, under the title of *Εικων Βασιλικη*, (ICON BASILIKE,) "The Royal Image," or "Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitudes and Sufferings." It purported to have been written by the king himself,* and made a powerful impression on the public mind.† Milton was ordered by Parliament to answer it, and he did so in the *Εικονοκλαστης*, (ICONOCLAST, or "Image Breaker.") This was considered, even by the prejudiced, as a triumphant refutation of the "Portraiture," and produced a conviction decidedly unfavourable to the royal party. It is indeed one of the very ablest of his controversial writings.

But a still greater triumph awaited him. Charles II., then in France, anxious to appeal to the world against the execution of his father, employed Claudius Salmatius, professor in the university of Leyden, and famed for his learning, to write a defence of the late king and monarchy; and before the close of the year 1649 the book appeared, under the title of *Defensio Regia pro Carolo Primo ad Carolum Secundum*. All eyes were now turned to Milton to answer it. By this time his sight, which had for a long time been weak, had become greatly impaired, and he was forewarned by his physicians that total blindness would be the infallible result, if he should engage in any new literary labour; but, undeterred by this prediction, and unrestrained by bad health, he persevered in the work,—for, as he says himself, "I did not long balance whether my duty should be preferred to my eyes." Early, therefore, in the year 1651, appeared his *Pro Populo Anglicano Defensio contra Claudii Salmatii Defensionem Regiam*. This work more than answered the expectations which were entertained of it. It was read with universal applause and admiration. The triumph of Milton was decisive, and the humiliation of his adversary so great, that he lost favour even with those whom he sought to please—the crowned heads. So great, indeed, was his mortification, and so wounded was his pride, that ill health soon followed, and he died the next year.

In 1653, Milton lost his wife, and he was left with three motherless daughters, in domestic solitude and in almost total blindness. But such was the vigour of his intellect, that he continued to labour in defence of the commonwealth. Numerous replies to his "Defence" were sent forth by the royalists, but all these he left to perish in obscurity, excepting one that was published at the Hague, entitled *Regii Sanguinis Clamor ad Cælum adversus Parricidas Anglicanas*. It was written by Peter du Moulin, a Frenchman, but afterwards Prebendary of Canterbury; but A. More, who had the charge of publishing it,—a Scotchman by birth, who had settled in France,—was treated by Milton as the real author. A terrible castigation awaited him; for, in 1654, appeared Milton's reply, under the title of *Defensio Secunda pro Populo Anglicano contra infamem*

* It is now known to have been written by Gauden, Bishop of Exeter. Read a most interesting and masterly account of the subject in the *Edinburgh Review*, June, 1826, (lxiv. 1.) written by Sir James Mackintosh.

† 48,500 copies of this book were sold,—a number which, when we look at the times, and the scarcity and dearness of books then, is truly extraordinary.

Libellum anonymum cui Titulus, Regii Sanguinis Clamor ad Cælum.
 This, on many accounts, is a more valuable work to us than the first; for, besides that he triumphantly and everywhere vindicates democratic principles,—laying down the broad truth that all legitimate governments are and must be from the people,—he has also, to refute the calumnies of his enemies, given a sketch of many parts of his own history, and introduced us to a large number of his republican friends, and gives their characters. The Address to Cromwell, notwithstanding Dr. Johnson's sneer,* has been generally admired, as ably portraying the character of that most remarkable man.

About 1656, Milton married his second wife, the daughter of Captain Woodcock, of Hackney, who died the next year. In one of his Sonnets, he has paid an affectionate tribute to her memory. Soon after this event, he retired from the office of Secretary of State, on an allowance of one hundred and fifty pounds a year. He occupied his time in completing his "History of England" to the Norman conquest; in the preparation of his *Thesaurus Lingue Latince*, and doubtless in reflecting upon the subject of his immortal epic, the "Paradise Lost."

In September, 1658, Cromwell, broken down by the cares and anxieties of government, finished his splendid career. His death, of course, gave no little anxiety in the breast of Milton, lest the great cause of freedom, for which he had been contending, should suffer detriment, and intolerance and persecution return. He therefore published two treatises, devoted to the consideration of two evils. One of these was entitled "A Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes;" and the other, "Considerations touching the likeliest Means to remove Hirelings out of the Church." In the first he asserts the entire liberty of conscience, maintaining that in matters purely religious, the civil magistrate has no right to interfere. In the second, he contends against all tithes; and that pastors should be supported by the voluntary contributions of their own flock. So wonderfully was this great man ahead of his times!

At the Restoration, he was of course in imminent peril, and he retired to the house of a friend in Bartholomew Close,† and there he lay concealed till the Act of Oblivion was passed, August 29, 1660. On his return to society, he took a house in Holborn, near Red Lion Square, and in 1662 removed to a house in the Artillery Walk, adjoining Bunhill Fields, where he continued during the remainder of his life. In 1665, Milton married his third wife,‡ Elizabeth Minshul, daughter of Sir Edward Minshul, of an ancient Cheshire family. She survived him above fifty years, and, retiring to Nantwich, in Cheshire, died there in 1727.

About this time, (1665,) Ellwood, the Quaker, desired to be introduced to Milton,—believing that, by reading to him, he would advance himself in classical knowledge, as well as materially aid the blind bard. The worthy and benevolent Quaker soon found in Milton a friend as well as an instructor; and when the plague began to rage in London, he had the poet and his family conveyed to a house near his own, at Chalfont, St. Giles, Buckinghamshire. Here Milton gave to Ellwood the manuscript of "Paradise Lost" to read, desiring his opinion upon it. When Ellwood returned it, he expressed his great pleasure, and added—"Thou hast said

* Dr. Johnson, in his Life of Milton, seems to miss no opportunity of libelling his character. Indeed, we can hardly conceive of two men more opposite: the one was a Democrat, the other a Tory in politics; the one a Congregationalist, the other a High-churchman in religion; the one highly imaginative, the other sensuous. Of Johnson's life of the poet, Fletcher says, "It is the trail of a serpent over all Milton's works: nothing escaped the fang of detraction."

† A very narrow close or passage, in London, entered from West Smithfield.

‡ This step seemed to be really necessary, to protect the blind poet from the unnatural conduct of his daughters, who sold his books, and combined with the maid-servant to cheat him in the marketing. His friendly physician, Dr. Paget, selected this lady for him, who appears to have been such a helpmate as his circumstances required.

much here about *Paradise Lost*, but what hast thou to say of *Paradise Found*?" That this remark was the means of our having the latter in mortal poem, we have Ellwood's subsequent authority:—"Soon after he showed me his second Poem, called 'Paradise Regained,' and in a pleasant tone said to me—'This is owing to you: for you put it into my head by the question you put to me at Chalfont, which before I had not thought of.' Newton remarks, that considering the difficulties "under which the author lay,—his uneasiness at the public affairs and his own, his age and infirmities, his not being now in circumstances to maintain an amanuensis, but obliged to make use of any hand that came next, to write his verses as he made them,—it is really wonderful that he should have had the spirit to undertake such a work, and much more that he should ever have brought it to perfection."

In 1670, Milton published his "History of England," continued only as far as the Norman conquest. In 1671, he gave to the world "*Paradise Regained*" and "*Samson Agonistes*." But he did not disdain to perform what are considered humbler services to literature. Having already published a book of Latin Accidence for children, he now, in 1672, supplied the more advanced student with a system of logic on the plan of Ramus, entitled, *Artis Logicæ plenior Institutio ad Petri Rami Methodum concinnata*; and in 1673 he published a short treatise, entitled "Of true Religion, Heresy, Schism, Toleration, and what best Means may be used against the growth of Popery."

In the latter part of his life, probably when Secretary of State, but of what particular time is not known, Milton employed a portion of his hours in preparing a Treatise on Divinity. It was written in Latin, and deposited in the hands of Cyriack Skinner, since which time all traces of it were lost until in the year 1823, when Mr. Lemon, the Deputy Keeper of the old State Paper Office in Whitehall, discovered it, loosely wrapped up in two or three sheets of printed paper, enclosed in a cover, and directed to Mr. Skinner, Merchant. There is not room here to give the evidence of this being Milton's long-lost work; suffice it to say that its genuineness is established beyond the shadow of a doubt. When it was discovered, it was placed in the hands of the Rev. Charles R. Sumner, M. A., since Archbishop of Canterbury, by whom it was carefully edited, and who also gave to the public a very elegant and exact translation. The work opens with a salutation, which, from any other man, would be presumption and affectation; but it was in perfect harmony with Milton's purity of character, loftiness of soul, extent of learning, and a whole life dedicated to the service of God and mankind, to adopt the style of an Apostle—"JOHN MILTON, TO ALL THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST, AND TO ALL WHO PROFESS THE CHRISTIAN FAITH THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, PEACE AND THE RECOGNITION OF THE TRUTH, AND ETERNAL SALVATION IN GOD THE FATHER, AND IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST." No work of this remarkable man shows more independence of thought than this. He discarded all the old systems of theology, and tests every question by the authority of Scripture alone; and though some may hesitate to adopt every conclusion to which he arrives, all must acknowledge that this Treatise evinces in its author a calm and conscientious desire for truth, an humble and reverential feeling for the Book of God, a logical precision of reasoning, and an amount of learning and a familiarity with the Scriptures unequalled in any other man.

Milton's health was now declining fast, and the gout, which had many years afflicted him, attacked him with a severity which prognosticated a fatal termination; yet such was the buoyancy of his spirits, that even in the paroxysms of the disease, he would, according to Aubrey, "be very cheerful, and sing." On Sunday, the 8th of November, 1674, he expired without pain, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, and was buried in the chancel of St. Giles, Cripplegate; "all his learned and great friends

in London accompanying his body, not without a friendly concourse of the vulgar."

In his youth, Milton was remarkable for his beauty of person; so that at Cambridge he was called "the lady of Christ's College." His eyes were dark gray, but full of animation; and his hair, which was light brown, he wore parted at the top, and clustering, as he describes that of Adam, upon his shoulders. His person was middle size and well proportioned. His habits were those of a severe student, and his temperance was proverbial. In his youth he studied very late at night, but he afterwards corrected this practice, and retiring to bed at the early hour of nine, rose about five. The opening of his day was uniformly consecrated to religion. When he rose, he heard a chapter in the Hebrew Bible read, and then occupied himself till twelve in private meditation, in listening while some author was read to him, or in dictating as some friendly hand supplied him with its pen. At noon commenced his hour of exercise, which was succeeded by his early and frugal dinner; after which he either played on the organ or sang, or heard some one else sing. From music he returned with fresh vigour to study or composition. At six he received the visits of his friends; at eight he supped, and at nine, having drank a glass of water, retired to his repose. Such was the scheme of his daily life.

Dr. Symmons, the learned editor of his prose works, thus concludes his life:—"We have now completed the history of John Milton,—a man in whom were illustriously combined all the qualities that could adorn, or could elevate the nature to which he belonged;—a man, who at once possessed beauty of countenance, symmetry of form, elegance of manners, benevolence of temper, magnanimity and loftiness of soul, the brightest illumination of intellect, knowledge the most various and extended, virtue that never loitered in her career nor deviated from her course;—a man, who, if he had been delegated as the representative of his species to one of the superior worlds, would have suggested a grand idea of the human race, as of beings affluent in moral and intellectual treasure—raised and distinguished in the universe, as the favorites and heirs of heaven."

To these, I will add the remarks of Sir Egerton Brydges, no less beautiful than just:—"He had not only every requisite of the Muse, but every one of the highest order, and in the highest degree. His invention of poetical fable, and poetical imagery, was exhaustless, and always grand, and always consistent with the faith of a cultivated and sensitive mind. Sublimity was his primary and unailing power. His characters were new, surprising, gigantic, or beautiful; and full of instruction, such as high wisdom sanctioned. His sentiments were lofty, comprehensive, eloquent, consistent, holy, original; and an amalgamation of spirit, religion, intellect, and marvellous learning. His language was his own: sometimes a little rough and unvernacular, but as magnificent as his mind: of pregnant thought; naked in its strength; rich and picturesque, where imagery was required; often exquisitely harmonious where the occasion permitted, but sometimes strong, mighty, and speaking with the voice of thunder."

Lastly, I must quote a few lines from Fletcher's "Introductory Review" to Milton's Prose Works:—"The name of Milton is a synonyme for vastness of attainment, sublimity of conception, and splendour of expression. His poetry is a fountain of living waters in the very heart of civilization. Its tendency is even more magnificent than its composition. Combining all that is lovely in religion, with all that in reason is grand and beautiful, it creates, while it gratifies, and at the same time purifies those tastes and powers that refine and exalt humanity. It is almost of itself, not less by the invigorating nature of its moral than of its intellectual qualities, sufficient to perpetuate the stability of an empire. To use his own words, his poetical writings 'are of power to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility.' They will be lost only with our language:—the tide of his song will cease to flow only with

that of time. But let us never think of Milton as a poet merely: he was a citizen, alive to all that was due from man to man in all the relations of life. He was invested with a power to mould the mind of a nation, and to lead the people into 'the glorious ways of truth and prosperous virtue.' He beheld tyranny and intolerance trampling upon the nobility of his nature, by the obligations of virtue, by the loud summons of beleaguered truth, in short, by his patriotism as well as his piety, to lay down the lyre, and to adventure within the circle of peril and glory; and buckling on the controversial panoply, he threw it off only when the various works of this volume,* surpassed by none in any sort of eloquence, became the record and trophy of his achievements, and the worthy forerunners of those poems which a whole people 'will not willingly let die.'"

But there are two points in Milton's character to which none of his biographers have done justice, for this plain reason—they have little sympathy with his sentiments: I mean his Politics and his Religion, † in both of which he was far ahead of his age. His political principles were purely republican, for he believed, and supported with an eloquence, logic, and learning unequalled, that all governments should be for the good of the governed, and should derive their power solely and directly from the people. Believing, also, that all true religion is the communing of the heart with God, he thought that an "established religion" was a contradiction of terms, and contended, with all his powers, that every man should have a perfect right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience. As a natural conclusion from this, he maintained what is now called the "voluntary principle,"—the only one that obtains in our country,—that each church or congregation should elect its own pastor, and support him by voluntary contributions. From his youth an opponent to Prelacy, in the latter part of his life he opposed the Presbyterian form of church government, and advocated Independency or Congregationalism, from conviction of its more scriptural order. He was also ahead of his age in contending for the unlimited freedom of the press; and his great work on that subject is a rich armory, from which many defenders of this cause in later times, have drawn their strongest weapons.

When, therefore, we survey Milton's character in all its parts;—when we view him as the great champion of civil and religious liberty, who looked so much farther and saw so much deeper than the men of his time;—and when we contemplate the variety, extent, and accuracy of his learning, the sublimity of his imagination, the loftiness of his soul;—and, above all, when we see all these high intellectual endowments and such deep wisdom united to such moral purity and holiness of character as he possessed,—who can hesitate to place him AT THE HEAD OF HIS RACE? ‡

* His prose works, particularly his controversial.

† I may except Robert Fletcher, in his admirable "Introductory Review" to Milton's Prose Works; Edwin Paxton Hood, in his excellent little work, entitled, "John Milton, the Patriot and Poet;" and the writer of the article "Milton," in the Encyclopædia Britannica.

‡ Read Life by Ellwood, Toland, Fenton, Newton, Warton, Symmons, Mitford, and Brydges. Also, an eloquent article in the 42d volume of the Edinburgh Review, by Macaulay; and another, of glowing eloquence, in Dr. Channing's works, vol. 1. Coleridge and Hazlitt also have written upon Milton, each with his own peculiar power. Indeed, hardly any distinguished English scholar has not felt it a sort of duty as well as privilege, to cast in his mite in praise of this wonderful man.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

THIS first book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed. Then touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who, revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of Angels, was by the command of God driven out of heaven with all his crew into the great deep. Which action passed over, the Poem hastes into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his Angels now fallen into hell, described here, not in the centre, for heaven and earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed; but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos: Here Satan, with his Angels lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him: they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded: they rise; their numbers, array of battel, their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world and a new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in heaven: for that Angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandæmonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the deep: the infernal Peers there sit in council.

OF Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,

5

1. *Of man's first disobedience.* The poet here lays before the reader the subject of the following work—the disobedience of our ancestors to the command of God—the effects of that disobedience which lost them Paradise; and the hope we are allowed to entertain, through the Divine Goodness, of being restored to the like blissful state. Such are the great events our poet proposes to celebrate. Tho

means by which they are brought about are to be unfolded by degrees, whilst here he offers to the reader's imagination only such ideas as are most capable to inspire him with reverence and attention. The poem begins with the origin of evil in our world, and the disobedience of our ancestors to God—the cause of all our wo.—CALLANDER.

4. *Till one greater Man.* Rom. v. 19.

Sing, heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
 Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
 That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
 In the beginning how the heavens and earth
 Rose out of chaos: or if Sion hill
 Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook, that flow'd
 Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
 Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
 That with no middle flight intends to soar
 Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
 And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
 Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
 Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
 Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
 Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
 And madest it pregnant: what in me is dark
 Illumine, what is low raise and support;
 That to the highth of this great argument

6. *Secret top.* There is some doubt in what sense Milton here uses the word *secret*. As the top of Sinai, when God gave his laws to Moses, was covered with "clouds" and "thick smoke," it was *secret* at that time in a peculiar sense. But, as Newton observes, Milton might have a further meaning in the epithet *secret*; for as he often uses words in their pure Latin sense, he may have used this in the sense of *secretus*, that is, *set apart, separate*: for while Moses talked with God on the mount in private, the people were forbidden to approach, and afterwards even to ascend it, upon pain of death.

7. *Of Oreb, or of Sinai.* The mountain from which the law was given is called *Horeb* in Deut. i. 6; iv. 10, 15; v. 2; xviii. 16; but in other places in the Pentateuch it is called *Sinai*. These names are now applied to two opposite summits of an isolated, oblong, and central mountain in the midst of a confused group of grand and rugged mountain-heights at the southern extremity of the peninsula, at the head of the Red Sea. *Horeb* is the steep, awful cliff, frowning over the plain Rahab, where the people of Israel were doubtless assembled. This plain, says Dr. Robinson, is about two miles long, and from one-third to two-thirds of a mile wide. "Our conviction was strengthened that here was the spot where the Lord 'descended in fire,' and proclaimed the law. Here lay the plain where the whole congregation might be assembled; here was the mount that, rising perpendicularly in frowning majesty, could be approached, if not forbidden; and here the mountain-brow, where alone the lightnings and the thick cloud would be visible." At the southern extremity of this central ridge, which

is about three miles long, is Mount Sinai proper, now called by the monks *Jebel Mûsa*, or *Moses' Mount*. But, though it has this traditional name, its character and topography do not apply so well to the description given in Exodus as do those of the northern summit, *Horeb*. The name *Sinai*, however, is sometimes applied to the whole ridge, and hence Milton's phrase "of *Horeb* or of *Sinai*."

15. *Above the Aonian mount.* In *Boeotia*, anciently called *Aonia*, was Mount *Helicon*, so famed in antiquity as the seat of Apollo and the Muses, and sung by poets of every age. Milton, therefore, means to say that he intends to "soar above" other poets, who have sung of mere earthly scenes and interests.

16. *Rhyme*, from the Latin *rythmus*, (Gr. *ρυθμος*), here means *verse*. "Blank verse is apt to be loose, thin, and more full of words than thought: the blank verse of Milton is compressed, close-woven, and weighty in matter."—SIR E. BRYDGES.

17. *And chiefly Thou, O Spirit.* In the beginning of his second book of "The Reason of Church Government," speaking of his design of writing a poem in the English language, he says, "I was not to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her Sirens daughters, but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and send out his Seraphim with the hallow'd fire of his Altar to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases." See Pickering's edition, London, 1851, vol. iii. p. 149 or "Compendium of English Literature," p. 265.

24. *That to the highth of this great argument.* "The highth of the argument is precisely what distinguishes this poem

I may assert eternal Providence,
 And justify the ways of God to men. 25
 Say first, for heaven hides nothing from thy view,
 Nor the deep tract of hell; say first, what cause
 Moved our grand Parents in that happy state,
 Favour'd of heaven so highly, to fall off 30
 From their Creator, and transgress his will
 For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
 Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
The infernal serpent: he it was, whose guile,
 Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceived 35
 The mother of mankind, what time his pride
 Had cast him out from heaven, with all his host
 Of rebel angels; by whose aid aspiring
 To set himself in glory above his peers,
 He trusted to have equal'd the Most High, 40
 If he opposed; and with ambitious aim
 Against the throne and monarchy of God,
 Raised impious war in heaven and battel proud,
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power 45
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down
 To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
 In adamantinè chains and penal fire,
 Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms. 50
 Nine times the space that measures day and night
 To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
 Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
 Confounded though immortal: but his doom 55
 Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
 Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
 That witness'd huge affliction and dismay
 Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate.
 At once, as far as angels ken, he views
 The dismal situation waste and wild: 60
 A dungeon horrible on all sides round,
 As one great furnace, flamed; yet from those flames
 No light, but rather darkness visible
 Served only to discover sights of woe,
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace 65
 And rest can never dwell; hope never comes,
 That comes to all; but torture without end

ton from all others. In other
 of imagination, the difficulty lies
 ing sufficient elevation to the sub-
 ere it lies in raising the imagina-
 to the grandeur of the subject,
 uate conception of its mightiness,
 finding language of such majesty
 not degrade it. A genius less
 and less holy than Milton's
 have shrunk from the attempt.
 not only does not lower, but he

illuminates the bright, and enlarges the
 great: he expands his wings, and 'sails
 with supreme dominion' up to the hea-
 vens, parts the clouds, and communes
 with angels and unembodied spirits."—
 SIR E. BRYDGES.

40. *He trusted, &c.* Isa. xiv. 13.

63. *Darkness visible.* Not absolute dark-
 ness, for that is invisible; but *gloom*,
 which shows that there are objects,
 though they cannot be distinctly seen.

Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed :
 Such place eternal justice had prepared 70
 For those rebellious; here their prison ordain'd
 In utter darkness; and their portion set
 As far removed from God and light of heaven,
 As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.
 O, how unlike the place from whence they fell! 75
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
 He soon discerns; and wett'ring by his side,
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,
 Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd 80
 Beëlzebub: to whom the arch-enemy,
 And thence in heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words
 Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:—
 If thou beest he—But, O, how fallen! how changed
 From him, who in the happy realms of light, 85
 Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
 Myriads, though bright! If he, whom mutual league,
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
 And hazard in the glorious enterprize,
 Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd 90
 In equal ruin: into what pit thou seest,
 From what highth fallen: so much the stronger prov'd
 He with his thunder; and till then who knew
 The force of those dire arms? yet not for those,
 Nor what the potent Victor in his rage 95
 Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,
 Though changed in outward lustre, that fix'd mind
 And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
 That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
 And to the fierce contention brought along 100
 Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
 That durst dislike his reign; and, me preferring,
 His utmost power with adverse power opposed
 In dubious battel on the plains of heaven,
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost? 105
 All is not lost; the unconquerable will,
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,
 And courage never to submit or yield,
 And what is else not to be overcome;

74. *Utmost pole*; that is, the pole of the universe. "Homer (Il. viii. 16) makes the seat of Hell as far beneath the deepest pit of earth, as the heaven is above the earth. Virgil (*Æn.* vi. 578) makes it twice as far, and Milton *thrice* as far; as if these three great poets had stretched their utmost genius, and vied with each other, who should extend his idea of the depth of Hell farthest. But Milton's whole description of Hell as much exceeds theirs as in this single

circumstance of the depth of it."—NEWTON.

77. *Tempestuous fire*. Ps. xi. 6.

82. *Called Satan*. The word *Satan* in Hebrew signifies *an enemy*: hence he is eminently *the enemy*, that is, of God and man.

109. *And what is else not to be overcome*. Pickering's edition, following Milton's own copy, reads this line with a note of interrogation. Though one or two commentators prefer this, I agree decidedly with Drs. Pearce and Newton

That glory never shall his wrath or might
 Extort from me: to bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
 Who from the terrour of this arm so late
 Doubted his empire; that were low indeed;
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath
 This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of gods
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail;
 Since, through experience of this great event,
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
 We may with more successful hope resolve
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,
 Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,
 Who now triumphs, and in the excess of joy
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of heaven.
 So spake the apostate angel, though in pain,
 Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
 And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer:—
 O prince, O chief of many throned powers,
 That led th' embattell'd seraphim to war
 Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds
 Fearless, endanger'd heaven's perpetual King;
 And put to proof his high supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate:
 Too well I see and rue the dire event,
 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
 Hath lost us heaven, and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low;
 As far as gods and heavenly essences
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
 Invincible, and vigour soon returns;
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
 Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
 But what if he our Conquerour, whom I now
 Of force believe almighty, since no less
 Than such could have o'erpower'd such force as ours—
 Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
 That we may so suffice his vengeful ire;
 Or do him mightier service, as his thralls
 By right of war, whate'er his business be,
 Here in the heart of hell to work in fire,
 Or do his errands in the gloomy deep:

in preferring the semicolon, or, what is still better, the colon. Satan tells Beelzebub what "is not lost," and then says, and if there be any thing else besides the particulars mentioned which is not to be overcome, THAT is not lost; and then he adds, that that glory, namely, to cherish and preserve the unconquerable will, the study of revenge, and any thing else which cannot be overcome, God shall never extort from him.

117. *Empyreal substance*, that is, *fiery substance*. "He maketh his Angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." Ps. civ. 4.

131. *Perpetual*, not *eternal*, for then he could not have boasted of *endangering* his kingdom: but, for detraction, he calls God only *perpetual King*, that is, king from time immemorial, or without interruption.—NEWTON.

What can it then avail, though yet we feel
 Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being,
 To undergo eternal punishment? 155
 Whereto with speedy words the Arch-fiend replied:—
 Fallen cherub, to be weak is miserable,
 Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
 To do aught good never will be our task,
 But ever to do ill our sole delight; 160
 As being the contrary to his high will,
 Whom we resist. If then his providence
 Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
 Our labour must be to pervert that end,
 And out of good still to find means of evil: 165
 Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
 Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
 His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
 But see! the angry Victor hath recall'd
 His ministers of vengeance and pursuit 170
 Back to the gates of heaven: the sulphurous hail,
 Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
 The fiery surge, that from the precipice
 Of heaven received us falling; and the thunder,
 Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage, 175
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
 To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
 Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn
 Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
 Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild, 180
 The seat of desolation, void of light,
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
 There rest, if any rest can harbour there; 185
 And, reassembling our afflicted powers,
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend
 Our enemy; our own loss how repair;
 How overcome this dire calamity;
 What reinforcement we may gain from hope; 190
 If not, what resolution from despair.
 Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large, 195
 Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
 Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
 Briareos, or Typhon, whom the den
 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast 200
 Leviathan, which God of all his works

190. *Briareos* and *Tiphœus* were two | Milton here means the whale, though in
 famed giants of antiquity. By *Leviathan* | Job it answers to the crocodile.

Created hugest that swim the ocean stream:
 Him, haply, slumbering on the Norway foam,
 The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff,
 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell, 205
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night
 Invests the sea, and wished morn delays.
 So stretch'd out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay
 Chain'd on the burning lake; nor ever thence 210
 Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs;
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought 215
 Evil to others; and enraged might see
 How all his malice served but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy shown
 On man by him seduced; but on himself 220
 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance pour'd.
 Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature; on each hand the flames,
 Driven backward, slope their pointing spires, and, roll'd
 In billows, leave in the midst a horrid vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight 225
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
 That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
 He lights; if it were land, that ever burn'd
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;
 And such appear'd in hue, as when the force 230
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
 Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
 And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
 Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds, 235
 And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
 With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
 Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate;
 Both glorying to have 'scaped the Stygian flood,
 As gods, and by their own recover'd strength, 240
 Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.
 Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
 Said then the lost Archangel, this the seat
 That we must change for heaven? this mournful gloom

204. *Night-founder'd*. A ship is said to founder at sea, (from the French *fondre*, to melt, to fall,) when she is overtaken by a leak, fills, and sinks. So she is here said to be *night-founder'd*, when she is overtaken by the night, and is stopped, not knowing which way to go. The same phrase is used in *Comus*. The two brothers in the night have lost their way in the wood: one hears a noise, and asks what it is. The other replies—

For certain
 Either some one like us *night-founder'd* here.
 Line 483.

232. *Pelorus*. *Pelorus* was the north-eastern promontory of Sicily. "Here again Milton brings in his learned allusions and illustrations: the picture is mighty poetical and sublime."—BRYDGES.

240. *Recovered, resumed, self-raised, self-recovered*.

For that celestial light? Be it so, since he, 245
 Who now is Sovran, can dispose and bid
 What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
 Whom reason hath equal'd, force hath made supreme
 Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
 Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors; hail, 250
 Infernal world! and thou, profoundest hell,
 Receive thy new possessour; one who brings
 A mind not to be changed by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven. 255
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be; all but less than he
 Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
 We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
 Here for his envy; will not drive us hence: 260
 Here we may reign secure; and in my choice
 To reign is worth ambition, though in hell:
 Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven. |
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
 The associates and copartners of our loss, 265
 Lie thus astonish'd on the oblivious pool;
 And call them not to share with us their part
 In this unhappy mansion; or once more
 With rallied arms to try what may be yet
 Regain'd in heaven, or what more lost in hell? 270
 No Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub
 Thus answer'd: Leader of those armies bright,
 Which but the Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft 275
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
 Of battel when it raged, in all assaults
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume
 New courage, and revive, though now they lie
 Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280
 As we erewhile, astounded and amazed:
 No wonder, fallen such a pernicious highth.
 He scarce had ceased, when the superiour fiend
 Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,
 Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round, 285
 Behind him cast; the broad circumference
 Hung on his shoulders, like the moon, whose orb
 Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
 At evening, from the top of Fesolé,

249. *Farewell, happy fields.* The pathos of this passage is exquisite.—BRYDGES.

286. *The broad circumference, &c.* Here Milton shines in all his majestic splendour: his mighty imagination almost exceeds itself. There is indescribable magic in this picture.—BRYDGES.

289. *Fesolé.* A town near Florence "We are here in Arno's vale, (*Valdarno*;) the full moon shining over Fesolé, which I see from my windows; Milton's verses every moment in one's month, and *Galileo's house* twenty yards from one's door." —Mrs. Prozzi's "Journey through Italy."

Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, 290
 Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
 His spear, to equal which the tallest pine,
 Hewn on Norwegian hills to be the mast
 Of some great ammiral, were but a wand,
 He walk'd with to support uneasy steps 295
 Over the burning marle; not like those steps
 On heaven's azure: and the torrid clime
 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
 Nathless he so endured, till on the beach
 Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd 300
 His legions, angel forms, who lay intranced,
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
 In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
 High overarch'd imbower; or scatter'd sedge
 Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd 305
 Hath vex'd the Red-sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
 Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
 While with perfidious hatred they pursued
 The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
 From the safe shore their floating carcasses 310
 And broken chariot-wheels: so thick bestrown,
 Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
 Under amazement of their hideous change.
 He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
 Of hell resounded: Princes, potentates, 315
 Warriors, the flower of heaven, once yours, now lost,
 If such astonishment as this can seize
 Eternal spirits: or have ye chosen this place
 After the toil of battel to repose
 Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find 320
 To slumber here, as in the vales of heaven?
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
 To adore the Conquerour? who now beholds
 Cherub and seraph rolling in the flood,

293. *Norwegian hills.* The hills of Norway abound in vast woods, from whence are brought masts of the largest size. "The annotators leave unnoticed the marvellous grandeur of this description, while they babble on petty technicalities. The walking over the burning marle is astonishing and tremendous."—BRYDGES.

302. *Thick as autumnal leaves.* "Here we see the impression of scenery made upon Milton's mind in his youth when he was at Florence. This is a favourite passage with all readers of descriptive poetry."—SIR E. BRYDGES. "The situation of Florence is peculiarly happy in the vale of Arno, which forms one continued interchange of garden and grove, enclosed by hills and distant mountains. Vallombrosa, (a vale about eighteen miles distant,) a grand and solemn scene, where 'Etrurian shades high over-arched in-

bower,' has been rendered classical by the immortal verse of Milton, who is supposed to have drawn from it his picture of Paradise, when he describes it—

—shade above shade
 A woody theatre of stateliest view."

MURRAY.

305. *Orion.* This constellation was supposed to be attended with stormy weather.

307. *Busiris.* Pharaoh is called by some writers Busiris; and he is here said to have pursued the Israelites with *perfidious hatred*, because, after having given them leave to depart, he followed them as fugitives.

314. *The hollow deep.* This magnificent call of Satan to his prostrate host could have been written by nobody but Milton.—BRYDGES.

With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon 325
 His swift pursuers from heaven gates discern
 The advantage, and descending tread us down
 Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
 Awake, arise; or be for ever fallen! 330
 They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
 Upon the wing; as when men wont to watch
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
 Nor did they not perceive the evil plight 335
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
 Yet to their general's voice they soon obey'd,
 Innumerable. As when the potent rod
 Of Amram's son, in Ægypt's evil day,
 Waved round the coast, up call'd a' pitchy cloud 340
 Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
 That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
 Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
 So numberless were those bad angels seen,
 Hovering on wing under the cope of hell, 345
 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires:
 Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear
 Of their great Sultan waving to direct
 Their course, in even balance down they light
 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain. 350
 A multitude, like which the populous north
 Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
 Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
 Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
 Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands. 355
 Forthwith from every squadron and each band
 The heads and leaders thither haste, where stood
 Their great Commander; godlike shapes and forms
 Excelling human, princely dignities,
 And powers, that erst in heaven sat on thrones; 360
 Though of their names in heavenly records now
 Be no memorial, blotted out and razed
 By their rebellion from the Book of Life.
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
 Got them new names; till, wandering o'er the earth, 365
 Through God's high suffrance for the trial of man,
 By falsities and lies the greatest part
 Of mankind they corrupted for forsake
 God their Creator, and the invisible
 Glory of him that made them to transform 370

333. *Potent rod.* See Ex. x. 13.

341. *Warping.* Working themselves forward; a sea-term.

353. *Rhene or the Danaw.* He might have said Rhine or the Danube, but he chose *Rhene* of the Latin and *Danaw* of

the German. The *barbarous sons* of the great "northern hive" were the Goths, the Huns, and the Vandals, who overran all the provinces of Southern Europe, destroying all the monuments of learning and the arts that came in their way.

Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
 With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
 And devils to adore for deities:
 Then were they known to men by various names,
 And various idols through the heathen world. 375

Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
 Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch
 At their great Emperour's call, as next in worth,
 Came singly where he stood on the bare strand;
 While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof. 380

The chief were those, who, from the pit of hell
 Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
 Their seats long after next the seat of God,
 Their altars by his altar, gods adored
 Among the nations round; and durst abide 385

Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned
 Between the cherubim: yea, often placed
 Within his sanctuary itself, their shrines,
 Abominations; and with cursed things
 His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned, 390

And with their darkness durst affront his light.
 First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
 Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;
 Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
 Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire 395

To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
 Worshipp'd in Rabba and her watery plain,
 In Argob, and in Basan, to the stream
 Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
 Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart 400

Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
 His temple right against the temple of God,
 On that opprobrious hill; and made his grove
 The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
 And black Gehenna call'd, the type of hell. 405

Next Chemos, the obscene dread of Moab's sons,

392. *Moloch* was the god of the Ammonites, (1 Kings xi. 7) and was worshipped in Rabba, their capital city, called the "city of waters," 2 Sam. xii. 27. The idol of this deity was of brass, sitting on a throne, and wearing a crown, having the head of a calf, and his arms extended to receive the miserable victims which were to be sacrificed; and therefore it is here probably styled "his grim idol," 2 Kings xxiii. 10; see also Jer. vii. 31.

398. *Argob* was a city to the east of the Jordan, and in the district Bashan. The river Arnon was the northern boundary of Moab and emptied into the Dead Sea.

400. Solomon built a temple to Moloch on the Mount of Olives, (1 Kings xi. 7) which is therefore called "that opprobrious hill."

404. *The valley of Hinnom* was south

of Jerusalem, where the Canaanites and afterwards the Israelites offered their children to Moloch. The good king Josiah defiled this place, by casting into it the bones of the dead and other disgusting refuse substances of a large city. A perpetual fire was kept there to consume these things, and hence under the name of *Gehenna* it is frequently alluded to in the New Testament as a type of Hell. It was also called *Tophet*, from the Hebrew *Toph*, a drum; since drums and such like noisy instruments were used to drown the cries of the miserable children who were offered to the idol here.

406. *Chemos* is the god of the Moabites, and is mentioned with Moloch in 1 Kings xi. 7. Some suppose him to be the same as that most shameful divinity, *Priapus*, and therefore here called the *obscene dread*.

From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild
 Of southmost Abarim: in Hesebon
 And Horonáim, Seon's realm, beyond
 The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines, 410
 And Elealé, to the Asphaltic pool;
 Peor his other name, when he enticed
 Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged 415
 Ev'n to that hill of scandal, by the grove
 Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to hell.
 With these came they, who, from the bordering flood
 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts 420
 Ægypt from Syrian ground, had general names
 Of Baälim and Ashtaroth, those male,
 These feminine: for spirits, when they please,
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
 And uncompounded is their essence pure; 425
 Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
 Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose,
 Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
 Can execute their aery purposes, 430
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook
 Their Living Strength, and unfrequented left
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
 To bestial gods; for which their heads as low 435
 Bow'd down in battel, sunk before the spear
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd
 Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns;
 To whose bright image nightly by the moon 440
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood

Aroer is a town on the north side of the river Arnon: *Abarim* a ridge of mountains east of the northern part of the Dead Sea and the lower Jordan, from one of the highest peaks of which, Mount Nebo, Moses surveyed the promised land. *Hesebon* or *Heshbon* is a city of the Moabites taken from them by Sihon king of the Amonites; Numb. xxi. 26. *Horonáim*, another city of the Moabites, mentioned in Isaiah xv. 5, and Jer. xlvi. 3, 5. *Sibma*, near *Heshbon*, (Isalah xvi. 8,) was famous for its vineyards. *Eleülé* a little town north of *Heshbon*. The *Asphaltic pool* is the Dead Sea, so called from the *Asphaltus* or bitumen abounding in it. *Sittim* (mentioned in Numbers xxv. 1) is where the Israelites formed their last encampment before crossing the Jordan. For the other name of *Chemos*; namely,

Baal-peor; see Numb. xxv. 3. The *hill of scandal*, the same as *that opprobrious hill*.

417. *Lust hard by hate*—"What a fine moral sentiment has Milton here introduced, and couched in half a verse."—THYER. "The poet's moral is exactly verified in the incestuous and cruel conduct of Amnon towards Tamar; 2 Sam. xiii. 15. The hemistich is a fine commentary on the passage."—TODD.

422. *Baälim* and *Ashtaroth* were the general names of the gods and goddesses of Syria and Palestine: they are supposed to mean the sun and the host of heaven.

438. *Astoreth* was the goddess of the Phœnicians, and under whose name the moon was adored. Solomon built her a temple on the mount of Olives, hence called the *offensive mountain*. 2 Kings xxiii. 13.

Her temple on the offensive mountain, built
 By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
 Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell 445
 To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
 In amorous ditties, all a summer's day ;
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock 450
 Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat ;
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
 Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led, 455
 His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one
 Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
 Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off
 In his own temple, on the grunsel edge, 460
 Where he fell flat, and shamed his worshippers :
 Dagon his name ; sea monster, upward man
 And downward fish: yet had his temple high
 Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
 Of Palestine, in Gath, and Ascalon, 465
 And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
 Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful seat
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
 Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
 He also against the house of God was bold : 470
 A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king ;
 Ahaz his sottish conquerour, whom he drew
 God's altar to disparage, and displace,
 For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
 His odious offerings, and adore the gods 475
 Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
 A crew, who under names of old renown,
 Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
 Fanatic Ægypt and her priests, to seek 480
 Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
 The infection, when their borrow'd gold composed
 The calf in Oreb ; and the rebel king

444. "And God gave Solomon largeness of heart."—1 Kings iv. 29.

446. "Thammuz was the god of the Syrians, the same with Adonis, who was said to die every year, and revive again. He was slain by a wild boar in Lebanon, whence the river *Adonis* descends: and when, at a certain season of the year, this river began to be of a reddish hue, the feasts of Adonis were celebrated by the women,—the women made loud la-

mentations for him."—NEWTON. See Ezek. viii. 12-18.

457. *Next came one.* For this god of the Philistines, see Judges xvi. 23; 1 Sam. v. 4. *Grunsel*, or *groundsel edge*,—the edge of the foot-post of his temple gate.

467. *Rimmon* was a god of the Syrians; see 2 Kings v. 18. Observe the accent of *Abbana* is on the first syllable, and not on the second, as it is often mispronounced. For the account of Naaman, see 2 Kings v.

Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan, 485
 Likening his Maker to the grazed ox ;
 Jehovah, who in one night, when he pass'd
 From Ægypt marching, equal'd with one stroke
 Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
 Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd 490
 Fell not from heaven, or more gross to love
 Vice for itself: to him no temple stood
 Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he
 In temples and at altars, when the priest
 Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd 495
 With lust and violence the house of God?
 In courts and palaces he also reigns,
 And in luxurious cities, where the noise
 Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
 And injury, and outrage: and when night 500
 Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
 Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
 Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
 Exposed a matron to avoid worse rape. 505
 These were the prime in order and in might;
 The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
 The Ionian gods, of Javan's issue, held
 Gods, yet confess'd later than heaven and earth,
 Their boasted parents. Titan, heaven's first-born, 510
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seized
 By younger Saturn: he from mightier Jove,
 His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;
 So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete
 And Ida known; thence on the snowy top 515
 Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,
 Their highest heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,
 Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
 Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
 Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields, 520
 And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.
 All these and more came flocking, but with looks
 Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appear'd
 Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief
 Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost 525
 In loss itself; which on his countenance cast
 Like doubtful hue: but he, his wonted pride
 Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
 Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised

485. *Doubled*. See 1 Kings xii. 28, 29. For an account of the Passover, see Exodus xii. 11 and following.

502. *Flown*, in the sense of *flushed*.

508. *Javan*, the fourth son of Japhet, probably settled in the western coast of Asia Minor; hence, with some corruption, the name *Ionia*.

519. *Doric land*. That is, Greece. *Adria*: the Adriatic. *Hesperian fields*: Italy. *Celtic*: France, peopled in part by the Celts. *Utmost isles*: Britain, Ireland, and the adjacent islands.

528. *Recollecting*, that is, *re-collecting*.

Their fainted courage, and dispell'd their fears : 530
 Then straight commands, that at the warlike sound
 Of trumpets loud and clarions, be uprear'd
 His mighty standard : that proud honour claim'd
 Azazel as his right, a cherub tall ;
 Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd 535
 The imperial ensign, which, full high advanced,
 Shone like a meteor, streaming to the wind,
 With gems and golden lustre rich imblazed,
 Seraphic arms and trophies : all the while
 Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds : 540
 At which the universal host up sent
 A shout that tore hell's concave, and beyond
 Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
 All in a moment through the gloom were seen
 Ten thousand banners rise into the air 545
 With orient colours waving : with them rose
 A forest huge of spears ; and thronging helms
 Appear'd, and serried shields in thick array
 Of depth immeasurable : anon they move
 In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood 550
 Of flutes and soft recorders ; such as raised
 To highth of noblest temper heroes old
 Arming to battel ; and, instead of rage,
 Deliberate valor breathed, firm, and unmoved
 With dread of death to flight or foul retreat ; 555
 Nor wanting power to mitigate and 'suage
 With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
 Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
 Breathing united force, with fixed thought, 560
 Moved on in silencé to soft pipes, that charm'd
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil : and now
 Advanced in view they stand, a horrid front
 Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
 Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield, 565
 Awaiting what command their mighty chief
 Had to impose : he through the armed files
 Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
 The whole battalion views ; their order due,
 Their visages and stature as of gods ; 570
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart
 Distends with pride, and, hardening in his strength,
 Glories ; for never, since created man,
 Met such imbodied force, as named with these

534. *Azazel*. "Derived from two Hebrew words *Az* and *Azel*, signifying *brave in retreating* ; a proper appellation for the standard-bearer to the fallen angels."—NEWTON.

541. *At which the universal host*. "A

most magnificent and inimitable passage."—BRYDGES.

548-551. *Serried shields*: locked one within another. *Dorian mood*: exciting to cool and deliberate courage. *Recorder*: a kind of flageolet.

Could merit more than that small infantry 577
 Warr'd on by cranes; though all the giant brood
 Of Phlegra with the heroic race were join'd
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
 Mix'd with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
 In fable or romance of Uther's son, 580
 Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
 And all who since, baptized or infidel,
 Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
 Damasco, or Morocco, or Trebisond, 585
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
 When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
 By Fontarabia. Thus far these beyond
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed
 Their dread commander: he, above the rest 590
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
 Stood like a tower: his form had yet not lost
 All her original brightness, nor appear'd
 Less than archangel ruin'd, and the excess
 Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen 595
 Looks through the horizontal misty air,
 Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
 In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
 Perplexes monarchs: darken'd so, yet shone
 Above them all the Archangel: but his face 600
 Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
 Sat on his faded cheek; but under brows
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
 Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
 Signs of remorse and passion, to behold 605
 The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
 (Far other once beheld in bliss,) condemn'd
 For ever now to have their lot in pain;
 Millions of spirits for his fault amerced
 Of heaven, and from eternal splendours flung 610
 For his revolt; yet faithful how they stood,
 Their glory wither'd. As when heaven's fire
 Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,

575. That is, all the heroes and armies that ever assembled, were no more than pygmies compared to these.

577. *Phlegra*. The peninsula of Palene in Macedonia, is said to have anciently borne this name, and to have witnessed the conflict between the gods and the earth-born Titans.—See Cramer's Greece, i. p. 244.

580. *Uther's son*. King Arthur, son of Uther Pendragon, who was often in alliance with the king of *Armorica*, since called *Bretagne*. *Aspramont* or *Montalban*: romantic names of places mentioned in *Orlando Furioso*. *Biserta*: the ancient name of *Utica*. *Fontarabia*: a strong

town in Biscay, at the entrance into Spain, and esteemed the key of the kingdom.

589. *He above the rest*. This is one of the most sublime descriptions of this most sublime of poets.

594. *As when the sun*. "Few poetical images can be finer than this, or more beautifully expressed. The precision with which the language is delineated, is incomparable."—BRYDGES.

597. *Disastrous twilight*. Alluding to the popular superstition, that an eclipse is the precursor of war or some other national calamity.

With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
 Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared 617
 To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
 From wing to wing, and half inclose him round
 With all his peers: attention held them mute.
 Thrice he assay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
 Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth; at last 624
 Words interwove with sighs found out their way.
 O myriads of immortal spirits! O powers
 Matchless, but with the Almighty; and that strife
 Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,
 As this place testifies, and this dire change 625
 Hateful to utter: but what power of mind,
 Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
 Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd
 How such united force of gods, how such
 As stood like these, could ever know repulse? 630
 For who can yet believe, though after loss,
 That all these puissant legions, whose exile
 Hath emptied heaven, shall fail to reascend
 Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?
 For me, be witness all the host of heaven, 635
 If counsels different or dangers shunn'd
 By me have lost our hopes: but he, who reigns
 Monarch in heaven, till then as one secure
 Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
 Consent, or custom; and his regal state 640
 Put forth at full; but still his strength conceal'd,
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own;
 So as not either to provoke, or dread
 New war, provoked: our better part remains 645
 To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
 What force effected not; that he no less
 At length from us may find, Who overcomes
 By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
 Space may produce new worlds, whereof so rife 650
 There went a fame in heaven, that he ere long
 Intended to create, and therein plant
 A generation, whom his choice regard
 Should favour equal to the sons of heaven.
 Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps 655
 Our first eruption; thither or elsewhere:
 For this infernal pit shall never hold
 Celestial spirits in bondage, nor the abyss
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
 Full counsel must mature: peace is despair'd; 660
 For who can think submission? war then, war,
 Open or understood, must be resolved.

633. *Hath emptied heaven.* "It is conceived that a third part of the angels fell with Satan, according to Revelations

xii. 4; but Satan here talks big, and magnifies their number."—NEWTON.

He spake ; and, to confirm his words, outflow
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
 Of mighty cherubim ; the sudden blaze 665
 Far round illumined hell : highly they raged
 Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
 Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of heaven.
 There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top 670
 Belch'd fire and rolling smoke ; the rest entire
 Shone with a glossy scurf ; undoubted sign
 That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
 The work of sulphur. Thither, wing'd with speed,
 A numerous brigad hasten'd ; as when bands 675
 Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe arm'd,
 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
 Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on ;
 Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
 From heaven ; for ev'n in heaven his looks and thoughts
 Were always downward bent ; admiring more 681
 The riches of heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
 Than aught divine or holy else enjoy'd
 In vision beatific : by him first
 Men also, and by his suggestion taught, 685
 Ransack'd the centre, and with impious hands
 Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
 For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
 Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
 And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire 690
 That riches grow in hell ; that soil may best
 Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
 Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
 Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame, 695
 And strength, and art, are easily outdone
 By spirits reprobate ; and in an hour
 What in an age they with incessant toil
 And hands innumerable scarce perform.
 Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared, 700
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire
 Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
 With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
 Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross :
 A third as soon had form'd within the ground 705
 A various mould, and from the boiling cells
 By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook :
 As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
 Anon out of the earth a fabric huge 710

674. *The work of Sulphur.* Sulphur was anciently thought the generator of gold.—678. *Mammon* is Syriac, and signifies "riches."

690. *Admire*, used in the sense of the Latin *admiror*, "to wonder at."
703. *Fbunded*, that is *meltd*.

Rose, like an exhalation, with the sound
 Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet;
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round
 Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
 With golden architrave: nor did there want
 Cornice or frieze with bossy sculptures graven; 715
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
 Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
 Equal'd in all their glories, to inshrine
 Belus or Serapis, their gods; or seat 720
 Their kings, when Ægypt with Assyria strove
 In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
 Stood fix'd her stately highth: and straight the doors,
 Opening their brazen folds, discover wide
 Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth 725
 And level pavement: from the arched roof,
 Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
 Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
 With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
 As from a sky. The hasty multitude 730
 Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise,
 And some the architect: his hand was known
 In heaven by many a tower'd structure high,
 Where sceptred angels held their residence,
 And sat as princes; whom the supreme King 735
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
 Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
 Nor was his name unheard or unadored
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
 Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell 740
 From heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
 A summer's day; and with the setting sun
 Dropp'd from the zenith like a falling star, 745
 On Lemnos, the Ægean isle: thus they relate,
 Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
 Fell long before; nor aught avail'd him now
 To have built in heaven high towers; nor did he 'scape
 By all his engines; but was headlong sent 750
 With his industrious crew to build in hell.
 Meanwhile the winged heralds, by command
 Of sovran power, with awful ceremony
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
 A solemn council forthwith to be held 755

711. This sudden rising of *Pandemonium* is supposed to be taken from some of the moving stage-scenes in the time of Charles the First.

728. *Cressets*, beacon lights, which had a cross on their top, and hence called *croisettes*.

740. *And how he fell*. Observe how Milton lengthens out the time of Vulcan's fall. It was not only all day long, but we are led through the parts of the day,—from morn to noon, then from noon to dewy eve; and, to add to the effect, it was a summer's day.

At Pandæmonium, the high capital
 Of Satan and his peers: their summons call'd
 From every band and squared regiment
 By place or choice the worthiest; they anon
 With hundreds and with thousands trooping came 760
 Attended: all access was throng'd; the gates
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall,
 (Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
 Wont ride in arm'd, and at the soldan's chair
 Defied the best of Panim chivalry 765
 To mortal combat, or career with lance,)
 Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air,
 Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
 In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
 Pour forth their populous youth about the hive 770
 In clusters: they among fresh dews and flowers
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
 New rubb'd with balm, expatiate, and confer
 Their state affairs: so thick the aery crowd 775
 Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till, the signal given,
 Behold a wonder! they, but now who seem'd
 In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
 Throng numberless, like that Pygmæan race 780
 Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,
 Whose midnight revels, by a forest side,
 Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
 Or dreams he sees, while over-head the moon
 Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth 785
 Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance
 Intent, with jocund music charm his ear:
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
 Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
 Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large, 790
 Though without number still, amidst the hall
 Of that infernal court. But far within,
 And in their own dimensions, like themselves,
 The great seraphic lords and cherubim
 In close recess and secret conclave sat; 795
 A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
 Frequent and full. After short silence then,
 And summons read, the great consult began.

764. *Soldan's chair*. "*Soldan* is an old English word for *Sultan*. He here alludes to those accounts of the single combats between the Saracens and Christians in Spain and Palestine, of which the old romances are full. *Panim*, another word found in ancient poetry, for *Pagan*."—TODD.

771. "It is not necessary to enlarge

upon the poetry of this beautiful passage."—BRYDGES.

774. *Expatiate*, used in its Latin sense, "to walk abroad."

785. *Arbitress*: witness, spectatress. *Nearer to the earth*, is said in allusion to the popular superstition that witches and fairies have great power over the moon.

797. *Frequent*, in the Latin sense of *crowded*.

REMARKS ON BOOK II.

In tracing the progress of this poem by deliberate and minute steps, our wonder and admiration increase. The inexhaustible invention continues to grow upon us: each page, each line, is pregnant with something new, picturesque, and great: the condensity of the matter is without any parallel: the imagination often contained in a single passage is more than equal to all that secondary poets have produced: the fable of the voyage through Chaos is alone a sublime poem. Milton's descriptions of materiality have always touches of the spiritual, the lofty, and the empyreal.

Milton has too much condensation to be fluent: a line or two often conveys a world of images and ideas: he expatiates over all time, all space, all possibilities: he unites earth with heaven, with hell, with all intermediate existences, animate and inanimate; and his illustrations are drawn from all learning, historical, natural, and speculative. In him, almost always, "more is meant than meets the ear." An image, an epithet, conveys a rich picture.

What is the subject of observation may be told without genius; but the wonder and the greatness lie in invention, if the invention be noble, and according to the principles of possibility. X

Who could have conceived,—or, if conceived, who could have expressed,—the voyage of Satan through Chaos, but Milton? Who could have invented so many distinct and grand obstacles in his way? and all picturesque, all poetical, and all the topics of intellectual meditation and reflection, or of spiritual sentiment?

All the faculties of the mind are exercised, stretched, and elevated at once by every page of "Paradise Lost."

Invention is the first and most indispensable essential of true poetry; but not the only one: the invention must have certain high, moral, sound, wise qualities: and, in addition to these, such as are picturesque or spiritual. It is easy to invent what is improbable or unnatural. Nothing will do which cannot command our belief.

Inventions either of character, imagery, or sentiment, taken separately in small fragments, may still have force and merit; but when they form an integral and appropriate part of a long whole, how infinitely their power, depth, and bearings, are increased!

In poetry, we must consider both the original conceptions and the illustrations: each derives interest and strength from the other: a mere copy of an image drawn from nature may have some beauty; but the invention and the essential poetry lie in their complex use, when applied as an embodiment to something intellectual. Imagery is almost always so used by Milton; and so it was used by Homer and Virgil. This gives a new light to the mind of the reader, and creates combinations which perhaps did not before exist: the poet thus spiritualises matter, and materialises spirit. When what is presented is merely such scenery of nature as the painter can give by lines and colours, it falls far short of the poet's power and charm. Poetry, purely descriptive, is not of the first order.

There are lines in the "Paradise Lost," which would seem to be mere abstract opinions; but they are not so; inset as they are into the course of a sublime, dense-woven narrative, they derive colour and character

from the position which they occupy. So placed, their plainness is their strength and their spell: ornamented language would have weakened them. Of all styles, the uniformly florid is the most fatiguing.

That Milton could bring so much learning, as well as so much imaginative invention, to bear on every part of his infinitely-extended, yet thick-compacted fable, is truly miraculous. Were the learning superficial and loosely applied, the wonder would not be great, or not nearly so great; but it is always profound, solid, conscientious; and in its combinations original.

Bishop Atterbury has said, in opposition to the general opinion, that the allegory of Sin and Death is one of the finest inventions of the poem. I agree with him most sincerely. The portress of the gates of hell sits there in a character, and with a tremendous figure and attributes, which no imagination less gigantic than Milton's could have drawn. Is it to be objected that Sin and Death are imaginary persons, when all the persons of the poem, except Adam and Eve, are imaginary? Realities, in the strict sense, do not make the most essential parts of poetry.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

The character of Satan is pride and sensual indulgence, finding in self the sole motive of action. It is the character so often seen *in little* on the political stage. It exhibits all the restlessness, temerity, and cunning, which have marked the mighty hunters of mankind, from Nimrod to Napoleon. The common fascination of men is, that these great men, as they are called, must act from some great motive. Milton has carefully marked in his Satan the intense selfishness, the alcohol of egotism, which would rather reign in hell than serve in heaven. To place this lust of self in opposition to denial of self, or duty, and to show what exertions it would make, and what pains endure to accomplish its end, is Milton's particular object in the character of Satan. But around this character he has thrown a singularity of daring, a grandeur of sufferance, and a ruined splendour, which constitute the very height of poetic sublimity.

COLERIDGE.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of heaven: some advise it, others dissuade. A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal or not much inferiour to themselves, about this time to be created: their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search: Satan, their chief, undertakes alone the voyage, is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to hell gates; finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them; by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between hell and heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the Power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous east with richest hand
Showers on her kings Barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised 5
To that bad eminence: and, from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high; insatiate to pursue
Vain war with heaven, and, by success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus display'd:— 10
Powers and Dominions, Deities of heaven,
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigour, though oppress'd and fallen,
I give not heaven for lost: from this descent
Celestial virtues rising, will appear 15
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me though just right and the fix'd laws of heaven
Did first create your leader; next free choice,
With what besides, in council or in fight, 20
Hath been achieved of merit; yet this loss,
Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne,

2. The Island of *Ormus*, in the Persian Gulf, was formerly a vast emporium of Indian trade, and celebrated for its wealth and its extended commerce all over Asia. It was the eastern ceremony,

at the coronation of their kings, to powder them with *gold-dust* and *seed-pearl*. The term *barbaric* is from the Greek *barbarikos*, applied by Herodotus to the Persians.—9. *Success*, i. e. bad success.

Yielded with full consent. The happier state
 In heaven, which follows dignity, might draw 25
 Envy from each inferiour; but who here
 Will envy whom the highest place exposes
 Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim,
 Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
 Of endless pain? Where there is then no good 30
 For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
 From faction; for none sure will claim in hell
 Precedence; none, whose portion is so small
 Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
 Will covet more. With this advantage then 35
 To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
 More than can be in heaven, we now return
 To claim our just inheritance of old;
 Surer to prosper than prosperity
 Could have assured us: and by what best way, 40
 Whether of open war or covert guile,
 We now debate. Who can advise, may speak.
 He ceased; and next him Moloch, sceptred king,
 Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
 That fought in heaven, now fiercer by despair: 45
 His trust was with the Eternal to be deem'd
 Equal in strength, and rather than be less
 Cared not to be at all: with that care lost
 Went all his fear: of God, or hell, or worse,
 He reck'd not; and these words thereafter spake. 50
 My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
 More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
 Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.
 For while they sit contriving, shall the rest, 55
 Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
 The signal to ascend, sit lingering here
 Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
 Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
 The prison of his tyranny who reigns
 By our delay? no; let us rather choose, 60
 Arm'd with hell flames and fury, all at once
 O'er heaven's high towers to force resistless way,
 Turning our tortures into horrid arms
 Against the Torturer; when to meet the noise
 Of his almighty engine he shall hear 65
 Infernal thunder; and for lightning see
 Black fire and horreur shot with equal rage
 Among his angels; and his throne itself
 Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire,
 His own invented torments. But perhaps 70
 The way seems difficult and steep, to scale
 With upright wing against a higher foe.
 Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
 Of that forgetful lake benumm not still,
 That in our proper motion we ascend 75

Up to our native seat: descent and fall
 To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
 When the fierce Foe hung on our broken rear
 Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
 With what compulsion and laborious flight 80
 We sunk thus low? the ascent is easy then:—
 The event is fear'd; should we again provoke
 Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
 To our destruction; if there be in hell
 Fear to be worse destroy'd: what can be worse 85
 Then to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemn'd
 In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
 Where pain of unextinguishable fire
 Must exercise us without hope of end,
 The vassals of his anger, when the scourge 90
 Inexorable, and the torturing hour
 Calls us to penance? more destroy'd than thus,
 We should be quite abolish'd, and expire.
 What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
 His utmost ire? which, to the highth enraged, 95
 Will either quite consume us, and reduce
 To nothing this essential; happier far
 Than miserable to have eternal being;
 Or if our substance be indeed divine,
 And cannot cease to be, we are at worst 100
 On this side nothing: and by proof we feel
 Our power sufficient to disturb his heaven,
 And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
 Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
 Which, if not victory, is yet revenge. 105
 He ended frowning, and his look denounced
 Desperate revenge and battel dangerous
 To less than gods. On the other side up rose
 Belial, in act more graceful and humaue:
 A fairer person lost not heaven; he seem'd 110
 For dignity composed and high exploit:
 But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
 Dropp'd manna, and could make the worse appear
 The better reason, to perplex and dash
 Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low; 115
 To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
 Timorous and slothful: yet he pleased the ear,
 And with persuasive accent thus began:—
 I should be much for open war, O Peers,
 As not behind in hate, if what was urged, 120

89. *Exercise*, in the sense of the Latin *exerceo*, "to vex," "to trouble."

92. *To penance*, to punishment.

104. *Fatal throne*, that is, upheld by fate.

106. *He ended frowning*, &c. "Nobody of any taste or understanding will deny the beauty of the following paragraph, in the whole of which there is not one

metaphorical or figurative word. In what then does the beauty consist? In the justness of the thought, in the propriety of the expression, in the art of the composition, and in the variety of the versification."—LORD MONBODDO. He means the whole of Belial's speech, from the 119th to the 225th line.

Main reason to persuade immediate war,
 Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
 Ominous conjecture on the whole success:
 When he, who most excels in fact of arms,
 In what he counsels and in what excels 125
 Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
 And utter dissolution, as the scope
 Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
 First, what revenge? the towers of heaven are fill'd
 With armed watch, that render all access 130
 Impregnable: oft on the bordering deep
 Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing
 Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
 Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
 By force, and at our heels all hell should rise 135
 With blackest insurrection, to confound
 Heaven's purest light: yet our great Enemy
 All incorruptible would on his throne
 Sit unpolluted, and the ethereal mould,
 Incapable of stain, would soon expel 140
 Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
 Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope
 Is flat despair: we must exasperate
 The Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
 And that must end us; that must be our cure, 145
 To be no more: sad cure! for who would lose,
 Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
 Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
 To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
 In the wide womb of uncreated night, 150
 Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,
 Let this be good, whether our angry Foe
 Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
 Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.
 Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire, 155
 Belike through impotence, or unaware,
 To give his enemies their wish, and end
 Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
 To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
 Say they who counsel war;—we are decreed, 160
 Reserved, and destined to eternal woe;
 Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
 What can we suffer worse?—Is this then worst,
 Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
 What! when we fled amain, pursued and struck 165
 With heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
 The deep to shelter us? this hell then seem'd
 A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
 Chain'd on the burning lake? that sure was worse.

138. *Would on his throne, &c.* "This is a reply to that part of Moloch's speech, where he had threatened to mix the throne itself of God with infernal sulphur and strange fire."—NEWTON.

156. *Impotence, weakness of mind.*

What, if the breath, that kindled those grim fires, 170
 Awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage,
 And plunge us in the flames? or from above
 Should intermitted vengeance arm again
 His red right hand to plague us? what, if all
 Her stores were open'd, and this firmament 175
 Of hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
 Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall
 One day upon our heads? while we, perhaps
 Designing or exhorting glorious war,
 Caught in a fiery tempest, shall be hurl'd 180
 Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
 Of racking whirlwinds; or for ever sunk
 Under yon boiling ocean, wrapp'd in chains:
 There to converse with everlasting groans,
 Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved, 185
 Ages of hopeless end? this would be worse.
 War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
 My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
 Views all things at one view? He from heaven's highth 190
 All these our motions vain sees and derides;
 Not more almighty to resist our might,
 Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
 Shall we then live thus vile, the race of heaven,
 Thus trampled, thus expell'd, to suffer here 195
 Chains and these torments? better these than worse,
 By my advice; since fate inevitable
 Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
 The Victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
 Our strength is equal; nor the law unjust 200
 That so ordains. This was at first resolved,
 If we were wise, against so great a Foe
 Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
 I laugh, when those, who at the spear are bold
 And venturous, if that fail them, shrink and fear 205
 What yet they know must follow, to endure
 Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
 The sentence of their Conquerour. This is now
 Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
 Our Súpreme Foe in time may much remit 210
 His anger; and perhaps thus far removed
 Not mind us not offending, satisfied
 With what is punish'd: whence these raging fires
 Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
 Our purer essence then will overcome 215
 Their noxious vapour; or, inured, not feel;
 Or changed at length, and to the place conform'd
 In temper and in nature, will receive
 Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;

170. *What, if the breath.* Isa. xxx. 33.
 191. *Derides.* Ps. ii. 4.

210. *Súpreme.* Accent on the first syllable.

This horror will grow mild, this darkness light: 220
 Besides, what hope the never-ending flight
 Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
 Worth waiting: since our present lot appears
 For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
 If we procure not to ourselves more woe. 225
 { Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's garb,
 Counsell'd ignoble ease and peaceful sloth,
 Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake:—
 Either to disenthroned the King of Heaven
 We war, if war be best; or to regain 230
 Our own right lost. Him to unthroned we then
 May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
 To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
 The former, vain to hope, argues as vain
 The latter: for what place can be for us 235
 Within heaven's bound, unless heaven's Lord supreme
 We overpower? Suppose he should relent
 And publish grace to all, on promise made
 Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
 Stand in his presence humble, and receive 240
 Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne
 With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
 Forced halleluiahs; while he lordly sits
 Our envied Sovran, and his altar breathes
 Ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers, 245
 Our servile offerings? This must be our task
 In heaven, this our delight: how wearisome
 Eternity so spent in worship paid
 To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue,
 By force impossible, by leave obtain'd 250
 Unacceptable, though in heaven, our state
 Of splendid vassalage: but rather seek
 Our own good from ourselves; and from our own
 Live to ourselves; though in this vast recess,
 Free, and to none accountable; preferring 255
 Hard liberty before the easy yoke
 Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
 Then most conspicuous, when great things of small, *from*
 Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,
 We can create; and in what place so'er 260
 Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain
 Through labour and endurance. This deep world
 Of darkness do we dread? how oft amidst
 Thick clouds and dark doth heaven's all-ruling Sire
 Choose to reside, his glory unobscured, 265
 And with the majesty of darkness round
 Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar

220. *Light*. This is an adjective here, in the sense of *easy*.

233. *Judge the strife*. That is, between the King of Heaven and Us. *The former*,

to unthroned the King of Heaven: *the latter*, to regain our own right lost.

263. *How oft*, &c. Ps. xviii. 11, 13, and xcvi. 2.

Mustering their rage, and heaven resembles hell
 As he our darkness, cannot we his light
 Imitate when we please? this desert soil 270
 Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
 Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
 Magnificence; and what can heaven show more?
 Our torments also may in length of time
 Become our elements; these piercing fires 275
 As soft as now severe; our temper changed
 Into their temper; which must needs remove
 The sensible of pain. All things invite
 To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
 Of order; how in safety best we may 280
 Compose our present evils, with regard
 Of what we are, and where; dismissing quite
 All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise.
 He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
 The assembly, as when hollow rocks retain 285
 The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
 Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
 Sea-faring men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance,
 Or pinnacle anchors in a craggy bay
 After the tempest: such applause was heard 290
 As Mammon ended; and his sentence pleased,
 Advising peace: for such another field
 They dreaded worse than hell: so much the fear
 Of thunder and the sword of Michaël 295
 Wrought still within them: and no less desire
 To found this nether empire; which might rise,
 By policy and long process of time,
 In emulation opposite to heaven.
 Which when Béełzebub perceived, than whom,
 Satan except, none higher sat, with grave 300
 Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
 A pillar of state: deep on his front engraven
 Deliberation sat and public care;
 And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
 Majestic though in ruin: sage he stood, 305
 With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
 The weight of mightiest monarchies: his look
 Drew audience and attention still as night
 Or summer's noon-tide air, while thus he spake:—
 Thrones and Imperial Powers, Offspring of heaven, 310
 Ethereal Virtues; or these titles now
 Must we renounce, and, changing style, be call'd
 Princes of hell? for so the popular vote
 Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
 A growing empire; doubtless while we dream, 315

315. *Doubtless, &c.*: that is, while we dream undisturbed by any doubt, that God will permit us to build up here such an empire as we desire; and know not, that is, are unconscious that he designs this place as our dungeon, &c.

And know not that the King of Heaven hath doom'd
 This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
 From heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league
 Banded against his throne; but to remain 320
 In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,
 Under the inevitable curb, reserved
 His captive multitude: for he, be sure,
 In highth or depth, still first and last will reign
 Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part 325
 By our revolt; but over hell extend
 His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
 Us here, as with his golden those in heaven.
 What sit we then projecting peace and war?
 War hath determined us, and foil'd with loss 330
 Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
 Vouchsafed or sought: for what peace will be given
 To us enslaved, but custody severe,
 And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
 Inflicted? and what peace can we return, 335
 But to our power hostility and hate,
 Untamed reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
 Yet ever plotting how the Conquerour least
 May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
 In doing what we most in suffering feel? 340
 Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
 With dangerous expedition to invade
 Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault, or siege,
 Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
 Some easier enterprize? There is a place, 345
 (If ancient and prophetic fame in heaven
 Err not) another world, the happy seat
 Of some new race call'd Man, about this time
 To be created like to us, though less
 In power and excellence; but favour'd more 350
 Of him who rules above: so was his will
 Pronounced among the gods, and by an oath,
 That shook heaven's whole circumference, confirm'd.
 Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
 What creatures there inhabit; of what mould, 355
 Or substance; how endued, and what their power
 And where their weakness; how attempted best,
 By force or subtlety. Though heaven be shut,
 And heaven's high Arbitrator sit secure
 In his own strength, this place may lie exposed, 360
 The utmost border of his kingdom, left,
 To their defence who hold it: here perhaps
 Some advantageous act may be achieved
 By sudden onset; either with hell fire
 To waste his whole creation, or possess 365
 All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,

The puny habitants; or if not drive,
 Seduce them to our party, that their God
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
 Abolish his own works. This would surpass 370
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
 In our confusion; and our joy upraise
 In his disturbance: when his darling sons,
 Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
 Their frail original and faded bliss, 375
 Faded so soon. Advise, if this be worth
 Attempting; or to sit in darkness here
 Hatching vain empires.—Thus Bœlzebub
 Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devised
 By Satan, and in part proposed. For whence, 380
 But from the authour of all ill, could spring
 So deep a malice, to confound the race
 Of mankind in one root, and earth with hell
 To mingle and involve, done all to spite
 The great Creator? But their spite still serves 385
 His glory to augment. The bold design
 Pleased highly those infernal States, and joy
 Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
 They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews:—
 Well have ye judged, well ended long debate, 390
 Synod of gods! and, like to what ye are,
 Great things resolved; which from the lowest deep
 Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
 Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
 Of those bright confines, whence, with neighbouring arms 395
 And opportune excursion, we may chance
 Re-enter heaven; or else in some mild zone
 Dwell, not unvisited of heaven's fair light,
 Secure; and at the brightening orient beam
 Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air, 400
 To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
 Shall breathe her balm. But, first, whom shall we send
 In search of this new world? whom shall we find
 Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet
 The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss, 405
 And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncouth way? or spread his aery flight,
 Upborne with undefatigable wings,
 Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive

367. *Puny*. As Milton so often used words in their original sense, he probably uses this for *puisne* or *puisny*, from the French *puis ne*, that is, *post natus*, "born afterwards," consequently, "junior," "younger," and hence implying also "inferior." In this sense Bishop Hall, a contemporary, used the word: "The first antiquity is true; the *puisne*, posthumous antiquity hath been a refuge for falsehood."

406. *The palpable* OBSCURE. An adject-

tive used as a noun; so in line 409, *the vast ABRUPT*. Again, we sometimes find two nouns together, the former of which is used as an adjective, as *the ocean stream*, i. 202; and *bullion dross*, i. 704. Milton often enriches his language in this manner.—NEWTON.

409. *Ere he arrive*. Shakspeare in two or three places uses the verb *arrive* without the preposition *at*, following; as,

But ere we could arrive the point proposed.
Jul. Cæsar, Act I. Sc. ii.

The happy isle? what strength, what art can then 410
 Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
 Through the strict senteries and stations thick
 Of angels watching round? here he had need
 All circumspection; and we now no less
 Choice in our suffrage: for on whom we send, 415
 The weight of all, and our last hope, relies.
 This said, he sat; and expectation held
 His looks suspense, awaiting who appear'd
 To second or oppose, or undertake
 The perilous attempt: but all sat mute, 420
 Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
 In other's countenance read his own dismay,
 Astonish'd: none among the choice and prime
 Of those heaven-warring champions could be found,
 So hardy, as to proffer, or accept 425
 Alone the dreadful voyage: till at last,
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised
 Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,
 Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake:
 O progeny of heaven, empyreal thrones, 430
 With reason hath deep silence and demur
 Seized us, though undismay'd. Long is the way
 And hard, that out of hell leads up to light:
 Our prison strong, this huge convex of fire,
 Outrageous to devour, immures us round 435
 Ninefold; and gates of burning adamant
 Barr'd over us prohibit all egress.
 These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
 Of unessential Night receives him next,
 Wide gaping; and with utter loss of being 440
 Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.
 If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
 Or unknown region; what remains him less
 Than unknown dangers and as hard escape?
 But I should ill become this throne, O peers, 445
 And this imperial sovranty, adorn'd
 With splendour, arm'd with power, if aught proposed
 And judged of public moment, in the shape
 Of difficulty or danger, could deter
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume 450
 These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
 Refusing to accept as great a share
 Of hazard as of honour, due alike
 To him who reigns, and so much to him due
 Of hazard more, as he above the rest 455

410. *The happy isle.* The earth hanging in the sea of air. "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing."—*Job xxvi. 7.*

439 *Unessential.* Void of being, as

darkness approaches nearest to non-entity.

445. *But I should ill become, &c.* "The whole speech, from this line, is wonderfully beautiful in every respect."—*MONBODDO.*

High honour'd sits? Go, therefore, mighty powers,
 Terror of heaven, though fallen! intend at home,
 While here shall be our home, what best may ease
 The present misery, and render hell
 More tolerable; if there be cure or charm 460
 To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
 Of this ill mansion. Intermit no watch
 Against a wakeful Foe; while I abroad
 Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
 Deliverance for us all: this enterprize 465
 None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose
 The monarch, and prevented all reply;
 Prudent, lest from his resolution raised
 Others among the chief might offer now,
 Certain to be refused, what erst they fear'd; 470
 And so refused might in opinion stand
 His rivals; winning cheap the high repute,
 Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
 Dreaded not more the adventure, than his voice
 Forbidding; and at once with him they rose: 475
 Their rising all at once was as the sound
 Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
 With awful reverence prone; and as a god
 Extol him equal to the Highest in heaven.
 Nor fail'd they to express how much they praised, 480
 That for the general safety he despised
 His own: for neither do the spirits damn'd
 Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
 Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
 Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal. 485
 Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
 Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief:
 As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds
 Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread
 Heaven's cheerful face; the louring element 490
 Scowls o'er the darken'd landskip snow, or shower:
 If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
 Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
 The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings. 495
 O shame to men! devil with devil damn'd
 Firm concord holds; men only disagree
 Of creatures rational, though under hope

457. *Intend*. Used in the sense of the Latin *intende animum*, "direct the attention:" *intend* and *attend* had anciently the same meaning, that is, "to turn one's notice to."

477. *Their rising*, &c. "The rising of this great assembly is described in a very sublime and poetical manner."—ADDISON.

482. *Spirits damn'd*. This seems to

have been a sarcasm on the bad men of Milton's time.—BRYDGES.

489. *While the north wind sleeps*. "A simile of perfect beauty: it illustrates the delightful feeling resulting from the contrast of the stormy debate with the light that seems subsequently to break in upon the assembly."—BRYDGES. "Perhaps this delightful passage is one of the finest instances of picturesque poetry which can be produced."—TODD.

Of heavenly grace; and, God proclaiming peace,
 Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife 500
 Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
 Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
 As if, which might induce us to accord,
 Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
 That day and night for his destruction wait. 505
 The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth
 In order came the grand infernal peers:
 Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
 Alone the antagonist of Heaven; nor less
 Than hell's dread emperor, with pomp supreme 510
 And God-like imitated state: him round
 A globe of fiery seraphim inclosed,
 With bright imblazonry and horrent arms.
 Then of their session ended they bid cry
 With trumpets' regal sound the great result: 515
 Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim
 Put to their mouths the sounding alchymy,
 By herald's voice explain'd: the hollow abyss
 Heard far and wide; and all the host of hell
 With deafening shout return'd them loud acclaim. 520
 Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat raised
 By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers
 Disband; and, wandering, each his several way
 Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
 Leads him perplex'd; where he may likeliest find 525
 Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
 The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
 Part, on the plain, or in the air sublime,
 Upon the wing or in swift race contend,
 As at the Olympian games, or Pythian fields: 530
 Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
 With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form.
 As when to warn proud cities war appears
 Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush
 To battel in the clouds, before each van 535
 Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears
 Till thickest legions close: with feats of arms
 From either end of heaven the welkin burns.
 Others, with vast Typhœan rage more fell,
 Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air 540
 In whirlwind: hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
 As when Alcides, from Cœchalia crown'd

512. *Globe* is used in the Latin sense of *globus*, "a troop," "a crowd;" and *horrent* in the sense of *horreo*, "to bristle," "to stand erect," "to stand on end:" *horrentes hastæ*.

"And each particular hair to stand on end
 Like quills upon the fretful porcupine."
Shaks. Hamlet, Act I. Sc. v.

536 *To couch the spear*, is to fix it in

its rest; from the French *coucher*, "to place."

542. *Alcides*: Hercules, the grandson of Alcæus. *Cœchalia*: a city of Thessaly. *Lichas* was the bearer of the poison robe sent to Hercules by his wife, in a fit of jealousy. See Keightley's Mythology, or Smith's Classical Dictionary.

With conquest, felt the envenom'd robe, and tore
 Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines;
 And Lichas from the top of Cæta threw 545
 Into the Euboic sea. Others more mild,
 Retreated in a silent valley, sing
 With notes angelical to many a harp
 Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall
 By doom of battel; and complain that fate 550
 Free virtue should intral to force or chance.
 Their song was partial; but the harmony,
 (What could it less when spirits immortal sing?)
 Suspended hell, and took with ravishment
 The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet, 555
 (For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense,)
 Others apart sat on a hill retired,
 In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
 Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate;
 Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute: 560
 And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
 Of good and evil much they argued then,
 Of happiness and final misery,
 Passion and apathy, and glory and shame;
 Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy: 565
 Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm
 Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
 Fallacious hope; or arm the obdured breast
 With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
 Another part, in squadrons and gross bands, 570
 On bold adventure to discover wide
 That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
 Might yield them easier habitation, bend
 Four ways their flying march, along the banks
 Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge 575
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams;
 Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
 Sad Acheron, of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
 Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon 580
 Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
 Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
 Her watery labyrinth; whereof who drinks,
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets, 585

560. *Fix'd fate, &c.* "The turn of the words is here admirable, and very well expresses the wanderings and mazes of their discourse."—NEWTON. Milton might here have had an eye to that large class of preachers who are constantly battling theological points, instead of preaching practical righteousness.

575. *Four infernal rivers.* The Greeks called three of these rivers of Hell after

the names of noxious streams in their own country. The *Styx* (called *abhorred*, from the Greek *στυγεω*, to hate) was a torrent in Arcadia, whose waters were said to be poisonous; and the *Acheron*, (from *αχος*, grief, and *ρευω*, to flow, flowing with grief,) and the *Cocytus*. (from *κωκυω*, to lament,) were rivers of Epirus. *Phlegethon* is from *φλεγω*, to burn; and *Lethe*, from *ληθη*, forgetfulness.

Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
 Beyond this flood a frozen continent
 Lies, dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
 Of whirlwind, and dire hail which on firm land
 Thaws not; but gathers heap, and ruin seems 590
 Of ancient pile: all else deep snow and ice;
 A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
 Betwixt Damiata and mount Casius old,
 Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
 Burns froze, and cold performs the effect of fire. 595
 Thither by harpy-footed furies haled,
 At certain revolutions all the damn'd
 Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce:
 From beds of raging fire to starve in ice 600
 Their soft ethereal warmth; and there to pine
 Immovable, infix'd, and frozen round,
 Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire.
 They ferry over this Lethean sound
 Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment, 605
 And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
 The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
 In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
 All in one moment, and so near the brink:
 But Fate withstands, and to oppose the attempt 610
 Medusa with Gorgonian terrour guards
 The ford, and of itself the water flies
 All taste of living wight, as once it fled
 The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
 In confused march forlorn, the adventurous bands, 615
 With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,
 View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
 No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
 They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
 O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp, 620
 — Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
 A universe of death, which God by curse
 Created evil, for evil only good,

592. *Serbonian bog*. Serbonis was a lake between Egypt and Palestine, near Mount Casius. "It was surrounded on all sides by loose hills of sand, which, carried into the water by high winds, so thickened the lake, that it could not be distinguished from the parts of the continent: here whole armies have been swallowed up."—HUME. Read Herodotus, book iii. 5; and Lucan's *Pharsalia*, viii. 539.

595. *Burns froze*. *Froze*, an old word for *frosty*. "When the cold north wind bloweth, it devoureth the mountains, and burneth the wilderness, and consumeth the grass as fire."—*Ecclesiasticus* xliiii. 20, 21.

600. *To starve*, to kill with cold.

611. The names of the three fabulous

sisters, the *Gorgons*, were Stheno, Euryale, and Medusa. They are described as girded with serpents, raising their heads, vibrating their tongues, and gnashing their teeth: some add wings and claws to them. Some say that Medusa was at first a beautiful maiden, but that for her crimes, Minerva changed her hair into serpents, which had the power of changing every one who looked at it into stone.

621. "Milton's are the 'Rocks, caves, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death;' and the idea caused by a word, which nothing but a word could annex to the others, raises a very great degree of the sublime; which is raised yet higher by what follows,—A UNIVERSE OF DEATH."—BURKE.

Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
 Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things, 625
 Abominable, inutterable, and worse
 Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceived,
 Gorgons, and hydras, and chimæras dire.
 Meanwhile, the adversary of God and man,
 Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design, 630
 Puts on swift wings, and toward the gates of hell
 Explores his solitary flight: sometimes
 He scours the right-hand coast, sometimes the left;
 Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
 Up to the fiery concave towering high. 635
 As when far off at sea a fleet descried
 Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
 Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
 Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
 Their spicy drugs, they on the trading flood 640
 Through the wide Æthiopian to the Cape
 Ply, stemming nightly toward the pole: so seem'd
 Far off the flying fiend. At last appear
 Hell bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
 And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass, 645
 Three iron, three of adamantine rock,
 Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,
 Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat
 On either side a formidable shape;
 The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair, 650
 But ended foul in many a scaly fold
 Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
 With mortal sting: about her middle round
 A cry of hell hounds never ceasing bark'd
 With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung 655
 A hideous peal: yet, when they list, would creep,
 If aught disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
 And kennel there; yet there still bark'd and howl'd
 Within unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
 Vex'd Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts 660
 Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
 Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, call'd
 In secret, riding through the air she comes,
 Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
 With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon 665
 Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
 If shape it might be call'd, that shape had none

648. Here begins that renowned allegory, the most terrifically sublime, it seems to me, of any thing written by that "greatest of all great men." The idea is taken from James i. 15: "Then, when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin; and Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth Death."

664. *Lured with the smell*, &c. Here is

a mixture of classical and demonological learning: hags were fabled as slaughtering infants, drinking their blood, and applying their mangled limbs to purposes of incantation.

666. *The other shape*, &c. "One of those masterly touches of horrible magnificence which the hand of Milton only could delineate."—TODD.

Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
 Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
 For each seem'd either: black it stood as night, 670
 Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
 And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head
 The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
 Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
 The monster moving onward came as fast, 675
 With horrid strides; hell trembled as he strode.
 The undaunted fiend what this might be admired
 Admired, not fear'd: God and his Son except,
 Created thing naught valued he, nor shunn'd;
 And with disdainful look thus first began:— 680
 Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
 That darest, though grim and terrible, advance
 Thy miscreated front athwart my way
 To yonder gates? through them I mean to pass,
 That be assured, without leave ask'd of thee: 685
 Retire, or taste thy folly; and learn by proof,
 Hell-born, not to contend with spirits of heaven!
 To whom the goblin full of wrath replied:—
 Art thou that traitor angel, art thou he,
 Who first broke peace in heaven, and faith, till then 690
 Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
 Drew after him the third part of heaven's sons
 Conjured against the Highest; for which both thou
 And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
 To waste eternal days in woe and pain? 695
 And reckon'st thou thyself with spirits of heaven,
 Hell-doomed, and breathest defiance here and scorn,
 Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,
 Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
 False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings; 700
 Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
 Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart
 Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.
 So spake the grisly terrour; and in shape,
 So speaking, and so threatening, grew tenfold 705
 More dreadful and deform: on the other side,
 Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
 Unterrified, and like a comet burn'd,
 That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
 In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair 710
 Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
 Levell'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
 No second stroke intend; and such a frown
 Each cast at the other, as when two black clouds

678. *God and his Son except, &c.* Todd justifies this ungrammatical expression by this paraphrase: "Include not God and his Son among the objects whom he

did not fear: them he did fear; but created thing he valued not."

709. *Ophiuchus*, or *Septentarius*, was a northern constellation of about forty degrees in length.

With heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on 715
 Over the Caspian; then stand front to front,
 Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
 To join their dark encounter in mid air;
 So frown'd the mighty combatants, that hell
 Grew darker at their frown; so match'd they stood; 720
 For never but once more was either like
 To meet so great a Foe: and now great deeds
 Had been achieved, whereof all hell had rung,
 Had not the snaky sorceress, that sat
 Fast by hell gate, and kept the fatal key, 725
 Risen, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.
 O father, what intends thy hand, she cried,
 Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
 Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
 Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom? 730
 For him who sits above, and laughs the while
 At thee, ordain'd his drudge, to execute
 Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
 His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.
 She spake, and at her words the hellish pest 735
 Forbore; then these to her Satan return'd:—
 So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
 Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
 Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds
 What it intends; till first I know of thee, 740
 What thing thou art, thus double-formed; and why,
 In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
 Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son:
 I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
 Sight more detestable than him and thee. 745
 To whom thus the portress of hell gate replied:
 Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
 Now in thine eye so foul, once deem'd so fair
 In heaven? when at the assembly, and in sight
 Of all the seraphim with thee combined 750
 In bold conspiracy against heaven's King,
 All on a sudden miserable pain
 Surprised thee; dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
 In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
 Threw forth: till on the left side opening wide, 755
 Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,
 Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess arm'd,
 Out of thy head I sprung; amazement seized
 All the host of heaven; back they recoi'd afraid
 At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a sign 760

716. The *Caspian* sea here mentioned, is remarkably tempestuous.

721. *Never but once more.* That is, in Jesus Christ, who is alluded to in the 734th line, and who will one day destroy both *Death*, and "*Him that has the*

power of death, that is, *the Devil.*"—*Heb.* ii. 14.

753. *Out of thy head I sprung.* Sin is rightly made to spring out of the head of Satan, as Wisdom, or Minerva, did out of Jupiter's.

Portentous held me: but, familiar grown,
 I pleased, and with attractive graces won
 The most averse; thee chiefly; who full oft
 Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing
 Became enamour'd: and such joy thou took'st 765
 With me in secret, that my womb conceived
 A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,
 And fields were fought in heaven; wherein remain'd
 (For what could else?) to our Almighty Foe
 Clear victory, to our part loss and rout 770
 Through all the empyrean: down they fell
 Driven headlong from the pitch of heaven, down
 Into this deep, and in the general fall
 I also; at which time this powerful key
 Into my hand was given, with charge to keep 775
 These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
 Without my opening. Pensive here I sat
 Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb,
 Pregnant by thee and now excessive grown,
 Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes. 780
 At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
 Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
 Tore through my entrails, that, with fear and pain
 Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
 Transform'd: but he, my inbred enemy, 785
 Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart
 Made to destroy: I fled, and cried out, *Death*;
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
 From all her caves, and back resounded, *Death*.
 I fled, but he pursued, though more, it seems, 790
 Inflamed with lust than rage; and, swifter far,
 Me overtook, his mother, all dismay'd;
 And, in embraces forcible and foul
 Ingendering with me, of that rape begot
 These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry 795
 Surround me, as thou saw'st; hourly conceived
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
 To me: for, when they list, into the womb
 That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw
 My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth 800
 Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
 That rest or intermission none I find.
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits
 Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on;
 And me his parent would full soon devour 805
 For want of other prey, but that he knows
 His end with mine involved; and knows that I
 Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
 Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounced.
 But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun 810
 His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
 To be invulnerable in those bright arms,

Though temper'd heavenly; for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd, and the subtle fiend his lore 815
Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth:—

Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in heaven, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change 820
Befallen us, unforeseen, unthought of; know
I come no enemy, but to set free

From out this dark and dismal house of pain
Both him and thee, and all the heavenly host
Of spirits, that, in our just pretences arm'd 825
Fell with us from on high: from them I go
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all

Myself expose; with lonely steps to tread
The unfounded deep, and through the void immense
To search with wandering quest a place foretold 830

Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created, vast and round, a place of bliss
In the purlieus of heaven, and therein placed
A race of upstart creatures, to supply

Perhaps our vacant room; though more removed, 835
Lest heaven, surcharged, with potent multitude,
Might hap to move new broils. Be this, or aught

Than this more secret, now design'd, I haste
To know; and, this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death 840

Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom air, imbalm'd
With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey.

He ceased, for both seem'd highly pleased, and Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear 846
His famine should be fill'd, and bless'd his maw
Destined to that good hour: no less rejoiced
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire:—

The key of this infernal pit by due, 850
And by command of heaven's all-powerful King,
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock

These adamantine gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might. 855

But what owe I to his commands above,
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office, here confined,

846. *Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile.*
“Several poets have endeavoured to express much the same image, but I believe it will be readily allowed that Milton has greatly exceeded them all.”—NEWTON.

855. *Living might.* It has been suggested that *living wight*, that is, creature, would be a better reading, as it is found in some early editions; as *living might* would include the ever-living God himself.

Inhabitant of heaven and heavenly-born, 860
 Here, in perpetual agony and pain,
 With terrours and with clamours compass'd round
 Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
 Thou art my father, thou my authour, thou
 My being gavest me; whom should I obey 865
 But thee? whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon
 To that new world of light and bliss, among
 The gods who live at ease; where I shall reign
 At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
 Thy daughter and thy darling, without end. 870
 Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
 Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
 And, towards the gate rolling her bestial train,
 Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
 Which but herself not all the Stygian powers 875
 Could once have moved; then in the keyhole turns
 The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
 Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
 Unfastens: on a sudden open fly
 With impetuous recoil and jarring sound 880
 The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
 Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
 Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
 Excell'd her power; the gates wide open stood,
 That with extended wings a banner'd host, 885
 Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
 With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
 So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth
 Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
 Before their eyes in sudden view appear- 890
 The secrets of the hoary deep; a dark
 Illimitable ocean, without bound,
 Without dimension, where length, breadth, and highth,
 And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night
 And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold 895
 Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
 Of endless wars, and by confusion stand:
 For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
 Strive here for mastery, and to battel bring
 Their embryon atoms; they around the flag 900
 Of each his faction, in their several clans,
 Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
 Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
 Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
 Levied to side with warring winds, and poise 905
 Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,

883. *She open'd, but to shut
 Excell'd her power.* "The grandeur
 here, both of the thought and the picture,
 is incomparable."—BRYDGES.

898. *For hot, &c.* "The reader may
 compare this whole description of Chaos

with OVN'S, and he will easily see how the
 Roman poet has lessened the grandeur
 of his, by puerile conceits and quaint
 antitheses. Every thing in Milton is
 great and masterly."—NEWTON.

906. *To whom, &c.* That is, to what side

He rules a moment: Chaos umpire sits,
 And by decision more embroils the fray,
 By which he reigns: next him, high arbiter,
 Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss, 910
 The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,—
 Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
 But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
 Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless the Almighty Maker them ordain 915
 His dark materials to create more worlds;—
 Into this wild abyss the wary fiend
 Stood on the brink of hell, and look'd a while
 Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith
 He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd 920
 With noises loud and ruinous, (to compare
 Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,
 With all her battering engines bent to rase
 Some capital city; or less than if this frame
 Of heaven were falling, and these elements 925
 In mutiny had from her axle torn
 The stedfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
 He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
 Uplifted spurns the ground; thence many a league.
 As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides 930
 Audacious; but, that seat soon failing, meets
 A vast vacuity: all unawares
 Fluttering his pennons vain; plumb down he drops
 Ten thousand fathom deep; and to this hour
 Down had been falling, had not by ill chance 935
 The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
 Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
 As many miles aloft: that fury stay'd,
 Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
 Nor good dry land: nigh founder'd on he fares, 940
 Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
 Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
 As when a gryphon, through the wilderness
 With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
 Pursues the Arimaspians, who by stealth 945
 Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
 The guarded gold; so eagerly the fiend
 O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare
 With head, hands, wings, or feet pursues his way,

soever the atoms temporarily adhere, that side rules for the moment.

918. *Stood on the brink.* Satan pauses for a moment, terrified at the danger of his enterprise.

927. *Vans, wings:* so Beaumont and Fletcher have "sail-stretched wings."

938. *That fury stay'd.* That fiery rebuff ceased, quenched, and put out by a soft quicksand: *Syrtis* is explained by *neither sea nor good dry land.*

943. *Gryphon.* The *gryphon*, or griffin, was a fabulous, bird-like species of animal, with the body of a lion and the head and wings of an eagle. They were fabled to dwell in the Riphæan mountains, between the Hyperboreans and the one-eyed *Arimaspians*, and to guard the gold of the north. These one-eyed *Arimaspians* were said to be of Scythia, and to adorn their hair with gold.

948. *O'er bog, &c.* "The difficulty of

And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies. 950
 At length a universal hubbub wild
 Of stunning sounds and voices all confused,
 Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
 With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,
 Undaunted to meet there whatever power 955
 Or spirit of the nethermost abyss
 Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
 Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies,
 Bordering on light; when straight behold the throne
 Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread 960
 Wide on the wasteful deep: with him enthroned
 Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
 The consort of his reign; and by them stood
 Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
 Of Demogorgon; Rumour next, and Chance, 965
 And Tumult and Confusion all embroil'd;
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
 To whom Satan turning boldly, thus:—Ye powers,
 And spirits of this nethermost abyss,
 Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy, 970
 With purpose to explore or to disturb
 The secrets of your realm; but by constraint
 Wandering this darksome desert,—as my way
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light,—
 Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek 975
 What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
 Confine with heaven; or if some other place,
 From your dominion won, the Ethereal King
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive
 I travel this profound: direct my course; 980
 Directed, no mean recompense it brings
 To your behoof, if I that region lost,
 All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
 To her original darkness and your sway,
 Which is my present journey, and once more 985
 Erect the standard there of ancient Night:
 Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge.
 Thus Satan; and him thus the anarch old,
 With faltering speech and visage incomposed,
 Answer'd:—I know thee, stranger, who thou art; 990
 That mighty leading angel, who of late
 Made head against heaven's King, though overthrown.
 I saw and heard; for such a numerous host
 Fled not in silence through the frightened deep,
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout, 995
 Confusion worse confounded; and heaven gates
 Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands

...'s voyage is very well expressed by
 many monosyllables as follow, which
 cannot be pronounced but slowly, and
 frequent pauses."—NEWTON.

964. *Orcus*. *Orcus* for Pluto. *Ades* for
 any dark place, or the world of the dead.
 "The very name of *Demogorgon* the an-
 cients supposed capable of producing the

Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
 Keep residence; if all I can will serve,
 That little which is left so to defend,
 Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils
 Weakening the sceptre of old Night: first hell,
 Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
 Now lately heaven and earth, another world,
 Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain
 To that side heaven from whence your legions fell.
 If that way be your walk, you have not far;
 So much the nearer danger: go, and speed:
 Havock, and spoil, and ruin are my gain.

1000

1005

1010

He ceased; and Satan stay'd not to reply;
 But, glad that that now his sea should find a shore,
 With fresh alacrity and force renew'd
 Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
 Into the wild expanse; and through the shock
 Of fighting elements, on all sides round
 Environ'd, wins his way; harder beset
 And more endanger'd, than when Argo pass'd
 Through Bosphorus betwixt the justling rocks;
 Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
 Charybdis, and by the other whirlpool steer'd.
 So he with difficulty and labour hard
 Moved on, with difficulty and labour he;
 But he once past, soon after, when man fell,
 (Strange alteration!) Sin and Death amain
 Following his track, (such was the will of Heaven)
 Paved after him a broad and beaten way
 Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
 Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length
 From hell continued, reaching the utmost orb
 Of this frail world; by which the spirits perverse
 With easy intercourse pass to and fro
 To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
 God and good angels guard by special grace.
 But now at last the sacred influence
 Of light appears, and from the walls of heaven
 Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night

1015

1020

1025

1030

1035

terrible effects, which they there-
 dreaded to pronounce. He is men-
 d as of great power in incantations."
 WTON.

1. *If all I can, &c.* As if he had
 "If all I can do will serve so (that is,
 y keeping here upon my frontiers) to
 d that little which is still encroach'd
 rough your intestine broils, I shall
 at all. That your broils have weak-
 my sceptre is clear, for in conse-
 ce of your rebellion Hell first en-
 bed on my domains, it being formed
 f them for the abode of the apostate
 is; and then Earth with the sur-
 ding heavens encroached on them,

as formed out of Chaos for the habit-
 of man. That is, the substance which
 which Hell and Earth were formed, be-
 longed, before the "intestine broils" took
 place in heaven, to the kingdom of Chaos
 and old Night.

1018. *Justling rocks.* These rocks, at
 the entrance of the Black Sea from the
 Bosphorus, are called in Greek *Justling*
gades, from two words meaning "to
 strike together," because they were so
 near that at a distance they would be
 open and shut again, and the rocks would
 another, as the ship varied her course
 from side to side: so Satan's passage
 through the fighting elements was

A glimmering dawn: here Nature first begins
 Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire
 As from her utmost works, a broken foe,
 With tumult less and with less hostile din; 104
 That Satan, with less toil, and now with ease,
 Waits on the calmer wave by dubious light;
 And, like a weather-beaten vessel, holds
 Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
 Or in the emptier waste, resembling air, 104
 Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
 Far off the empyreal heaven, extended wide
 In circuit, undetermined square or round,
 With opal towers and battlements adorn'd
 Of living sapphire, once his native seat; 104
 And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
 This pendent world, in bigness as a star
 Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.
 Thither, full fraught with mischievous revenge,
 Accurs'd, and in a cursed hour, he hies. 104

difficult and dangerous than that of the
 Argonauts through narrow seas betwixt
 justling rocks.

1052. *This pendent world.* "By this is
 meant not the Earth, but the new crea-
 tion of a heaven and Earth, (line 1004.) or the
 new created universe; for Satan did not
 see the Earth, yet: he was afterwards sur-

prised at the *sudden view of all this world
 at once*, (iii. 542.) This new created uni-
 verse, when *beheld far off*, appeared, by
 comparison with the empyreal heaven
 no bigger than a star of smallest magni-
 tude when *close by the moon*, whose su-
 perior light causes a star so near to be
 scarcely visible."—NEWTON.

65

REMARKS ON BOOK III.

CANNOT admit this book to be inferior in poetical merit to those which precede it: the argumentative parts give a pleasing variety. The favourable opinion has arisen from a narrow view of the nature of poetry: from the theory of those who think that it ought to be confined to description and imagery. On the contrary, the highest poetry consists more of spirit than of matter. Matter is only good so far as it is animated with spirit, or causes spiritual exaltation. Among the innumerable grand descriptions in Milton, I do not believe there is one which is unconnected with complex intellectual considerations, and of which the considerations do not form a leading part of the attraction. The poet's allusions may be too deep for the common reader; and so far as the poet is above the reach of the multitude: but even then they create a certain vague stir in unprepared minds:—names indistinctly heard, and dimly seen; constant recognitions of Scriptural passages, and of names, awfully impressed on the memory from childhood, and connected on the sensitive understanding with sacred and mysterious movements.

We do not read Milton in the same light mood as we read any other poet. This is the imagination of a sublime instructor: we give our faith to his duty, as well as will. If our fancy flags, we strain it, that we may apprehend: we know that there is something which our conceits cannot reach. There is not an idle word in any of the delineations which the bard exhibits; nor is any picture merely addressed to the senses. Every thing therefore is invention;—arising from novel combinations of complexity of combination: nothing is a mere reflection from the objects of the fancy.

Milton early broke loose from the narrow bounds of observation; and soared into the trackless regions of air, and worlds of spirits,—the good and the bad. There his pregnant imagination imbodyed new states of existence; and out of Chaos drew form, and life, and all that is grand and beautiful, and godlike: and yet he so mingled them up with matter from the globe in which we are placed, that it is an unpardonable error to say that "Paradise Lost" contains little applicable to human nature. The human learning and wisdom contained in every part is inexhaustible.

On this account no other poem requires so many explanatory notes drawn from all the most extensive stores of erudition.

In the study of classical literature, and of the Italian poets, Milton was a perfect scholar: he often replenished his images and forms of expression from Homer and Virgil, and yet never was a servile borrower. There is a pleasure to what in itself is beautiful, from the happiness of his conceptions.

I do not doubt that what he wrote was from a conjunction of genius, learning, art, and labour; but the grand source of all his poetical conceptions and language was the Scriptures. — SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

God sitting on his throne sees Satan flying towards this world newly created; shows him to the Son, who sat at his right hand, foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind: clears his justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created man free and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his mercy of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to the Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards man; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended towards man without the satisfaction of divine justice; man hath offended the Majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and therefore with all his progeny devoted to death must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for man; the Father accepts, and ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in heaven and earth; commands all the angels to adore him; they obey, and, hymning to their harps in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile, Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of Vanity; what persons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the gate of heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it; his passage thence to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb; he first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and, pursuing a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights first on Mount Niphates.

HAIL, holy Light! offspring of heaven first-born,
Or of the Eternal co-eternal beam
May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
Or hear'st thou rather pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain, who shall tell? before the sun,
Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless infinite.
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,

Hail, holy Light! This celebrated complaint, with which Milton opens the book, deserves all the praises which have been given it.—ADDISON.

Or hear'st thou rather, &c. Or dost

thou rather hear this address—dost thou delight rather to be called *pure ethereal stream?*

8. *Whose fountain.* Job xxxviii.

Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
 In that obscure sojourn; while in my flight
 Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
 With other notes than to the Orphéan lyre,
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;
 Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to reascend,
 Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
 So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs,
 Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
 Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
 Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
 Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,
 That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
 Nightly I visit; nor sometimes forget
 Those other two equal'd with me in fate,
 So were I equal'd with them in renown,
 Blind *Thamyris* and blind *Mæonides*,
 And *Tiresias* and *Phineus*, prophets old:
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
 Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
 Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
 Seasons return, but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine:
 But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
 Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
 Presented with a universal blank
 Of nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
 So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
 Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
 Irradiate; there plant eyes, all mist from thence
 Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
 Of things invisible to mortal sight.
 Now had the Almighty Father from above,

6. Through the *utter* darkness of Hell, and the *middle* darkness of the great abyss between Hell and Heaven.

30. *The flowery brooks beneath.* Headed (not the American *divine* (?)) who has been so much by his writings to cultivate the war-spirit, but) the elegant and tasteful English poet and critic, beautifully remarks, in a criticism on Quarles's poem that "to mix the waters of Jordan and Helicon in the same cup, was re-

served for the hand of Milton; and for him, and him only, to find the bays of Mount Olivet equally verdant with those of Parnassus."

35. *Blind Thamyris.* *Thamyris* was a Thracian, and invented the *Doric mood* or measure: *Mæonides* is *Homer*, so called from his father *Mæon*. *Tiresias* and *Phineus*, the one a Theban, the other a king of Arcadia, (famous blind bards of antiquity.)

From the pure empyrean where he sits
 High throned above all highth, bent down his eye,
 His own works and their works at once to view.
 About him all the sanctities of heaven
 Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received
 Beatitude past utterance; on his right
 The radiant image of his glory sat,
 His only Son: on earth he first beheld
 Our two first parents, yet the only two
 Of mankind, in the happy garden placed,
 Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
 Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
 In blissful solitude: he then survey'd
 Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
 Coasting the wall of heaven on this side night
 In the dun air sublime, and ready now
 To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet,
 On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
 Firm land imbosom'd, without firmament,
 Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
 Him God beholding from his prospect high,
 Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
 Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake:—

Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage
 Transports our adversary? whom no bounds
 Prescribed, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
 Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss
 Wide interrupt, can hold: so bent he seems
 On desperate revenge, that shall redound
 Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
 Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
 Not far off heaven, in the precincts of light,
 Directly towards the new-created world,
 And man there placed; with purpose to assay
 If him by force he can destroy, or, worse,
 By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert:
 For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
 And easily transgress the sole command,
 Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall,
 He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
 Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
 All he could have: I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 Such I created all the ethereal powers
 And spirits, both them who stood and them who fai
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love?
 Where only, what they needs must do, appear'd,
 Not what they would: what praise could they recei

What pleasure I from such obedience paid?
 When will and reason, (reason also is choice)
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
 Made passive both, had served necessity, 110
 Not me. They therefore, as to right belong'd,
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate;
 As if predestination over-ruled
 Their will, disposed by absolute decree 115
 Or high foreknowledge: they themselves decreed
 Their own revolt, not I: if I foreknew,
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
 Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.
 So without least impùlse or shadow of fate, 120
 Or ought by me immutably foreseen,
 They trespass, authours to themselves in all,
 Both what they judge and what they choose; for so
 I form'd them free, and free they must remain,
 Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change 125
 Their nature, and revoke the high decree,
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
 Their freedom: they themselves ordain'd their fall.
 The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
 Self-tempted, self-depraved: man falls deceived 130
 By the other first: man therefore shall find grace,
 The other none: in mercy and justice both,
 Through heaven and earth, so shall my glory excel;
 But mercy first and last shall brightest shine.
 Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd 135
 All heaven, and in the blessed spirits elect
 Sense of new joy ineffable diffused.
 Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
 Most glorious; in him all his Father shone
 Substantially express'd; and in his face 140
 Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
 Love without end, and without measure grace;
 Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake:—
 O Father, gracious was that word which closed
 Thy sovran sentence, that man should find grace; 145
 For which both heaven and earth shall high extol
 Thy praises, with the innumerable sound
 Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
 Encompass'd shall resound thee ever bless'd.*
 For should man finally be lost? should man, 150
 Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son,
 Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
 With his own folly? that be from theē far,

108. *Reason also is choice.* "Many there be that complain of Divine Providence, for suffering Adam to transgress. Foolish tongues! When God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choose; for rea-

son is but choosing: he had been else a mere artificial Adam!"—MILTON'S *Areopagitica*.

140. *Substantially express'd.* Heb. i. 3
 153. *From thee far.* Gen. xviii. 25.

That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
 Of all things made, and judgest only right. 155
 Or shall the adversary thus obtain
 His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught;
 Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
 Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to hell 160
 Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
 By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself
 Abolish thy creation, and unmake,
 For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
 So should thy goodness and thy greatness both 165
 Be question'd and blasphemed without defence.
 To whom the great Creator thus replied:—
 O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
 Son of my bosom, Son, who art alone
 My word, my wisdom, and effectual might, 170
 All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
 As my eternal purpose hath decreed:
 Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
 Freely vouchsafed: once more I will renew 175
 His lapsed powers, though forfeit and enthrall'd
 By sin to foul exorbitant desires:
 Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
 On even ground against his mortal foe,
 By me upheld; that he may know how frail 180
 His fallen condition is, and to me owe
 All his deliverance, and to none but me.
 Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
 Elect above the rest; so is my will:
 The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd 185
 Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
 The incensed Deity, while offer'd grace
 Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,
 What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
 To pray, repent, and bring obedience due. 190
 To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
 Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
 Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut;
 And I will place within them as a guide
 My umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear, 195
 Light after light, well used, they shall attain;
 And to the end, persisting, safe arrive.
 This my long sufferance and my day of grace
 They who neglect and scorn shall never taste;
 But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more, 200
 That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;

168. *O Son*. "The Son is here addressed by several titles and appellations, borrowed from the following texts of Scripture: Matt. iii. 17; John i. 18; Rev. xix 13; and 1 Cor. i. 24."—NEWTON.

189. *Soften stony hearts*. Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

And none but such from mercy I exclude.
 But yet all is not done; man disobeying,
 Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
 Against the high supremacy of Heaven, 205
 Affecting Godhead, and so losing all,
 To expiate his treason hath naught left,
 But to destruction sacred and devote,
 He with his whole posterity must die;
 Die he or justice must: unless for him 210
 Some other able, and as willing, pay
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
 Say, heavenly powers, where shall we find such love?
 Which of you will be mortal to redeem
 Man's mortal crime; and just the unjust to save? 215
 Dwells in all heaven charity so dear?
 He ask'd, but all the heavenly quire stood mute;
 And silence was in heaven: on man's behalf
 Patron or intercessor none appear'd;
 Much less that durst upon his own head draw 220
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
 And now without redemption all mankind
 Must have been lost, adjudged to death and hell
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
 In whom the fulness dwells of love divine, 225
 His dearest mediation thus renew'd:—
 Father, thy word is pass'd; man shall find grace;
 And shall grace not find means? that finds her way,
 The speediest of thy winged messengers,
 To visit all thy creatures, and to all 230
 Comes unprevented, unimplored, unsought?
 Happy for man, so coming: he her aid
 Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
 Atonement for himself or offering meet,
 Indebted and undone, hath none to bring. 235
 Behold me then, me for him, life for life,
 I offer: on me let thine anger fall;
 Account me man; I for his sake will leave
 Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
 Freely put off, and for him lastly die 240
 Well pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage;
 Under his gloomy power I shall not long
 Lie vanquish'd; thou hast given me to possess
 Life in myself for ever; by thee I live.
 Though now to Death I yield, and am his due 245
 All that of me can die; yet that debt paid,
 Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
 His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
 For ever with corruption there to dwell:

219 *Intercessor none.* Isa. lix. 16.

231. *Unprevented.* This word is here used in its primitive Latin sense, as derived from *prævenire*, "to go before;"

that is, nothing shall go before this grace; it shall not be preceded by merit or supplication.

244. *Life in myself.* John v. 26.

But I shall rise victorious, and subdue 250
 My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
 Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop,
 Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
 I through the ample air in triumph high
 Shall lead hell captive, maugre hell, and show 255
 The powers of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight
 Pleased, out of heaven shalt look down and smile;
 While, by thee raised, I ruin all my foes,
 Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave:
 Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd, 260
 Shall enter heaven long absent, and return,
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assured
 And reconcilment: wrath shall be no more
 Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire. 265
 His words here ended, but his meek aspect
 Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
 To mortal men, above which only shone
 Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
 Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will 270
 Of his great Father. Admiration seized
 All heaven, what this might mean and whither tend,
 Wondering; but soon the Almighty thus replied:
 O thou, in heaven and earth the only peace
 Found out for mankind under wrath, O thou, 275
 My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear
 To me are all my works; nor man the least,
 Though last created; that for him I spare
 Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
 By losing thee a while, the whole race lost. 280
 Thou therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
 Their nature also to thy nature join;
 And be thyself man among men on earth,
 Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
 By wondrous birth: be thou in Adam's room 285
 The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
 As in him perish all men, so in thee,
 As from a second root, shall be restored,
 As many as are restored; without thee none.
 His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit 290
 Imputed shall absolve them, who renounce
 Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
 And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
 Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
 Shall satisfy for man, be judged and die; 295
 And dying rise, and rising with him raise
 His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
 So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate,
 Giving to death, and dying to redeem;

So dearly to redeem what hellish hate 300
 So easily destroy'd; and still destroys
 In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
 Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
 Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
 Because thou hast, though throned in highest bliss 305
 Equal to God, and equally enjoying
 God-like fruition, quitted all to save
 A world from utter loss; and hast been found
 By merit more than birthright Son of God:
 Found worthiest to be so by being good, 310
 Far more than great or high: because in thee
 Love hath abounded more than glory abounds;
 Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
 With thee thy manhood also to this throne;
 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign 315
 Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
 Anointed universal King; all power
 I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
 Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme,
 Thrones, principedoms, powers, dominions, I reduce: 320
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
 In heaven, or earth, or under earth in hell.
 When thou attended gloriously from heaven
 Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
 The summoning archangels to proclaim 325
 Thy dread tribunal: forthwith from all winds
 The living, and forthwith the cited dead
 Of all past ages, to the general doom
 Shall hasten: such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
 Then, all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge 330
 Bad men and angels; they arraign'd shall sink
 Beneath thy sentence; hell, her numbers full,
 Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
 The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
 New heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell, 335
 And after all their tribulations long
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
 With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth:
 Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
 For regal sceptre then no more shall need; 340
 God shall be all in all. But, all ye gods,
 Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
 Adore the Son, and honour him as me.
 No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but all
 The multitude of angels with a shout, 345
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet

317. *All power*, &c. Matt. xxviii. 18.321. *All knees*, &c. Phil. ii. 10.323. *When thou*, &c. Matt. xxv. 30, &c.;
1 Thess. iv. 16.341. *God shall be all*. 1 Cor. xv. 28.344. *No sooner*, &c. "The close of this
divine colloquy, and the hymn of angels
which follows upon it, are wonderfully
beautiful and poetical."—ADDISON.

As from blest voices, uttering joy; heaven rung
 With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
 The eternal regions. Lowly reverent
 Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground 350
 With solemn adoration down they cast
 Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold;
 Immortal amarant, a flower which once
 In Paradise fast by the tree of life
 Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence 355
 To heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows,
 And flowers aloft shading the fount of life,
 And where the river of bliss through midst of heaven
 Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream;
 With these, that never fade, the spirits elect 360
 Bind their resplendent locks inwreathed with beams;
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
 Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.
 Then crown'd again their golden harps they took, 365
 Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side
 Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
 Of charming symphony they introduce
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;
 No voice exempt, no voice but well could join 370
 Melodious part: such concord is in heaven.

Thee, Father, first they sung, Omnipotent,
 Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
 Eternal King; thee, Authour of all being,
 Fountain of light, thyself invisible 375
 Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitt'st
 Throned inaccessible; but when thou shadest
 The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
 Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
 Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear, 380
 Yet dazzle heaven; that brightest seraphim
 Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
 Thee next they sang of all creation first,
 Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
 In whose conspicuous countenance, without cloud 385
 Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,
 Whom else no creature can behold: on thee
 Impress'd the effulgence of his glory abides;
 Transfused on thee his ample Spirit rests.
 He heaven of heavens and all the powers therein 390
 By thee created, and by thee threw down
 The aspiring Dominations: thou that day

351. See Rev. iv. 10, 11, and v. 11, 12,
 and 13.

360. *With these*, that is, *these flowers*.

377. *But*, the same as *except*.

380. *Dark with excessive bright*. Gray,
 in the "Bard," has beautifully imitated
 this in his allusion to Milton's blind-

ness—who,

Blasted with excess of light,
 Closed his eyes in endless night.

382. Isa. vi. 2.

383. Col. i. 15.

390 and 391. See Heb. i. 2. The order
 is, *By thee He created the heaven, &c.*

Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
 Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook
 Heaven's everlasting frame; while o'er the necks 395
 Thou drow'st of warring angels disarray'd.
 Back from pursuit thy powers with loud acclaim
 Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
 To execute fierce vengeance on his foes;
 Not so on man; him, through their malice fallen, 400
 Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
 So strictly; but much more to pity incline:
 No sooner did thy dear and only Son
 Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail man
 So strictly, but much more to pity inclined, 405
 He, to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
 Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
 Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
 Second to thee, offer'd himself to die
 For man's offence. O unexampled love, 410
 Love no where to be found, less than Divine!
 Hail, Son of God! Saviour of men! Thy name
 Shall be the copious matter of my song
 Henceforth; and never shall my harp thy praise
 Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin. 415
 Thus they in heaven, above the starry sphere,
 Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
 Meanwhile upon the firm opacous globe
 Of this round world, whose first convex divides
 The luminous inferior orbs, inclosed 420
 From Chaos and the inroad of Darkness old;
 Satan alighted walks: a globe far off
 It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent,
 Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of night
 Starless, exposed, and ever-threatening storms 425
 Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;
 Save on that side, which from the wall of heaven,
 Though distant far, some small reflection gains
 Of glimmering air, less vex'd with tempest loud:
 Here walk'd the fiend at large in spacious field. 430
 As when a vulture on Imaus bred,
 Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,

406. Supply *than* or *but* before *He*.

422. *A globe far off*. "Satan's walk upon the outside of the universe, which at a distance appeared to him of a globular form, but upon his nearer approach looked like an unbounded plain, is natural and noble."—ADDISON.

431. *As when a vulture, &c.* "This simile is very apposite and lively, and corresponds exactly in all the particulars. Satan coming from Hell to Earth, in order to destroy mankind, but lighting first on the bare convex of this world's outermost orb, (*a sea of land*, as the poet

calls it,) is very fitly compared to a vulture flying, in quest of his prey, (tender lambs or kids new-yeaned,) from the barren rocks to the more fruitful hills and streams of India; but lighting, in his way, on the plains of Sericana, which were in a manner a sea of land, too, the country being so smooth and open that carriages were driven (as travellers report) with sails and wind."—NEWTON. The ridge of mountains known by the ancients under the name of *Imaus*, corresponds to the Himalaya range, in the region of Thibet.

Dislodging from a region scarce of prey
 To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanning kids
 On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs 435
 Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
 But in his way lights on the barren plains
 Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
 With sails and wind their cany waggons light:
 So on this windy sea of land the fiend 440
 Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey;
 Alone, for other creature in this place,
 Living or lifeless, to be found was none;
 None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
 Up hither like ærial vapours flew 445
 Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
 With vanity had fill'd the works of men:
 Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
 Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
 Or happiness in this or the other life; 450
 All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
 Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
 Naught seeking but the praise of men, here find
 Fit retribution, empty as their deeds:
 + All the unaccomplish'd works of nature's hand, 455
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
 Dissolved on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
 Till final dissolution, wander here:
 Not in the neighbouring moon, as some have dream'd;
 Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460
 Translated saints, or middle spirits hold
 Betwixt the angelical and human kind:
 Hither of ill-join'd sons and daughters born
 First from the ancient world those giants came
 With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd: 465
 The builders next of Babel on the plain
 Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
 New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
 Others came single; he, who to be deem'd
 A god, leap'd fondly into Ætna flames, 470
 Empedocles; and he who, to enjoy

438. *Sericana*. *Sericana*, *Serica*, or the country of the *Seres*, is mentioned by the eminent English geographer, Mr. Murray, to be identical with modern China; while the French geographer, Malte-Brun, considers it as including merely the western parts of *Thibet*, *Serinagur*, *Cashmere*, *Little Thibet*, and perhaps a small portion of *Little Buckharia*.

459. *Neighbouring moon*. Pope has this idea in his "Rape of the Lock:" speaking of the whereabouts of Lady Arabella Fermour's renowned lock of hair, he says—
 Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,
 Since all things lost on earth are treasured there.
 Canto V. line 113.

463. *Ill-join'd sons*. He here alludes to Gen. vi. 4, where, by the "sons of God," is meant the posterity of Seth, who, called thus as worshippers of the true God, intermarried with the idolatrous posterity of wicked Cain.

467. *Sennaar*, that is, *Shinar*.

471. *Empedocles*, a poet and philosopher of Sicily. *Clombrotus*, a youth of Ambracia in Epirus, who, after reading Plato on the immortality of the soul, was so enraptured with his description of the happiness of the good in another life, that he jumped into the sea to enjoy it at once.

Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
 Cleombrotus, and many more too long,
 Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars,
 White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery. } *Small stuff*
 Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek 475
 In Golgotha him dead, who lives in heaven;
 And they, who to be sure of Paradise,
 Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised; 480
 They pass the planets seven, and pass the fix'd,
 And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
 The trepidation talk'd, and that first moved:
 And now Saint Peter at heaven's wicket seems
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot 485
 Of heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when, lo!
 A violent cross wind from either coast
 Blows them transverse ten thousand leagues awry
 Into the devious air: then might ye see
 Cows, hoods, and habits with their wearers toss'd 490
 And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
 Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
 The sport of winds: all these, upwhirl'd aloft,
 Fly o'er the backside of the world far off,
 Into a limbo large and broad, since call'd 495
 The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
 Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
 All this dark globe the fiend found as he pass'd;
 And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
 Of dawning light turn'd thitherward in haste 500
 His travell'd steps: far distant he descries,
 Ascending by degrees magnificent
 Up to the wall of heaven, a structure high;
 At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
 The work as of a kingly palace gate, 505
 With frontispiece of diamond and gold
 Imbellish'd; thick with sparkling orient gems
 The portal shone, inimitable on earth
 By model or by shading pencil drawn.
 The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw 510
 Angels ascending and descending, bands
 Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
 To Padan-Aram in the field of Luz,
 Dreaming by night under the open sky,
 And waking cried, "This is the gate of heaven." 515
 Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood

478. It was thought that to be clothed in a friar's habit at death was a sure road to heaven.—481. Referring to the Ptolemaic system. *They pass the planets seven*, our solar system, *and*, beyond this, *pass the fixed*, or the fixed stars, *and*, beyond this, *that crystalline sphere*, the heaven clear as crystal, to which was attributed a sort of shaking, (the *trepidation* so much talked of,) to account for the irregularities in the motion of the stars, *and*, beyond this, *that first moved*, (the "*primum mobile*,"") as well as first mover, communicating its motion to the lower spheres. Beyond this was the empyrean heavens, the seat of God and the angels. See viii. 131.

There always, but drawn up to heaven sometimes
 Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
 Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
 Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd, 520
 Wafted by angels; or flew o'er the lake,
 Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
 The stairs were then let down; whether to dare
 The fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
 His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss: 525
 Direct against which open'd from beneath,
 Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
 A passage down to the earth, a passage wide;
 Wider by far than that of after-times
 Over Mount Sion, and, though that were large, 530
 Over the promised land to God so dear;
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
 On high behests his angels to and fro
 Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard,
 From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood, 535
 To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
 Borders on Ægypt and the Arabian shore:
 So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
 To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
 Satan from hence, now on the lower stair, 540
 That scaled by steps of gold to heaven gate,
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
 Of all this world at once. As when a scout,
 Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
 All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn 545
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
 Which to his eye discovers unaware
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land
 First seen; or some renown'd metropolis,
 With glistening spires and pinnacles adorn'd, 550
 Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:
 Such wonder seized, though after heaven seen,
 The spirit malign; but much more envy seized,
 At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
 Round he surveys, (and well might, where he stood 555
 So high above the circling canopy
 Of night's extended shade,) from eastern point
 Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
 Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
 Beyond the horizon: then from pole to pole 560
 He views in breadth; and without longer pause
 Downright into the world's first region throws
 His flight precipitant; and winds with ease
 Through the pure marble air his oblique way
 Amongst innumerable stars, that shone 565

535. *Paneas*, originally called *Dan*; the northernmost city of Palestine.

564. *Marble air*, so called from its clearness and brightness. So Shakspeare,—
 "Now by yon *marble* heaven."

Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds.
 Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
 Like those Hesperian gardens, famed of old,
 Fortunate fields, and groves and flowery vales,
 Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt happy there 570
 He stay'd not to inquire. Above them all,
 The golden sun, in splendour likest heaven,
 Allured his eye: thither his course he bends
 Through the calm firmament: but up or down,
 By centre or eccentric, hard to tell, 575
 Or longitude, where the great luminary,
 Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
 That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
 Dispenses light from far; they, as they move
 Their starry dance in numbers that compute 580
 Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp
 Turn swift their various motions; or are turn'd
 By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
 The universe, and to each inward part
 With gentle penetration, though unseen, 585
 Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep;
 So wondrously was set his station bright.
 There lands the fiend; a spot like which perhaps
 Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
 Through his glazed optic tube yet never saw. 590
 The place he found beyond expression bright,
 Compared with aught on earth, metal or stone;
 Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
 With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire:
 If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear; 595
 If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
 In Aaron's breastplate; and a stone besides
 Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen;
 That stone, or like to that which here below 600
 Philosophers in vain so long have sought;
 In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
 Volatil Hermes, and call up unbound
 In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
 Drain'd through a limbeck to his native form. 605
 What wonder then if fields and regions here
 Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Potable gold; when with one virtuous touch,
 The arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,
 Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd, 610
 Here in the dark so many precious things,

604. "Proteus, after he had turned himself into various amazing mutations, was fabled by the poets to return at last to his proper shape, and to answer truly all questions put to him. Therefore Milton tells us, that the chemists drain the

various matter they work upon through all its mutations, till, pursued through all its latest labyrinths, it assume, Proteus-like, its first shape, and answer their expectations: a simile well suite'd to their uncertain search."—HUME.

Of colour glorious and effect so rare?
 Here matter new to gaze the devil met
 Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands;
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade, 615
 But all sunshine. As when his beams at noon
 Culminate from the equator, as they now
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
 Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air,
 No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray' 620
 To objects distant far; whereby he soon
 Saw within ken a glorious angel stand,
 The same whom John saw also in the sun:
 His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid;
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar 625
 Circled his head; nor less his locks behind
 Illustrious on his shoulders fledge with wings
 Lay waving round: on some great charge employ'd
 He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
 Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope 630
 To find who might direct his wandering flight
 To Paradise, the happy seat of man,
 His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
 But first he casts to change his proper shape;
 Which else might work him danger or delay: 635
 And now a stripling cherub he appears,
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
 Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb
 Suitable grace diffused, so well he feign'd;
 Under a coronet his flowing hair 640
 In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
 Of many a colour'd plume sprinkled with gold;
 His habit fit for speed succinct; and held
 Before his decent steps a silver wand.
 He drew not nigh unheard; the angel bright, 645
 Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd
 Admonish'd by his ear; and straight was known
 The archangel Uriel, one of the seven,
 Who in God's presence nearest to his throne
 Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650
 That run through all the heavens, or down to the earth
 Bear his swift errands, over moist and dry,
 O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts:—
 Uriel, for thou of those seven spirits that stand
 In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright, 655
 The first art wont his great authentic will
 Interpreter through highest heaven to bring,

623. *Whom John saw.* See Rev. xix. 17.

627. *Illustrious,* lustrous; *fledge,* furnished.

634. *He casts;* he considers, meditates, purposes.

643. *Succinct,* prepared, ready for action.

654. *Uriel.* His name is derived from

two Hebrew words, meaning *God is my light.* He is mentioned as the good angel in the second book of Esdras; and the Jews and some Christians conceive him to be an angel of light, according to his name, and therefore he has properly his station in the sun.—NEWTON.

Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
 And here art likeliest by supreme decree
 Like honour to obtain, and as his eye 660
 To visit oft this new creation round;
 Unspeakable desire to see, and know
 All these his wondrous works, but chiefly man,
 His chief delight and favour, him for whom
 All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd, 665
 Hath brought me from the quires of cherubim
 Alone thus wandering. Brightest seraph, tell
 In which of all these shining orbs hath man
 His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
 But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell; 670
 That I may find him, and, with secret gaze
 Or open admiration, him behold,
 On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
 Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;
 That both in him and all things, as is meet, 675
 The universal Maker we may praise;
 Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes
 To deepest hell; and, to repair that loss,
 Created this new happy race of men
 To serve him better: wise are all his ways. 680
 So spake the false dissembler unperceived;
 For neither man nor angel can discern
 Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
 Invisible, except to God alone,
 By his permissive will, through heaven and earth: 685
 And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
 At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
 Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
 Where no ill seems; which now for once beguiled
 Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held 690
 The sharpest-sighted spirit of all in heaven;
 Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,
 In his uprightness, answer thus return'd:—
 Fair angel, thy desire, which tends to know
 The works of God, thereby to glorify 695
 The great Work-master, leads to no excess
 That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
 The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
 From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
 To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps, 700
 Contented with report, hear only in heaven;
 For wonderful indeed are all his works,
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
 Had in remembrance always with delight:
 But what created mind can comprehend 705
 Their number; or the wisdom infinite

686. *Though wisdom wake.* There is not, in my opinion, a nobler sentiment, or one more poetically expressed in the whole poem. What great art has the

poet shown in taking off the dryness of a mere moral sentence, by throwing it into the form of a short and beautiful allegory!—THYER.

That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
 I saw, when at his word the formless mass,
 This world's material mould, came to a heap:
 Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar 710
 Stood ruled; stood vast infinitude confined;
 Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
 Light shone, and order from disorder sprung.
 Swift to their several quarters hasted then
 The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire; 715
 And this ethereal quintessence of heaven
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
 That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
 Each had his place appointed, each his course; 720
 The rest in circuit walls this universe.
 Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
 With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
 That place is earth, the seat of man; that light
 His day, which else, as the other hemisphere, 725
 Night would invade: but there the neighbouring moon,
 So call that opposite fair star, her aid
 Timely interposes; and her monthly round
 Still ending, still renewing, through mid heaven,
 With borrow'd light her countenance triform 730
 Hence fills and empties to enlighten the earth;
 And in her pale dominion checks the night.
 That spot to which I point is Paradise,
 Adam's abode; those lofty shades his bower:
 Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires. 735
 Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan, bowing low,
 As to superiour spirits is wont in heaven,
 Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
 Took leave; and toward the coast of earth beneath,
 Down from the ecliptic, sped with hoped success, 740
 Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel,
 Nor stay'd, till on Niphates' top he lights.

716. *This ethereal, &c.* Our author borrowed this notion from Aristotle and others of the ancient philosophers, who supposed that besides the four elements, there was likewise an ethereal quintessence or fifth essence, out of which the stars and heavens were formed, and that its motion was orbicular.—NEWTON.

742. *Niphates.* This is a range of mountains in Armenia, forming a part of the great chain of Mount Taurus, and south of lake Van. This ridge is chosen as the one on which Satan lights, as it is in the supposed region of Paradise.

"Satan, after having wandered upon the surface, or utmost wall of the universe, discovers at last a wide gap in it, which led into the creation, and is described as the opening through which the angels pass to and fro into the lower world, upon their errands to mankind. His sitting upon the brink of this passage,

and taking a survey of the whole face of nature that appeared to him new and fresh in all its beauties, with the simile illustrating this circumstance, fills the mind of the reader with as surprising and glorious an idea as any that arises in the whole poem. He looks down into that vast hollow of the universe with the eye, or as Milton calls it in his first book, with the ken of an angel. He surveys all the wonders in this immense amphitheatre that lies between both the poles of heaven, and takes in at one view the whole round of the creation.

His flight between the several worlds that shined on every side of him, and the particular description of the sun, are set forth in all the wantonness of a luxuriant imagination. His shape, speech, and behaviour, upon his transforming himself into an angel of light, are touched with exquisite beauty."—ADDISON.

REMARKS ON BOOK IV.

WE may consider the beauties of the fourth book under three heads. In the first are those pictures of still-life, which we meet with in the description of Eden, Paradise, Adam's bower, &c.: in the next are the machines, which comprehend the speeches and behaviour of the good and bad angels: in the last is the conduct of Adam and Eve, who are the principal actors in the poem.

In the description of Paradise, the poet has observed Aristotle's rule of lavishing all the ornaments of diction on the weak inactive parts of the fable which are not supported by the beauty of sentiments and characters. Accordingly, the reader may observe, that the expressions are more florid and elaborate in these descriptions, than in most other parts of the poem. This description of Paradise is wonderfully beautiful, and formed upon the short sketch which we have of it in Holy Writ. Milton's exuberance of imagination has poured forth such a redundancy of ornaments on this seat of happiness and innocence, that it would be endless to point out each particular.

We are in the next place to consider the machines of the fourth book. Satan, being now within prospect of Eden, and looking round upon the glories of the creation, is filled with sentiments different from those which he discovered whilst he was in hell. The place inspires him with thoughts more adapted to it.

The thought of Satan's transformation into a cormorant, ver. 196, and placing himself on the Tree of Life, seems raised upon that passage in the Iliad, where two deities are described as perching on the top of an oak, in the shape of vultures.

The description of Adam and Eve, as they first appeared to Satan, is exquisitely drawn, and sufficient to make the fallen angel gaze upon them with all that astonishment, and those emotions of envy, in which he is represented.

There is a fine spirit of poetry in the lines which follow, wherein they are described as sitting on a bed of flowers by the side of a fountain, amidst a mixed assembly of animals. The speeches of these first two lovers flow equally from passion and sincerity: the professions they make to one another are full of warmth; but at the same time founded on truth: in a word, they are the gallantries of Paradise. The part of Eve's speech, in which she gives an account of herself upon her first creation, and the manner in which she was brought to Adam, is, I think, as beautiful a passage as any in Milton, or perhaps in any other poet whatsoever. These passages are all worked off with so much art, that they are capable of pleasing the most delicate reader, without offending the most severe:

That day I oft remember, when from sleep, &c.

A poet of less judgment and invention than this great author would have found it very difficult to have filled these tender parts of the poem with sentiments proper for a state of innocence; to have described the warmth of love, and the professions of it, without artifice or hyperbole; to have made the man speak the most endearing things without descending from his natural dignity, and the woman receiving them without departing from the modesty of character: in a word, to adjust the prerogatives of wisdom and beauty, and make each appear to the other in its proper force and loveliness. This mutual subordination of the two

sexes is wonderfully kept up in the whole poem, as particularly in the speech of Eve I have before mentioned, and upon the conclusion of it; when the poet adds, that the devil turned away with envy at the sight of so much happiness, v. 492, &c.

We have another view of our first parents in their evening discourses, which is full of pleasing images and sentiments suitable to their condition and characters. The speech of Eve, in particular, is dressed up in such a soft and natural turn of words and sentiments, as cannot be sufficiently admired.

Satan's planting himself at the ear of Eve under the form of a toad, in order to produce vain dreams and imaginations, is a striking circumstance; as his starting up in his own form is wonderfully fine, both in the literal description, and in the moral which is concealed under it. His answer upon his being discovered, and demanded to give an account of himself, is conformable to the pride and intrepidity of his character.

Zephor's rebuke, with the influence it had on Satan, is exquisitely graceful and moral. Satan is afterwards led away to Gabriel, the chief of the guardian angels, who kept watch in Paradise. His disdainful behaviour on this occasion is so remarkable a beauty, that the most ordinary reader cannot but take notice of it: Gabriel's discovering his approach at a distance is drawn with great strength and liveliness of imagination.

The conference between Gabriel and Satan abounds with sentiments proper for the occasion, and suitable to the persons of the two speakers. Satan clothing himself with terror when he prepares for the combat is truly sublime, and at least equal to Homer's description of Discord, celebrated by Longinus; or to that of Fame, in Virgil; who are both represented with their feet standing upon the earth, and their heads reaching above the clouds.—ADDISON.

Milton, like Dante, had been unfortunate in ambition and in love. He had survived his health and his sight, the comforts of his home, and the prosperity of his party. Of the great men by whom he had been distinguished, some had been taken away from the evil to come: some had taken into foreign climates their unconquerable hatred of oppression: some were pining in dungeons, and some had poured forth their blood on scaffolds. If ever despondency and asperity could be excused in any man, they might have been excused in Milton; but the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. His temper was serious, perhaps stern; but it was a temper which no sufferings could render sullen or fretful. Such as it was, when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels, in the prime of health and manly beauty, loaded with literary distinctions, and glowing with patriotic hopes—such it continued to be—when, after having experienced every calamity which is incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless, and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die!

Hence it was, that though he wrote the *Paradise Lost* at a time of life when images of beauty and tenderness are, in general, beginning to fade, even from those minds in which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the physical and in the moral world. Neither Theocritus nor Ariosto had a finer or a more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects, or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the juice of summer fruits, and the coolness of shady fountains. His poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery: nooks and dells, beautiful as fairy land, are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche.—MACAULAY.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

SATAN, now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise, which he undertook alone against God and man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described, overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a cormorant on the Tree of Life, as the highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described: Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve: his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall: overhears their discourse; thence gathers that the Tree of Knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under the penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress: then leaves them awhile to know further of their state by some other means. Meanwhile, Uriel, descending on a sunbeam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escaped the deep, and passed at noon by his sphere in the shape of a good angel down to Paradise, discovered afterwards by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel, drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the rounds of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers, prepares resistance, but, hindered by a sign from heaven, flies out of Paradise.

O, FOR that warning voice, which he, who saw
The Apocalypse, heard cry in heaven aloud,
Then when the dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be revenged on men,
"Woe to the inhabitants on earth!" that now, 5
While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scaped,
Haply so 'scaped his mortal snare; for now
Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,
The tempter ere the accuser of mankind, 10
To wreak on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first battel, and his flight to hell:
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,

2. *The Apocalypse.* See Rev. xii. 12.

13. *Not rejoicing.* Satan was bold "far off, and fearless;" and as he drew nearer, was pleased with "hoped success;" but, now that he is come to earth to "begin

his dire attempt," he does not "rejoice" in it; his heart misgives him; "horror and doubt distract" him. This is all very natural.—NEWTON.

Begins his dire attempt; which, nigh the birth, 13
 Now rolling, boils in his tumultuous breast,
 And like a devilish engine back recoils
 Upon himself: horrour and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
 The hell within him; for within him hell 20
 He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
 One step, no more than from himself, can fly
 By change of place: now conscience wakes despair
 That slumber'd; wakes the bitter memory
 Of what he was, what is, and what must be 25
 Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
 Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
 Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;
 Sometimes towards heaven and the full-blazing sun,
 Which now sat high in his meridian tower: 30
 Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began.
 O thou, that, with surpassing glory crown'd,
 Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
 Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
 Hide their diminish'd heads; to thee I call, 35
 But with no friendly voice; and add thy name,
 O sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
 That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
 Till pride and worse ambition threw me down, 40
 Warring in heaven against heaven's matchless King.
 Ah, wherefore! he deserved no such return
 From me, whom he created what I was
 In that bright eminence, and with his good
 Upbraided none; nor was his service hard. 45
 What could be less than to afford him praise,
 The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
 How due! yet all his good proved ill in me,
 And wrought but malice; lifted up so high,
 I 'sdein'd subjection, and thought one step higher 50
 Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
 The debt immense of endless gratitude,
 So burdensome; still paying, still to owe:
 Forgetful what from him I still received;
 And understood not that a grateful mind 55
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
 Indebted and discharged: what burden then?
 O, had his powerful destiny ordain'd
 Me some inferiour angel, I had stood
 Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised 60

32. *O thou, &c.* One of those magnificent speeches to which no other name can be given, than that it is supereminently Miltonic. This is mainly argumentative sublimity; in which, I think, that he is even still greater than in his splendid and majestic imagery. The alternations

of this dreadful speech strike and move the mind like the changes of the tempest in a dark night, when the thunder and lightning roar and flash, and then intermit, and then redouble again.—BRYDGES.
50. *I 'sdain'd*, for *disdain'd*.

Ambition! Yet why not? some other power
 As great might have aspired, and me, though mean,
 Drawn to his part; but other powers as great
 Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
 Or from without, to all temptations arm'd. 65
 Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?
 Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
 But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?
Be then his love accursed; since love or hate,
 To me alike, it deals eternal woe: 70
 Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will
 Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
 Me miserable! which way shall I fly
 Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;
And in the lowest deep a lower deep 75
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.
 O, then at last relent: is there no place
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left? 80
 None left but by submission; and that word
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
 Among the spirits beneath; whom I seduced
 With other promises and other vaunts
 Than to submit; boasting I could subdue 85
 The Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain;
 Under what torments inwardly I groan;
 While they adore me on the throne of hell.
 With diadem and sceptre high advanced, 90
 The lower still I fall; only supreme
 In misery: such joy ambition finds.
 But say I could repent, and could obtain
 By act of grace my former state; how soon
 Would highth recall high thoughts, how soon unsay 95
 What feign'd submission swore! Ease would recant
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
 For never can true reconcilment grow
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep;
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 100
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
 Short intermission bought with double smart.
 This knows my Punisher; therefore as far
 From granting he, as I from begging peace:
 All hope excluded thus; behold, instead 105
 Of us outcast, exiled, his new delight,
 Mankind created, and for him this world.
 So farewell, hope; and with hope, farewell, fear;
 Farewell, remorse: all good to me is lost;
 Evil, be thou my good; by thee at least 110

80. *Left for repentance.* See Heb. xii. 17. | thou all my happiness; for by thee I hold
 110-112. As if he had said, Evil, be | divided empire with the Supreme, and by

Divided empire with heaven's King I hold,
 By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
 As man ere long and this new world shall know.
 Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
 Thrice changed with pale, ire, envy, and despair; 115
 Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
 Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld:
 For heavenly minds from such distempers foul
 Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
 Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm, 120
 Artificer of fraud; and was the first
 That practised falsehood under saintly show,
 Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:
 Yet not enough had practised to deceive
 Uriel once warn'd; whose eye pursued him down 125
 The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount
 Saw him disfigured, more than could befall
 Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
 He mark'd and mad demeanour, then alone,
 As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen. 130
 So on he fares, and to the border comes
 Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
 Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
 As with a rural mound, the champain head
 Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides 135
 With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
 Access denied; and overhead up grew
 Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
 Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
 A sylvan scene; and, as the ranks ascend 140
 Shade above shade, a woody theatre
 Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
 The verdurous wall of Paradise up sprung;
 Which to our general sire gave prospect large
 Into his nether empire neighbouring round. 145
 And higher than that wall a circling row
 Of goodliest trees loaden with fairest fruit,
 Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
 Appear'd, with gay enamel'd colours mix'd:
 On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams, 150
 Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
 When God hath shower'd the earth; so lovely seem'd
 That landskip: and of pure now purer air
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive 155
 All sadness but despair: now gentle gales,

thee, I repeat, I will in a short time reign
 over more than half, as I intend to add
 earth (man's domain) to my empire.
 Addison deems this speech of Satan the
 finest that is ascribed to him in the
 whole poem.

115. *Thrice changed with pale.* That

is, each passion, *ire, envy, and despair*,
 dimmed his face, which was thrice changed
 with *pale*, through the successive agita-
 tions of these passions.

151. Some would read, "on fair even-
 ing cloud."

Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
 Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are pass'd 160
 Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
 Sabæan odours from the spicy shore
 Of Araby the bless'd; with such delay
 Well pleased they slack their course, and many a league
 Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles: 165
 So entertain'd those odorous sweets the fiend
 Who came their bane; though with them better pleased
 Than Asmodæus with the fishy fume,
 That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170
 From Media post to Ægypt, there fast bound.
 Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill
 Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow;
 But further way found none; so thick entwined,
 As one continued brake, the undergrowth 175
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
 All path of man or beast that pass'd that way.
 One gate there only was, and that look'd east
 On the other side: which when the arch-felon saw,
 Due entrance he disdain'd; and in contempt, 180
 At one slight bound high overleap'd all bound
 Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
 Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve 185
 In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
 Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:
 Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
 Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
 Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault, 190
 In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
 So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
 So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
 Thence up he flew; and on the Tree of Life,
 The middle tree and highest there that grew, 195
 Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
 Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
 To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought
 Of that life-giving plant, but only used
 For prospect, what well used had been the pledge 200
 Of immortality. So little knows

168. *Asmodæus* was the evil Spirit, enamoured of Sarah, the daughter of Raguel, whose seven husbands he destroyed. But when she was married to the son of Tobit, he was driven away by the fumes of the heart and liver of a fish; "the which smell when the evil Spirit had smelled, he fled into the utmost parts of Egypt,

and the angel bound him." See the Book of Tobit, chap. viii.

177. *That pass'd*, for *that would have pass'd*.

193. *Lewd*. In Milton's time this word was used in a wider sense than now, and signified *profane, impious, wicked*, as well as *lascivious*. See i. 490; and vi. 182.

Any, but God alone, to value right
 The good before him; but perverts best things
 To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
 Beneath him with new wonder now he views, 205
 To all delight of human sense exposed,
 In narrow room, Nature's whole wealth, yea, more,
 A heaven on earth: for blissful Paradise
 Of God the garden was, by him in the east
 Of Eden planted; Eden stretch'd her line 210
 From Auran eastward to the royal towers
 Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings;
 Or where the sons of Eden long before
 Dwelt in Telassar. In this pleasant soil
 His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd: 215
 Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow
 All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
 And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,
 High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
 Of vegetable gold; and next to Life, 220
 Our death, the Tree of Knowledge, grew fast by,
 Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
 Southward through Eden went a river large,
 Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
 Pass'd underneath ingulf'd; for God had thrown 225
 That mountain as his garden mould, high raised
 Upon the rapid current, which through veins
 Of porous earth with kindly thirst up drawn,
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
 Water'd the garden; thence united fell 230
 Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
 Which from his darksome passage now appears;
 And now, divided into four main streams,
 Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm
 And country, whereof here needs no account; 235
 But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
 ✓ How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
 With mazy error under pendent shades
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240
 Flowers worthy of Paradise; which not nice art
 In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
 Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain;

210. *Eden stretch'd her line.* *Auran*, or *Haran*, was a city of Mesopotamia, about due east of the head of the gulf of Issus. *Seleucia* was a city on the Tigris, built by Seleucus, one of Alexander's successors. There is no question in ancient geography upon which more ink and paper have been wasted, than upon the situation of Eden. One places it in Armenia, another at the junction of the Euphrates and Tigris, another in the vale of Cashmere, while the country around the sources of

the Amazon has had its advocates: all seeming to forget that Moses describes it as it was before the flood, and that that catastrophe must have altered the whole face of nature. True, Moses mentions the Euphrates. But what was more natural than for the family of Noah, as they came from the ark, to call this first river they met with by the name of one they had known before the flood?—*Telassar* was in Babylonia, upon the common streams of Tigris and Euphrates.

Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
 The open field, and where the unpierced shade 245
 Imbrown'd the noontide bowers. Thus was this place
 A happy rural seat of various view:
 Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm;
 Others, whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,
 Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true, 250
 If true, here only, and of delicious taste.
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
 Grazing the tender herb, were interposed;
 Or palmy hillock, or the flowery lap
 Of some irriguous valley spread her store; 255
 Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
 Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
 Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
 Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
 Luxuriant: meanwhile murmuring waters fall 260
 Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,
 That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
 Her crystal mirrour holds, unite their streams.
 The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune 265
 The trembling leaves; while universal Pan,
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
 Led on the eternal spring. Not that fair field
 Of *Enna*, where *Proserpine* gathering flowers,
 Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy *Dis* 270
 Was gather'd, which cost *Ceres* all that pain
 To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
 Of *Daphne* by *Orontes*, and the inspired
Castalian spring, might with this *Paradise*
 Of *Eden* strive; nor that *Nyseian* isle 275
 Girt with the river *Triton*, where old *Cham*,
 Whom *Gentiles* *Ammon* call and *Libyan* *Jove*,
 Hid *Amalthea*, and her florid son,
 Young *Bacchus*, from his stepdame *Rhea's* eye;
 Nor where *Abassin* kings their issue guard, 280
 Mount *Amara*, though this by some supposed
 True *Paradise*, under the *Ethiop* line
 By *Nilus' head*, enclosed with shining rock,
 A whole day's journey high, but wide remote

266. *While universal Pan*. "While universal Nature, linked with the graceful Seasons, danced a perpetual round, and throughout the earth, yet unpolled, led an eternal Spring."—HUME.

269. *Enna*, a field of Sicily, from whence *Proserpine* was carried away by *Dis*, or *Pluto*. There is great diversity of opinion as to the situation of some of these places in ancient geography. *Triton* is thought to be a river that emptied into the *Syrtis Minor*, east of *Carthage*. *Cham*, or *Ham*, a son of *Noah*, was a name given to *Jupiter Ammon*, who was worshipped

in *Lybia*. He became enamoured of *Amalthea*, which caused the jealousy of *Rhea*.

281. *Mount Amara*. This was a ridge of hills in *Ethiopia*, under the *Equator*. Between two of these hills there is a plain abounding with the rich and beautiful productions of nature, and highly ornamented with the various operations of art. In this place the kings of *Abysinia* kept their children continually confined; and when a king dies, he that is to succeed him is brought thence, and set upon the throne.—MASSEY.

From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend 285
 Saw, undelighted, all delight, all kind
 Of living creatures, new to sight and strange.
 Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
 Godlike erect, with native honour clad
 In naked majesty, seem'd lords of all; 290
 And worthy seem'd: for in their looks divine
 The image of their glorious Maker shone,
 Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
 Severe, but in true filial freedom placed;
 Whence true authority in men: though both 295
 Not equal, as their sex not equal, seem'd;
 For contemplation he and valour form'd,
 For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
 He for God only, she for God in him.
 His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd 300
 Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung
 Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
 She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
 Her unadorn'd golden tresses wore 305
 Disshewell'd, but in wanton ringlets waved
 As the vine curls her tendrils; which implied
 Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
 And by her yielded, by him best received,
 Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, 310
 And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.
 Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd;
 Then was not guilty shame: dishonest shame
 Of nature's works, honour dishonourable,
 Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind 315
 With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
 And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
 Simplicity and spotless innocence!
 So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
 Of God or angel, for they thought no ill: 320
 So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
 That ever since in love's embraces met;
 Adam the goodliest man of men since born
 His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
 Under a tuft of shade, that on a green 325
 Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain side
 They sat them down; and, after no more toil
 Of their sweet gardening labour than sufficed
 To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease

299. *For God in him.* See 1 Cor. xi. 7. | For what is he speaking to but to
 314. *Honour dishonourable.* He alludes | Shame?
 to 1 Cor. xii. 24. "But that honour is | 323. *Adam the goodliest.* This idiom,
 really a dishonour; a token of our fall | though strictly incorrect, is supported
 and an indication of our guilt. Inno- | by high authority in the ancient poets.
 cent nature made no such distinction."— | The meaning is clear enough,—that
 NEWTON. | Adam was goodlier than any of his
 315. *Ye.* Should we not read *you?* | sons, &c.

More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite 330
 More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell,
 Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
 Yielded them, sidelong as they sat recline
 On the soft downy bank damask'd with flowers.
 The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind, 335
 Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream:
 Nor gentle purpose nor endearing smiles
 Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems
 Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
 Alone as they. About them frisking play'd 340
 All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase
 In wood or wilderness, forest or den:
 Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
 Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
 Gamboll'd before them; the unwieldy elephant, 345
 To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed
 His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
 His braided train, and of his fatal guile
 Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass 350
 Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing sat,
 Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,
 Declined, was hastening now with prone career
 To the ocean isles, and in the ascending scale
 Of heaven the stars that usher evening rose: 355
 When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad:—
 O hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold?
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanced
 Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps, 360
 Not spirits, yet to heavenly spirits bright
 (Little inferiour; whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love; so lively shines
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace
 The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd! 365
 Ah! gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
 Your change approaches, when all these delights
 Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe;
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;
 Happy, but for so happy ill secured 370
 Long to continue; and this high seat your heaven
 Ill fenced for heaven to keep out such a foe
 As now is enter'd; yet no purposed foe
 To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
 Though I unpitied. League with you I seek, 375
 And mutual amity, so strait, so close,
 That I with you must dwell, or you with me
 Henceforth: my dwelling haply may not please,

352. *Bedward ruminating.* Chewing | 362. *Little inferiour.* Ps. viii. 5; Heb
 the cud before going to rest.—HUME. | ii. 7.

Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such 380
 Accept, your Maker's work; he gave it me,
 Which I as freely give: hell shall unfold,
 To entertain you two, her widest gates,
 And send forth all her kings: there will be room,
 Not like these narrow limits, to receive
 Your numerous offspring; if no better place, 385
 Thank him who puts me loth to this revenge
 On you, who wrong me not, for him who wrong'd.
 And should I at your harmless innocence
 Melt, as I do; yet public reason just,
 Honour and empire with revenge enlarged, 390
 By conquering this new world, compels me now
 To do, what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.
 So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
 The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.
 Then from his lofty stand on that high tree 395
 Down he alights among the sportful herd
 Of those four-footed kinds; himself now one,
 Now other, as their shape served best his end
 Nearer to view his prey, and, unespied,
 To mark what of their state he more might learn, 400
 By word or action mark'd: about them round,
 A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
 Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied
 In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
 Straight couches close; then, rising, changes oft 405
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,
 Griped in each paw: when, Adam first of men
 To first of women Eve thus moving speech,
 Turn'd him, all ear to hear new utterance flow: 410
 Sole partner and sole part of all these joys,
 Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Power
 That made us, and for us this ample world,
 Be infinitely good, and of his good
 As liberal and free as infinite; 415
 That raised us from the dust, and placed us here
 In all this happiness; who at his hand
 Have nothing merited, nor can perform
 Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires
 From us no other service than to keep 420
 This one, this easy charge; of all the trees
 In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
 So various, not to taste that only Tree
 Of Knowledge, planted by the Tree of Life;
 So near grows death to life, whate'er death is; 425
 Some dreadful thing no doubt: for well thou know'st
 God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree:

410. *Turn'd him.* That is, *he*, meaning | was "moving speech" to Eve. Adam is
Satan, turn'd him to hear, while Adam | in the nominative absolute with moving.

The only sign of our obedience left
 Among so many signs of power and rule
 Conferr'd upon us; and dominion given 430
 Over all other creatures that possess
 Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
 One easy prohibition, who enjoy
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
 Unlimited of manifold delights: 435
 But let us ever praise him, and extol
 His bounty; following our delightful task
 To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers;
 Which, were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.
 To whom thus Eve replied:—O thou, for whom 440
 And from whom I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
 And without whom am to no end, my guide
 And head; what thou hast said is just and right:
 For we to him indeed all praises owe,
 And daily thanks: I chiefly, who enjoy 445
 So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
 Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
 Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep
 I first awaked, and found myself reposed 450
 Under a shade on flowers; much wondering where
 And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
 Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
 Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
 Into a liquid plain; then stood unmoved, 455
 Pure as the expanse of heaven: I thither went
 With unexperienced thought, and laid me down
 On the green bank, to look into the clear
 Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
 As I bent down to look, just opposite 460
 A shape within the watery gleam appear'd,
 Bending to look on me: I started back,
 It started back; but pleas'd I soon return'd,
 Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answering looks
 Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd 465
 Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,
 Had not a voice thus warn'd me: What thou seest,
 What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
 With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
 And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470
 Thy coming, and thy soft embraces; he
 Whose image thou art, him thou shalt enjoy
 Inseparably thine; to him shalt bear
 Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
 Mother of human race. What could I do, 475

449. *That day I oft remember.* The whole of this passage is exquisitely tender, beautiful, and picturesque, in expression as well as in imagery and sentiment.—BRIDGES.

But follow straight, invisibly thus led?
 Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall,
 Under a platane; yet, methought, less fair,
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
 Than that smooth watery image. Back I turn'd: 480
 Thou following criedst aloud, Return, fair Eve;
 Whom fliest thou? whom thou fliest, of him thou art,
 His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
 Substantial life; to have thee by my side 485
 Henceforth an individual solace dear.
 Part of my soul, I seek thee, and thee claim,
 My other half: with that thy gentle hand
 Seized mine: I yielded: and from that time see
 How beauty is excell'd by manly grace 490
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.
 So spake our general mother; and, with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unreprieved
 And meek surrender, half-embracing lean'd
 On our first father; half her swelling breast 495
 Naked met his, under the flowing gold
 Of her loose tresses hid: he, in delight
 Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
 Smiled with superiour love; as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds 500
 That shed May flowers; and press'd her matron lip
 With kisses pure. Aside the devil turn'd
 For envy; yet with jealous leer malign
 Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plain'd:
 Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two, 505
 Imparadis'd in one another's arms,
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
 Of bliss on bliss; while I to hell am thrust,
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
 Among our other torments not the least, 510
 Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines.
 Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
 From their own mouths; all is not theirs, it seems:
 One fatal tree there stands, of Knowledge call'd,
 Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden? 515
 Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
 Envy them that? can it be sin to know?
 Can it be death? and do they only stand
 By ignorance? is that their happy state,

492. *So spake, &c.* What a charming picture of love and innocence has the poet given us in this paragraph! There is the greatest warmth of affection, and yet the most exact delicacy and decorum. One would have thought that a scene of this nature could not with any consistency have been introduced into a divine poem; and yet our author has so nicely

and judiciously covered the soft description with the veil of modesty, that the purest and chastest mind can find no room for offence.—*TYLER.*

499. *As Jupiter, &c.* As the heaven smiles upon the air, when it makes the clouds and every thing fruitful in the Spring. This seems to be the meaning of the allegory.—*NEWTON.*

The proof of their obedience and their faith? 520
 O fair foundation laid whereon to build
 Their ruin! hence I will excite their minds
 With more desire to know, and to reject
 Envious commands, invented with design
 To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt 525
 Equal with Gods; aspiring to be such,
 They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
 But first with narrow search I must walk round
 This garden, and no corner leave unspied;
 A chance but chance may lead where I may meet 530
 Some wandering spirit of heaven by fountain side,
 Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw
 What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
 Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
 Short pleasures; for long woes are to succeed. 535
 So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
 But with sly circumspection, and began,
 Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam
 Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where heaven
 With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun 540
 Slowly descended, and with right aspect
 Against the eastern gate of Paradise
 Levell'd his evening rays: it was a rock
 Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,
 Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent 545
 Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
 The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
 Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
 Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
 Chief of the angelic guards, awaiting night; 550
 About him exercised heroic games
 The unarm'd youth of heaven; but nigh at hand
 Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
 Hung high with diamond flaming and with gold.
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even 555
 On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star
 In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fired
 Impress the air, and show the mariner
 From what point of his compass to beware
 Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste:— 560
 Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
 Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
 No evil thing approach or enter in.
 This day at highth of noon came to my sphere
 A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know 565
 More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly man,
 God's latest image: I described his way
 Bent all on speed, and mark'd his aery gait;
 But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
 Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks 570
 Alien from heaven, with passions foul obscured:

Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
 Lost sight of him: one of the banish'd crew,
 I fear, hath ventured from the deep, to raise
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find. 575

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd:
 Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
 Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sitt'st,
 See far and wide: in at this gate none pass
 The vigilance here placed, but such as come 580

Well known from heaven; and since meridian hour
 No creature thence. If spirit of other sort,
 So minded, have o'erleap'd these earthly bounds
 On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
 Spiritual substance with corporeal bar. 585

But if within the circuit of these walks
 In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
 Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.

So promised he; and Uriel to his charge
 Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now raised 590

Bore him slope downward to the sun, now fallen
 Beneath the Azores; whether the prime orb,
 Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd

Diurnal; or this less volúbil earth,
 By shorter flight to the east, had left him there, 595

Arraying with reflected purple and gold
 The clouds that on his western throne attend.
 Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
 Had in her sober livery all things clad:

Silence accompanied; for beast and bird, 600
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,
 Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;
 She all night long her amorous descant sung;

598. *Now came still evening on.* "The greatest poets of all ages have, as it were, vied one with another, in their description of evening and night; but, for the variety of numbers and pleasing images, I know of nothing parallel or comparable to this, to be found among all the treasures of ancient or modern poetry."—NEWTON. "This praise is not too high: the imagery consists of the most extraordinary union of richness, nature, and simplicity; and this is equally true of the expression."—BRYDGES.

602. *The wakeful nightingale.* The nightingale has always been the favourite bird among poets, for the ancients seem to have been as much attached to it as the moderns. Homer, Theocritus, Sophocles, Virgil, Horace, all delight to sing its praises: so also the earlier English poets, Chaucer, Drummond, Drayton, and Browne. Our own poet has not only noticed this delicious warbler here, but in many other places in *Paradise Lost*, in *Paradise Regained*, and in *Il Penseroso*, and has also devoted to it one of his ex-

quisitely beautiful sonnets. Gray, too, in his *Ode to Spring*, has given to it a few of his highly finished lines:—

The Attic warbler pours her throat
 Responsive to the cuckoo's note,—
 The untaught harmony of Spring.

But no description of this bird exceeds in beauty and richness that of honest old Isaac Walton, who shows, in many places of his "Complete Angler," that neither rhythm nor rhyme are essential to true poetry:—"But the nightingale, another of my airy creatures, breathes such sweet, loud music out of her little instrumental throat, that it might make mankind to think that miracles are not ceased. He that at midnight, when the very labourer sleeps securely, should hear, as I have very often, the clear airs, the sweet descants, the natural rising and falling, the doubling and redoubling of her voice, might well be lifted up above the earth, and say—Lord, what music hast thou provided for the saints in heaven, when thou affordest bad men such music on earth!"

Silence was pleased: now glowed the firmament
 With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led 605
 The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length,
 Apparent queen, unveil'd her peerless light,
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

When Adam thus to Eve: Fair consort, the hour 610
 Of night, and all things now retired to rest,
 Mind us of like repose; since God hath set
 Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
 Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,
 Now falling with soft slumbrous weight, inclines 615
 Our eyelids: other creatures all day long
 Rove idle, unemploy'd, and less need rest:
 Man hath his daily work of body or mind
 Appointed, which declares his dignity,
 And the regard of Heaven on all his ways; 620
 While other animals unactive range,
 And of their doings God takes no account.

To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
 With first approach of light, we must be risen,
 And at our pleasant labour, to reform 625
 Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,
 Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
 That mock our scant manuring, and require
 More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth:
 Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums, 630
 That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,
 Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
 Meanwhile, as nature wills, night bids us rest.

To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorn'd:
 My author and disposer, what thou bidd'st 635
 Unargued I obey; so God ordains.

God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
 Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.
 With thee conversing, I forget all time;
 All seasons, and their change, all please alike. 640
 Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
 With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun,
 When first on this delightful land he spreads
 His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
 Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile earth 645
 After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
 Of grateful evening mild; then silent night,
 With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
 And these the gems of heaven, her starry train:
 But neither breath of morn, when she ascends 650

608. *Apparent*, used in the Latin sense of *appareo*, evident, distinctly seen. Milton's mind was so thoroughly imbued with the classics, that he often thus uses words in their original sense.

650. *But neither*, &c. What can be more beautiful and touching than the repetition of these particulars!

With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
 On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
 Glistening with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
 Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night,
 With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon, 655
 Or glittering starlight, without thee is sweet.
 But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom
 This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?
 To whom our general ancestor replied:
 Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve, 660
 Those have their course to finish, round the earth,
 By morrow evening; and from land to land
 In order, though to nations yet unborn,
 Ministering light prepared, they set and rise;
 Lest total darkness should by night regain 665
 Her old possession, and extinguish life
 In nature and all things; which these soft fires
 Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
 Of various influence foment and warm,
 Temper or nourish, or in part shed down 670
 Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
 On earth, made hereby apter to receive
 Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
 These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
 Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none, 675
 That heaven would want spectators, God want praise:
 Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
 Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
 Both day and night. How often from the steep 680
 Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
 Celestial voices to the midnight air,
 Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
 Singing their great Creator! oft in bands
 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk, 685
 With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds,
 In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heaven.
 Thus talking, hand in hand alone they pass'd
 On to their blissful bower: it was a place 690
 Chosen by the sovran Planter, when he framed
 All things to man's delightful use: the roof
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade,
 Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
 Of firm and fragrant leaf: on either side 695
 Acanthus and each odorous bushy shrub
 Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
 Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,
 Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
 Mosaic; under-foot the violet, 700

Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
 Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
 Of costliest emblem: other creature here,
 Bird, beast, insect, or worm, durst enter none;
 Such was their awe of man. In shadier bower 705
 More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
 Pan or Sylvanus never slept; nor nymph
 Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
 With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
 Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed; 710
 And heavenly quires the hymenæan sung,
 What day the genial angel to our sire
 Brought her, in naked beauty more adorn'd,
 More lovely, than Pandora, whom the gods
 Endow'd with all their gifts; and, O! too like 715
 In sad event, when to the unwiser son
 Of Japhet brought by Hermes she ensnared
 Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged
 On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.
 Thus, at their shady lodge arrived, both stood, 720
 Both turn'd, and under open sky adored
 The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,
 Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
 And starry pole. Thou also madest the night,
 Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day, 725
 Which we, in our appointed work employ'd,
 Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help
 And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
 Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place,
 For us too large, where thy abundance wants 730
 Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
 But thou hast promised from us two a race
 To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
 Thy goodness infinite; both when we wake,
 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep. 735
 This said unanimous, and other rites
 Observing none, but adoration pure,
 Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
 Handed they went; and, eased the putting off
 These troublesome disguises which we wear 740
 Straight side by side were laid; nor turn'd, I ween,
 Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
 Mysterious of connubial love refused:
 Whatever hypocrites austere talk
 Of purity, and place, and innocence, 745
 Defaming as impure what God declares

714. *Pandora*. The story is this: Prometheus, the son of Japhet, had stolen Jove's *authentic fire* from heaven, in revenge for which Jupiter sent him *Pandora*, (meaning *all-gifts*), so called because all the gods had contributed their gifts to make her more charming. She was

brought by Mercury, (*Hermes*), but was not received by Prometheus, the wiser son of Japhet, but by his brother Epimetheus, the *unwiser son*. He was enticed by his foolish curiosity to open the box which she brought, in which were contained all manner of evils.—RICHARDSON.

Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
 Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain
 But our destroyer, foe to God and man?
 Hail, wedded love, mysterious law, true source 750
 Of human offspring, sole propriety
 In Paradise of all things common else!
 By thee adulterous lust was driven from men
 Among the bestial herds to range: by thee,
 Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure, 755
 Relations dear, and all the charities
 Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
 Far be it that I should write thee sin or blame,
 Or think thee unbefitting holiest place;
 Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets, 760
 Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,
 Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs us'd.
 Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
 His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
 Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile 765
 Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd,
 Casual fruition; nor in court-amours,
 Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
 Or serenate, which the starved lover sings
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770
 These, lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept,
 And on their naked limbs the flowery roof
 Shower'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on,
 Blest pair; and O! yet happiest; if ye seek
 No happier state, and know to know no more! 775
 Now had night measured with her shadowy consort
 Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault;
 And from their ivory port the cherubim,
 Forth issuing at the accustom'd hour, stood arm'd.
 To their night-watches in warlike parade; 780
 When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake:
 Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
 With strictest watch; these other wheel the north:
 Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part,
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear. 785
 From these two strong and subtle spirits he call'd
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge:
 Ithuriel and Zephon, with wing'd speed
 Search through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook;
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, 790
 Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.

750. *Mysterious law.* Eph. v. 32.761. *Whose bed, &c.* Heb. xiii. 4.768. *Mix'd dance, &c.* An apparent sarcasm on the dissolute court of Charles II.—BRYDGES.777. *Half way up hill*, that is, half way towards midnight, or about nine o'clock. *Ivory port*, or gate, from the Latin *porta*.785. *Half to the shield, half to the spear*, that is, half to the left, as soldiers wore their shields on their left arm, and half to the right, on which side the spear was.788. *Ithuriel* means in Hebrew "the discovery of God;" *Zephon*, "the searcher of secrets;" *Uzziel*, "the strength of God."

This evening from the sun's decline arrived,
 Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
 Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escaped
 The bars of hell, on errand bad no doubt: 795
 Such, where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.

So saying, on he led his radiant files,
 Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct
 In search of whom they sought: him there they found
 Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve, 800

Assaying by his devilish art to reach
 The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
 Illusions as he list, phantasms, and dreams;
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
 The animal spirits, that from pure blood arise 805

Like gentle breaths from rivers pure; thence raise
 At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
 Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
 Blown up with high conceits ingendering pride.

Him thus intent, Ithuriel with his spear
 Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure
 Touch of celestial temper, but returns

Of force to its own likeness: up he starts
 Discover'd and surprised. As when a spark
 Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid 815

Fit for the tun, some magazine to store
 Against a rumour'd war; the smutty grain,
 With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air;
 So started up in his own shape the fiend.

Back stepp'd those two fair angels, half amazed 820
 So sudden to behold the grisly king;
 Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon:

Which of those rebel spirits adjudged to hell
 Comest thou, escaped thy prison? and, transform'd,
 Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait, 825
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep?

Know ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
 Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate
 For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar:

Not to know me argues yourselves unknown, 830
 The lowest of your throng; or, if ye know,
 Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
 Your message, like to end as much in vain?

To whom thus Zephor, answering scorn with scorn:—
 Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same, 835
 Or undiminish'd brightness to be known

As when thou stood'st in heaven upright and pure:
 That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
 Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now
 Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul. 840

835. *Think not, &c.* That is, "Think | or thy shape to be known the same as,"
 not thy brightness to be undiminished, | &c.

But come; for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm.

So spake the cherub; and his grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace 845
Invincible: abash'd the devil stood,

And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pined
His loss; but chiefly to find here observed
His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd 850
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,

Best with the best, the sender not the sent,
Or all at once; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
Will save us trial what the least can do 855
Single against thee, wicked and thence weak.

The fiend replied not, overcome with rage;
But, like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly
He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd 860
His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,
Gabriel, from the front thus call'd aloud:— 865

O friends! I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade;
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendour wan; who by his gait 870
And fierce demeanour seems the prince of hell,
Nor likely to part hence without contest:
Stand firm; for in his look defiance lours.

He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd,
And brief related whom they brought, where found, 875
How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.

To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake:
Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed
To thy transgressions? and disturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress 880
By thy example? but have power and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employ'd, it seems, to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss.

To whom thus Satan, with contemptuous brow: 885
Gabriel, thou hadst in heaven the esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question ask'd
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from hell,
Though thither doom'd? thou wouldst thyself, no doubt, 890
And boldly venture to whatever place
Farthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change

Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
 Dole with delight; which in this place I sought:
 To thee no reason, who know'st only good, 895
 But evil hast not tried: and wilt object
 His will who bounds us? Let him surer bar
 His iron gates, if he intends our stay
 In that dark durance: thus much what was ask'd.
 The rest is true, they found me where they say; 900
 But that implies not violence or harm.
 Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel moved,
 Disdainfully half-smiling, thus replied:—
 O loss of one in heaven to judge of wise,
 Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew; 905
 And now returns him from his prison 'scaped,
 Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
 Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
 Unlicensed from his bounds in hell prescribed:
 So wise he judges it to fly from pain 910
 However, and to 'scape his punishment.
 So judge thou still, presumptuous; till the wrath,
 Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
 Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to hell,
 Which taught thee yet no better, That no pain 915
 Can equal anger infinite provoked.
 But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
 Came not all hell broke loose? is pain to them
 Less pain, less to be fled; or thou than they
 Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief! 920
 The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alleged
 To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
 Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.
 To which the fiend thus answer'd, frowning stern:—
 Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain, 925
 Insulting angel! well thou know'st I stood
 Thy fiercest; when in battel to thy aid
 The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
 And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
 But still thy words at random, as before, 930
 Argue thy inexperience what behoves
 From hard assays and ill successes past
 A faithful leader; not to hazard all
 Through ways of danger by himself untried:
 I therefore, I alone first undertook 935
 To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
 This new-created world, whereof in hell
 Fame is not silent; here in hope to find
 Better abode, and my afflicted powers
 To settle here on earth, or in mid air; 940

896. *And wilt thou object.*904. *To judge of what is wise.*927. *Thy fiercest, that is, thy fiercest attack, or power; or it may mean, thy**fiercest enemy.* Milton often thus uses adjectives as substantives. "The sensible of pain." "The stony from their hearts."

*Substance to word battles of per-
 vidence*

Though for possession put to try once more
 What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
 Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
 High up in heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,
 And practised distances to cringe, not fight. 945

To whom the warrior angel soon replied:—
 To say and straight unsay, pretending first
 Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
 Argues no leader, but a liar traced,
 Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name, 950
 O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!

Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
 Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
 Was this your discipline and faith engaged,
 Your military obedience, to dissolve 955
 Allegiance to the acknowledged Power supreme?

And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou
 Once fawn'd, and cringed, and servilely adored
 Heaven's awful Monarch? wherefore but in hope 960
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?

But mark what I arreed thee now; Avaunt;
 Fly thither whence thou fledst: if from this hour
 Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
 Back to the infernal pit I drag thee chain'd, 965
 And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
 The facile gates of hell too slightly barr'd.

So threaten'd he: but Satan to no threats
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage replied:—

Then, when I am thy captive, talk of chains, 970
 Proud liminary cherub; but ere then
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
 From my prevailing arm; though heaven's King
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
 Used to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels 975
 In progress through the road of heaven star-paved.

While thus he spake, the angelic squadron bright
 Turn'd fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
 With ported spears, as thick as when a field 980
 Of Ceres, ripe for harvest, waving bends

Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
 Sways them; the careful plowman doubting stands
 Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan, alarm'd, 985
 Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
 Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:
 His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
 Sat horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp

971. *Proud liminary.* That is, set to guard the bounds or limits.—974. *Ride on thy wings.* Ezek. i. 6 to 10; and xi. 22.

980. *Ported.* A military term, borne pointed towards him.

What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds 990
 Might have ensued; nor only Paradise
 In this commotion, but the starry cope
 Of heaven perhaps, or all the elements
 At least had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon 995
 The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
 Hung forth in heaven his golden scales, yet seen
 Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
 Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
 The pendulous round earth with balanced air 1000
 In counterpoise; now ponders all events,
 Battels, and realms: in these he put two weights,
 The sequel each of parting and of fight:
 The latter quick upflew and kick'd the beam;
 Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend: 1005
 Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine;
 Neither our own, but given: what folly then
 To boast what arms can do, since thine no more
 Than Heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled now
 To trample thee as mire! for proof look up, 1010
 And read thy lot in yon celestial sign;
 Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how weak,
 If thou resist. The fiend look'd up, and knew
 His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
 Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night. 1016

 999. Job xxviii. 25; Is. xl. 12.

| 1012. Dan. v. 27.

REMARKS ON BOOK V.

THIS book consists of elements of the same character and of similar combinations as the fourth. Eve's dream, and the manner of relating it, are in a very high degree poetical: here the invention is perfect, both in imagery, sentiment, and language.

The approach of the angel Raphael, as viewed at a distance by Adam, is designed with all those brilliant circumstances, and those undefinable touches, which give the force of embodied reality to a vision. Milton never relates with the artifices, and attempts to excite attention, of a technical poet: what he creates stands before him as life: he does not struggle to embellish or exaggerate, but simply relates what he believes that he beholds or hears: but none could have beheld or heard these high things, except one inspired.

The hints of a great part of the incidents are taken from the Scriptures; but the invention is not on that account the less. To bring the dim general idea into broad light in all its lineaments is the difficulty, and requires the power.

The conversation between Raphael and Adam is admirably contrived on both sides. These argumentative portions of the poem are almost always grand: and poetical, because they are grand. Now and then, indeed, the bard indulges in the display of too much abstruse learning or metaphysical subtleties.

As to this portion of the work, which occupies a large space, it is less easy to reconcile it to the general taste: but we must take it as a part of the two essential divisions of an epic poem—character and sentiments. Taken by itself, separated from the story, much of it would not be poetical: as part of the story, it is primary essence. Without it, mere imagery would lose almost all its dignity, as well as its instructiveness, because it would lose its intellectual and spiritual charm.

In relating the cause of Satan's rebellion, Raphael sustains all the almost unutterable sublimity of his subject. The hero is drawn wicked and daring beyond prior conception; but mighty and awful as he is wicked. Language to express these high thoughts would have sunk before any other genius but Milton's: and as he had to convey the movements of heavenly spirits by earthly comparisons, the difficulty increased at every step.

To cite detached passages from other poets, as containing a supposed similitude to Milton, is very fallacious. These are patches:—Milton's is a uniform, close-wove, massy web of gold. Numerous particles of the ingredients may be traced in other authors: it is the combination, and the design by which that combination is conducted, that makes the merit.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

MORNING approached, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: they come forth to their day-labours: their morning hymn at the door of their bower. God, to render man inexcusable, sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience, of his free estate, of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy, and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise; his appearance described; his coming discerned by Adam afar off, sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise got together by Eve; their discourse at table: Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy; relates, at Adam's request, who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his legions after him to the parts of the north, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel a seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

Now Morn, her rosy steps in the eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam waked, so custom'd; for his sleep
Was aery-light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapours bland, which the only sound 5
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough: so much the more
His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek, 10
As through unquiet rest: he, on his side
Leaning half-raised, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice 15
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus: Awake,
My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
Heaven's last, best gift, my ever new delight!
Awake; the morning shines, and the fresh field 20
Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,

5. Which refers to sleep, which was dispersed only by the sound of leaves and fuming rills—called fuming from the steam that rises from the water in the morning. *Aurora's fan*, the cause for the effect—the fanning winds of the morning among the leaves.

What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
 How nature paints her colours, how the bee
 Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet. 25
 Such whispering waked her, but with startled eye
 On Adam; whom embracing, thus she spake:
 O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
 My glory, my perfection; glad I see
 Thy face, and morn return'd; for I this night 30
 (Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd
 If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
 Works of day past, or morrow's next design;
 But of offence and trouble, which my mind
 Knew never till this irksome night. Methought 35
 Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
 With gentle voice; I thought it thine: it said,
 Why sleep'st thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
 The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
 To the night-warbling bird, that now awake 40
 Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song; now reigns
 Full-orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
 Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
 If none regard; heaven wakes with all his eyes,
 Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire? 45
 In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
 Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.
 I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
 To find thee I directed then my walk;
 And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways 50
 That brought me on a sudden to the tree
 Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seem'd,
 Much fairer to my fancy than by day:
 And, as I wondering look'd, beside it stood
 One shaped and wing'd like one of those from heaven 55
 By us oft seen; his dewy locks distill'd
 Ambrosia; on that tree he also gazed:
 And, O, fair plant, said he, with fruit surcharged,
 Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
 Nor God, nor man? is knowledge so despised? 60
 Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?
 Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
 Longer thy offer'd good; why else set here?
 This said, he paused not, but with venturous arm
 He pluck'd, he tasted; me damp horror chill'd 65
 At such bold words vouch'd with a deed so bold:
 But he thus, overjoy'd: O fruit divine,
 Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt.
 Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
 For gods, yet able to make gods of men: 70
 And why not gods of men, since good, the more

30. The breaks in Eve's narration are extremely beautiful, and adapted to the circumstances of one just awakened, be-

fore the thoughts were well re-collected.

60. *Nor God.* Milton often attributes the name of God to angels: see 117.

Communicated, more abundant grows,
 The authour not impair'd, but honour'd more?
 Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve,
 Partake thou also; happy though thou art, 75
 Happier thou mayst be, worthier canst not be:
 Taste this, and be-henceforth among the gods
 Thyself a goddess; not to earth confined,
 But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
 Ascend to heaven, by merit thine, and see 80
 What life the gods live there, and such live thou.
 So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
 Ev'n to my mouth of that same fruit held part
 Which he had pluck'd: the pleasant savoury smell
 So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought, 85
 Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
 With him I flew; and underneath beheld
 The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide
 And various: wondering at my flight and change
 To this high exaltation, suddenly 90
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
 And fell asleep: but, O, how glad I waked
 To find this but a dream! Thus Evè her night
 Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad:
 Best image of myself, and dearer half, 95
 The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
 Affects me equally; nor can I like
 This uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear:
 Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,
 Created pure. But know, that in the soul 100
 Are many lesser faculties that serve
 Reason as chief; among these Fancy next
 Her office holds; of all external things,
 Which the five watchful senses represent,
 She forms imaginations, aery shapes 105
 Which Reason, joining or disjoining, frames
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
 Into her private cell, when nature rests.
 Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes 110
 To imitate her; but, misjoining shapes,
 Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams;
 Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.
 Some such resemblances, methinks, I find
 Of our last evening's talk in this thy dream, 115
 But with addition strange; yet be not sad:
 Evil into the mind of God or man
 May come and go, so unapproved; and leave
 No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope
 That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream, 120

110. *mimic fancy*. This account of | and philosophical as it is beautiful and
 dreams, Mr. Dunster remarks, is as just | poetical. 117. See note on l. 60.

Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
 Be not dishearten'd then; nor cloud those looks,
 That wont to be more cheerful and serene
 Than when fair morning first smiles on the world:
 And let us to our fresh employments rise 125
 Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers,
 That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
 Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store.
 So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd;
 But silently a gentle tear let fall 130
 From either eye, and wiped them with her hair:
 Two other precious drops, that ready stood,
 Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
 Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse,
 And pious awe that fear'd to have offended. 135
 So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
 But first, from under shady arborous roof
 Soon as they forth were come to open sight
 Of day-spring and the sun, who, scarce uprisen,
 With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean-brim, 140
 Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
 Discovering in wide landskip all the east
 Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
 Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
 Their orisons, each morning duly paid 145
 In various style; for neither various style
 Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
 Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung
 Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
 Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse, 150
 More tuneable than needed lute or harp
 To add more sweetness; and they thus began:
 These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
 Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
 Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then! 155
 Unspeakable, who sitt'st above these heavens,
 To us invisible, or dimly seen
 In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
 Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.
 Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light, 160
 Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs
 And choral symphonies, day without night,
 Circle his throne rejoicing: ye in heaven;
 On earth join all ye creatures to extol
 Him first, him last, him midst, and without end. 165
 Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
 If better thou belong not to the dawn,
 Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
 With thy bright circlet; praise him in thy sphere

153. *These are, &c.* I need not remark the beautiful spirit of poetry which runs through this whole hymn, nor the holiness of that resolution with which it concludes.

While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. 170
 Thou sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
 Acknowledge him thy greater; sound his praise
 In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
 And when high noon hast gain'd and when thou fall'st.
 Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st, 175
 With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;
 And ye five other wandering fires, that move
 In mystic dance not without song, resound
 His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
 Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth 180
 Of nature's womb, that in quaternion run
 Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix
 And nourish all things, let your ceaseless change
 Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
 Ye mists and exhalations, that now rise 185
 From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
 Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
 In honour to the world's great Authour rise;
 Whether to deck with clouds the uncolour'd sky,
 Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers, 190
 Rising or falling still advance his praise.
 His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
 Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines,
 With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
 Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow, 195
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
 Join voices, all ye living souls: ye birds,
 That singing up to heaven-gate ascend,
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
 Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk 200
 The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;
 Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
 To hill or valley, fountain or fresh shade,
 Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
 Hail, universal Lord! be bounteous still 205
 To give us only good; and if the night
 Have gather'd aught of evil or conceal'd,
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.
 So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
 Firm peace recover'd soon, and wonted calm. 210
 On to their morning's rural work they haste,
 Among sweet dews and flowers, where any row
 Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd too far
 Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check
 Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine 215
 To wed her elm; she, spoused, about him twines
 Her marriageable arms, and with her brings

181. *That in quaternion run.* That is, that in a fourfold mixture and combination run a perpetual circle, one element continually changing into another.

198. We find a like hyperbole in Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, ii.: "Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings."

Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn
 His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld
 With pity heaven's high King, and to him call'd 220
 Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deign'd
 To travel with Tobias, and secured
 His marriage with the seven-times-wedded maid.

Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on earth
 Satan, from hell 'scaped through the darksome gulf, 225
 Hath raised in Paradise; and how disturb'd
 This night the human pair; how he designs
 In them at once to ruin all mankind:

Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend
 Converse with Adam; in what bower or shade 230
 Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retired,
 To respite his day-labour with repast,
 Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
 As may advise him of his happy state;

Happiness in his power left free to will, 235
 Left to his own free will, his will though free,
 Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware

He swerve not, too secure: tell him withal
 His danger, and from whom; what enemy,
 Late fallen himself from heaven, is plotting now 240
 The fall of others from like state of bliss;

By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;
 But by deceit and lies: this let him know,
 Lest, wilfully transgressing, he pretend
 Surprisal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd 245

So spake the Eternal Father, and fulfill'd
 All justice: nor delay'd the winged saint
 After his charge received; but from among
 Thousand celestial ardours, where he stood
 Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up springing light, 250
 Flew through the midst of heaven: the angelic quires,

On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
 Through all the empyreal road; till, at the gate
 Of heaven arrived, the gate self-open'd wide
 On golden hinges turning, as by work 255
 Divine the sovran Architect had framed.

From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
 Star interposed, however small, he sees,
 Not unconform to other shining globes,
 Earth and the garden of God, with cedars crown'd 260
 Above all hills: as when by night the glass

Of Galileo, less assured, observes
 Imagined lands and regions in the moon:

222. In the Book of Tobit, the angel Raphael travels with Tobias into Media and back again, and instructs him how to marry Sarah, and how to drive away the wicked spirit. See book iv. 168.

243. *Ardours*. By the word *Ardours*

Milton here means only *Seraphim*, which signifies just the same in Hebrew (being derived from *Zaraph*, "to burn") as *Ardours* in English.—*THY. R.*

257. *No cloud or star being interposed. Not unconform*: that is, not unlike.

Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades
 Delos or Samos first appearing, kens 265
 A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight
 He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
 Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing:
 Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
 Winnows the buxom air; till, within soar 270
 Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems
 A phoenix, gazed by all as that sole bird,
 When, to enshrine his reliques in the Sun's
 Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
 At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise 275
 He lights, and to his proper shape returns,
 A seraph wing'd: six wings he wore, to shade
 His lineaments divine: the pair that clad
 Each shoulder broad came mantling o'er his breast
 With regal ornament; the middle pair 280
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
 And colours dipp'd in heaven; the third his feet
 Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
 Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood, 285
 And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
 The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
 Of angels under watch; and to his state,
 And to his message high, in honour rise:
 For on some message high they guess'd him bound. 290
 Their glittering tents he pass'd, and now is come
 Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
 And flowering odours, cassia, nard, and balm;
 A wilderness of sweets: for nature here
 Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will 295
 Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
 Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss.
 Him through the spicy forest onward come
 Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
 Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun 300
 Shot down direct his fervid rays, to warm
 Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs:
 And Eve within, due at her hour prepared
 For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
 True appetite, and not disrelish thirst 305
 Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,
 Berry, or grape: to whom thus Adam call'd:
 Haste hither, Eve, and worth thy sight behold,
 Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape

277. *A Seraph wing'd*. He seemed again what he really was, a *seraph wing'd*; whereas, in his flight, he appeared what he was not, a phoenix. See Isa. vi. 2.

285. *Maia's son*. Mercury.

296. *Pouring forth*. That is, pouring forth *enormous bliss*, which was the more

sweet for being mild and above rule or art.

298. Raphael's reception by the guardian angels; his passing through the wilderness of sweets; his distant appearance to Adam, have all the graces that poetry is capable of bestowing.—ADDISON.

Comes this way moving; seems another morn 310
 Risen on mid-noon; some great behest from Heaven
 To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
 This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
 And, what thy stores contain, bring forth, and pour
 Abundance, fit to honour and receive 315
 Our heavenly stranger: well we may afford
 Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
 From large bestow'd, where nature multiplies
 Her fertile growth, and by disburdening grows
 More fruitful; which instructs us not to spare. 320
 To whom thus Eve: Adam, earth's hallow'd mould,
 Of God inspired; small store will serve, where store,
 Ail seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
 Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
 To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes: 325
 But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
 Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
 To entertain our angel-guest, as he
 Beholding shall confess, that here on earth
 God hath dispensed his bounties as in heaven. 330
 So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
 What choice to choose for delicacy best;
 What order, so contrived as not to mix
 Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant; but bring 335
 Taste after taste upheld with kindest change:
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk,
 Whatever earth, all-bearing mother, yields
 In India East or West, or middle shore,
 In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where 340
 Alcinous reign'd; fruit of all kinds, in coat
 Rough, or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell,
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
 Heaps with unsparing hand. For drink the grape
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths 345
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels press'd
 She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold
 Wants her fit vessels pure; then strows the ground
 With rose and odours from the shrub unfum'd.
 Meanwhile our primitive great sire, to meet 350
 His godlike guest, walks forth; without more train
 Accompanied than with his own complete
 Perfections: in himself was all his state;
 More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
 On princes, when their rich retinue long 355
 Of horses led, and grooms besmeared with gold,
 Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
 Nearer his presence Adam, though not awed,
 Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek,

315. *Inoffensive*. That is, had not intoxicating qualities. *Must*: new wine
M uths: sweet drinks, like mead.

As to a superiour nature bowing low, 300
 Thus said: Native of heaven, for other place
 None can than heaven such glorious shape contain;
 Since, by descending from the thrones above,
 Those happy places thou hast deign'd awhile
 To want, and honour these; vouchsafe with us 365
 Two only, who yet by sovran gift possess
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
 To rest; and what the garden choicest bears
 To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
 Be over, and the sun more cool decline. 370

Whom thus the angelic Virtue answer'd mild:
 Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
 As may not oft invite, though spirits of heaven,
 To visit thee: lead on then where thy bower 375
 O'er shades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
 I have at will. So to the sylvan lodge
 They came, that like Pomona's arbour smiled
 With flowerets deck'd and fragrant smells; but Eve,
 Undeck'd save with herself, more lovely fair 380
 Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
 Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,
 Stood to entertain her guest from heaven; no veil
 She needed, virtue-proof; no thought infirm
 Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel Hail 385
 Bestow'd; the holy salutation used
 Long after to blest Mary, second Eve:

Hail, mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb
 Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
 Than with these various fruits the trees of God 390
 Have heap'd this table! Raised of grassy turf
 Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
 And on her ample square from side to side
 All autumn piled; though spring and autumn here
 Danced hand in hand. Awhile discourse they hold; 395
 No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began
 Our author: Heavenly stranger, please to taste
 These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
 All perfect good, unmeasured out descends,
 To us for food and for delight hath caused 400
 The earth to yield; unsavoury food, perhaps,
 To spiritual natures: only this I know,
 That one celestial Father gives to all.

To whom the angel: Therefore what he gives
 (Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part 405
 Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found
 No ingrateful food: and food alike those pure

382. *Of three that in Mount Ida*; referring to the judgment of Paris.

384. *No thought, &c.* There is a dignified simplicity, a chasteness of expression here, that has the finest effect, and

I believe never was exceeded. Such language is the essence of true poetry.—DUNSTER.

385. *Hail.* Luke i. 28.

407. There being mention made of an-

Intelligent substances require,
 As doth your rational; and both contain
 Within them every lower faculty 410
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
 Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
 And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
 For know, whatever was created needs
 To be sustain'd and fed: of elements 415
 The grosser feeds the purer; earth the sea;
 Earth and the sea feed air; the air those fires
 Ethereal; and as lowest first the moon;
 Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged
 Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd. 420
 Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
 From her moist continent to higher orbs.
 The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
 From all his alimantal recompense
 In humid exhalations, and at even 425
 Sups with the ocean. Though in heaven the trees
 Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
 Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn
 We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
 Cover'd with pearly grain; yet God hath here 430
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,
 As may compare with heaven; and to taste
 Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,
 And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
 The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss 435
 Of theologians; but with keen dispatch
 Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
 To transubstantiate: what redounds, transpires
 Through spirits with ease; nor wonder; if by fire
 Of sooty coal the empiric alchemist 440
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
 As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve
 Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
 With pleasant liquours crown'd. O innocence 445
 Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
 Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
 Enamour'd at that sight; but in those hearts
 Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
 Was understood, the injured lover's hell. 450
 Thus when with meats and drinks they had sufficed,
 Not burdened nature, sudden mind arose
 In Adam, not to let the occasion pass,
 Given him by this great conference, to know

gels' food in Ps. lxxviii. 25, is foundation
 enough for a poet to build upon, and to
 advance these notions of the angels eat-
 ing.—NEWTON.

438. *To transubstantiate*. That is, to
 turn their food and nourishment into

their own substance. *What redounds,*
 &c. "This gives a delicacy to these Spirits,
 which finely distinguishes them from us,
 in one of the most humbling circum-
 stances relating to our bodies."—RICHARD-
 SON.

Of things above his world, and of their being 455
 Who dwell in heaven, whose excellence he saw
 Transcend his own so far; whose radiant forms,
 Divine effulgence, whose high power, so far
 Exceeded human; and his wary speech
 Thus to the empyreal minister he framed: 460
 Inhabitant with God, now know I well
 Thy favour, in this honour done to man:
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed
 To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
 Food not of angels, yet accepted so, 465
 As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
 At heaven's high feasts to have fed; yet what compare?
 To whom the winged Hierarch replied:
 O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
 All things proceed, and up to him return, 470
 If not depraved from good; created all
 Such to perfection, one first matter all,
 Endued with various forms, various degrees
 Of substance, and, in things that live, of life;
 But more refined, more spiritous, and pure, 475
 As nearer to him placed, or nearer tending
 Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
 Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
 Springs lighter the green stalk; from thence the leaves 480
 More aery; last the bright consummate flower
 Spirits od'rous breathes: flowers and their fruit,
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
 To intellectual; give both life and sense, 485
 Fancy and understanding: whence the soul
 Reason receives, and reason is her being,
 Discursive or intuitive: discourse
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
 Differing but in degree, of kind the same. 490
 Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
 If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
 To proper substance. Time may come, when men
 With angels may participate, and find
 No inconvenient diet nor too light fare: 495
 And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
 Improved by tract of time, and, wing'd, ascend
 Ethereal, as we; or may, at choice,
 Here or in heavenly Paradises dwell; 500
 If ye be found obedient, and retain
 Unalterably firm his love entire,

458. *Divine effulgence*, in apposition to *radiant forms*.

498. *Ascend ethereal*. This alludes to

the doctrine that if Adam had not sinned, he would never have died, but would have been translated from earth to heaven.

Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more. 505

To whom the patriarch of mankind replied:
O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
From centre to circumference; whereon, 510

In contemplation of created things,
By steps we may ascend to God. But say
What meant that caution join'd, If ye be found
Obedient? Can we want obedience then
To him, or possibly his love desert, 515

Who form'd us from the dust and placed us here
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?

To whom the angel: Son of heaven and earth,
Attend: that thou art happy, owe to God; 520
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.

This was that caution given thee; be advised.
God made thee perfect, not immutable;

And good he made thee, but to persevere 525
He left it in thy power; ordain'd thy will
By nature free, not over-ruled by fate

Inextricable, or strict necessity:
Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated; such with him 530

Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how
Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other choose?

Myself, and all the angelic host, that stand 535
In sight of God, enthroned, our happy state
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;

On other surety none: freely we serve,
Because we freely love, as in our will
To love or not; in this we stand or fall: 540

And some are fallen, to disobedience fallen,
And so from heaven to deepest hell; O fall
From what high state of bliss, into what woe!

To whom our great progenitor: Thy words
Attentive, and with more delighted ear, 545
Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
Cherubic songs by night from neighbouring hills
Aereal music send: nor knew I not
To be both will and deed created free;

504. *Enjoy to your fill, &c., or enjoy your fill of what, &c.*

512. *By steps, &c.* There is a real, visible ladder (besides that visionary one of Jacob) whose foot, though placed on

earth among the lowest of the creation, yet leads us, by steps, in contemplation of created things, up to God, the invisible Creator of all things.—HUME.

Yet that we never shall forget to love 550
 Our Maker, and obey him whose command
 Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
 Assured me, and still assure: though what thou tell'st
 Hath pass'd in heaven, some doubt within me move,
 But more desire to hear, if thou consent, 555
 The full relation, which must needs be strange,
 Worthy of sacred silence to be heard;
 And we have yet large day; for scarce the sun
 Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins
 His other half in the great zone of heaven. 560
 Thus Adam made request; and Raphael,
 After short pause assenting, thus began:
 High matter thou enjoin'st me, O prime of men,
 Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate
 To human sense the invisible exploits 565
 Of warring spirits? how, without remorse,
 The ruin of so many, glorious once
 And perfect while they stood? how last unfold
 The secrets of another world, perhaps
 Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good 570
 This is dispensed; and what surmounts the reach
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
 By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
 As may express them best; though what if earth
 Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein 575
 Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?
 As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
 Reign'd where these heavens now roll, where earth now rests
 Upon her centre poised; when on a day,
 (For time, though in eternity, applied 580
 To motion, measures all things durable
 By present, past, and future) on such day
 As heaven's great year brings forth, the empyreal host
 Of angels, by imperial summons call'd,
 Innumerable before the Almighty's throne 585
 Forthwith, from all the ends of heaven, appear'd
 Under their hierarchs in orders bright:
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,
 Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve 590
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
 Or in their glittering tissues bear imblazed
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
 Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood, 595
 Orb within orb, the Father infinite,

Vergil
Aeneid

583. *Heaven's great year.* Milton seems to have had Plato's great year—the revolution of all the spheres—in his thoughts, imagining such kind of revolutions before the Angels or the worlds were in being.

So far back into eternity did the vast mind of this greatest of all poets carry him!

589. *Gonfalons*, ensigns, or flags.

By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,
 Amidst, as from a flaming mount, whose top
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake:
 Hear, all ye angels, progeny of light, 600
 Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers;
 Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand;
 This day I have begot whom I declare
 My only Son, and on this holy hill
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold 6 5
 At my right hand; your head I him appoint;
 And by myself have sworn, to him shall bow
 All knees in heaven, and shall confess him Lord.
 Under his great vicegerent reign abide
 United, as one individual soul, 610
 For ever happy: him who disobeys,
 Me disobeys, breaks union; and that day,
 Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
 Into utter darkness, deep ingulf'd, his place
 Ordain'd without redemption, without end. 615
 So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words
 All seem'd well pleased; all seem'd, but were not all.
 That day, as other solemn days, they spent
 In song and dance about the sacred hill;
 Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere 620
 Of planets, and of fix'd, in all her wheels
 Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
 Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular
 Then most, when most irregular they seem;
 And in their motions harmony divine 625
 So smoothes her charming tones, that God's own ear
 Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd;
 (For we have also our evening and our morn,
 We ours for change delectable, not need,)
 Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn 630
 Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
 Tables are set, and on a sudden piled
 With angel's food; and rubied nectar flows
 In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
 Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of heaven. 635
 On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowerets crown'd,
 They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
 Quaff immortality and joy, secure
 Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
 Excess, before the all bounteous King, who shower'd 640
 With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
 Now when ambrosial night with clouds exhaled
 From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
 Spring both, the face of brightest heaven had changed
 To grateful twilight, (for night comes not there 645

600. *Hear*, &c. How much of this language ascribed to the Almighty is taken from the Scriptures may be seen by com-

paring it with Ps. ii. 6, 7; Gen. xxii. 16; Phil. ii. 10, 11; Heb. i. 5; Isa. xlv. 23.

633. *Nectar* of the colour of *rubies*.

In darker veil,) and roseat dew's disposed
 All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far
 Than all this globous earth in plain outspread,
 (Such are the courts of God,) the angelic throng, 650
 Dispersed in bands and files, their camp extend
 By living streams among the trees of life,
 Pavilions numberless and sudden rear'd,
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
 Fann'd with cool winds; save those, who, in their course, 655
 Melodious hymns about the sovran throne
 Alternate all night long: but not so waked
 Satan; so call him now; his former name
 Is heard no more in heaven: he of the first,
 If not the first archangel, great in power, 660
 In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
 With envy against the Son of God, that day
 Honour'd by his great Father, and proclaimed
 Messiah King anointed, could not bear
 Through pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd. 665
 Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolved
 With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
 Unworshipp'd, unobey'd, the throne supreme, 670
 Contemptuous; and his next subordinate
 Awakening, thus to him in secret spake:
 Sleep'st thou, companion dear? what sleep can close
 Thy eyelids? and remember'st what decree
 Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips 675
 Of heaven's Almighty? Thou to me thy thoughts
 Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart:
 Both waking we were one; how then can now
 Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;
 New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise 680
 In us who serve, new counsels to debate
 What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
 To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
 Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
 Tell them, that by command, ere yet dim night 685
 Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
 And all who under me their banners wave,
 Homeward, with flying march, where we possess
 The quarters of the north; there to prepare
 Fit entertainment to receive our King, 690
 The great Messiah, and his new commands;
 Who speedily through all the hierarchies
 Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.

652. *Living streams.* Rev. vii. 17.671. *His next.* Beëlzebub.685. *Tell them, that by command.* He begins his revolt with a lie: so well does

Milton preserve the character given of him in Scripture! John viii. 44.—NEW TON.

689. *Quarters of the north.* See Isa. xiv. 13

So spake the false archangel, and infused
 Bad influence into the unwary breast 695
 Of his associate: he together calls,
 Or several one by one, the regent powers,
 Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
 That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
 Now ere dim night had disincumber'd heaven, 700
 The great hierarchal standard was to move;
 Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
 Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
 Or taint integrity: but all obey'd
 The wonted signal and superiour voice 705
 Of their great potentate; for great indeed
 His name, and high was his degree in heaven.
 His countenance, as the morning-star that guides
 The starry flock, allured them; and with lies
 Drew after him the third part of heaven's host. 710
 Meanwhile the Eternal eye, whose sight discerns
 Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
 And from within the golden lamps that burn
 Nightly before him, saw without their light
 Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread 715
 Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
 Were banded to oppose his high decree;
 And, smiling, to his only Son thus said:—
 Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
 In full resplendence, heir of all my might, 720
 Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
 Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
 We mean to hold what anciently we claim
 Of deity or empire: such a foe
 Is rising, who intends to erect his throne 725
 Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;
 Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
 In battel, what our power is, or our right.
 Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
 With speed what force is left, and all employ 730
 In our defence; lest unawares we lose
 This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.
 To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear,
 Lightening divine, ineffable, serene,
 Made answer:—Mighty Father, thou thy foes 735
 Justly hast in derision, and, secure,
 Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,
 Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
 Illustrates; when they see all regal power

702. Beëlzebub tells the *cause* that Satan had suggested; namely, to prepare entertainment for their new king and receive his laws; interspersing *ambiguous words* and *jealous* remarks to try or corrupt their integrity

710. *The third part.* Rev. xii. 3, 4.

713. *Golden lamps.* Rev. iv. 5.

716. *Sons of morn.* Isa. xiv. 12.

718. *And, smiling.* Ps. ii. 4.

Given me to quell their pride, and in event 740
 Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
 Thy rebels, or be found the worst in heaven.

So spake the Son: but Satan, with his powers,

Far was advanced on winged speed: an host
 Innumerable as the stars of night, 745

(Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
 Impearls on every leaf and every flower.

Regions they pass'd, the mighty regencies
 Of seraphim, and potentates, and thrones,
 In their triple degrees; regions, to which 750
 All thy dominion, Adam, is no more

Than what this garden is to all the earth,
 And all the sea, from one entire globose
 Stretch'd into longitude; which having pass'd,
 At length into the limits of the north 755

They came; and Satan to his royal seat,
 High on a hill far blazing, as a mount
 Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers
 From diamond quarries hewn and rocks of gold;

The palace of great Lucifer, (so call 760
 That structure in the dialect of men
 Interpreted,) which not long after, he,
 Affecting all equality with God,

In imitation of that mount whereon
 Messiah was declared in sight of heaven, 765

✓ The Mountain of the Congregation call'd;

For thither he assembled all his train,
 Pretending so commanded to consult
 About the great reception of their King,
 Thither to come; and with calumnious art 770
 Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears:

Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers;
 If these magnific titles yet remain

Not merely titular, since by decree
 Another now hath to himself engross'd 775

All power, and us eclipsed under the name
 Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
 Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
 This only to consult how we may best,

With what may be devised of honours new, 780
 Receive him coming to receive from us
 Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile!

Too much to one! but double how endured,
 To one, and to his image now proclaim'd?

✓ But what if better counsels might erect 785
 Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?
 Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend

The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust
 To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves

Natives and sons of heaven, possess'd before 790
 By none; and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for orders and degrees
 Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
 Who can in reason then, or right, assume
 Monarchy over such as live by right 795
 His equals? if in power and splendour less,
 In freedom equal: or can introduce
 Law and edict on us, who without law
 Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
 And look for adoration, to the abuse 800
 Of those imperial titles, which assert
 Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve?
 Thus far his bold discourse without controul
 Had audience; when among the seraphim,
 Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored 805
 The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
 Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
 The current of his fury thus opposed:
 O argument blasphemous, false, and proud!
 Words which no ear ever to hear in heaven 810
 Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate,
 In place thyself so high above thy peers.
 Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
 The just decree of God, pronounced and sworn,
 That to his only Son, by right endued 815
 With regal sceptre, every soul in heaven
 Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
 Confess him rightful King? unjust, thou say'st,
 Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
 And equal over equals to let reign, 820
 One over all with unsucceeded power.
 Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
 With him the points of liberty, who made
 Thee what thou art, and form'd the powers of heaven
 Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being? 825
 Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,
 And of our good and of our dignity
 How provident he is; how far from thought
 To make us less, bent rather to exalt
 Our happy state, under one head more near 830
 United. But to grant it thee unjust,
 That equal over equals monarch reign:
 Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
 Or all angelic nature join'd in one,
 Equal to him Begotten Son? by whom, 835
 As by his word, the mighty Father made
 All things, ev'n thee; and all the spirits of heaven

799. The meaning, I presume, is, *much less* can he, *for this*, (namely, because we are *less in power and splendour*, v. 796,) rightly assume to be our Lord.

822. *Shalt thou give law?* Rom. ix. 20.
 835. *By whom, &c.* Col. i. 16, and Ps. ii. 8-12.

By him created in their bright degrees;
 Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory named
 Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers, 840
 Essential powers; nor by his reign obscured,
 But more illustrious made; since he the head
 One of our number thus reduced becomes;
 His laws our laws; all honour to him done
 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage, 845
 And tempt not these; but hasten to appease
 The incensed Father and the incensed Son,
 While pardon may be found in time besought.
 So spake the fervent angel; but his zeal
 None seconded, as out of season judged, 850
 Or singular and rash: whereat rejoiced
 The Apostate, and, more haughty, thus replied:
 That we were form'd then, say'st thou? and the work
 Of secondary hands by task transferr'd
 From Father to his Son? strange point and new! 855
 Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd: who saw
 When this creation was? Remember'st thou
 Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
We know no time when we were not as now;
 Know none before us; self-begot, self-raised 860
 By our own quickening power, when fatal course
 Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
 Of this our native heaven, ethereal sons.
 Our puissance is our own; our own right hand
 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try 865
 Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold
 Whether by supplication we intend
 Address, and to begirt the almighty throne
 Beseeching or besieging. This report,
 These tidings carry to the anointed King; 870
 And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.
 He said; and, as the sound of waters deep,
 Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause
 Through the infinite host; nor less for that
 The flaming seraph fearless, though alone, 875
 Encompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold:
 O alienate from God, O spirit accursed,
 Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall
 Determined, and thy hapless crew, involved
 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread 880
 Both of thy crime and punishment. Henceforth
 No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
 Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws
 Will not be now vouchsafed; other decrees
 Against thee are gone forth without recall: 885

848. *While pardon, &c.* Isa. lv. 6.861. *When fatal course.* No compli-
ment to fatalism, to put it into the mouth
of the Devil.—NEWTON.864. *Our own puissance.* Ps. xii. 4.872. *As the sound, &c.* Rev. xix. 6.

That golden sceptre, which thou didst reject,
 Is now an iron rod, to bruise and break
 Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise:
 Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
 These wicked tents devoted; lest the wrath 890
 Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
 Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel
 His thunder on thy head, devouring fire:
 Then who created thee lamenting learn;
 When, who can uncreate thee, thou shalt know. 895
 ? So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
 Among the faithless, faithful only he;
 Among innumerable false, unmoved,
 Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
 His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal: 900
 Nor number nor example with him wrought
 To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
 Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
 Long way through hostile scorn; which he sustain'd
 Superiour, nor of violence fear'd aught; 905
 And, with retorted scorn, his back he turn'd
 On those proud towers to swift destruction doom'd.

890. Alluding, probably, to the rebellion of Korah, and Moses' speech. Numb. xvi. 26.

896. The noble character of Abdiel may be presented as a model of integrity to all who, in a corrupt age, would stand forth firm for the truth, though standing lone, regardless of the obloquy and abuse they may receive. Every one who advo-

cates any reform, physical or moral, must expect bitter and malignant opposition from the mass of mankind, who dislike to give up their old ways of thinking and acting, either from pride of opinion, or from the fear that, by the change, their own selfish interests may in some way be injuriously affected.

REMARKS ON BOOK VI.

We are now entering upon the sixth book of *Paradise Lost*, in which the poet describes the battle of the angels; having raised his reader's expectation, and prepared him for it by several passages in the preceding books. The author's imagination was so inflamed with this great scene of action, that wherever he speaks of it, he rises, if possible, above himself. Thus, where he mentions Satan in the beginning of his poem:

———Him the almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamant chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.

It required great pregnancy of invention, and strength of imagination, to fill this battle with such circumstances as should raise and astonish the mind of the reader; and at the same time an exactness of judgment, to avoid every thing that might appear light or trivial. Those who look into Homer are surprised to find his battles still rising one above another, and improving in horror to the conclusion of the *Iliad*. Milton's fight of angels is wrought up with the same beauty. It is ushered in with such signs of wrath as are suitable to Omnipotence incensed. The first engagement is carried on under a cope of fire, occasioned by the flights of innumerable burning darts and arrows which are discharged from either host. The second onset is still more terrible, as it is filled with those artificial thunders, which seem to make the victory doubtful, and produce a kind of consternation even in the good angels. This is followed by the tearing up of mountains and promontories; till in the last place Messiah comes forth in the fulness of majesty and terror. The pomp of his appearance, amidst the roarings of his thunders, the flashes of his lightnings, and the noise of his chariot-wheels, is described with the utmost flights of human imagination.

There is nothing in the first and last day's engagement which does not appear natural, and agreeable enough to the ideas most readers would conceive of a fight between two armies of angels.

The second day's engagement is apt to startle an imagination which has not been raised and qualified for such a description, by the reading of the ancient poets, and of Homer in particular. It was certainly a very bold thought in our author, to ascribe the first use of artillery to the rebel angels. But as such a pernicious invention may be well supposed to have proceeded from such authors, so it enters very properly into the thoughts of that being, who is all along described as aspiring to the majesty of his Maker. Such engines were the only instruments he could have made use of to imitate those thunders, that in all poetry, both sacred and profane, are represented as the arms of the Almighty. The tearing up the hills was not altogether so daring a thought as the former. We are, in some measure, prepared for such an incident by the description of the giants' war, which we meet with among the ancient poets. Milton has taken every thing that is sublime in these several passages, and composes out of them the following great image:—

From their foundations loos'ning to and fro,
They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops
Uplifting bore them in their hands.

We have the full majesty of Homer in this short description, improved by the imagination of Claudian, without its puerilities.

I need not point out the description of the fallen angels seeing the promontories hanging over their heads in such a dreadful manner, with the other numberless beauties in this book, which are so conspicuous, that they cannot escape the notice of the most ordinary reader.

There are indeed so many wonderful strokes of poetry in this book, and such a variety of sublime ideas, that it would have been impossible to have given them a place within the bounds of this paper.

In a word, Milton's genius, which was so great in itself, and so strengthened by all the helps of learning, appears in this book every way equal to his subject, which was the most sublime that could enter into the thoughts of a poet. As he knew all the arts of affecting the mind, he has given it certain resting-places, and opportunities of recovering itself from time to time; several speeches, reflections, similitudes, and the like reliefs, being interspersed to diversify his narration, and ease the attention of the reader.

ADDISON.

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

RAPHAEL continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battel against Satan and his angels. The first fight described. Satan and his powers retire under night: he calls a council; invents devilish engines, which, in the second day's fight, put Michael and his angels to some disorder; but they at length, pulling up mountains, overwhelmed both the force and machines of Satan: yet, the tumult not so ending, God on the third day sends Messiah his Son, for whom he had reserved the glory of that victory. He, in the power of his Father, coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, pursues them, unable to resist, towards the wall of heaven; which opening, they leap down with horreur and confusion into the place of punishment prepared for them in the deep. Messiah returns with triumph to his Father.

ALL night the dreadless angel, unpursued,
Through heaven's wide champain held his way; till Morn,
Waked by the circling hours, with rosy hand
Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne, 5
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through heaven
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night;
Light issues forth, and at the other door
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour 10
To veil the heaven, though darkness there might well
Seem twilight here: and now went forth the Morn,
Such as in highest heaven, array'd in gold
Empyreal: from before her vanish'd Night,
Shot through, with orient beams; when all the plain, 15
Cover'd with thick embattel'd squadrons bright,
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
War he perceived, war in procinct; and found
Already known what he for news had thought 20
To have reported: gladly then he mix'd
Among those friendly powers, who him received
With joy and acclamations loud, that one,

1. *The dreadless angel*, that is, Abdiel, mentioned in the last of the preceding book.

19. *War in procinct*. This is from the Latin *procinctus*, and means *girded for*, that is, *ready girded*; as the ancients

used, before going into the battle, to gird their flowing garments close about them. Hence the figurative allusion of the apostle, "Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind;" that is, be ready to "fight the good fight of faith." 1 Peter i. 13.

That of so many myriads fallen, yet one
 Return'd not lost. On to the sacred hill 25
 They led him high applauded, and present
 Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice,
 From midst a golden cloud, thus mild was heard:
 Servant of God, well done; well hast thou fought
 The better fight, who single hast maintain'd 30
 Against revolted multitudes the cause
 Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;
 And for the testimony of truth hast borne
 Universal reproach, far worse to bear
 Than violence; for this was all thy care, 35
 To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
 Judged thee perverse: the easier conquest now
 Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
 Back on thy foes more glorious to return,
 Than scorn'd thou didst depart; and to subdue 40
 By force, who reason for their law refuse,
 Right reason for their law, and for their King
 Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.
 Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince;
 And thou, in military prowess next, 45
 Gabriel, lead forth to battel these my sons
 Invincible; lead forth my armed saints,
 By thousands and by millions, ranged for fight,
 Equal in number to that godless crew
 Rebellious: them with fire and hostile arms 50
 Fearless assault; and to the brow of heaven
 Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss,
 Into their place of punishment, the gulf
 Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
 His fiery chaos to receive their fall. 55
 So spake the Sovran Voice, and clouds began
 To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
 In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
 Of wrath awaked; nor with less dread the loud
 Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow: 60
 At which command the powers militant,
 That stood for heaven, in mighty quadrate join'd
 Of union irresistible, moved on
 In silence their bright legions, to the sound
 Of instrumental harmony, that breathed 65
 Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds,
 Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
 Of God and his Messiah. On they move
 Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
 Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides 70
 Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground

29. *Abdiel* signifies *servant of God* in the Hebrew.

53. *Reluctant flames*. The word *reluctant* is here used in the sense of its

original Latin, *reluctari*, "to struggle against," implying a most violent exertion of the fire to break through the smoke and clouds that envelop it.

Their march was, and the passive air upbore
 Their nimble tread; as when the total kind
 Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
 Came summon'd over Eden to receive 75
 Their names of thee; so over many a tract
 Of heaven they march'd, and many a province wide,
 Tenfold the length of this terrene. At last,
 Far in the horizon to the north appear'd
 From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd 80
 In battailous aspéct, and nearer view
 Bristled with upright beams innumerable
 Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
 Various, with boastful argument portray'd,
 The banded powers of Satan hasting on 85
 With furious expedition; for they ween'd
 That self-same day, by fight or by surprise,
 To win the mount of God, and on his throne
 To set the envier of his state, the proud
 Aspirer: but their thoughts proved fond and vain 90
 In the mid way. Though strange to us it seem'd
 At first, that angel should with angel war,
 And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
 So oft in festivals of joy and love
 Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire, 95
 Hymning the Eternal Father: but the shout
 Of battel now began, and rushing sound
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
 High in the midst, exalted as a god,
 The apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat, 100
 Idol of majesty divine, enclosed
 With flaming cherubim and golden shields;
 Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
 'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
 A dreadful interval; and front to front 105
 Presented stood in terrible array
 Of hideous length. Before the cloudy van,
 On the rough edge of battel ere it join'd,
 Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced,
 Came towering, arm'd in adamant and gold. 110
 Abdiel that sight endured not, where he stood
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds;
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores:
 O heaven! that such resemblance of the Highest
 Should yet remain, where faith and reälty 115
 Remain not: wherefore should not strength and might
 There fail where virtue fails? or weakest prove
 Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable?
 His puissance, trusting in the Almighty's aid,

76. *Of thee*, that is, of Adam, to whom Raphael is continuing the narration.

81. This image is amazing, picturesque, and magnificent.—BRYDGES.

93. *Hosting*, encounter, from *hostis*.
“an enemy.”

101. *Idol*, that is, representative.

I mean to try, whose reason I have tried 120
 Unsound and false: nor is it aught but just,
 That he, who in debate of truth hath won,
 Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
 Victor; though brutish that contést and foul,
 When reason hath to deal with force: yet so 125
 Most reason is that reason overcome.

So pondering, and, from his armed peers
 Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met
 His daring foe, at this prevention more
 Incensed, and thus securely him defied: 130

Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd
 The highth of thy aspiring unopposed;
 The throne of God unguarded, and his side
 Abandon'd, at the terrour of thy power
 Or potent tongue: fool! not to think how vain 135
 Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms;

Who, out of smallest things could, without end,
 Have raised incessant armies to defeat
 Thy folly; or with solitary hand
 Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow, 140

Unaided, could have finish'd thee, and overwhelm'd
 Thy legions under darkness: but thou seest
 All are not of thy train; there be, who faith
 Prefer, and piety to God, though then
 To thee not visible, when I alone 145

Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent
 From all: my sect thou seest; now learn too late
 How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.

Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
 Thus answer'd:—Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour 150
 Of my revenge first sought for, thou return'st
 From flight, seditious angel! to receive
 Thy merited reward, the first assay

Of this right hand provoked, since first that tongue,
 Inspir'd with contradiction, durst oppose 155

A third part of the gods, in synod met
 Their deities to assert; who, while they feel
 Vigour divine within them, can allow
 Omnipotence to none. But well thou comest
 Before thy fellows, ambitious to win 160

From me some plume, that thy success may show
 Destruction to the rest: this pause between,
 (Unanswer'd lest thou boast) to let thee know,—
 At first I thought that liberty and heaven
 To heavenly souls had been all one; but now 165
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
 Ministering spirits, train'd up in feast and song:
 Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of heaven,

139. *Solitary hand*, single hand.

161. The word *success* is here probably

used in the sense of *ill-success*, as in book ii. 9.

Servility with freedom to contend,
 As both their deeds compared this day shall prove. 170
 To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied:
 Apostate, still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
 Unjustly thou depravest it with the name
 Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains, 175
 Or Nature: God and Nature bid the same,
 When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
 Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
 To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
 Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee, 180
 Thyself not free, but to thyself enthral'd;
 Yet lewdly darest our ministering upbraid.
 Reign thou in hell, thy kingdom; let me serve
 In heaven God ever bless'd, and his divine
 Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd: 185
 Yet chains in hell, not realms, expect: meanwhile
 From me return'd, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
 This greeting on thy impious crest receive.
 So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
 Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell 190
 On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
 Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
 Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
 He back recoil'd; the tenth on bended knee
 His massy spear upstay'd: as if on earth 195
 Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
 Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat,
 Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seized
 The rebel thrones, but greater rage, to see
 Thus foil'd their mightiest; ours joy fill'd, and shout, 200
 Presage of victory, and fierce desire
 Of battel: whereat Michaël bid sound
 The archangel trumpet; through the vast of heaven
 It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
 Hosanna to the Highest; nor stood at gaze 205
 The adverse legions, nor less hideous join'd
 The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
 And clamour such as heard in heaven till now
 Was never; arms on armour clashing bray'd
 Horrible discord, and the madding wheels 210
 Of brazen chariots raged: dire was the noise
 Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss
 Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
 And flying vaulted either host with fire.
 So under fiery cope together rush'd 215
 Both battels main, with ruinous assault
 And inextinguishable rage. All heaven

197. A MOUNTAIN FROM HIS SEAT. A more magnificent simile can hardly be conceived.—BRYDGES.

Resounded; and had earth been then, all earth
 Had to her centre shook. What wonder? when
 Millions of fierce encountering angels fought 220
 On either side, the least of whom could wield
 These elements, and arm him with the force
 Of all their regions: how much more of power
 Army against army numberless to raise
 Dreadful combustion warring; and disturb, 225
 Though not destroy, their happy native seat:
 Had not the eternal King omnipotent,
 From his strong hold of heaven, high overruled
 And limited their might; though number'd such,
 As each divided legion might have seem'd 230
 A numerous host; in strength each armed hand
 A legion; led in fight, yet leader seem'd
 Each warrior, single as in chief, expert
 When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
 Of battel, open when, and when to close 235
 The ridges of grim war: no thought of flight,
 None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
 That argued fear; each on himself relied,
 As only in his arm the moment lay
 Of victory: deeds of eternal fame 240
 Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread
 That war and various; sometimes on firm ground
 A standing fight; then, soaring on main wing,
 Tormented all the air: all air seem'd then
 Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale 245
 The battel hung; till Satan, who that day
 Prodigious power had shown, and met in arms
 No equal, ranging through the dire attack
 Of fighting seraphim confused, at length
 Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd 250
 Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway
 Brandish'd aloft, the horrid edge came down
 Wide-wasting: such destruction to withstand
 He hasted, and opposed the rocky orb
 Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield, 255
 A vast circumference. At his approach
 The great archangel from his warlike toil
 Surceased; and glad, as hoping here to end
 Intestine war in heaven, the arch-foe subdued
 Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown 260
 And visage all inflamed, first thus began:
 Authour of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
 Unnam'd in heaven; now plenteous as thou seest
 These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,

229. *Though numbered, &c.* Each legion was in number like an army; each single warrior was in strength a legion; and, though led in fight, was as expert as a commander-in-chief.—NEWTON.

239. *Moment*, in the sense of the Latin *momentum*, "the weight that turns the balance."

Though heaviest by just measure on thyself 265
 And thy adherents: how hast thou disturb'd
 Heaven's blessed peace, and into nature brought
 Misery, uncreated till the crime
 Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instill'd
 Thy malice into thousands, once upright 270
 And faithful, now proved false! But think not here
 To trouble holy rest; heaven casts thee out
 From all her confines: heaven, the seat of bliss,
 Brooks not the works of violence and war.
 Hence then, and evil go with thee along, 275
 Thy offspring, to the place of evil, hell;
 Thou and thy wicked crew! there mingle broils,
 Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
 Or some more sudden vengeance, wing'd from God,
 Precipitate thee with augmented pain. 280
 So spake the prince of angels; to whom thus
 The adversary:—Nor think thou with wind
 Of aery threats to awe whom yet with deeds
 Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these 285
 To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
 Unvanquish'd, easier to transact with me
 That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
 To chase me hence? err not, that so shall end
 The strife which thou call'st evil, but we style 290
 The strife of glory; which we mean to win,
 Or turn this heaven itself into the hell
 Thou fablest; here however to dwell free,
 If not to reign: meanwhile thy utmost force,
 And join him named Almighty to thy aid,
 I fly not; but have sought thee far and nigh. 295
 They ended parle, and both address'd for fight
 Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
 Of angels, can relate, or to what things
 Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift
 Human imagination to such highth 300
 Of godlike power? for likest gods they seem'd,
 Stood they or moved, in stature, motion, arms,
 Fit to decide the empire of great heaven.
 Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air
 Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields 305
 Blazed opposite, while expectation stood
 In horror: from each hand with speed retired,
 Where erst was thickest fight, the angelic throng,
 And left large field, unsafe within the wind
 Of such commotion; such as, to set forth 310
 Great things by small, if, nature's concord broke,
 Among the constellations war were sprung,
 Two planets, rushing from aspect malign
 Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky
 Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound. 315
 Together both, with next to almighty arm

Uplifted imminent, one stroke they aim'd
 That might determine, and not need repeat,
 As not of power at once; nor odds appear'd
 In might or swift prevention: but the sword 320
 Of Michael from the armoury of God
 Was given him temper'd so, that neither keen
 Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
 The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite
 Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stay'd, 325
 But with swift wheel reverse, deep entering, shared
 All his right side. Then Satan first knew pain,
 And writhed him to and fro convolved; so sore
 The griding sword with discontinuous wound
 Pass'd through him: but the ethereal substance closed, 330
 Not long divisible; and from the gash
 A stream of nectarous humour issuing flow'd
 Sanguine, such as celestial spirits may bleed,
 And all his armour stain'd, erewhile so bright.
 Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run 335
 By angels many and strong, who interposed
 Defence; while others bore him on their shields
 Back to his chariot, where it stood retired
 From off the files of war: there they him laid
 Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame, 340
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride
 Humbled by such rebuke; so far beneath
 His confidence to equal God in power.
 Yet soon he heal'd; for spirits that live throughout
 Vital in every part, not as frail man 345
 In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
 Cannot but by annihilating die;
 Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
 Receive, no more than can the fluid air:
 All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear, 350
 All intellect, all sense; and, as they please,
 They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size
 Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.
 Meanwhile in other parts like deeds deserved
 Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought, 355
 And with fierce ensigns pierced the deep array
 Of Moloch, furious king; who him defied,
 And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound
 Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of heaven
 Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon, 360
 Down cloven to the waist, with shatter'd arms
 And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing,
 Uriel and Raphael, his vaunting foe,
 Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
 Vanquish'd Adramelech and Asmadai, 365

328. *Gridding*: harshly cutting. *Dis-*
continuous: separating the continuity
 of the parts.

365. *Adramelech*: "The mighty, mag-
 nificent king," (Hebrew.) *Asmadai*: the

Two potent thrones, that to be less than gods
 Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
 Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
 The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow 374
 Ariel, and Arioch, and the violence
 Of Ramiel scorch'd and blasted, overthrew.
 I might relate of thousands, and their names
 Eternize here on earth; but those elect 375
 Angels, contented with their fame in heaven,
 Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,
 In might though wondrous and in acts of war,
 Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
 Cancel'd from heaven and sacred memory,
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell: 380
 For strength from truth divided and from just,
 Illaudable, naught merits but dispraise
 And ignominy; yet to glory aspires
 Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
 Therefore eternal silence be their doom. 385

And now, their mightiest quell'd, the battel swerved,
 With many an inroad gored; deformed rout
 Enter'd, and foul disorder; all the ground
 With shiver'd armour strown, and on a heap
 Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd, 390
 And fiery foaming steeds; what stood, recoil'd
 O'erwearied, through the faint Satanic host
 Defensive scarce; or with pale fear surprised,
 Then first with fear surprised, and sense of pain,
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought 395
 By sin of disobedience; till that hour
 Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
 Far otherwise the inviolable saints,
 In cubic phalanx firm, advanced entire,
 Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd; 400
 Such high advantages their innocence
 Gave them above their foes; not to have sinn'd,
 Not to have disobey'd; in fight they stood
 Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd
 By wound, though from their place by violence moved. 405

Now Night her course began, and, over heaven
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce imposed,
 And silence on the odious din of war:
 Under her cloudy covert both retired,

"lustful and destroying" angel Asmodeus, mentioned in Tobit iii. 8.

371. *Ariel* means "lion of God," or, "a strong lion." *Arioch*: "a fierce and terrible lion." *Ramiel*: "one that exalts himself against God."

391. *What stood*. That is, that part which was not overturn'd, but kept on their feet and stood, either gave way and

recoil'd, being *o'erwearied*, or, with *pale fear surprised*, *fled ignominious*.

393. *Defensive scarce*. Scarcely in a state to defend themselves.

399. *Cubic*. Squared.

407. *Inducing*. In the sense of the Latin *inducere*.

*Jam nox inducere terris
 Umbras. Hor*

Victor and vanquish'd. On the foughten field 410
 Michaël and his angels prevalent
 Encamping, placed in guard their watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires: on the other part,
 Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,
 Far in the dark dislodged; and, void of rest, 415
 His potentates to council call'd by night;
 And in the midst thus undismay'd began:
 O now in danger tried, now known in arms
 Not to be overpower'd, companions dear,
 Found worthy not of liberty alone, 420
 Too mean pretence! but what we more affect,
 Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
 Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight,
 (And if one day, why not eternal days?)
 What heaven's Lord had powerfulest to send 425
 Against us from about his throne, and judged
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
 But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
 Of future we may deem him, though till now
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm'd, 430
 Some disadvantage we endured, and pain
 Till now not known, but, known, as soon contemn'd:
 Since now we find this our empyreal form
 Incapable of mortal injury,
 Imperishable; and, though pierced with wound, 435
 Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd.
 Of evil then so small, as easy think
 The remedy; perhaps more valid arms,
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
 May serve to better us, and worse our foes; 440
 Or equal what between us made the odds,
 In nature none: if other hidden cause
 Left them superiour; while we can preserve
 Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,
 Due search and consultation will disclose. 445
 He sat; and in the assembly next upstood
 Nisroch, of principalities the prime:
 As one he stood escaped from cruel fight,
 Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havoc hewn;
 And, cloudy in aspect, thus answering spake: 450
 Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
 Enjoyment of our right as gods; yet hard
 For gods, and too unequal work we find,
 Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
 Against unpain'd, impassive; from which evil 455
 Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails
 Valor or strength, though matchless, quell'd with pain
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands

447. *Nisroch*. A god of the Assyrians, in whose temple Sennacherib was killed by his two sons. 2 Kings xix. 37.

Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine, 460
 But live content, which is the calmest life:
 But pain is perfect misery, the worst
 Of evils, and, excessive, overturns
 All patience. He who therefore can invent
 With what more forcible we may offend 465
 Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
 Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
 No less than for deliverance what we owe.
 Whereto with look composed Satan replied:
 Not uninvented that, which thou aright 470
 Believ'st so main to our success, I bring.
 Which of us, who beholds the bright surface
 Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,
 This continent of spacious heaven, adorn'd
 With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial, gems, and gold; 475
 Whose eye so superficially surveys
 These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
 Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
 Of spirituous and fiery spume; till touch'd
 With heaven's ray, and temper'd, they shoot forth 480
 So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?
 These in their dark nativity the deep
 Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;
 Which, into hollow engines long and round,
 Thick-ramm'd, at the other bore with touch of fire 485
 Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
 From far, with thundering noise, among our foes
 Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
 To pieces and o'erwhelm whatever stands
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarm'd 490
 The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.
 Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn
 Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive;
 Abandon fear; to strength and counsel join'd
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despair'd. 495
 He ended; and his words their drooping cheer
 Enlighten'd, and their languished hope revived:
 The invention all admired, and each, how he
 To be the inventor miss'd, so easy it seem'd
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought 500
 Impossible: yet, haply, of thy race
 In future days, if malice should abound,
 Some one, intent on mischief, or inspired
 With devilish machination, might devise
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men 505
 For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
 Forthwith from council to the work they flew:

467. *To me*, that is, in my opinion.

484. *Hollow engines*. The first invention of cannon is here very appropri-

ately ascribed to Satan; as is the making of gunpowder (lines 512-515) to his hellish crew.

None arguing stood; innumerable hands
 Were ready; in a moment up they turn'd
 Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath 510
 The originals of nature in their crude
 Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam
 They found, they mingled, and, with subtle art,
 Concocted and adusted they reduced
 To blackest grain, and into store convey'd. 515
 Part hidden veins digg'd up (nor hath this earth
 Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,
 Whereof to found their engines and their balls
 Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
 Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire. 520
 So all ere dayspring, under conscious night,
 Secret they finish'd, and in order set,
 With silent circumspection, unespied.
 Now when fair morn orient in heaven appear'd,
 Up rose the victor-angels, and to arms 525
 The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood
 Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
 Soon banded; others from the dawning hills
 Look'd round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
 Each quarter, to descry the distant foe, 530
 Where lodged, or whither fled; or if for fight,
 In motion or in halt: him soon they met
 Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
 But firm battalion. Back with speediest sail,
 Zophiel, of cherubim the swiftest wing, 535
 Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cried:
 Arm, warriors, arm for fight; the foe at hand,
 Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
 This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud
 He comes, and settled in his face I see 540
 Sad resolution, and secure. Let each
 His adamantine coat gird well, and each
 Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,
 Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,
 If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower, 545
 But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire.
 So warn'd he them, aware themselves; and soon
 In order, quit of all impediment,
 Instant without disturb they took alarm,
 And onward moved embattel'd; when, behold! 550
 Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
 Approaching gross and huge; in hollow cube
 Training his devilish enginery, impaled

514. *Adusted*, dried by heat.528. *Dawning hills*.

————And jocund day
 Stands tip-toe on the misty mountains' tops.
Shaks.

535. *Zophiel*, in Hebrew, *the spy of God*.548. *Impediment*. The carriages and baggage of the Roman legions were called *impedimenta*.553. *Training*, drawing in train. *Impaled*, surrounded, encircled, as with palisades.

On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood 555
 Awhile; but suddenly at head appear'd
 Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud:
 Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;
 That all may see, who hate us, how we seek
 Peace and composure, and with open breast 560
 Stand ready to receive them, if they like
 Our overture, and turn not back perverse:
 But that I doubt; however witness, heaven;
 Heaven, witness thou anon, while we discharge
 Freely our part: ye, who appointed stand, 565
 Do as you have in charge; and briefly touch
 What we propound, and loud that all may hear.
 So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
 Had ended; when to right and left the front
 Divided, and to either flank retired: 570
 Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange,
 A triple mounted row of pillars laid
 On wheels; (for like to pillars most they seem'd,
 Or hollow'd bodies made of oak or fir
 With branches lopp'd, in wood or mountain fell'd) 575
 Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths
 With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,
 Portending hollow truce: at each behind
 A seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
 Stood waving tipp'd with fire; while we, suspense, 580
 Collected stood, within our thoughts amused;
 Not long; for sudden all at once their reeds
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
 With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
 But soon obscured with smoke, all heaven appear'd, 585
 From those deep-throated engines belch'd, whose roar
 Embowel'd with outrageous noise the air,
 And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
 Their devilish glut, chain'd thunderbolts and hail
 Of iron globes; which, on the victor host 590
 Levell'd, with such impetuous fury smote,
 That, whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
 Though standing else as rocks; but down they fell
 By thousands, angel on archangel roll'd;
 The sooner for their arms: unarm'd, they might 595
 Have easily, as spirits, evaded swift
 By quick contraction or remove; but now
 Foul dissipation follow'd, and forced rout;
 Nor served it to relax their serried files.

570. *Divided.* Nothing can be more distinct, picturesque, and grand, than this advance of Satan's army, with his masked artillery.—BRYDGES.

576. *Brass.* That is, *pillars of brass, &c., on wheels.*

578. *Hollow truce.* Here Raphael himself continues the pun, of which figure we have a specimen in the latter part of Satan's speech, (lines 564-568.)

What should they do? if on they rush'd, repulse 600
 Repeated, and indecent overthrow
 Doubled, would render them yet more despised,
 And to their foes a laughter; for in view
 Stood rank'd of seraphim another row,
 In posture to displode their second tire 605
 Of thunder: back defeated to return
 They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld their plight,
 And to his mates thus in derision call'd:
 O friends, why come not on these victors proud?
 Erewhile they fierce were coming; and when we, 610
 To entertain them fair with open front
 And breast, (what could we more?) propounded terms
 Of composition, straight they changed their minds,
 Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
 As they would dance; yet for a dance they seem'd 615
 Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps
 For joy of offer'd peace: but I suppose,
 If our proposals once again were heard,
 We should compel them to a quick result.
 To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood: 620
 Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
 Of hard contents, and full of force urged home;
 Such as we might perceive amused them all,
 And stumbled many: who receives them right,
 Had need from head to foot well understand; 625
 Not understood, this gift they had besides,
 They show us when our foes walk not upright.
 So they among themselves in pleasant vein
 Stood scoffing, heighten'd in their thoughts beyond
 All doubt of victory; Eternal Might 630
 To match with their inventions they presumed
 So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
 And all his host derided, while they stood
 Awhile in trouble: but they stood not long;
 Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms 635
 Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
 Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,
 Which God hath in his mighty angels placed!)
 Their arms away they threw, and to the hills,
 (For earth hath this variety from heaven 640
 Of pleasure situate in hill and dale)
 Light as the lightning glimpse, they ran, they flew;
 From their foundations loosening to and fro,
 They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,
 Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops 645
 Uplifting, bore them in their hands. *Amaze, no doubt!*
 Be sure, and terrour, seized the rebel host,
 When coming towards them so dread they saw
 The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd;
 Till on those cursed engines' triple row 650
 They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence

Under the weight of mountains buried deep;
 Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
 Main promontories flung, which in the air
 Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd. 655
 Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruised
 Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
 Implacable, and many a dolorous groan;
 Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
 Out of such prison, though spirits of purest light, 660
 Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
 The rest, in imitation, to like arms
 Betook them, and the neighbouring hills uptore:
 So hills amid the air encounter'd hills,
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire, 665
 That under ground they fought in dismal shade;
 Infernal noise! war seem'd a civil game
 To this uproar; horrid confusion heap'd
 Upon confusion rose; and now all heaven
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread, 670
 Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits
 Shrined in his sanctuary of heaven secure,
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
 This tumult, and permitted all, advised;
 That his great purpose he might so fulfil, 675
 To honour his anointed Son avenged
 Upon his enemies; and to declare
 All power on him transferr'd: whence to his Son,
 The Assessor of his throne, he thus began:
 Effulgence of my glory, Son beloved; 680
 Son, in whose face invisible is beheld
 Visibly, what by Deity I am;
 And in whose hand what by decree I do,
 Second Omnipotence: two days are pass'd,
 Two days, as we compute the days of heaven, 685
 Since Michael and his powers went forth to tame
 These disobedient: sore hath been their fight,
 As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd:
 For to themselves I left them; and thou know'st,
 Equal in their creation they were form'd, 690
 Save what sin hath impair'd; which yet hath wrought
 Insensibly, for I suspend their doom:
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
 Endless, and no solution will be found.
 War wearied hath perform'd what war can do, 695

661. *Now gross by sinning grown.* What a fine moral does Milton here inculcate, and indeed quite through this book, by showing that all the weakness and pain of the rebel angels was the natural consequence of their sinning! And I believe, one may observe in general of our author, that he is scarcely ever so far hurried on by his muse as to

forget the main end of all good writing, —the recommendation of virtue and religion.—THYER.—467. *Advised*, advisedly.

679. *Assessor*, i.e. seated with him on the throne.

681. *Inv'isible*: see Col. i. 15. The meaning is, *Son in whose face what is invisible is beheld visibly*; namely, *what I am by Deity*.

And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,
 With mountains, as with weapons, arm'd; which makes
 Wild work in heaven, and dangerous to the main.
 Two days are therefore pass'd, the third is thine:
 For thee I have ordain'd it; and thus far 700
 Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
 Of ending this great war, since none but thou
 Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
 Immense I have transfused, that all may know
 In heaven and hell thy power above compare: 705
 And, this perverse commotion govern'd thus,
 To manifest thee worthiest to be heir
 Of all things, to be heir and to be King
 By sacred unction, thy deserved right.
 Go then, thou Mightiest, in thy Father's might: 710
 Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
 That shake heaven's basis, bring forth all my war,
 My bow and thunder; my almighty arms
 Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;
 Pursue these sons of darkness: drive them out 715
 From all heaven's bounds into the utter deep:
 There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
 God, and Messiah his anointed King.
 He said; and on his Son with rays direct
 Shone full: he all his Father full express'd 720
 Ineffably into his face received:
 And thus the Filial Godhead answering spake:
 O Father, O Supreme of heavenly thrones,
 First, Highest, Holiest, Best; thou always seek'st
 To glorify thy Son, I always thee, 725
 As is most just: this I my glory account,
 My exaltation, and my whole delight,
 That thou in me well pleased, declar'st thy will
 Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
 Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume; 730
 And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
 Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
 For ever; and in me all whom thou lov'st:
 But whom thou hat'st, I hate; and can put on
 Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on, 735
 Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,
 Arm'd with thy might, rid heaven of these rebell'd,
 To their prepared ill mansion driven down,
 To chains of darkness, and the undying worm;
 That from thy just obedience could revolt, 740
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.
 Then shall thy saints unmix'd, and from the impure
 Far separate, circling thy holy mount,
 Unfeigned halleluiahs to thee sing,
 Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief. 745

714. *Gird on*, &c. Ps. xlv. 3, 4, 5.

725. See John xvii. 1, and Matt. xvii. 5.

732. 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28; John xvii. 21, 23.

739. See Mark ix. 44 and Jude 6.

So said, he, o'er his sceptre bowing, rose
 From the right hand of Glory where he sat;
 And the third sacred morn begin to shine
 Dawning through heaven: forth rush'd with whirlwind sound
 The chariot of paternal Deity, 750
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
 Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd
 By four cherubic shapes; four faces each
 Had wondrous: as with stars, their bodies all
 And wings were set with eyes; with eyes the wheels 755
 Of beryl, and careering fires between;
 Over their heads a crystal firmament,
 Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
 Amber, and colours of the showery arch.
 He, in celestial panoply all arm'd *rainbow!* 760
 Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
 Ascended; at his right hand Victory
 Sat eagle-winged; beside him hung his bow
 And quiver with three-bolted thunder stored;
 And from about him fierce effusion roll'd 765
 Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire.
 Attended with ten thousand thousand saints,
 He onward came; far off his coming shone:
 And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
 Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen. 770
 He on the wings of cherub rode sublime
 On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned,
 Illustrious far and wide; but by his own
 First seen: them unexpected joy surprised,
 When the great ensign of Messiah blazed 775
 Aloft by angels borne, his sign in heaven;
 Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced
 His army, circumfused on either wing,
 Under their Head imbodied all in one.
 Before him Power Divine his way prepared; 780
 At his command the uprooted hills retired
 Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went
 Obsequious: heaven his wonted face renew'd,
 And with fresh flowerets hill and valley smiled.
 This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdured, 785
 And to rebellious fight rallied their powers,
 Insensate, hope conceiving from despair:
 In heavenly spirits could such perverseness dwell?
 But to convince the proud what signs avail,
 Or wonders move the obdurate to relent? 790
 They, harden'd more by what might most reclaim,
 Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
 Took envy; and, aspiring to his highth,
 Stood re-embattel'd fierce, by force or fraud

749. See Ezek. i. 4, and Isa. lxvi. 15.

751. Ezek. i. 5, 14, 16, 22, and x. 12.

760. See Eph. vi. 11, and Ex. xxviii. 30

765. See Ps. xviii. 8, and Jude 14.

Weening to prosper, and at length prevail 795
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall
 In universal ruin last; and now
 To final battel drew, disdainning flight,
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
 To all his host on either hand thus spake: 800
 Stand still in bright array, ye saints; here stand,
 Ye angels arm'd; this day from battel rest:
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause;
 And as ye have received, so have ye done, 805
 Invincibly: but of this cursed crew
 The punishment to other hand belongs;
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:
 Number to this day's work is not ordain'd,
 Nor multitude: stand only, and behold 810
 God's indignation on these godless pour'd
 By Me; not you, but Me, they have despised,
 Yet envied; against Me is all their rage,
 Because the Father, to whom in heaven supreme
 Kingdom, and power, and glory appertains, 815
 Hath honour'd Me according to his will.
 Therefore to Me their doom he hath assign'd,
 That they may have their wish, to try with Me
 In battel which the stronger proves; they all,
 Or I alone against them; since by strength 820
 They measure all, of other excellence
 Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
 Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.
 So spake the Son; and into terrour changed
 His countenance, too severe to be beheld, 825
 And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
 At once the Four spread out their starry wings
 With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
 Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound
 Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host. 830
 He on his impious foes right onward drove,
 Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels
 The steadfast empyréan shook throughout,
 All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
 Among them he arrived; in his right hand 835
 Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
 Before him, such as in their souls infix'd
 Plagues: they, astonish'd, all resistance lost,
 All courage; down their idle weapons dropp'd:
 O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode 840
 Of thrones and mighty seraphim prostrate;
 That wish'd the mountains now might be again

797. *Last*. At last. Newton and Bentley suggest *lost* as the true reading.

801. Ex. xiv. 13, 14.

827. *At once the Four*. Wherever he

mentions the four cherubim and the Messiah's chariot, he still copies from Ezekiel's vision. See ch. i. 9, 19, 24.

Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.
 Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
 His arrows, from the fourfold-visaged Four, 845
 Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
 Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
 One Spirit in them ruled; and every eye
 Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
 Among the accursed, that wither'd all their strength, 850
 And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd,
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen.
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid volley; for he meant
 Not to destroy, but root them out of heaven: 855
The overthrown he raised; and as a herd
Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd
Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursued
With terrours and with furies to the bounds
 And crystal wall of heaven; which, opening wide, 860
 Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclosed
 Into the wasteful deep: the monstrous sight
 Struck them with horreur backward, but far worse
 Urged them behind: headlong themselves they threw
 Down from the verge of heaven: eternal wrath 865
 Burn'd after them to the bottomless pit.
 Hell heard the unsufferable noise; hell saw
 Heaven ruining from heaven, and would have fled
 Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep
 Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound. 870
Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roar'd,
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
 Through his wild anarchy; so huge a rout
 Incumber'd him with ruin: hell at last
 Yawning received them whole, and on them closed; 875
 Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
 Disburden'd heaven rejoiced, and soon repair'd
 Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.
 Sole victor, from the expulsion of his foes, 880
 Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd:
 To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
 Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
 With jubilee advanced; and, as they went,
 Shaded with branching palm, each order bright 885
 Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
 Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
 Worthiest to reign: he, celebrated, rode
 Triumphant through mid heaven, into the courts
 And temple of his mighty Father throned 890
 On high; who into glory him received,
 Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

868. *Heaven ruining.* Falling down | 890. See 1 Tim. iii. 16, and Heb. i. 3.
 with precipitation and ruin.

Thus, measuring things in heaven by things on earth,
 At thy request, and that thou mayst beware
 By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd 895
 What might have else to human race been hid;
 The discord which befell, and war in heaven
 Among the angelic powers, and the deep fall
 Of those too high aspiring, who rebell'd
 With Satan; he who envies now thy state, 900
 Who now is plotting how he may seduce
 Thee also from obedience, that, with him
 Bereaved of happiness, thou mayst partake
 His punishment, eternal misery,
 Which would be all his solace and revenge, 905
 As a despite done against the Most High,
 Thee once to gain companion of his woe.
 But listen not to his temptations; warn
 Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard,
 By terrible example, the reward 910
 Of disobedience: firm they might have stood,
 Yet fell: remember, and fear to transgress.

893. It is remarkable with what art
 and beauty the poet, from the height and
 sublimity of the rest of the book, descends
 here, at the close of it, (like the lark from
 her loftiest notes in the clouds,) to the
 most prosaic simplicity of language and
 numbers: a simplicity which not only

gives it variety, but the greatest majesty.

—NEWTON.

900. *He*. The construction requires
him. Or we may understand it as, *He*
it is who envies, &c.

909. *Thy weaker*. 1 Peter iii. 7.

REMARKS ON BOOK VII.

THE seventh book is nothing but delight;—all beauty, and hope, and smiles: it has little of the awful sublimity of the preceding books; and it has much less of that grand invention, which sometimes astonishes with a painful emotion, but which is the first power of a poet: at the same time, there is poetical invention in filling up the details.

In every description Milton has seized the most picturesque feature, and found the most expressive and poetical words for it. On the mirror of his mind all creation was delineated in the clearest and most brilliant forms and colours; and he has reflected them with such harmony and enchantment of language as has never been equalled.

The globe with all its rich contents thus lies displayed before us, like a landscape under the freshness of the dewy light of the opening morning, when the shadows of night first fly away.

Here is to be found every thing which in descriptive poetry has the greatest spell: all majesty or grace of forms, animate or inanimate; all variety of mountains, and valleys, and forests, and plains, and seas, and lakes, and rivers; the vicissitudes of suns and of darkness; the flame and the snow; the murmur of the breeze; the roar of the tempest.

One great business of poetry is to teach men to see, and feel, and think upon the beauties of the creation, and to have gratitude and devotion to their Maker: this can best be effected by a poet's eye and a poet's tongue. Poets can present things in lights which can warm the coldest hearts: he who can create himself, can best represent what is already created.—SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

In the seventh book the author appears in a kind of composed and sedate majesty; and though the sentiments do not give so great an emotion as those in the former book, they abound with magnificent ideas. The sixth book, like a troubled ocean, represents greatness in confusion; the seventh affects the imagination like the ocean in a calm; and fills the mind of the reader, without producing in it any thing like tumult or agitation.

In this book, which gives us an account of the six days' work, the poet received but very few assistances from heathen writers, who were strangers to the wonders of creation: but, as there are many glorious strokes of poetry upon this subject in Holy Writ, the author has numberless allusions to them through the whole course of this book. The great critic, Longinus, though a heathen, has taken notice of the sublime manner in which the lawgiver of the Jews has described the creation in the first book of Genesis: and there are many other passages in Scripture, which rise up to the same majesty, where this subject is touched upon. Milton has shown his judgment very remarkably in making use of such of these as were proper for his poem; and in duly qualifying those high strains of Eastern poetry, which were suited to readers, whose imaginations were set to a higher pitch than those of colder climates.

Adam's speech to the angel, where he desires an account of what passed within the regions of nature before the creation, is very great and solemn. The lines, in which he tells that the day is not too far spent for him to enter upon such a subject, are exquisite in their kind, v. 98.

The angel's encouraging our first parents in a modest pursuit after knowledge, and the causes which he assigns for the creation of the world, are very just and beautiful. The Messiah, by whom, as we are told in Scripture, the heavens were made, comes forth in the power of his Father, surrounded with a host of angels, and clothed with such a majesty, as becomes his entering upon a work, which, according to our conceptions, appears the utmost exertion of Omnipotence. What a beautiful description has our author raised upon that hint in one of the prophets! "And behold there came four chariots out from between two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of brass:"—

About his chariots numberless were pour'd, &c.

I do not know any thing in the whole poem more sublime than the description which follows; where the Messiah is represented at the head of his angels, as looking down into the chaos, calming its confusion, riding into the midst of it, and drawing the first outline of the creation.

The beauties of description in this book lie so very thick, that it is impossible to enumerate them in these remarks. The poet has employed on them the whole energy of our tongue: the several great scenes of the creation rise up to view, one after another, in such a manner, that the reader seems present at this wonderful work, and to assist among the choirs of angels, who are the spectators of it. How glorious is the conclusion of the first day! v. 252, &c. We have the same elevation of thought in the third day, when the mountains were brought forth, and the deep was made: we have also the rising of the whole vegetable world described in this day's work, which is filled with all the graces that other poets have lavished on their description of the spring, and leads the reader's imagination into a theatre equally surprising and beautiful. The several glories of the heavens make their appearances on the fourth day.

One would wonder how the poet could be so concise in his description of the six days' work, as to comprehend them within the bounds of an episode: and, at the same time, so particular, as to give us a lively idea of them. This is still more remarkable in his account of the fifth and sixth days, in which he has drawn out to our view the whole animal creation, from the reptile to the behemoth. As the lion and the leviathan are two of the noblest productions in the world of living creatures, the reader will find a most exquisite spirit of poetry in the account which our author gives us of them. The sixth day concludes with the formation of man; upon which, the angel takes occasion, as he did after the battle in heaven, to remind Adam of his obedience, which was the principal design of his visit.

The poet afterwards represents the Messiah returning into heaven and taking a survey of his great work. There is something inexpressibly sublime in this part of the poem, where the author describes the great period of time filled with so many glorious circumstances; when the heavens and earth were finished; when the Messiah ascended up in triumph through the everlasting gates; when he looked down with pleasure upon his new creation; when every part of nature seemed to rejoice in its existence; "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy."—ADDISON.

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

RAPHAEL, at the request of Adam, relates how and wherefore this world was first created; that God, after the expelling of Satan and his angels out of heaven, declared his pleasure to create another world, and other creatures to dwell therein; sends his Son with glory, and attendance of angels, to perform the work of creation in six days; the angels celebrate with hymns the performance thereof, and his reascension into heaven.

heavenly muse

DESCEND from heaven, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing.
The meaning, not the name, I call: for thou 5
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but, heavenly-born,
Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with Eternal Wisdom didst converse, 10
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of the Almighty Father, pleas'd
With thy celestial song. Up-led by thee,
Into the heaven of heavens I have presumed,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy tempering: with like safety guided down, 15
Return me to my native element;
Lest from this flying steed unrein'd, (as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime)
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall,
Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn. 20
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
Within the visible diurnal sphere:
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged
To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days, 25

1. *Urania*, Heavenly; thus here, as in the opening of the poem, he invokes the "heavenly muse."

8. See Prov. viii. 24, 25, 30.

19. *Aleian field*. This was a tract of country in Cilicia, (Asia Minor,) east of the river Sarus, (which is the river next east to the Cydnus, on which was Tarsus) where Bellerophon was fabled to have been thrown from his horse Pegasus, and to have perished.

21. *Half yet, &c.* That is, half of the

episode, which consists of two parts, the war in heaven, and the new creation: the latter is confined to a narrower compass, and *bound* within the *visible sphere* of day.

25. *Though fallen, &c.* The repetition and turn of the words is very beautiful: a lively picture this, in a few lines, of the poet's wretched condition. Though he was blind, "in darkness; and with dangers compass'd round, and solitude," obnoxious to the government, and hav-

On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues ;
 In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
 And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou
 Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
 Purples the east : still govern thou my song, 30
 Urania, and fit audience find, though few :
 But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
 Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
 Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
 In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears 35
 To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
 Both harp and voice ; nor could the Muse defend
 Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores :
 For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.
 Say, goddess, what ensued, when Raphael, 40
 The affable archangel, had forewarn'd
 Adam, by dire example, to beware
 Apostasy, by what befell in heaven
 To those apostates ; lest the like befall 45
 In Paradise to Adam or his race,
 Charged not to touch the interdicted tree,
 If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
 So easily obey'd amid the choice
 Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
 Though wandering. He, with his consorted Eve, 50
 The story heard attentive, and was fill'd
 With admiration and deep muse, to hear
 Of things so high and strange ; things, to their thought
 So unimaginable, as hate in heaven,
 And war so near the peace of God in bliss, 55
 With such confusion : but the evil, soon
 Driven back, redounded as a flood on those
 From whom it sprung ; impossible to mix
 With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd
 The doubts that in his heart arose ; and now 60
 Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
 What nearer might concern him ; how this world
 Of heaven and earth conspicuous first began ;
 When, and whereof created ; for what cause ;
 What within Eden, or without, was done 65
 Before his memory : as one, whose drouth
 Yet scarce allay'd, still eyes the current stream,
 Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,
 Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly guest :

ing a world of enemies among the royal party, and therefore obliged to live very much in privacy and alone, he was not become "hoarse or mute." And what strength of mind was it, that could not only support him under the weight of these misfortunes, but enable him to soar to such heights, as no human genius ever reached before.—NEWTON. Who will

not add,—and as no human genius has reached since?

33. *Of Bacchus, &c.* Milton here, doubtless, intends to satirize the dissoluteness of Charles the Second and his court, from whom he seems to have apprehended the fate of Orpheus.

59. *Repeal'd*: Dismissed, banished.

Great things and full of wonder in our ears, 70
 Far differing from this world, thou hast reveal'd,
 Divine interpreter! by favour sent
 Down from the empyréan, to forewarn
 Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
 Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach; 75
 For which to the infinitely Good we owe
 Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
 Receive, with solemn purpose to observe
 Immutably his sovran will, the end
 Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsafed 80
 Gently, for our instruction, to impart
 Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd
 Our knowing, as to highest Wisdom seem'd;
 Deign to descend now lower, and relate
 What may no less perhaps avail us known; 85
 How first began this heaven which we behold
 Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd
 Innumerable; and this which yields or fills
 All space, the ambient air wide interfused,
 Embracing round this florid earth: what cause 90
 Moved the Creator, in his holy rest
 Through all eternity, so late to build
 In Chaos; and the work begun, how soon
 Absolved; if unforbid thou mayst unfold
 What we, not to explore the secrets, ask, 95
 Of his eternal empire, but the more
 To magnify his works, the more we know:
 And the great light of day yet wants to run
 Much of his race though steep; suspense in heaven,
 Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears; 100
 And longer will delay to hear thee tell
 His generation, and the rising birth
 Of Nature from the unapparent deep:
 Of if the star of evening and the moon
 Haste to thy audience, Night with her will bring 105
 Silence; and Sleep, listening to thee, will watch;
 Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
 End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.
 Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought;
 And thus the Godlike Angel answer'd mild: 110
 This also thy request, with caution ask'd,
 Obtain; though to recount almighty works
 What words or tongue of seraph can suffice,
 Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
 Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve 115
 To glorify the Maker, and infer
 The also happier, shall not be withheld

94. *Absolved*: Finished, completed.

98. *And the great light of day*. Mr. Thyer is of opinion that there is not a greater instance of our author's equi-

site skill in the art of poetry, than this and the following lines.

103. *Unapparent*: Where nothing was to be seen.

Thy hearing; such commission from above
 I have received, to answer thy desire
 Of knowledge within bounds; beyond, abstain 120
 To ask; nor let thine own inventions hope
 Things not reveal'd, which the invisible King,
 Only Omniscient, hath suppress'd in night,
 To none communicable in earth or heaven:
 Enough is left besides to search and know: 125
 But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
 Her temperance over appetite, to know
 In measure what the mind may well contain;
 Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
 Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind. 130
 Know then, that, after Lucifer from heaven
 (So call him, brighter once amidst the host
 Of angels, than that star the stars among)
 Fell with his flaming legions through the deep
 Into his place, and the great Son return'd 135
 Victorious with his saints, the Omnipotent
 Eternal Father from his throne beheld
 Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake:
 At least our envious foe hath fail'd, who thought
 All like himself rebellious; by whose aid 140
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat
 Of Deity supreme, us dispossess'd,
 He trusted to have seized, and into fraud
 Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;
 Yet far the greater part have kept, I see, 145
 Their station; heaven, yet populous, retains
 Number sufficient to possess her realms
 Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
 With ministeries due, and solemn rites:
 But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm 150
 Already done, to have dispeopled heaven,
 My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
 That detriment, if such it be to lose
 Self-lost; and in a moment will create
 Another world, out of one man a race 155
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
 Not here; till by degrees of merit raised,
 They open to themselves at length the way
 Up hither, under long obedience tried;
 And earth be changed to heaven, and heaven to earth, 160
 One kingdom, joy and union without end.
 Meanwhile inhabit lax, ye powers of heaven;
 And thou, my Word, begotten Son, by thee

150. "Knowledge puffeth up."—1 Cor. viii. 1.

139. *At least.* Mr. Thyer suggests *at last.*

160. The meaning is, that Earth, inhabited by obedient creatures, would in

happiness resemble Heaven; and Heaven, by receiving such creatures, would resemble Earth, having men for inhabitants. See Rev. xxi. 3.

162. *Inhabit lax.* Dwell at ease, the rebel angels being vanquish'd.

This I perform; speak thou, and be it done!
 My overshadowing Spirit and Might with thee 165
 I send along: ride forth, and bid the deep
 Within appointed bounds be heaven and earth;
 Boundless the deep, because I Am, who fill
 Infinitude; nor vacuous the space.
 Though I, uncircumscribed myself, retire, 170
 And put not forth my goodness, which is free
 To act or not: necessity and chance
 Approach not me, and what I will is fate.
 So spake the Almighty, and to what he spake,
 His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect. 175
 Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
 Than time or motion; but to human ears
 Cannot without process of speech be told,
 So told as earthly notion can receive.
 Great triumph and rejoicing was in heaven, 180
 When such was heard declared the Almighty's will;
 Glory they sung to the Most High, good will
 To future men, and in their dwellings peace:
 Glory to him, whose just avenging ire
 Had driven out the ungodly from his sight 185
 And the habitations of the just; to him
 Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordain'd
 Good out of evil to create; instead
 Of spirits malign, a better race to bring
 Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse 190
 His good to worlds and ages infinite.
 So sang the hierarchies: meanwhile the Son
 On his great expedition now appear'd,
 Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
 Of majesty divine: sapience and love 195
 Immense, and all his Father in him shone.
 About his chariot numberless were pour'd
 Cherub and Seraph, Potentates and Thrones,
 And Virtues, winged Spirits, and Chariots wing'd
 From the armoury of God; where stand of old 200
 Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodged
 Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,
 Celestial equipage; and now came forth
 Spontaneous, for within them spirit lived,
 Attendant on their Lord: heaven open'd wide 205
 Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound,
 On golden hinges moving, to let forth
 The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
 And Spirit, coming to create new worlds.
 On heavenly ground they stood; and from the shore 210
 They view'd the vast immeasurable abyss
 Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,

210. *From the shore, &c.* Here is a most magnificent picture, breathing all the powers of poetry.—BRYDGES.

Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
 And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
 Heaven's highth, and with the centre mix the pole. 215
 Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep, peace,
 Said then the omnific Word; your discord end!
 Nor stay'd; but, on the wings of cherubim
 Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
 Far into Chaos, and the world unborn; 220
 For Chaos heard his voice: him all his train
 Follow'd in bright procession, to behold
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.
 Then stay'd the fervid wheels; and in his hand
 He took the golden compasses, prepared 225
 In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
 This universe, and all created things:
 One foot he centred, and the other turn'd
 Round through the vast profundity obscure;
 And said, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds; 230
 This be thy just circumference, O world!
 Thus God the heaven created, thus the earth,
 Matter unform'd and void: darkness profound
 Cover'd the abyss; but on the watery calm
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread, 235
 And vital virtue infused, and vital warmth,
 Throughout the fluid mass; but downward purged
 The black, tartareous, cold, infernal dregs,
 Adverse to life: then founded, then conglobed
 Like things to like; the rest to several place 240
 Disparted, and between spun out the air;
 And earth, self-balanced, on her centre hung.
 Let there be light, said God; and forthwith light
 Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
 Sprung from the deep; and from her native east 245
 To journey through the aery gloom began,
 Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
 Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
 Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good;
 And light from darkness by the hemisphere 250
 Divided: light the day, and darkness night
 He named. Thus was the first day even and morn:
 Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
 By the celestial quires, when orient light
 Exhaling first from darkness they beheld, 255
 Birth-day of heaven and earth: with joy and shout
 The hollow universal orb they fill'd,
 And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning praised
 God and his works; Creator him they sung,
 Both when first evening was, and when first morn. 260
 Again, God said, Let there be firmament

225. *Compasses*. See Prov. viii. 27.
 256. See Job xxxviii. 4, 7.

261. *Firmament* signifies "expansion."

Amid the waters, and let it divide
 The waters from the waters: and God made
 The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
 Transparent, elemental air, diffused 265
 In circuit to the uttermost convex
 Of this great round; partition firm and sure,
 The waters underneath from those above
 Dividing: for as earth, so he the world
 Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide 270
 Crystalline ocean, and the loud misrule
 Of Chaos far removed; lest fierce extremes
 Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:
 And heaven he named the firmament: so even
 And morning chorus sung the second day. 275
 The earth was form'd, but in the womb as yet
 Of waters, embryon immature involved,
 Appear'd not: over all the face of earth
 Main ocean flow'd, not idle; but, with warm
 Prolific humour softening all her globe, 280
 Fermented the great mother to conceive,
 Sate with genial moisture; when God said,
 Be gather'd now, ye waters under heaven,
 Into one place, and let dry land appear.
 Immediately the mountains huge appear 285
 Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
 Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky:
 So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low
 Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
 Capacious bed of waters: thither they 290
 Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd,
 As drops on dust conglobing from the dry:
 Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
 For haste; such flight the great command impress'd
 On the swift floods: as armies at the call 295
 Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
 Troop to their standard; so the watery throng,
 Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
 If steep, with torrent rapture; if through plain,
 Soft ebbing: nor withstood them rock or hill: 300
 But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
 With serpent error wandering, found their way,
 And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;
 Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
 All but within those banks, where rivers now 305
 Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
 The dry land, earth; and the great receptacle

274. *And heaven.* According to the Hebrews, there were three heavens: the first is the air, wherein the clouds move and the birds fly; the second is the starry heaven; and the third is the habitation of the angels and the seat of God's glory.

Milton is here speaking of the first heaven, as he mentions the others in other places.—NEWTON.

281. *Fermented:* Excited.

299. *Torrent rapture:* With the rapidity and violence of a torrent

Of congregated waters, he call'd seas:
 And saw that it was good; and said, Let th' earth
 Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed, 310
 And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
 Whose seed is in herself upon the earth.
 He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
 Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
 Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad 315
 Her universal face with pleasant green;
 Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flower'd,
 Opening their various colours, and made gay
 Her bosom, smelling sweet: and, these scarce blown,
 Forth flourish'd thick the clustering vine, forth crept 320
 The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
 Embattel'd in her field, and th' humble shrub,
 And bush with frizzled hair implicit: last
 Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread
 Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd 325
 Their blossoms: with high woods the hills were crown'd,
 With tufts the valleys, and each fountain-side;
 With borders long the rivers: that earth now
 Seem'd like to heaven, a seat where gods might dwell,
 Or wander with delight, and love to haunt 330
 Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd
 Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
 None was; but from the earth a dewy mist
 Went up, and water'd all the ground, and each
 Plant of the field; which, ere it was in th' earth, 335
 God made, and every herb, before it grew
 On the green stem: God saw that it was good:
 So even and morn recorded the third day.
 Again the Almighty spake, Let there be lights
 High in the expanse of heaven, to divide 340
 The day from night; and let them be for signs,
 For seasons, and for days, and circling years;
 And let them be for lights, as I ordain
 Their office in the firmament of heaven,
 To give light on the earth; and it was so. 345
 And God made two great lights, great for their use
 To man, the greater to have rule by day,
 The less by night, altern; and made the stars,
 And set them in the firmament of heaven
 To illuminate the earth, and rule the day 350
 In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
 And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
 Surveying his great work, that it was good:
 For of celestial bodies first the sun,
 A mighty sphere, he framed, unlightsome first, 355
 Though of ethereal mould: then form'd the moon
 Globose, and every magnitude of stars,

323. *Implicit*, in the sense of the Latin *implicere*, to entangle. *Gemm'd*: Put forth

And sow'd with stars the heaven, thick as a field:
 Of light by far the greater part he took,
 Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and placed 360
 In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
 And drink the liquid light; firm to retain
 Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light.
 Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
 Repairing, in their golden urns draw light, 365
 And hence the morning planet gilds her horns;
 By tincture or reflection they augment
 Their small peculiar, though from human sight
 So far remote, with diminution seen.
 First in his east the glorious lamp was seen, 370
 Regent of day, and all the horizon round
 Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
 His longitude through heaven's high road; the gray
 Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danced,
 Shedding sweet influence: less bright the moon, 375
 But opposite in levell'd west was set,
 His mirrour, with full face borrowing her light
 From him; for other light she needed none
 In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
 Till night; then in the east her turn she shines, 380
 Revolved on heaven's great axle, and her reign
 With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
 With thousand thousand stars, that then appear'd
 Spangling the hemisphere: then first adorn'd
 With their bright luminaries, that set and rose, 385
 Glad evening and glad morn crown'd the fourth day.
 And God said, Let the waters generate
 Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul:
 And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
 Display'd on the open firmament of heaven. 390
 And God created the great whales, and each
 Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
 The waters generated by their kinds:
 And every bird of wing after his kind;
 And saw that it was good, and bless'd them, saying, 395
 Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas,
 And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill:
 And let the fowl be multiplied on the earth.
 Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
 With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals 400
 Of fish that with their fins, and shining scales,
 Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft
 Bank the mid sea: part single, or with mate,

364. By *other stars* are meant the planets: as the *morning planet*, Venus, particularly is mentioned.

368. *Peculiar*: Exclusive property; from the Latin *peculium*.

374. *The Pleiades* are seven stars in the

neck of the constellation Taurus, which rise about the time of the vernal equinox. See Job xxxviii. 31.—NEWTON.

388. *Reptile*: Creeping things.

402. *Sculls* (pronounced with the *u* long) is clearly for *shoals*.

Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and through groves
 Of coral stray; or, sporting with quick glance, 405
 Show to the sun their wav'd coats dropt with gold;
 Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend
 Moist nutriment; or under rocks their food
 In jointed armour watch: on smooth the seal
 And bended dolphins play: part huge of bulk, 410
 Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
 Tempest the ocean: there leviathan,
 Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
 Stretch'd like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
 And seems a moving land; and at his gills 415
 Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.
 Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,
 Their brood as numerous hatch, from the egg that soon
 Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclosed
 Their callow young; but feather'd soon and fledge 420
 They summ'd their pens; and, soaring th' air sublime,
 With clang despised the ground, under a cloud
 In prospect; there the eagle and the stork
 On cliffs and cedar-tops their eyries build:
 Part loosely wing the region; part, more wise, 425
 In common, ranged in figure, wedge their way,
 Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
 Their aery caravan, high over seas
 Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing
 Easing their flight; so steers the prudent crane 430
 Her annual voyage, borne on winds; the air
 Floats as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes:
 From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
 Solaced the woods, and spread their painted wings
 Till even; nor then the solemn nightingale 435
 Ceased warbling, but all night tuned her soft lays:
 Others, on silver lakes and rivers, bathed
 Their downy breast; the swan with arched neck,
 Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
 Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit 440
 The dank, and, rising on stiff pennons, tower
 The mid aerial sky: others on ground
 Walk'd firm; the crested cock, whose clarion sounds
 The silent hours; and the other, whose gay train
 Adorns him, coloured with the florid hue 445

409. *In jointed armour.* There is no slight resemblance between the shells of the lobster and the ancient armour of knights. The *seal* and *dolphin* love to sport on *smooth* seas; and the latter is called *bended*, as he forms an arch in leaping out of the water and instantly diving into it again.—NEWTON.

412. *Tempest.* To disturb like a tempest—most vigorously and laconically expressed. *Leviathan* is doubtless here intended for the *whale*, though in the book

of Job the description comes nearer to the *crocodile*.

421. *Summ'd their pens.* A term in falconry. *Pens* being from the Latin *penna*, “a feather;” and the phrase means, they had their feathers full grown, wanting nothing of the *sum* of them.

427. *Intelligent of seasons.* Jer. viii. 7.

429. That is, the bird that takes the lead of the flock, and presently falls back, while another takes his place

440. *State*, like a *barge* of state.

Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
With fish replenish'd, and the air with fowl,
Evening and morning solemnized the fifth day.

The sixth, and of creation last, arose
With evening harps and matin; when God said, 450
Let the earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the earth,
Each in their kind. The earth obey'd, and straight
Opening her fertile womb, teem'd at a birth
Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms, 455
Limb'd and full grown: out of the ground up rose,
As from his lair, the wild beast, where he wons
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den;
Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd:
The cattle in the fields and meadows green: 460
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.
The grassy clods now calved; now half appear'd
The tawny lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts; then springs, as broke from bonds, 465
And rampant shakes his brinded mane: the ounce,
The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole
Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
In hillocks: the swift stag from under ground
Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mould, 470
Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheaved
His vastness: fleeced the flocks and bleating rose,
As plants; ambiguous between sea and land
The river-horse, and scaly crocodile.
At once came forth whatever creeps the ground, 475
Insect or worm: those waved their limber fans
For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
In all the liveries deck'd of summer's pride,
With spots of gold and purple, azure and green:
These as a line their long dimension drew, 480
Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all
Minims of nature; some of serpent kind,
Wondrous in length and corpulence, involved
Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
The parsimonious emmet, provident 485
Of future; in small room large heart enclosed;
Pattern of just equality, perhaps
Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes
Of commonalty: swarming next appear'd
The female bee, that feeds her husband drone 490
Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
With honey stored: the rest are numberless,

457. *Wons*: Frequents, or dwells.

451. *Those*, the wild beasts: *these*, the tame, the cattle.

463. *Calved*: Brought forth. He sup-

poses the beasts to arise out of the earth, in perfect forms.

467. *Libbard*: the leopard.—471. *Behemoth*. Milton here means the elephant.

482. *Minims*, smallest productions.

And thou their natures know'st, and gavest them names,
Needless to be repeated; nor unknown
The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field, 495
Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.

Now heaven in all her glory shone, and roll'd
Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand 500
First wheel'd their course: earth in her rich attire
Consummate lovely smiled; air, water, earth,
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walk'd,
Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remain'd:
There wanted yet the master-work, the end 505
Of all yet done; a creature, who, not prone
And brute: as other creatures, but endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright with front serene
Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence 510
Magnanimous to correspond with Heaven,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends; thither, with heart, and voice, and eyes,
Directed in devotion, to adore
And worship God Supreme, who made him chief 515
Of all his works: therefore the Omnipotent
Eternal Father (for where is not he
Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake:

Let us make now man in our image, man
In our similitude, and let them rule 520
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.

This said, he form'd thee, Adam, thee, O man,
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed 525
The breath of life; in his own image he
Created thee, in the image of God
Express; and thou becamest a living soul.

Male he created thee; but thy consort
Female, for race; then bless'd mankind, and said, 530
Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth;
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the air,
And every living thing that moves on the earth.
Wherever thus created, (for no place 535
Is yet distinct by name) thence, as thou know'st,
He brought thee into this delicious grove,
This garden, planted with the trees of God,
Delectable both to behold and taste;

And freely all their pleasant fruit for food 540
Gave thee: all sorts are here that all the earth yields,
Variety without end; but of the tree,
Which, tasted, works knowledge of good and evil,
Thou mayst not; in the day thou eat'st, thou diest:

the was
yet
aled

Death is the penalty imposed; beware, 545
 And govern well thy appetite; lest sin
 Surprise thee, and her black attendant, death.
 Here finish'd he, and all that he had made
 View'd, and behold all was entirely good;
 So even and morn accomplish'd the sixth day: 550
 Yet not till the Creator, from his work
 Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd,
 Up to the heaven of heavens, his high abode;
 Thence to behold this new-created world,
 The addition of his empire, how it show'd 555
 In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
 Answering his great idea. Up he rode,
 Follow'd with acclamation, and the sound
 Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tuned
 Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air 560
 Resounded (thou remember'st, for thou heard'st),
 The heavens and all the constellations rung,
 The planets in their station listening stood,
 While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
 Open, ye everlasting gates! they sung; 565
 Open, ye heavens! your living doors; let in
 The great Creator, from his work return'd
 Magnificent, his six days' work, a world;
 Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
 To visit oft the dwellings of just men, 570
 Delighted; and with frequent intercourse
 Thither will send his winged messengers
 On errands of supernal grace. So sung
 The glorious train ascending: he through heaven,
 That open'd wide her blazing portals, led 575
 To God's eternal house direct the way;
 A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold,
 And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
 Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,
 Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest 580
 Powder'd with stars. And now on earth the seventh
 Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
 Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
 Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
 Of heaven's high-seated top, the imperial throne 585
 Of Godhead, fix'd for ever firm and sure,
 The Filial Power arrived, and sat him down
 With his great Father; for he also went
 Invisible, yet stay'd, (such privilege
 Hath Omnipresence) and the work ordain'd, 590
 Authour and End of all things; and, from work
 Now resting, bless'd and hallow'd the seventh day,
 As resting on that day from all his work,
 But not in silence holy kept: the harp
 Had work, and rested not; the solemn pipe, 595
 And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,

All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,
 Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice
 Choral or unison: of incense clouds,
 Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount. 600
 Creation and the six days' acts they sung.
 Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite
 Thy power! what thought can measure thee, or tongue
 Relate thee? Greater now in thy return
 Than from the giant angels: thee that day 605
 Thy thunders magnified; but to create
 Is greater than created to destroy.
 Who can impair thee, Mighty King, or bound
 Thy empire? easily the proud attempt
 Of spirits apostate, and their counsels vain, 610
 Thou hast repell'd; while impiously they thought
 Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
 The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
 To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
 To manifest the more thy might: his evil 615
 Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
 Witness this new-made world, another heaven
 From heaven-gate not far, founded in view
 On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;
 Of amplitude almost immense, with stars 620
 Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
 Of destined habitation; but thou know'st
 Their seasons: among these the seat of men,
 Earth with her nether ocean circumfused,
 Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men, 625
 And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanced!
 Created in his image, there to dwell
 And worship him; and in reward to rule
 Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,
 And multiply a race of worshippers 630
 Holy and just: thrice happy, if they know
 Their happiness, and persevere upright!
 So sung they, and the empyréan rung
 With halleluiahs: thus was sabbath kept.—
 And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd 635
 How first this world and face of things began,
 And what before thy memory was done
 From the beginning; that posterity,
 Inform'd by thee, might know: if else thou seek'st
 Aught, not surpassing human measure, say. 640

597. *Fret*. On the finger-board of a bass-viol, are divisions athwart, by which the sound is regulated and varied: these divisions are called *frets*.

598. *Temper'd, &c.*: Produced soft sounds.

619. *The hyaline, or glassy sea*, is the same as the *Crystalline ocean*, vii. 271.

REMARKS ON BOOK VIII.

No praise can be deemed too high for this eighth book of *Paradise Lost*. Milton speaks as the historian of idealism; never as a rhetorician: he has never any factitious warmth; what he relates he first sees: the richness of his imagination is united with extreme and surprising simplicity: he rejects all adornment. The imagination which creates a whole series of characters and actions, resulting from each other,—those actions at the same time springing from high minds and high passions,—performs the greatest and rarest work of genius: thus we are filled with the most delightful astonishment, when we read Milton's picture of the creation of Adam and Eve: the beauty, the glow, the enthusiasm, the rapture running through all the senses, and all the veins; the unalloyed grandeur of the man, the celestial grace of the woman; the majesty of his movements, the delicacy of hers; the inconceivable happiness of thoughts and words with which their admiration of each other is expressed; the breaks, the turns of language, the inspired brilliance, and flow of the strains; yet the inimitable chastity and transparency of the whole style;—fill a sensitive reader with an unfeigned wonder and exaltation, which it would be vain to attempt adequately to record.

I need not say, that all the art and skill alone of all the poets of the earth would never have reached those thoughts, though natural and human, yet mixed with intellectual sublimity and exalted passion, which the poet ascribes to Adam and Eve; and in which his beautiful language could only be attained by following those thoughts in a congenial tone. This is the real secret of Milton's great superiority in the true language of poetry: it is miserable, when flat thoughts are covered by sounding or gaudy words.

The mind of him who undertakes to write poetry can only be worked into a due temperament by the force of a warm and pregnant imagination: in that state he need not seek for phrases or ideas: these rise out of the ideal position to which his genius has transported him: they are not the result of slow reflection, or reasoning, or memory: admit the circumstances, and nature points out the sentiments: but it is the great poet alone who can invent the circumstances; and of all men, Milton could invent them with the most fertility and splendour.

There is another consideration which makes Milton's invention deserving of the most unlimited praise: he was bound down by his awe of religion, and his search after truth and wisdom. When imagination may indulge itself in wanton flights, it may easily blaze by its erratic courses: here the poet had to keep within a prescribed track: he had therefore all his mighty powers at command; he threw his light where it was required.

Again I must say something of the argumentative parts of the poem as applied to this eighth book: these are as profound and excellent as those in the former books: they are not, as Dryden has hinted, flat and unprofitable; but the reverse: they are exalted, closely-argued, nakedly but vigorously expressed, sagacious, moral, instructive, comprehensive, deep in the knowledge of life, consolatory, and fortifying. Whoever supposes them unpoetical, has a narrow and mean conception of poetry: they are never out of place, but result from the leading characters of the poem; and are quite as essential to it, even as its grand, or beautiful, and breathing imagery.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

ADAM inquires concerning celestial motions; is doubtfully answered, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledge: Adam assents; and, still desirous to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remembered since his own creation; his placing in Paradise; his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society; his first meeting and nuptials with Eve; his discourse with the angel thereupon; who, after admonitions repeated, departs.

THE angel ended, and in Adam's ear
 So charming left his voice, that he awhile
 Thought him still speaking, still stood fix'd to hear;
 Then, as new-waked, thus gratefully replied:
 What thanks sufficient, or what recompense 5
 Equal, have I to render thee, divine
 Historian, who thus largely hast allay'd
 The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsafed
 This friendly condescension to relate
 Things else by me unsearchable; now heard 10
 With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
 With glory attributed to the high
 Creator? Something yet of doubt remains,
 Which only thy solution can resolve.
 When I behold this goodly frame, this world, 15
 Of heaven and earth consisting, and compute
 Their magnitudes; this earth, a spot, a grain,
 An atom, with the firmament compared
 And all her number'd stars, that seem to roll
 Spaces incomprehensible (for such 20
 Their distance argues, and their swift return
 Diurnal), merely to officiate light
 Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,
 One day and night; in all their vast survey
 Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire, 25
 How Nature, wise and frugal, could commit
 Such disproportions, with superfluous hand

3. *Stood*: Remained, continued; not his attitude, but his great attention being described.

15. *When I behold, &c.* Milton, after having given so noble an idea of the creation of this new world, takes a proper occasion to show the two great systems, usually called the Ptolemaic and Copernican, the former making the

earth, the latter the sun the centre; and this he does by introducing Adam proposing very judiciously the difficulties that occur in the first, and which was the system most obvious to him.—RICHARDSON.

23. *Punctual spot*, from the Latin *punctum*, “a point;” that is, a spot no bigger than a point.

So many nobler bodies to create,
 Greater so manifold, to this one use,
 For aught appears, and on their orbs impose 30
 Such restless revolution day by day
 Repeated; while the sedentary earth,
 That better might with far less compass move,
 Served by more noble than herself, attains
 Her end without least motion, and receives, 35
 As tribute, such a sumless journey brought
 Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;
 Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.
 So spake our sire, and by his countenance seem'd
 Entering on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve 40
 Perceiving, where she sat retired in sight,
 With lowliness majestic from her seat,
 And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
 Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
 To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom, 45
 Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
 And, touch'd by her fair tendance, gladlier grew.
 Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
 Delighted, or not capable her ear
 Of what was high: such pleasure she reserved, 50
 Adam relating, she sole auditress:
 Her husband the relater she preferr'd
 Before the angel, and of him to ask
 Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute 55
 With conjugal caresses: from his lip
 Not words alone pleased her. O! when meet now
 Such pairs in love and mutual honour join'd?
 With goddess-like demeanour forth she went,
 Not unattended; for on her, as queen, 60
 A pomp of winning Graces waited still,
 And from about her shot darts of desire
 Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.
 And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt proposed,
 Benevolent and facile thus replied: 65
 To ask or search, I blame thee not; for heaven
 Is as the book of God before thee set,
 Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
 His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:
 This to attain, whether heaven move or earth, 70
 Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest

37. *Incorporeal speed*: Speed such as spirits might use.

40. What a lovely picture has the poet here drawn of Eve! As it did not become her to bear a part in the conversation, she modestly sits at a distance, but yet within view. She stays as long as the angel and her husband are discoursing of things which it might concern her and her duty to know; but when

they enter upon abstruser points, then she decently retires. She rises to go forth with lowliness, but yet with majesty and grace. What modesty and what dignity is here!—NEWTON.

71. *It imports not*: It matters not, whether heaven move or earth; whether the Ptolemaic or the Copernican system be true. This knowledge we may still attain; *the rest*,—other more curious

From man or angel the great Architect
 Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
 His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
 Rather admire; or, if they list to try 75
 Conjecture, he his fabric of the heavens
 Hath left to their disputes; perhaps to move
 His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
 Hereafter, when they come to model heaven
 And calculate the stars; how they will wield 80
 The mighty frame; how build, unbuild, contrive,
 To save appearances; how gird the sphere
 With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,
 Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb:
 Already by thy reasoning this I guess, 85
 Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
 That bodies bright and greater should not serve
 The less not bright; nor heaven such journeys run,
 Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
 The benefit. Consider first, that great 90
 Or bright infers not excellence: the earth,
 Though, in comparison of heaven, so small,
 Nor glistening, may of solid good contain
 More plenty than the sun that barren shines;
 Whose virtue on itself works no effect, 95
 But in the fruitful earth; there first received,
 His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.
 Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
 Officious; but to thee, earth's habitant.
 And for the heaven's wide circuit, let it speak 100
 The Maker's high magnificence; who built
 So spacious, and his line stretch'd out so far,
 That man may know he dwells not in his own;
 An edifice too large for him to fill,
 Lodged in a small partition; and the rest 105
 Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.
 The swiftness of those circles átribute,
 Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
 That to corporeal substances could add
 Speed almost spiritual: me thou think'st not slow, 110
 Who since the morning-hour set out from heaven
 Where God resides, and ere mid-day arrived
 In Eden; distance inexpressible
 By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
 Admitting motion in the heavens, to show 115
 Invalid that which thee to doubt it moved;

points of inquiry concerning the heavenly bodies,—God hath done wisely to conceal.—NEWTON.

80. *To calculate*, &c. That is, to make a computation of every thing relating to them.

83. *Cycle*, &c. Expedients of the Ptolemaics to solve the apparent difficulties in their system. *Cycle*, an imaginary circle

in the heavens: *epicycle*, a circle upon a circle.

103. *That man may know*, &c. A fine reflection, and confirmed by the authority of the greatest philosophers, who seem to attribute the first notions of religion in man to his observing the grandeur of the universe.—STILLINGFLEET.

Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
 To thee, who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
 God, to remove his ways from human sense,
 Placed heaven from earth so far, that earthly sight, 120
 If it presume, might err in things too high,
 And no advantage gain. What if the sun
 Be centre to the world; and other stars,
 By his attractive virtue and their own
 Incited, dance about him various rounds? 125
 Their wandering course, now high, now low, then hid,
 Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
 In six thou seest; and what if seventh to these
 The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,
 Insensibly three different motions move? 130
 Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
 Moved contrary with thwart obliquities;
 Or save the sun his labour, and that swift
 Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb supposed,
 Invisible else above all stars, the wheel 135
 Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,
 If earth, industrious of herself, fetch day
 Travelling east, and with her part averse
 From the sun's beam meet night, her other part
 Still luminous by his ray. What if that light, 140
 Sent from her through the wide transpicious air,
 To the terrestrial moon be as a star,
 Enlightening her by day, as she by night
 This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,
 Fields and inhabitants: her spots thou seest 145
 As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
 Fruits in her soften'd soil, for some to eat
 Allotted there; and other suns perhaps,
 With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry,
 Communicating male and female light; 150
 Which two great sexes animate the world,
 Stored in each orb perhaps with some that live:
 For such vast room in nature unpossess'd
 By living soul, desert and desolate,
 Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute 155
 Each orb a glimpse of light, convey'd so far
 Down to this habitable, which returns

Copernicus

128. *In six*: In the moon and "five other wandering fires."

131. The meaning is, you must either ascribe these motions to several spheres crossing and thwarting one another with crooked and indirect turnings and windings, or you must attribute them to the earth, and *save the sun his labour*; and save, also, the labour of what was called the *primum mobile*, "the first mover,"—*that swift nocturnal and diurnal rhomb*, which, in ancient astronomy, was an imaginary sphere above the planets and fixed stars, and therefore said to be *invisible*

above all stars. This "first mover" was supposed to carry all the lower spheres along with it. See note iii, 482.

136. *Which needs not*: That is, you need not believe this if the earth, by revolving on her own axis from west to east, (*travelling east*), enjoys day and night alternately.

150. *Male and female light*. The sun was supposed to communicate male, and the moon female light: of course, a ridiculous fancy of the old astronomers.

157. *This habitable*: An adjective used substantively, earth being understood.

Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
 But whether thus these things, or whether not;
 Whether the sun, predominant in heaven, 160
 Rise on the earth; or earth rise on the sun;
 He from the east his flaming road begin,
 Or she from west her silent course advance,
 With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps
 On her soft axle; while she paces even, 165
 And bears thee soft with the smooth air along;
 Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;
 Leave them to God above; him serve and fear.
 Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
 Wherever placed, let him dispose; joy thou 170
 In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
 And thy fair Eve; heaven is for thee too high
 To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
 Think only what concerns thee, and thy being;
 Dream not of other worlds; what creatures there 175
 Live, in what state, condition, or degree:
 Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd,
 Not of earth only, but of highest heaven.
 To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, replied:
 How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure 180
 Intelligence of heaven, angel serene!
 And, freed from intricacies, taught to live
 The easiest way; nor with perplexing thoughts
 To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
 God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares, 185
 And not molest us; unless we ourselves
 Seek them with wandering thoughts, and notions vain.
 But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
 Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end;
 Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn, 190
 That not to know at large of things remote
 From use, obscure and subtle; but to know
 That which before us lies in daily life,
 Is the prime wisdom: what is more, is fume,
 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence; 195
 And renders us, in things that most concern,
 Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek.
 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
 Useful; whence, haply, mention may arise 200
 Of something not unseasonable to ask,
 By sufferance, and thy wonted favour, deign'd.
 Thee I have heard relating what was done
 Ere my remembrance; now, hear me relate
 My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard: 205
 And day is not yet spent; till then thou seest
 How subtly to detain thee I devise;
 Inviting thee to hear while I relate;
 Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply:

For, while I sit with thee, I seem in heaven; 210
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
 Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst
 And hunger both, from labour at the hour
 Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,
 Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine 215
 Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.
 To whom thus Raphael answer'd heavenly meek:
 Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men,
 Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
 Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd 220
 Inward and outward both, his image fair:
 Speaking or mute, all comeliness and grace:
 Attends thee; and each word, each motion forms:
 Nor less think we in heaven of thee on earth
 Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire 225
 Gladly into the ways of God with man:
 For God, we see, hath honour'd thee, and set
 On man his equal love: say therefore on;
 For I that day was absent, as befell,
 Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure, 230
 Far on excursion toward the gates of hell;
 Squared in full legion, (such command we had,)
 To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
 Or enemy, while God was in his work;
 Lest he, incensed at such eruption bold, 235
 Destruction with creation might have mix'd.
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt:
 But us he sends upon his high behests
 For state, as Sovran King; and to inure
 Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut 240
 The dismal gates, and barricadoed strong;
 But long ere our approaching heard within
 Noise, other than the sound of dance or song;
 Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
 Glad we return'd up to the coasts of light 245
 Ere sabbath evening: so we had in charge.
 But thy relation now; for I attend,
 Pleased with thy words no less than thou with mine.
 So spake the godlike power, and thus our sire:
 For man to tell how human life began 250
 Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
 Desire with thee still longer to converse
 Induced me. As new waked from soundest sleep,
 Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid,
 In balmy sweat; which with his beams the sun 255
 Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.
 Straight toward heaven my wondering eyes I turn'd,
 And gazed awhile the ample sky; till, raised

216. See Psalm cxix. 103.

218. Alluding to Psalm xlv. 2.

225. So the angel in Rev. xxii. 9.

229. *That day*: The sixth day of creation.

By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
 As thitherward endeavouring, and upright 260
 Stood on my feet: about me round I saw
 Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
 And liquid lapse of murmuring streams; by these
 Creatures that lived and moved, and walk'd or flew;
 Birds on the branches warbling; all things smiled; 265
 With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.
 Myself I then perused, and limb by limb
 Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
 With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause, 270
 Knew not: to speak I tried, and forthwith spake;
 My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
 Whate'er I saw. Thou sun, said I, fair light,
 And thou enlighten'd earth, so fresh and gay,
 Ye hills, and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains, 275
 And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
 Tell, if ye saw, how I came thus, how here?
 Not of myself; by some great Maker then,
 In goodness and in power pre-eminent:
 Tell me, how may I know him, how adore; 280
 From whom I have that thus I move and live,
 And feel that I am happier than I know?
 While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither,
 From where I first drew air, and first beheld
 This happy light; when answer none return'd, 285
 On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,
 Pensive I sat me down: there gentle sleep
 First found me, and with soft oppression seized
 My drowsed sense; untroubled, though I thought
 I then was passing to my former state 290
 Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
 When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
 Whose inward apparition gently moved
 My fancy to believe I yet had being,
 And lived: one came, methought, of shape divine, 295
 And said, Thy mansion wants thee, Adam; rise,
 First man, of men innumerable ordain'd
 First father! call'd by thee, I come thy guide
 To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepared.
 So saying, by the hand he took me raised, 300
 And over fields and waters, as in air
 Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
 A woody mountain; whose high top was plain,
 A circuit wide enclosed, with goodliest trees
 Planted, with walks and bowers; that what I saw 305
 Of earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree,
 Loaden with fairest fruit that hung to the eye

266. *With fragrance.* By *fragrance* Milton has endeavoured to give the idea of that exquisite and delicious joy of heart | Homer so often expresses by *iaiverai*, a word that signifies the fragrance that flowers emit after a shower or dew.

Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite
 To pluck and eat; whereat I waked, and found
 Before mine eyes all real, as the dream 310
 Had lively shadow'd: here had new begun
 My wandering, had not He, who was my guide
 Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,
 Presence Divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
 In adoration at his feet I fell 315
 Submit: he rear'd me, and, Whom thou sought'st I am,
 Said mildly; Authour of all this thou seest
 Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
 This Paradise I give thee; count it thine
 To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat: 320
 Of every tree that in the garden grows
 Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:
 But of the tree, whose operation brings
 Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
 The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith, 325
 Amid the garden, by the tree of life,
 Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,
 And shun the bitter consequence: for know,
 The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
 Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt die, 330
 From that day mortal; and this happy state
 Shalt lose, expell'd from hence into a world
 Of woe and sorrow. Sternly he pronounced
 The rigid interdiction, which resounds
 Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice 335
 Not to incur: but soon his clear aspect
 Return'd, and gracious purpose thus renew'd:
 Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth
 To thee and to thy race I give; as lords
 Possess it, and all things that therein live, 340
 Or live in sea or air; beast, fish, and fowl.
 In sign whereof, each bird and beast behold
 After their kinds; I bring them to receive
 From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
 With low subjection; understand the same 345
 Of fish within their watery residence,
 Not hither summon'd, since they cannot change
 Their element, to draw the thinner air.
 As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
 Approaching two and two; these cowering low 350
 With blandishment; each bird stoop'd on his wing.
 I named them as they pass'd, and understood
 Their nature; with such knowledge God endued
 My sudden apprehension: but in these

323. *But of the tree.* This being the great hinge on which the whole poem turns, Milton has marked it strongly: he dwells, expatiates upon it, (from line

323 to 336,) repeating, enforcing, fixing every word: it is all nerve and energy.—RICHARDSON.

354. From the short account given by

I found not what methought I wanted still; 355
 And to the heavenly Vision thus presumed:
 O, by what name, for thou above all these,
 Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,
 Surpassest far my naming; how may I
 Adore thee, Authour of this universe, 360
 And all this good to man? for whose well-being
 So amply, and with hands so liberal,
 Thou hast provided all things: but with me
 I see not who partakes. In solitude
 What happiness, who can enjoy alone, 365
 Or, all enjoying, what contentment find?
 Thus I presumptuous; and the Vision bright,
 As with a smile more brighten'd, thus replied:
 What call'st thou solitude? Is not the earth
 With various living creatures, and the air 370
 Replenish'd, and all these at thy command
 To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not
 Their language and their ways? They also know,
 And reason not contemptibly: with these
 Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large. 375
 So spake the Universal Lord, and seem'd
 So ordering: I, with leave of speech implored,
 And humble deprecation, thus replied:
 Let not my words offend thee, heavenly Power;
 My Maker, be propitious while I speak. 380
 Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
 And these inferiour far beneath me set?
 Among unequals what society
 Can sort, what harmony, or true delight?
 Which must be mutual, in proportion due 385
 Given and received: but, in disparity,
 The one intense, the other still remiss,
 Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
 Tedious alike: of fellowship I speak,
 Such as I seek, fit to participate 390
 All rational delight; wherein the brute
 Cannot be human consort: they rejoice
 Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
 So fitly them in pairs thou hast combined:
 Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl 395
 So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;
 Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.
 Whereto the Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd:
 A nice and subtle happiness, I see,

Moses in Genesis, (ii. 19, 20,) what a noble episode, what a divine dialogue has our author raised!—NEWTON.

379. Here Milton had in his mind, perhaps, Abraham's intercession for Sodom, Gen. xviii. 30.

386. *But in disparity, &c.* That is, inequality, such as between brute and

rational; *the one intense*, man high, and strained to nobler understanding; *the other still remiss*, the animal let down, and grovelling: these can never suit together. A musical metaphor, from strings, of which the stretched and highest give a sharp and smart sound; the slack, a flat and heavy one.

Thou to thyself propos'est, in the choice 400
 Of thy associates, Adam! and wilt taste
 No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
 What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
 Seem I to thee sufficiently possess'd
 Of happiness, or not? who am alone 405
 From all eternity; for none I know
 Second to me or like, equal much less.
 How have I then with whom to hold converse,
 Save with the creatures which I made, and those
 To me inferiour, infinite descents 410
 Beneath what other creatures are to thee?
 He ceased; I lowly answer'd: To attain
 The highth and depth of thy eternal ways
 All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!
 Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee 415
 Is no deficiencie found: not so is man,
 But in degree; the cause of his desire
 By conversation with his like to help,
 Or solace his defects. No need that thou
 Shouldst propagate, already Infinite; 420
 And through all numbers absolute, though One:
 But man by number is to manifest
 His single imperfection, and beget
 Like of his like, his image multiplied,
 In unity defective; which requires 425
 Collateral love, and dearest amity.
 Thou in thy secrecy, although alone,
 Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
 Social communication; yet, so pleased,
 Canst raise thy creature to what highth thou wilt 430
 Of union or communion, deified:
 I, by conversing, cannot these erect
 From prone; nor in their ways complacence find.
 Thus I embolden'd spake, and freedom used
 Permissive, and acceptance found: which gain'd 435
 This answer from the gracious Voice Divine:
 Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleased:
 And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,
 Which thou hast rightly named, but of thyself;
 Expressing well the spirit within thee free, 440
 My image, not imparted to the brute;
 Whose fellowship therefore, unmeet for thee,
 Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike;
 And be so minded still: I, ere thou spak'st,
 Knew it not good for man to be alone; 445

421. *And through all numbers absolute.* Milton's mind was so thoroughly imbued with the classics, that he constantly uses English words derived from the Latin in their original sense. Here the word *numbers* is used in one of the senses of *numerus*; namely, "a part," "a particu-

lar;" in *omnibus numeris*, "through all numbers," means perfect in every part: so, *habere omnes numeros*, "to have every requisite," "to have every good quality."

423. *His single:* That is, the imperfection of him as an individual, from being single.

And no such company as then thou saw'st
 Intended thee; for trial only brought,
 To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet:
 What next I bring shall please thee, be assured,
 Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self, 450
 Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.

He ended, or I heard no more; for now
 My earthly by his heavenly overpower'd,
 Which it had long stood under, strain'd to the highth
 In that celestial colloquy sublime, 455

As with an object that excels the sense,
 Dazzled and spent, sunk down; and sought repair
 Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
 By nature as in aid, and closed mine eyes.

Mine eyes he closed, but open left the cell
 Of fancy, my internal sight; by which, 460

Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,
 Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
 Still glorious before whom awake I stood;
 Who stooping, open'd my left side, and took 465

From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
 And life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,
 But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd:
 The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands;

Under his forming hands a creature grew,
 Man-like, but different sex; so lovely fair, 470

That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
 Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd
 And in her looks; which from that time infused
 Sweetness into my heart unfelt before, 475

And into all things from her air inspired
 The spirit of love and amorous delight.
 She disappear'd, and left me dark; I waked
 To find her, or for ever to deplore

Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure: 480

When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
 Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
 With what all earth or heaven could bestow
 To make her amiable; on she came,

Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen, 485

And guided by his voice; nor uninform'd
 Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage rites:
 Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
 In every gesture dignity and love.

I, overjoy'd, could not forbear aloud: 490

This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfill'd
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
 Giver of all things fair! but fairest this
 Of all thy gifts! nor enviest. I now see

Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself 495

Before me: Woman is her name; of man
 Extracted: for this cause he shall forego

Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
 And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul. |
 She heard me thus; and though divinely brought, 500
 Yet innocence, and virgin modesty,
 Her virtue, and the conscience of her worth,
 That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but, retired,
 The more desirable; or, to say all, 505
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
 Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turn'd:
 I follow'd her; she what was honour knew,
 And with obsequious majesty approved
 My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower 510
 I led her blushing like the morn: all heaven,
 And happy constellations, on that hour
 Shed their selectest influence; the earth
 Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;
 Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs 515
 Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
 Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
 Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
 Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening-star
 On his hill top, to light the bridal lamp. 520
 Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
 My story to the sum of earthly bliss,
 Which I enjoy; and must confess to find
 In all things else delight indeed, but such
 As, used or not, works in the mind no change, 525
 Nor vehement desire; these delicacies
 I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,
 Walks, and the melody of birds: but here
 Far otherwise, transported I behold,
 Transported touch; here passion first I felt, 530
 Commotion strange! in all enjoyments else
 Superiour and unmoved; here only weak
 Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.
 Or nature fail'd in me, and left some part
 Not proof enough such object to sustain; 535
 Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps
 More than enough; at least on her bestow'd
 Too much of ornament, in outward show
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.
 For well I understand in the prime end 540
 Of nature her the inferiour, in the mind
 And inward faculties, which most excel:
 In outward also her resembling less
 His image who made both, and less expressing
 The character of that dominion given 545
 O'er other creatures: yet, when I approach

502. *Conscience*: Consciousness.546. Let the fair reader, who may feel | some degree of resentment against our
 great poet because she thinks, that in

Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
 And in herself complete, so well to know
 Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
 Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best: 550
 All higher knowledge in her presence falls
 Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her
 Loses discountenanced, and like folly shows;
 Authority and reason on her wait,
 As one intended first, not after made 555
 Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
 Greatness of mind, and nobleness, their seat
 Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
 About her, as a guard angelic placed.
 To whom the angel with contracted brow: 560
 Accuse not nature; she hath done her part,
 Do thou but thine; and be not diffident
 Of wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou
 Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh,
 By attributing overmuch to things 565
 Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
 For, what admirest thou, what transports thee so?
 An outside? fair, no doubt, and worthy well
 Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love;
 Not thy subjection: weigh with her thyself; 570
 Then value: oft-times nothing profits more
 Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right
 Well managed; of that skill the more thou know'st,
 The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
 And to realities yield all her shows: 575
 Made so adorn for thy delight the more,
 So awful, that with honour thou mayst love
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
 But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
 Is propagated, seem such dear delight 580
 Beyond all other; think the same vouchsafed
 To cattle and each beast; which would not be
 To them made common and divulged, if aught
 Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue
 The soul of man, or passion in him move. 585
 What higher in her society thou find'st
 Attractive, human, rational, love still;
 In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
 Wherein true love consists not: love refines
 The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat 590
 In reason, and is judicious; is the scale

drawing the character of our first parents, he has not done justice to the woman, but has made her, in every respect, materially inferior to her husband, only read the next thirteen verses, and I have no doubt that the author will completely make his peace with her. The whole

passage is exquisitely delightful, and forms one of the eminent beauties of this book; which, in this particular, is rich in beautiful passages.—DUNSTON.

573. *That skill*: Skill in self-esteem

576. *Adorn*: For adorned.

By which to heavenly love thou mayst ascend,
 Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause,
 Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.
 To whom thus, half abash'd, Adam replied: 595
 Neither her outside form'd so fair, nor aught
 In procreation common to all kinds,
 (Though higher of the genial bed by far,
 And with mysterious reverence I deem,)
 So much delights me, as those graceful acts, 600
 Those thousand decencies, that daily flow
 From all her words and actions, mix'd with love
 And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
 Union of mind, or in us both one soul;
 Harmony to behold in wedded pair 605
 More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.
 Yet these subject not: I to thee disclose
 What inward thence I feel, not therefore foil'd;
 Who meet with various objects, from the sense
 Variously representing; yet, still free, 610
 Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
 To love, thou blam'st me not; for love, thou say'st,
 Leads up to heaven, is both the way and guide;
 Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask:
 Love not the heavenly spirits, and how their love 615
 Express they? by looks only? or do they mix
 Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?
 To whom the angel, with a smile that glow'd
 Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue,
 Answer'd: Let it suffice thee that thou know'st 620
 Us happy; and without love no happiness.
 Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st,
 (And pure thou wert created,) we enjoy
 In eminence; and obstacle find none
 Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars: 625
 Easier than air with air, if spirits embrace,
 Total they mix, union of pure with pure
 Desiring; nor restrain'd conveyance need,
 As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.
 But I can now no more; the parting sun, 630
 Beyond the earth's green cape and verdant isles

598. *Genial bed*. "Milton had before applied the epithet 'mysterious' to marriage, by which he means something not proper to be divulged, but to be revered like the mysteries."—NEWTON. The word "procreation" is to be supplied before the preposition "of."

607. *Subject not*: Bring me not under subjection.

610. *Representing*. The difficulty of this passage vanishes when we make this a compound word, *re-presenting*, and giving to *re* its original force of "again." As if he had said: *I who meet with the various objects that present themselves again*

and again to me, variously, from the different senses, am not on that account foiled, or baffled or confounded in my judgment, but feel that I am still free to approve of the best, and to follow what I approve.

630. The conversation was now become of such a nature, that it was proper to put an end to it; and he very properly closes his discourse with those moral instructions which should make the most lasting impression on the mind of Adam, and to deliver which was the principal end and design of the angel's coming.—

631. *Green cape*, Cape de verd.

Hesperian, sets; my signal to depart.
 Be strong, live happy, and love! but, first of all,
 Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep
 His great command: take heed, lest passion sway 635
 Thy judgment to do aught, which else free will
 Would not admit: thine, and of all thy sons,
 The weal or woe in thee is placed; beware!
 I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
 And all the blest: stand fast; to stand or fall 640
 Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.
 Perfect within, no outward aid require;
 And all temptation to transgress repel.
 So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus
 Follow'd with benediction:—Since to part, 645
 Go, heavenly guest, ethereal messenger,
 Sent from whose Sovran Goodness I adore!
 Gentle to me and affable hath been
 Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever
 With grateful memory: thou to mankind 650
 Be good and friendly still, and oft return!
 So parted they; the angel up to heaven
 From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower.

637. *Admit*: In the sense of the Latin *admitto*, "to commit."

REMARKS ON BOOK IX.

THE ninth book is raised upon that brief account in Scripture, wherein we are told that the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field; that he tempted the woman to eat of the forbidden tree; that she was overcome by this temptation; and that Adam followed her example. From these few particulars Milton has formed one of the most entertaining fables that invention ever produced: he has disposed of these several circumstances among so many agreeable and natural fictions of his own, that his whole story looks only like a comment upon Sacred Writ, or rather seems to be a full and complete relation of what the other is only an epitome. I have insisted the longer on this consideration, as I look upon the disposition and contrivance of the fable to be the principal beauty of the ninth book, which has more story in it, and is fuller of incidents than any other in the whole poem. Satan's traversing the globe, and still keeping within the shadow of the night, as fearing to be discovered by the angel of the sun, who had before detected him, is one of those beautiful imaginations with which he introduces this his second series of adventures. Having examined the nature of every creature, and found out one who was the most proper for his purpose, he again returns to Paradise; and, to avoid discovery, sinks by night with a river that ran under the garden, and rises up again through a fountain that issued from it by the Tree of Life. He is then described as gliding through the garden, under the resemblance of a mist, in order to find out that creature in which he designed to tempt our first parents. This description has something in it very poetical and surprising.

The author afterwards gives us a description of the morning, which is wonderfully suitable to a divine poem, and peculiar to that first season of nature. He represents the earth, before it was cursed, as a great altar, breathing out its incense from all parts, and sending up a pleasant savour to the nostrils of its Creator; to which he adds a noble idea of Adam and Eve, as offering their morning worship, and filling up the universal concert of praise and adoration.

The subtle wiles which are put in practice by the tempter, when he found Eve separated from her husband,—the many pleasing images of nature which are intermixed in this part of the story, with its gradual and regular progress to the fatal catastrophe,—are so very remarkable, that it would be superfluous to point out their respective beauties.

That secret intoxication of pleasure, with all those transient flushings of guilt and joy, which the poet represents in our first parents upon their eating the forbidden fruit, to those flaggings of spirit, damps of sorrow, and mutual accusations which succeed it, are conceived with a wonderful imagination, and described in very natural sentiments. When Dido, in the fourth *Æneid*, yielded to that fatal temptation which ruined her, Virgil tells us, the earth trembled, the heavens were filled with flashes of lightning, and the nymphs howled upon the mountain-tops. Milton, in the same poetical spirit, has described all nature upon Eve's eating the forbidden fruit: upon Adam's falling into the same guilt, the whole creation appears a second time in convulsions. As all nature suffered by the guilt of our first parents, these symptoms of trouble and consternation are wonderfully imagined, not only as prodigies, but as marks of her sympathizing in the fall of man.—ADDISON.

The ninth book is that on which the whole fate and fall of man turns; and so far is the most important. It is called the most tender. If the submission to sensual human passions be tenderness, it is so; taking the resistance to those passions to be loftiness. The serpent himself appears to have been enamoured of Eve's beauty and loveliness of mien, and for a moment to have repented of the evil he was plotting to bring upon her.

The descriptive parts glow with a uniform freshness, splendour, and nature; with a compactness of imagery, and a simple and naked force of language, which make all pictures of other poets fade away before them. There never appears a superfluous word, or one which is not pregnant with thought and matter.

The sentiments have a weight and a profundity of wisdom which seem like inspiration: out of every incident arise such reflections as have the spell of oracles.

All that we know from the Mosaic history is, that the serpent tempted Eve, and Eve tempted Adam to eat of the forbidden fruit; but we do not know by what wiles this sin was brought about. We may suppose that by the serpent the operation of the evil passions of contradiction, disobedience, rebellion, and skepticism was meant; just as we may suppose that Eve persisted in roaming alone in spite of Adam's dissuasions, merely because her pride was thwarted by her husband's fear that "some harm should befall her" in his absence.

Critics will say, that had she been more purely virtuous, Heaven would not have decreed the loss of Paradise; and therefore that it was of the essence of the story to represent her thus guilty. It may be deemed highly presumptuous in me to suggest that Milton might have represented her equally guilty, with more probability and more spirituality. He might have painted mental delusions rather than the intoxicating pleasures of the senses: it was open to him to follow his own course in the inventions of his overflowing imagination; but it could never be necessary to Milton's genius to dwell on matter rather than on spirit. The luxuriance of description has made this a favourite book of the poem: it is this luxuriance which I think misplaced in so holy a work.—SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

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BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

SATAN having encompassed the earth, with meditated guile returns, as a mist, by night into Paradise; enters into the serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labours, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each labouring apart: Adam consents not, alleging the danger, lest that enemy, of whom they were forewarned, should attempt her found alone: Eve, loth to be thought not circum-spect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make trial of her strength: Adam at last yields; the serpent finds her alone: his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking; with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve, wondering to hear the serpent speak, asks how he attained to human speech, and such understanding, not till now: the serpent answers, that by tasting of a certain tree in the garden he attained both to speech and reason, till then void of both: Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the tree of knowledge forbidden; the serpent, now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat; she, pleased with the taste, deliberates awhile whether to impart thereof to Adam or not; at last brings him of the fruit; relates what persuaded her to eat thereof: Adam, at first amazed, but perceiving her lost, resolves, through vehemence of love, to perish with her; and, extenuating the trespass, eats also of the fruit: the effects thereof in them both; they seek to cover their nakedness; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

No more of talk where God or angel guest
With man, as with his friend, familiar used
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast; permitting him the while
Venial discourse unblamed. I now must change 5
Those notes to tragic; foul distrust, and breach
Disloyal on the part of man, revolt
And disobedience: on the part of Heaven
Now alienated, distance and distaste,
Anger and just rebuke, and judgment given, 10
That brought into this world a world of woe,
Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery,
Death's harbinger: sad task! yet argument
Not less, but more heroic, than the wrath
Of stern Achilles on his foe pursued 15
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespoused;

1. *Where God, &c.* The sense is, where God, or rather the angel sent by him, and acting as his proxy, used to sit familiarly with man as with his friend.

12. *Misery* here means sickness, disease, and all sorts of mortal pains.

Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
 Perplex'd the Greek, and Cytherea's son;
 If answerable style I can obtain 20
 Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
 Her nightly visitation unimplored,
 And dictates to me slumbering, or inspires
 Easy my unpremeditated verse:
 Since first this subject for heroic song 25
 Pleased me, long choosing and beginning late;
 Not sedulous by nature to indite
 Wars, hitherto the only argument
 Heroic deem'd; chief mastery to dissect
 With long and tedious havoc fabled knights, 30
 In battles feign'd; the better fortitude
 Of patience and heroic martyrdom
 Unsung; or to describe races and games,
 Or tilting furniture, imblazon'd shields,
 Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds, 35
 Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
 At joust and tournament; then marshall'd feast
 Served up in hall with sewers and seneshals;
 The skill of artifice or office mean,
 Not that which justly gives heroic name 40
 To person or to poem. Me, of these
 Nor skill'd nor studious, higher argument
 Remains; sufficient of itself to raise
 That name, unless an age too late, or cold
 Climate, or years, damp my intended wing 45
 Depress'd; and much they may, if all be mine,
 Not hers, who brings it nightly to my ear.
 — The sun was sunk, and after him the star
 Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
 Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter 50
 'Twixt day and night; and now from end to end
 Night's hemisphere had veil'd the horizon round;
 When Satan, who late fled before the threats
 Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improved
 In meditated fraud and malice, bent 55
 On man's destruction, maugre what might hap
 Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.
 By night he fled, and at midnight return'd

26. *Long choosing*. Milton early designed to write an epic poem on the subject of King Arthur; but it was laid aside, though it was not till after the Restoration that he set about the present work in earnest; so that he was long choosing and beginning late.

35. *Impresses quaint*: emblems and devices on the shield, alluding to the name or the fortune of the wearer.

36. *Bases*: the mantle which hung down from the middle to about the knees or lower, worn by knights on

horseback: from the French *bas*; *à bas*, "upon the ground."

37. *The marshal* placed the guests according to their rank, and saw that they were properly served; the *sewer* (from the French *asseoir*, to sit down,) marched in before the meats, and arranged them on the table; the *seneshal* was the household steward.—TODD.

41. *Of these*, for *in these*, Latinè.

45. *Or years*. Milton was nearly sixty years old when this poem was published

From compassing the earth; cautious of day,
 Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried 60
 His entrance, and forewarn'd the cherubim
 That kept their watch; thence full of anguish driven,
 The space of seven continued nights he rode
 With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line
 He circled; four times cross'd the car of night 65
 From pole to pole, traversing each colure;
 On the eighth return'd; and, on the coast averse
 From entrance or cherubic watch, by stealth
 Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
 Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change. 70
 Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,
 Into a gulf shot underground; till part
 Rose up a fountain by the tree of life:
 In with the river sunk, and with it rose,
 Satan, involved in rising mist; then sought 75
 Where to lie hid: sea he had search'd, and land
 From Eden over Pontus, and the pool
 Mæotis, up beyond the river Ob;
 Downward as far antarctic; and in length,
 West from Orontes to the ocean barr'd 80
 At Darien; thence to the land where flows
 Ganges and Indus: thus the orb he roam'd
 With narrow search; and with inspection deep
 Consider'd every creature, which of all
 Most opportune might serve his wiles; and found 85
 The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
 Him, after long debate irresolute
 Of thoughts revolved, his final sentence chose;
 Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
 To enter, and his dark suggestions hide 90
 From sharpest sight; for, in the wily snake
 Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,
 As from his wit and native subtlety
 Proceeding; which, in other beasts observed,
 Doubt might beget of diabolic power 95
 Active within, beyond the sense of brute.
 Thus he resolved; but first from inward grief
 His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd:
 O earth, how like to heaven, if not preferr'd
 More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built 100

59. *Compassing the earth.* Job i. 7.

63. Satan was three days compassing the earth from east to west, and four days from north to south, but still kept always in the shade of night; and on the eighth day returned by stealth into Paradise.—NEWTON.

66. *Each colure.* The colures are two great circles, intersecting each other at right angles in the poles of the world, and encompassing the earth from north to south.

77. As we before had an astronomical, so here we have a geographical account of Satan's peregrinations.—NEWTON.

78. *Ob*, the Oby; *Orontes*, a river of Syria that empties into the gulf of Issus; *Darien*, the isthmus that seems to set a bar to the Atlantic, preventing its mingling with the waters of the Pacific

86. Gen. iii. 1.

89. *Fittest imp*: Fittest stock to graft his devilish fraud upon.—HUME.

With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
 For what God, after better, worse would build?
 Terrestrial heaven, danced round by other heavens
 That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
 Light above light, for thee alone, as seems; 105
 In thee concentrating all their precious beams
 Of sacred influence! As God in heaven
 Is centre, yet extends to all; so thou,
 Centring, receiv'st from all those orbs: in thee,
 Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears 110
 Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
 Of creatures animate with gradual life,
 Of growth, sense, reason, all summ'd up in man.
 With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,
 If I could joy in aught! sweet interchange 115
 Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
 Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crown'd,
 Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these
 Find place or refuge; and the more I see
 Pleasures about me, so much more I feel 120
 Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
 Of contraries: all good to me becomes
 Bane, and in heaven much worse would be my state.
 But neither here seek I, no, nor in heaven
 To dwell, unless by mastering heaven's Supreme: 125
 Nor hope to be myself less miserable
 By what I seek, but others to make such
 As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
 For only in destroying I find ease
 To my relentless thoughts; and, him destroy'd, 130
 Or won to what may work his utter loss,
 For whom all this was made; all this will soon
 Follow, as to him link'd in weal or woe:
 In woe then; that destruction wide may range.
 To me shall be the glory sole among 135
 The infernal powers, in one day to have marr'd
 What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days
 Continued making; and who knows how long
 Before had been contriving? though perhaps
 Not longer than since I, in one night, freed 140
 From servitude inglorious well nigh half
 The angelic name, and thinner left the throng
 Of his adorers: he, to be avenged,
 And to repair his numbers thus impair'd,
 Whether such virtue spent of old now fail'd 145
 More angels to create, if they at least
 Are his created; or, to spite us more,

113. *Of growth, &c.* The three kinds of life, vegetable, animal, and rational, of all of which man partakes.

119. *Place:* Abiding-place.

130. *Him.* Milton has in two or three

places used the objective absolute instead of the nominative.

146. *If they at least, &c.;* thus doubting whether the angels were created by God.

Determined to advance into our room
 A creature form'd of earth; and him endow,
 Exalted from so base original, 150
 With heavenly spoils, our spoils: what he decreed,
 He effected; man he made, and for him built
 Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
 Him lord pronounced; and, O indignity!
 Subjected to his service angel-wings, 155
 And flaming ministers to watch and tend
 Their earthy charge: of these the vigilance
 I dread; and, to elude, thus wrapp'd in mist
 Of midnight vapour glide obscure; and pry
 In every bush and brake, where hap may find 160
 The serpent sleeping; in whose mazy folds
 To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
 O foul descent! that I, who erst contended
 With gods to sit the highest, am now constrain'd
 Into a beast; and, mix'd with bestial slime, 165
 This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
 That to the highth of deity aspired!
 But what will not ambition and revenge
 Descend to? Who aspires, must down as low
 As high he soar'd; obnoxious, first or last, 170
 To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
 Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils:
 Let it; I reck not, so it light well aim'd,
 Since higher I fall short, on him who next
 Provokes my envy, this new favourite 175
 Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite;
 Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised
 From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid.
 So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,
 Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on 180
 His midnight search, where soonest he might find
 The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
 In labyrinth of many a round self-roll'd,
 His head the midst, well stored with subtle wiles:
 Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den, 185
 Nor nocent yet; but, on the grassy herb,
 Fearless unfear'd he slept: in at his mouth
 The devil enter'd; and his brutal sense,
 In heart or head, possessing, soon inspired
 With act intelligential; but his sleep 190
 Disturb'd not, waiting close the approach of morn.
 Now, when as sacred light began to dawn

156 and 157. See Ps. civ. 4 and xci. 11, and Heb. i. 14.

173. No speech in the whole work is, in my opinion, worked up with greater judgment, or better suited to the character of the speaker, than this of Satan's. There is all the horror and malignity of a fiend-like spirit expressed; and yet this is so artfully tempered with Satan's

starts of recollection upon the meanness and folly of what he was going to undertake, as plainly show the remains of the archangel and the ruins of a superior nature.—THYER.

192. *Sacred light.* This is the morning of the ninth day, as far as we can reckon the time in this poem;—the last of man's innocence and happiness.—NEWTON.

In Eden on the humid flowers, that breathed
 Their morning incense, when all things, that breathe,
 From the earth's great altar send up silent praise 195
 To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
 With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
 And join'd their vocal worship to the quire
 Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
 The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs: 200
 Then commune, how that day they best may ply
 Their growing work; for much their work outgrew
 The hands' dispatch of two, gardening so wide;
 And Eve first to her husband thus began:
 Adam, well may we labour still to dress 205
 This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,
 Our pleasant task enjoin'd; but, till more hands
 Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
 Luxurious by restraint: what we by day
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind, 210
 One night or two with wanton growth derides,
 Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,
 Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present:
 Let us divide our labours; thou, where choice
 Leads thee, or where most needs; whether to wind 215
 The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
 The clasping ivy where to climb: while I,
 In yonder spring of roses intermix'd
 With myrtle, find what to redress till noon:
 For, while so near each other thus all day 220
 Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
 Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
 Casual discourse draw on; which intermits
 Our day's work, brought to little, though begun
 Early, and the hour of supper comes unearn'd? 225
 To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd:
 Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
 Compare above all living creatures dear!
 Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd
 How we might best fulfil the work which here 230
 God hath assign'd us; nor of me shalt pass
 Unpraised; for nothing lovelier can be found
 In woman, than to study household good,
 And good works in her husband to promote.
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed 235
 Labour, as to debar us when we need
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
 Of looks and smiles; for smiles from reason flow,
 To brute denied, and are of love the food; 240
 Love, not the lowest end of human life.
 For not to irksome toil, but to delight,

He made us, and delight to reason join'd.
 These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
 Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide 245
 As we need walk; till younger hands ere long
 Assist us: but if much converse perhaps
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield;
 For solitude sometimes is best society,
 And short retirement urges sweet return. 250
 But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
 Befall thee sever'd from me; for thou know'st
 What hath been warn'd us; what malicious foe,
 Envyng our happiness, and of his own
 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame 255
 By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
 Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
 His wish and best advantage, us asunder;
 Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each
 To other speedy aid might lend at need: 260
 Whether his first design be to withdraw
 Our fealty from God; or to disturb
 Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
 Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more;
 Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side 265
 That gave thee being, still shades thee, and protects.
 The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
 Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
 Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.
 To whom the virgin majesty of Eve, 270
 As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
 With sweet austere composure thus replied:
 Offspring of heaven and earth, and all earth's lord!
 That such an enemy we have, who seeks
 Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn, 275
 And from the parting angel overheard,
 As in a shady nook I stood behind,
 Just then return'd at shut of evening flowers.
 But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
 To God or thee, because we have a foe 280
 May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
 His violence thou fear'st not; being such
 As we, not capable of death or pain,
 Can either not receive, or can repel.
 His fraud is then thy fear; which plain infers 285
 Thy equal fear, that my firm faith and love
 Can by his fraud be shaken or seduced;
 Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
 Adam, misthought of her to thee so dear?

270. *Virgin*. The ancients used the word *virgin* (*virgo*) with more latitude than we, as Virgil calls Pasiphaë *virgo*, after she had had three children. It is put to denote beauty, bloom, sweetness,

modesty, and all the amiable characters which are usually found in a virgin, and these with matron majesty. What a picture!—RICHARDSON.

To whom with healing words Adam replied: 290
 Daughter of God and man, immortal Eve!
 For such thou art; from sin and blame entire:
 Not diffident of thee, do I dissuade
 Thy absence from my sight; but to avoid
 The attempt itself, intended by our foe. 295
 For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses
 The tempted with dishonour foul; supposed
 Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
 Against temptation: thou thyself with scorn
 And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong, 300
 Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,
 If such affront I labour to avert
 From thee alone, which on us both at once
 The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;
 Or daring, first on me the assault shall light. 305
 Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn:
 Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce
 Angels; nor think superfluous others' aid.
 I, from the influence of thy looks, receive
 Access in every virtue; in thy sight 310
 More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
 Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
 Shame to be overcome or overreach'd,
 Would utmost vigour raise, and raised unite.
 Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel 315
 When I am present, and thy trial choose
 With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?
 So spake domestic Adam in his care
 And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
 Less attributed to her faith sincere, 320
 Thus her reply with accent sweet renew'd:
 If this be our condition, thus to dwell
 In narrow circuit straiten'd by a foe,
 Subtle or violent, we not endued
 Single with like defence, wherever met; 325
 — How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
 But harm precedes not sin: only our foe,
 Tempting, affronts us with his foul esteem
 Of our integrity: his foul esteem
 Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns 330
 Foul on himself; then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd
 By us? who rather double honour gain
 From his surmise proved false; find peace within,
 Favour from Heaven, our witness, from the event.
 And what is faith, love, virtue, unassay'd? 335
 Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?
 Let us not then suspect our happy state
 Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
 As not secure to single or combined.

320. *Less*: Too little; less than there should be.

Frail is our happiness, if this be so; 340
 And Eden were no Eden, thus exposed.
 To whom thus Adam fervently replied:
 O woman, best are all things as the will
 Of God ordain'd them: his creating hand
 Nothing imperfect or deficient left 345
 Of all that he created: much less man,
 Or aught that might his happy state secure,
 Secure from outward force: within himself
 The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
 Against his will he can receive no harm: 350
 But God left free the will; for what obeys
 Reason, is free; and reason he made right,
 But bid her well be ware, and still erect;
 Lest, by some fair-appearing good surprised,
 She dictate false, and misinform the will 355
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.
 Not then mistrust, but tender love enjoins,
 That I should mind thee oft; and mind thou me.
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve;
 Since reason not impossibly may meet 360
 Some specious object by the foe suborn'd,
 And fall into deception unaware,
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warn'd.
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
 Were better, and most likely if from me 365
 Thou sever not: trial will come unsought.
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancy? approve
 First thy obedience; the other who can know?
 Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
 But if thou think trial unsought may find 370
 Us both securer than thus warn'd thou seem'st
 Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
 Go in thy native innocence, rely
 On what thou hast of virtue; summon all:
 For God towards thee hath done his part; do thine. 375
 So spake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve
 Persisted; yet submiss, though last, replied:
 With thy permission then, and thus forewarn'd
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
 Touch'd only; that our trial, when least sought, 380
 May find us both perhaps far less prepared;
 The willinger I go, nor much expect
 A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;
 So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.

342. Throughout this whole conversation, which the poet has in every respect worked up to a faultless perfection, there is the most exact observance of justness and propriety of character. With what strength is the superior excellence of man's understanding here pointed out, and how nicely does our author here

sketch out the defects peculiar, in general, to the female mind! And after all, what great art has he shown in making Adam, contrary to his better reason, grant his spouse's request—beautifully verifying what he had made our general ancestor a little before observe to the angel! Book viii. 546 and following.—TUYER.

Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand 385
 Soft she withdrew, and, like a wood-nymph light,
 Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
 Betook her to the groves; but Delia's self
 In gait surpass'd, and goddess-like deport,
 Though not as she with bow and quiver arm'd, 390
 But with such gardening-tools as art, yet rude,
 Guiltless of fire, had form'd, or angels brought.
 To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorn'd,
 Likest she seem'd; Pomona, when she fled
 Vertumnus; or to Ceres in her prime, 395
 Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
 Her long with ardent look his eye pursued
 Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
 Oft he to her his charge of quick return
 Repeated: she to him as oft engaged 400
 To be return'd by noon amid the bower,
 And all things in best order to invite
 Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
 O, much deceived, much failing, hapless Eve,
 Of thy presumed return! event perverse! 405
 Thou never from that hour in Paradise
 Found'st either sweet repast or sound repose;
 Such ambush, hid among sweet flowers and shades,
 Waited with hellish rancour imminent
 To intercept thy way, or send thee back 410
 Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss!
 For now, and since first break of dawn, the fiend,
 Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come;
 And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
 The only two of mankind, but in them 415
 The whole included race, his purposed prey.
 In bower and field he sought, where any tuft
 Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
 Their tendance, or plantation for delight;
 By fountain or by shady rivulet 420
 He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
 Eve separate; he wish'd, but not with hope
 Of what so seldom chanced; when to his wish,
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
 Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood, 425

386. *Like a wood-nymph.* As this is the last description of Eve in a state of innocence, Milton has bestowed upon her the richest colours of his poetry, and has compared her to every thing most beautiful of the kind to be found in ancient fable, with which he thought it necessary to adorn even his Christian poem.—LORD MONBODDO.

387. *Oread:* (From the Greek *oros*, a mountain,) a mountain nymph. *Dryad:* (*dryus*, an oak,) a nymph of the groves. *Delia:* A name of Diana, from the island Delos, where she was born.

396. *Virgin of Proserpina, &c.* "That is, a virgin not having yet conceived Proserpina, who was begot by Jove."—WARBURTON. "The expression is certainly not common English, and many will deny it to be English at all; but let any man try to express the same thought otherwise, and he will be convinced how much Milton has raised and ennobled his style by an idiom so uncommon, but which is, notwithstanding, sufficiently intelligible."—LORD MONBODDO.

441. *Laertes's son:* Ulysses, who was entertained by Alcinous, at his garden.

Half spied, so thick the roses bushing round
 About her glow'd, oft stooping to support
 Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though gay
 Carnation, purple, azure, or speck'd with gold,
 Hung drooping unsustain'd; them she upstays 430
 Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
 Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
 From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
 Nearer he drew, and many a walk travérs'd
 Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm; 435
 Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen,
 Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers
 Imborder'd on each bank, the hand of Eve:
 Spot more delicious than those gardens feign'd
 Or of revived Adonis, or renown'd 440
 Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son;
 Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
 Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.
 Much he the place admired, the person more.
 As one who, long in populous city pent, 445
 Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
 Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
 Among the pleasant villages and farms
 Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight,
 The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine, 450
 Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
 If chance, with nymph-like step, fair virgin pass
 What pleasing seem'd, for her now pleases more;
 She most, and in her look sums all delight:
 Such pleasure took the serpent to behold 455
 This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve
 Thus early, thus alone: her heavenly form
 Angelic, but more soft, and feminine,
 Her graceful innocence, her every air
 Of gesture, or least action, overawed 460
 His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
 That space the evil one abstracted stood
 From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
 Stupidly good; of enmity disarm'd, 465
 Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge:
 But the hot hell that always in him burns,
 Though in mid heaven, soon ended his delight,
 And tortures him now more, the more he sees
 Of pleasure, not for him ordain'd: then soon 470
 Fierce hate he recollects: and all his thoughts
 Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites:
 Thoughts, whither have ye led me? with what sweet

442. *That, not mystic*: the garden of Solomon.

450. *Tedded grass*: Grass just mowed and spread for drying.

464. *From his own evil*. This passage is preëminently beautiful, and of extraordinary originality.—BRYDGES.

471. *Recollects*: Re-collects,—as in i. 528.

Compulsion thus transported, to forget
 What hither brought us? hate, not love; nor hope 475
 Of Paradise for hell, hope here to taste
 Of pleasure; but all pleasure to destroy,
 Save what is in destroying: other joy
 To me is lost. Then, let me not let pass
 Occasion which now smiles; behold alone 480
 The woman, opportune to all attempts,
 Her husband (for I view far round) not nigh,
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
 And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould; 485
 Foe not formidable! exempt from wound,
 I not; so much hath hell debased, and pain
 Enfeebled me, to what I was in heaven.
 She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods!
 Not terrible, though terrour be in love 490
 And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate,
Hate stronger, under show of love well feign'd;
 The way which to her ruin now I tend.

So spake the enemy of mankind, enclosed
 In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve 495
 Address'd his way: not with indented wave,
 Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,
 Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd
 Fold above fold, a surging maze! his head
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes; 500
 With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
 Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape
 And lovely; never since of serpent-kind
 Lovelier, not those that in Illyria changed 505
 Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
 In Epidaurus; nor to which transform'd
 Ammonian Jove or Capitoline was seen;
 He with Olympias; this with her who bore
 Scipio, the highth of Rome. With tract oblique 510
 At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
 To interrupt, sidelong he works his way.
 As when a ship, by skilful steersman wrought
 Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
 Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail: 515
 So varied he, and of his tortuous train
 Curl'd many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
 To lure her eye; she, busied, heard the sound
 Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as used

505. *Not those*: That is, not those serpents were more beautiful than, in Illyria, changed Hermione and Cadmus into themselves. This Cadmus and his wife Hermione, leaving Thebes, came into Illyria, where they were both fabled to

have been turned into serpents, for having slain one sacred to Mars.

507. *Epidaurus*: That is, Æsculapius who was worshipped in Epidaurus. *Nor to which, &c.*: Nor were those serpents lovelier to which, &c. Jupiter Ammon, and Jupiter Capitoline.

To such disport before her through the field, 520
 From every beast; more duteous at her call,
 Than at Circean call the herd disguised.
 He, bolder now, uncall'd before her stood,
 But as in gaze admiring: oft he bow'd
 His turret crest, and sleek enamell'd neck, 525
 Fawning; and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
 His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length
 The eye of Eve, to mark his play; he, glad
 Of her attention gain'd, with serpent-tongue
 Organic, or impulse of vocal air, 530
 His fraudulent temptation thus began:
 Wonder not, sovran mistress, if perhaps
 Thou canst, who art sole wonder! much less arm
 Thy looks, the heaven of mildness, with disdain,
 Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze 535
 Insatiate; I thus single; nor have fear'd
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retired.
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
 By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore 540
 With ravishment beheld! there best beheld,
 Where universally admired; but here
 In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,
 Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
 Half what in thee is fair, one man except, 545
 Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be seen
 A goddess among gods, adored and served
 By angels numberless, thy daily train.
 So gloz'd the tempter, and his proem tuned:
 Into the heart of Eve his words made way, 550
 Though at the voice much marvelling; at length,
 Not unamazed, she thus in answer spake:
 What may this mean? language of man pronounced
 By tongue of brute, and human sense express'd?
 The first, at least, of these I thought denied 555
 To beasts; whom God, on their creation-day,
 Created mute to all articulate sound:
 The latter I demur; for in their looks
 Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.
 Thee, serpent, subtlest beast of all the field 560
 I knew, but not with human voice endued:
 Redouble then this miracle, and say,
 How cam'st thou speakable of mute; and how
 To me so friendly grown above the rest
 Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight? 565
 Say, for such wonder claims attention due.

522. Alluding to the men turned into beasts by Circe.

530. *Organic, or, &c.* That the Devil moved the serpent's tongue, and used it as an instrument to form that tempting speech he made to Eve, is the opinion

of some; that he formed a voice by impression of the sounding air, distant from the serpent, is that of others: of which Milton has left the curious to their choice.—HUME.

To whom the guileful tempter thus replied:
 Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!
 Easy to me it is to tell thee all
 What thou command'st; and right thou shouldst be obey'd:
 I was at first as other beasts that graze 571
 The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
 As was my food; nor aught but food discern'd,
 Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:
 Till, on a day roving the field, I chanced 575
 A goodly tree far distant to behold
 Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mix'd,
 Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
 When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
 Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense 580
 Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
 Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,
 Unsuck'd of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
 To satisfy the sharp desire I had
 Of tasting those fair apples, I resolved 585
 Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
 Powerful persuaders, quicken'd at the scent
 Of that alluring fruit, urged me so keen.
 About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;
 For, high from ground, the branches would require 590
 Thy utmost reach or Adam's: round the tree
 All other beasts that saw, with like desire
 Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
 Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
 Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill 595
 I spared not; for such pleasure till that hour,
 At feed or fountain, never had I found.
 Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
 Strange alteration in me, to degree
 Of reason in my inward powers; and speech 600
 Wanted not long; though to this shape retain'd.
 Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
 I turn'd my thoughts, and with capacious mind
 Consider'd all things visible in heaven,
 Or earth, or middle; all things fair and good: 605
 But all that fair and good in thy divine
 Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,
 United I beheld; no fair to thine
 Equivalent or second! which compell'd
 Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come 610
 And gaze, and worship thee, of right declared
Sovran of creatures, universal dame!
 So talk'd the spirited sly snake; and Eve,
 Yet more amazed, unwary thus replied:

612. *Dame*. Among the earlier English poets, *dame* was a term of more re-

spect than now. It is used in the sense of the Latin *domina*, "mistress."

613. *Spirited*: The diabolic spirit within.

Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt 615
 The virtue of that fruit, in thee first proved:
 But say, where grows the tree? from hence how far?
 For many are the trees of God that grow
 In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
 To us; in such abundance lies our choice, 620
 As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd
 Still hanging incorruptible, till men
 Grow up to their provision, and more hands
 Help to disburden Nature of her birth.
 To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad: 625
 Empress, the way is ready, and not long;
 Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
 Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past
 Of blowing myrrh and balm: if thou accept
 My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon. 630
 Lead then, said Eve. He, leading, swiftly roll'd
 In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
 To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
 Brightens his crest. As when a wandering fire,
 Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night 635
 Condenses, and the cold environs round,
 Kindled through agitation to a flame,
 Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,
 Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
 Misleads the amaz'd night-wanderer from his way 640
 To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;
 There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far:
 So glister'd the dire snake, and into fraud
 Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree
 Of prohibition, root of all our woe; 645
 Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake:
 Serpent, we might have spared our coming hither,
 Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
 The credit of whose virtue rest with thee;
 Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects! 650
 But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;
 God so commanded, and left that command
 Sole daughter of his voice: the rest, we live
 Law to ourselves; our reason is our law.
 To whom the tempter guilefully replied: 655
 Indeed! hath God then said that of the fruit
 Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,
 Yet lords declared of all in earth or air?
 To whom thus Eve, yet sinless: Of the fruit
 Of each tree in the garden we may eat; 660
 But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
 The garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat
 Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.
 She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold
 The tempter, but with show of zeal and love 665
 To man, and indignation at his wrong,

New part puts on; and, as to passion moved,
 Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely and in act
 Raised, as of some great matter to begin.
 As when of old some orator renown'd, 670
 In Athens, or free Rome, where eloquence
 Flourish'd, since mute, to some great cause address'd,
 Stood in himself collected, while each part,
 Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue,
 Sometimes in highth began, as no delay 675
 Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right:
 So standing, moving, or to highth upgrown,
 The tempter, all impassion'd, thus began:
 O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,
 Mother of science! now I feel thy power 680
 Within me clear; not only to discern
 Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
 Of highest agents, deem'd however wise.
 Queen of this universe! do not believe
 Those rigid threats of death: ye shall not die; 685
 How should you? by the fruit? it gives you life
 To knowledge; by the threatener? look on me,
 Me, who have touch'd and tasted; yet both live,
 And life more perfect have attain'd than fate
 Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot. 690
 Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
 Is open? or will God incense his ire
 For such a petty trespass? and not praise
 Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
 Of death denounced, whatever thing death be, 695
 Deterr'd not from achieving what might lead
 To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;
 Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
 Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd?
 God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just: 700
 Not just, not God; not fear'd then, nor obey'd:
 Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
 Why then was this forbid? why, but to awe?
 Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,
 His worshippers? He knows, that in the day 705
 Ye eat thereof, your eyes, that seem so clear,
 Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
 Open'd and clear'd, and ye shall be as gods,
 Knowing both good and evil, as they know.
 That ye shall be as gods, since I as man, 710
 Internal man, is but proportion meet;
 I, of brute, human; ye, of human, gods.
 So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
 Human, to put on gods; death to be wish'd,
 Though threaten'd, which no worse than this can bring. 715

675. *Sometimes in highth began*: That is, entered at once into the midst of his subject

And what are gods, that man may not become
 As they, participating godlike food?
 The gods are first, and that advantage use
 On our belief, that all from them proceeds:
 I question it; for this fair earth I see, 720
 Warm'd by the sun, producing every kind;
 Them, nothing: if they all things, who enclosed
 Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
 That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains
 Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies 725
 The offence, that man should thus attain to know?
 What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
 Impart against his will, if all be his?
 Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
 In heavenly breasts? These, these, and many more 730
 Causes import your need of this fair fruit.
 Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste.
 He ended; and his words, replete with guile,
 Into her heart too easy entrance won:
 Fix'd on the fruit she gazed, which to behold 735
 Might tempt alone; and in her ears the sound
 Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd
 With reason, to her seeming, and with truth:
 Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and waked
 An eager appetite, raised by the smell 740
 So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,
 Inclination now grown to touch or taste,
 Solicited her longing eye; yet first
 Pausing awhile, thus to herself she mused:
 Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits, 745
 Though kept from man, and worthy to be admired;
 Whose taste, too long forborne, at first assay
 Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
 The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise.
 Thy praise he also, who forbids thy use, 750
 Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
 Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
 Forbids us then to taste: but his forbidding
 Commends thee more, while it infers the good
 By thee communicated, and our want: 755
 For good unknown sure is not had; or, had
 And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
 In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
 Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
 Such prohibitions bind not. But, if death 760
 Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
 Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
 Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die!

739. *Meanwhile, &c.* This is a circumstance beautifully added by our author to the Scripture account, in order to make the folly and impiety of Eve appear less extravagant and monstrous.—NEWTON

How dies the serpent? he hath eaten and lives,
 And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns, 765
 Irrational till then. For us alone
 Was death invented? or to us denied
 This intellectual food, for beasts reserved?
 For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
 Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy 770
 The good befallen him, authour unsuspect,
 Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
 What fear I then? rather, what know to fear
 Under this ignorance of good or evil,
 Of God or death, of law or penalty? 775
 Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
 Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
 Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
 To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?
 So saying, her rash hand in evil hour 780
 Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat!
 Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat,
 Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
 That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
 The guilty serpent, and well might; for Eve, 785
 Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else
 Regarded; such delight till then, as seem'd,
 In fruit she never tasted; whether true
 Or fancied so, through expectation high
 Of knowledge: nor was godhead from her thought. 790
 Greedily she ingorged without restraint,
 And knew not eating death: satiate at length,
 And highten'd as with wine, jocund and boon,
 Thus to herself she pleasingly began:
 O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees 795
 In Paradise! of operation blest
 To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed,
 And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
 Created; but henceforth my early care,
 Not without song, each morning, and due praise, 800
 Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
 Of thy full branches offer'd free to all;
 Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature
 In knowledge, as the gods, who all things know;
 Though others envy what they cannot give: 805
 For, had the gift been theirs, it had not here
 Thus grown. Experience, next, to thee I owe,
 Best guide: not following thee, I had remain'd
 In ignorance; thou open'st wisdom's way,
 And giv'st access, though secret she retire. 810
 And I perhaps am secret: Heaven is high,

811. *And I perhaps, &c.* She questions even God's omniscience, and flatters herself that she is still in secret, like other sinners, who say, "The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it."—*Ps. xciv. 7.*—NEWTON.

High, and remote to see from thence distinct
 Each thing on earth; and other care perhaps
 May have diverted from continual watch
 Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies 815
 About him. But to Adam in what sort
 Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
 As yet my change, and give him to partake
 Full happiness with me; or rather not,
 But keep the odds of knowledge in my power 820
 Without copartner? so to add what wants
 In female sex, the more to draw his love,
 And render me more equal; and perhaps,
 A thing not undesirable, sometime
 Superior; for, inferiour, who is free? 825
 This may be well: but what if God have seen,
 And death ensue? then I shall be no more!
 And Adam, wedded to another Eve,
 Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
 A death to think! Confirm'd then I resolve, 830
 Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
 So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
 I could endure, without him live no life.

So saying, from the tree her step she turn'd;
 But first low reverence done, as to the power 835
 That dwelt within, whose presence had infused
 Into the plant sciential sap, derived
 From nectar, drink of gods. Adam the while,
 Waiting desirous her return, had wove
 Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn 840
 Her tresses, and her rural labours crown;
 As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
 Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new
 Solace in her return, so long delay'd:
 Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill, 845
 Misgave him; he the faltering measure felt;
 And forth to meet her went, the way she took
 That morn when first they parted: by the tree
 Of knowledge he must pass; there he her met,
 Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand 850
 A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smiled,
 New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffused.
 To him she hasted; in her face excuse
 Came prologue, and apology too prompt;
 Which, with bland words at will, she thus address'd: 855

Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?
 Thee I have miss'd, and thought it long, deprived
 Thy presence; agony of love till now

835. Eve falling into idolatry upon the taste of the forbidden tree, as the first fruit of disobedience, is finely imagined.

845. *Divine of*, foreboding.

846. *He the faltering measure felt.* He

found his heart kept not true time; he felt the false and intermitting measure: the natural description of our minds foreboding ill, by the unequal beatings of the heart and pulse.—HUME.

Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
 Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought, 860
 The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
 Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear:
 This tree is not, as we are told, a tree
 Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
 Opening the way; but of divine effect 865
 To open eyes, and make them gods who taste;
 And hath been tasted such: the serpent, wise,
 Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
 Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
 Not dead, as we are threaten'd, but thenceforth 870
 Endued with human voice and human sense,
 Reasoning to admiration; and with me
 Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I
 Have also tasted, and have also found
 The effects to correspond: opener mine eyes, 875
 Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
 And growing up to godhead; which for thee
 Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
 For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;
 Tedious, unshared with thee, and odious soon. 880
 Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
 May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
 Lest, thou not tasting, different degree
 Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
 Deity for thee, when fate will not permit. 885

Thus Eve with countenance blithe her story told;
 But in her cheek distemper flushing glow'd.
 On the other side, Adam, soon as he heard
 The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed,
 Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill 890
 Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd;
 From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve
 Down dropp'd, and all the faded roses shed:
 Speechless he stood and pale; till thus at length
 First to himself he inward silence broke: 895

O fairest of creation, last and best
 Of all God's works! creature, in whom excell'd
 Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,
 Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
 How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost, 900
 Defaced, deflower'd, and now to death devote!
 Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress
 The strict forbiddance? how to violate
 The sacred fruit forbidden? Some cursed fraud
 Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown; 905
 And me with thee hath ruin'd: for with thee
 Certain my resolution is to die.

How can I live without thee? how forego
 Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly join'd,
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn? 910

Should God create another Eve, and I
 Another rib afford; yet loss of thee
 Would never from my heart: no, no! I feel
 (The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
 Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state 915
 Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.
 So having said, as one from sad dismay
 Recomforted, and after thoughts disturb'd
 Submitting to what seem'd remediless,
 Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd: 920
 Bold deed thou hast presumed, adventurous Eve,
 And peril great provok'd, who thus hast dared,
 Had it been only coveting to eye
 That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence;
 Much more to taste it, under ban to touch. 925
 But past who can recall, or done undo?
 Not God omnipotent, nor fate: yet so
 Perhaps thou shalt not die; perhaps the fact
 Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
 Profaned first by the serpent, by him first 930
 Made common, and unhallow'd, ere our taste;
 Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives;
 Lives, as thou said'st, and gains to live, as man,
 Higher degree of life: inducement strong
 To us, as likely tasting to attain 935
 Proportional ascent; which cannot be
 But to be gods, or angels, demigods.
 Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
 Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy
 Us his prime creatures, dignified so high, 940
 Set over all his works; which in our fall,
 For us created, needs with us must fail,
 Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
 Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;
 Not well conceived of God, who, though his power 945
 Creation could repeat, yet would be loth
 Us to abolish, lest the adversary
 Triumph, and say,—Fickle their state, whom God
 Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
 He ruin'd, now mankind; whom will he next?— 950
 Matter of scorn, not to be given the foe.
 However, I with thee have fix'd my lot,
 Certain to undergo like doom: if death
 Consort with thee, death is to me as life;
 So forcible within my heart I feel 955
 The bond of nature draw me to my own;
 My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;

928. *Perhaps thou shalt not die.* How | mind, and its aptness to be warped into
 just a picture does Milton here give us | false judgments and reasonings by pas-
 of the natural imbecility of the human | sion and inclination!—THYER.

Our state cannot be sever'd ; we are one,
One flesh ; to lose thee were to lose myself.

So Adam ; and thus Eve to him replied : 960

O glorious trial of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high !

Engaging me to emulate ; but, short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,

Adam, from whose dear side I boast me sprung, 965
And gladly of our union hear thee speak,

One heart, one soul in both ; whereof good proof
This day affords, declaring thee resolved,

Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,
Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear, 970

To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit ;

Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion) hath presented

This happy trial of thy love, which else 975
So eminently never had been known ?

Were it I thought death menaced would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone

The worst, and not persuade thee ; rather die
Deserted than oblige thee with a fact 980

Pernicious to thy peace ; chiefly, assured
Remarkably so late of thy so true,

So faithful, love unequal'd : but I feel
Far otherwise the event ; not death, but life

Augmented, open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys, 985
Taste so divine, that what of sweet before

Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,

And fear of death deliver to the winds. 990

So saying, she embraced him, and for joy
Tenderly wept ; much won, that he his love

Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.

In recompense, (for such compliance bad
Such recompense best merits) from the bough 995

She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
With liberal hand : he scrupled not to eat,

Against his better knowledge ; not deceived,
But fondly overcome with female charm.

Earth trembled from her entrails, as again 1000
In pangs ; and Nature gave a second groan ;

Sky lour'd, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin

Original : while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill ; nor Eve to iterate 1005

Her former trespass fear'd, the more to soothe

980. *Oblige* is here used in the sense of the Latin *obligo*, "to render obnoxious to guilt and punishment."

Him with her loved society; that now,
 As with new wine intoxicated both,
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
 Divinity within them breeding wings, 1010
 Wherewith to scorn the earth: but that false fruit
 Far other operation first display'd,
 Carnal desire inflaming: he on Eve
 Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him
 As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn: 1015
 Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move:
 Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
 And elegant, of sapience no small part;
 Since to each meaning savour we apply,
 And palate call judicious: I the praise 1020
 Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
 Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
 From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
 True relish, tasting: if such pleasure be
 In things to us forbidden, it might be wish'd, 1025
 For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
 But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,
 As meet is, after such delicious fare;
 For never did thy beauty, since the day
 I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd 1030
 With all perfections, so inflame my sense
 With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
 Than ever; bounty of this virtuous tree!
 So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
 Of amorous intent; well understood 1035
 Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
 Her hand he seized; and to a shady bank,
 Thick over-head with verdant roof embower'd,
 He led her nothing loth; flowers were the couch,
 Pansies, and violets, and asphodel, 1040
 And hyacinth; earth's freshest, softest lap.
 There they their fill of love and love's disport
 Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
 The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep
 Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play. 1045
 Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
 That with exhilarating vapour bland
 About their spirits had play'd, and inmost powers
 Made err, was now exhaled, and grosser sleep,
 Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams 1050
 Encumber'd, now had left them, up they rose
 As from unrest; and, each the other viewing,
 Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their minds
 How darken'd; innocence, that as a veil

1034. What a fine contrast does this description of the amorous follies of our first parents after the Fall make, to that lovely picture of the same passion in its state of innocence, described at line 510 of the preceding book!—THYER.

Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone; 1055
 Just confidence, and native righteousness,
 And honour, from about them, naked left
 To guilty Shame: he cover'd, but his robe
 Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong,
 Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap 1060
 Of Philistéan Dalilah, and waked
 Shorn of his strength; they destitute and bare
 Of all their virtue: silent, and in face
 Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute:
 Till Adam, though not less than Eve abash'd, 1065
 At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd:
 O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
 To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
 To counterfeit man's voice; true in our fall,
 False in our promised rising; since our eyes 1070
 Open'd we find indeed, and find we know
 Both good and evil; good lost, and evil got:
 Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know;
 Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
 Of innocence, of faith, of purity, 1075
 Our wonted ornaments now soil'd and stain'd,
 And in our faces evident the signs
 Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store,
 Ev'n shame, the last of evils; of the first
 Bé sure then. How shall I behold the face 1080
 Henceforth of God or angels, erst with joy
 And rapture so oft beheld? Those heavenly shapes
 Will dazzle now this earthly, with their blaze
 Insufferably bright. O, might I here
 In solitude live savage, in some glade 1085
 Obscured; where highest woods, impenetrable
 To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad
 And brown as evening! cover me, ye pines!
 Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
 Hide me, where I may never see them more! 1090
 But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
 What best may for the present serve to hide
 The parts of each from other, that seem most
 To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;
 Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sew'd, 1095
 And girded on our loins, may cover round
 Those middle parts; that this new-comer, Shame,
 There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.
 So counsell'd he, and both together went
 Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose 1100
 The fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd;
 But such as at this day, to Indians known,

1058. *He cover'd*: That is, Shame personified. The meaning is, this Shame covered Adam and Eve with his robe, but this robe of his uncovered them more.—NEWTON.—1059. *The Danite*, Samson, who was of the tribe of Dan.
 1102. *Such*, the banyan tree.

In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms
 Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
 The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow 1105
 About the mother-tree, a pillar'd shade
 High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between:
 There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
 Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
 At loop-holes cut through thickest shade: those leaves 1110
 They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe;
 And, with what skill they had, together sew'd,
 To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide
 Their guilt and dreaded shame! O, how unlike
 To that first naked glory! Such of late 1115
 Columbus found the American, so girt
 With feather'd cincture; naked else, and wild
 Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
 Thus fenced, and, as they thought, their shame in part
 Cover'd, but not at rest or ease of mind, 1120
 They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
 Rain'd at their eyes, but high winds worse within
 Began to rise; high passions, anger, hate,
 Mistrust, suspicion, discord; and shook sore
 Their inward state of mind, calm region once 1125
 And full of peace, now tost and turbulent:
 For understanding ruled not, and the will
 Heard not her lore; both in subjection now
 To sensual appetite, who from beneath
 Usurping over sovran reason claim'd 1130
 Superiour sway: from thus distemper'd breast,
 Adam, estranged in look and alter'd style,
 Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd:
 Would thou hadst hearken'd to my words, and stay'd
 With me, as I besought thee, when that strange 1135
 Desire of wandering, this unhappy morn,
 I know not whence possess'd thee; we had then
 Remain'd still happy: not, as now, despoil'd
 Of all our good; shamed, naked, miserable!
 Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve 1140
 The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
 Such proof, conclude they then begin to fail.
 To whom, soon moved with touch of blame, thus Eve:
 What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam, severe?
 Imputest thou that to my default, or will 1145
 Of wandering, as thou call'st it, which who knows
 But might as ill have happen'd, thou being by,
 Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
 Or here the attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd
 Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake; 1150
 No ground of enmity between us known,
 Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
 Was I to have never parted from thy side?
 As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.

Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head, 1155
 Command me absolutely not to go,
 Going into such danger, as thou said'st?
 Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay;
 Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
 Hadst thou been firm and fix'd in thy dissent, 1160
 Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me.

To whom, then first incensed, Adam replied:
 Is this the love, is this the recompense
 Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve? express'd
 Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I, 1165
 Who might have lived; and joy'd immortal bliss,
 Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?
 And am I now upbraided as the cause
 Of thy transgressing? not enough severe,
 It seems, in thy restraint: what could I more? 1170
 I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
 The danger and the lurking enemy
 That lay in wait; beyond this, had been force;
 And force upon free will hath here no place.
 But confidence then bore thee on; secure 1175
 Either to meet no danger, or to find
 Matter of glorious trial: and perhaps
 I also err'd, in overmuch admiring
 What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought
 No evil durst attempt thee: but I rue 1180
 That error now, which is become my crime,
 And thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall
 Him, who, to worth in women overtrusting,
 Lets her will rule: restraint she will not brook;
 And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue, 1185
 She first his weak indulgence will accuse.

Thus they in mutual accusation spent
 The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
 And of their vain contest appear'd no end.

REMARKS ON BOOK X.

CERTAINLY Milton has in this book shown to an amazing extent all the variety of his powers in striking contrast with each other: the sublimity of the celestial persons; the gigantic wickedness of the infernal; the mingled excellence and human infirmities of Adam and Eve; and the shadowy and terrific beings of Sin and Death. Of any other poet, the imagination would have been exhausted in the preceding books: in Milton, it still gathers strength, and grows bolder and bolder, and darts with more expanded wings. When Sin and Death deserted the gates of hell, and made their way to earth, the conception and expression of all the circumstances is of a supernatural force.

It may be admitted that it requires a rich mind duly to enjoy and appreciate these grand and spiritual agencies; they therefore who have cold conceptions eagerly catch hold of any censures to justify their own insensibility: they *can* understand illustrations drawn from objects daily in solid forms before their eyes. But it is not only in the description of forms and actions that the bard has a strength and brilliance so wonderful: he is equally happy in the sentiments he attributes to each personage: all speak in their own distinct characters, with a justness and individuality which meet instant recognition, and waken an indescribable assent and pleasure. Thus Adam and Eve, when they know the displeasure of the Almighty, and are overwhelmed with fear and remorse, each express themselves according to their separate casts of mind, disposition, and circumstances: their moans are deeply affecting. To my taste, this book is much more lofty, and much more pathetic, than the ninth: as the subject was much more difficult, so it is executed with much more miraculous vigour and originality.

The representation of the manner in which God's judgment upon earth was executed by changing the seasons, putting the elements into contest, and deteriorating all nature, fills the imagination with wonder, and brings out new touches of poetry with a magical effect.

In others the poetical language seems a sort of cover,—a gilding; in Milton it is a part and essence of the thought. The primary image is poetical; the poetry does not depend upon the illustration; though sometimes there is a union, and it is thus to be found in both: but if the secondary has it, the first never wants it.

The characters of Milton are all compound and reflective; they are not merely intuitive, like Shakspeare's: they have therefore more of that invention which is comprehensive, and requires study to appreciate. The whole of "Paradise Lost" from beginning to end is part of one inseparable web; and however beautiful detached parts may appear, not half their genius or wisdom can be felt or understood except in connection with the whole. There are congruities and allusions in every word, which are lost, unless we attend to their essential relation to the whole scheme.

It is this intensity and inseparability of the web which is among the miracles of Milton's execution. Grace, strength, splendour, depth, all depend upon its unity. As no texture was ever before produced out of particles drawn from such an extent of space, and such a variety of mines; so the amalgamation of all into one perfect whole is the more astonishing.

Such is the erudition applied to this most wonderful work, that nothing less than the conjoined attempts of a whole body of learned men for a century has been able to explain its inexhaustible allusions; and even yet the task is not completed.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

MAN'S transgression known, the guardian-angels forsake Paradise, and return up to heaven to approve their vigilance, and are approved; God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors; who descends and gives sentence accordingly; then in pity clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death, sitting till then at the gates of hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new world, and the sin by man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confined in hell, but to follow Satan their sire up to the place of man: to make the way easier from hell to this world to and fro, they pave a broad highway or bridge over Chaos, according to the track that Satan first made; then, preparing for earth, they meet him, proud of his success, returning to hell; their mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandæmonium; in full assembly relates with boasting his success against man; instead of applause is entertained with a general hiss by all his audience, transformed with himself also suddenly into serpents according to his doom given in Paradise; then, deluded with a show of the forbidden tree springing up before them, they, greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretels the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but for the present commands his angels to make several alterations in the heavens and elements. Adam, more and more perceiving his fallen condition, heavily bewails, rejects the condolment of Eve; she persists, and at length appeases him: then, to evade the curse likely to fall on their offspring, proposes to Adam violent ways, which he approves not; but, conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late promise made them, that her seed should be revenged on the serpent; and exhorts her with him to seek peace of the offended Deity by repentance and supplication.

MEANWHILE the heinous and despiteful act
Of Satan done in Paradise, and how
He, in the serpent, had perverted Eve,
Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
Was known in heaven; for what can 'scape the eye 5
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just,
Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the mind
Of man, with strength entire, and free-will arm'd
Complete to have discover'd and repulsed 10
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
For still they knew, and ought to have still remember'd,
The high injunction not to taste that fruit,

12. *They*: *Man* collectively is the antecedent of *they*. "God said, Let us make | *man* in our image, and let *them* have, &c. Gen. i. 26.

Whoever tempted: which they not obeying,
 Incurr'd (what could they less?) the penalty; 15
 And, manifold in sin, deserved to fall.
 Up into heaven from Paradise in haste
 The angelic guards ascended, mute and sad
 For man; for of his state by this they knew,
 Much wondering how the subtle fiend had stolen 20
 Entrance unseen. Soon as the unwelcome news
 From earth arrived at heaven-gate, displeas'd
 All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare
 That time celestial visages, yet, mix'd
 With pity, violated not their bliss. 25
 About the new arrived in multitudes
 The ethereal people ran, to hear and know
 How all befell: they towards the throne supreme,
 Accountable, made haste, to make appear,
 With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance, 30
 And easily approved; when the Most High
 Eternal Father, from his secret cloud,
 Amidst in thunder utter'd thus his voice:
 Assembled angels, and ye powers return'd
 From unsuccessful charge, be not dismay'd, 35
 Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,
 Which your sincerest care could not prevent;
 Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
 When first this tempter cross'd the gulf from hell.
 I told ye then he should prevail, and speed 40
 On his bad errand; man should be seduced,
 And flatter'd out of all, believing lies
 Against his Maker; no decree of mine
 Concurring to necessitate his fall,
 Or touch with lightest moment of impulse 45
 His free-will, to her own inclining left
 In even scale. But fallen he is; and now
 What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass
 On his transgression, death denounced that day?
 Which he presumes already vain and void, 50
 Because not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,
 By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find
 Forbearance no acquittance, ere day end.
 Justice shall not return as bounty scorn'd.
 But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee, 55
 Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferr'd
 All judgment, whether in heaven, or earth, or hell.
 Easy it may be seen that I intend
 Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee,
 Man's friend, his Mediator, his design'd 60
 Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,
 And destined man himself to judge man fallen.

16. *Manifold in sin*: That is, this sin of transgression included several, as pride, lust, disobedience, &c.

51. *Not yet inflicted*. Eccles. viii. 11.

56. See John v. 22.

59. *Mercy, &c.* See Ps. lxxxv. 10.

So spake the Father; and, unfolding bright
 Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
 Blazed forth unclouded deity: he full 65
 Resplendent all his Father manifest
 Express'd, and thus divinely answer'd mild:
 Father Eternal, thine is to decree;
 Mine, both in heaven and earth, to do thy will
 Supreme: that thou in me, thy Son beloved, 70
 Mayst ever rest well pleased. I go to judge
 On earth these thy transgressours; but thou know'st,
 Whoever judged, the worst on me must light,
 When time shall be; for so I undertook
 Before thee; and, not repenting, this obtain 75
 Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
 On me derived: yet I shall temper so
 Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most
 Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.
 Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none 80
 Are to behold the judgment but the judged,
 Those two; the third best absent is condemn'd,
 Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:
 Conviction to the serpent none belongs.
 Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose 85
 Of high collateral glory. Him thrones, and powers,
 Princedoms, and dominations ministrant,
 Accompanied to heaven-gate; from whence
 Eden, and all the coast, in prospect lay.
 Down he descended straight; the speed of gods 90
 Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes wing'd.
 Now was the sun in western cadence low
 From noon; and gentle airs, due at their hour,
 To fan the earth now waked, and usher in
 The evening cool; when he, from wrath more cool, 95
 Came, the mild Judge and Intercessour both,
 To sentence man. The voice of God they heard
 Now walking in the garden, by soft winds
 Brought to their ears while day declined; they heard,
 And from his presence hid themselves among 100
 The thickest trees, both man and wife; till God
 Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud:
 Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet
 My coming seen far off? I miss thee here;
 Not pleased, thus entertain'd with solitude, 105
 Where obvious duty erewhile appear'd unsought:
 Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
 Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth!
 He came; and with him Eve, more loth, though first
 To offend; discountenanced both and discomposed: 110

80. *Shall need.* *Need* used as a neuter verb, in the sense of shall be necessary.

84. *Conviction, &c.* That is, no proof is needful against the serpent, now mute,

as he was merely the medium through which Satan acted.

92. *Now was the sun, &c.* This beautiful description is founded upon Gen. iii. 8.

Love was not in their looks, either to God
 Or to each other; but apparent guilt,
 And shame, and perturbation, and despair,
 Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.
 Whence Adam, faltering long, thus answer'd brief: 115
 I heard thee in the garden; and of thy voice
 Afraid, being naked, hid myself. To whom
 The gracious Judge without revile replied:
 My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,
 But still rejoiced; how is it now become 120
 So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who
 Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree,
 Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?
 To whom thus Adam sore beset replied:
 O heaven! in evil strait this day I stand 125
 Before my Judge; either to undergo
 Myself the total crime, or to accuse
 My other self, the partner of my life;
 Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
 I should conceal, and not expose to blame 130
 By my complaint; but strict necessity
 Subdues me, and calamitous constraint;
 Lest on my head both sin and punishment,
 However insupportable, be all
 Devolved; though, should I hold my peace, yet thou 135
 Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.
 This woman, whom thou mad'st to be my help,
 And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,
 So fit, so acceptable, so divine,
 That from her hand I could suspect no ill; 140
 And what she did, whatever in itself,
 Her doing seem'd to justify the deed;
 She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.
 To whom the Sovran Presence thus replied:
 Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey 145
 Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,
 Superiour, or but equal, that to her
 Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
 Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
 And for thee, whose perfection far excell'd 150
 Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd
 She was indeed, and lovely, to attract
 Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
 Were such, as under government well seem'd;
 Unseemly to bear rule; which was thy part 155
 And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.
 So having said, he thus to Eve in few:
 Say, woman, what is this which thou hast done?
 To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelm'd,
 Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge 160

Bold or loquacious, thus abash'd replied:
 The serpent me beguiled, and I did eat.
 Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
 To judgment he proceeded on the accused
 Serpent, though brute; unable to transfer 165
 The guilt on him who made him instrument
 Of mischief, and polluted from the end
 Of his creation: justly then accursed,
 As vitiated in nature: more to know
 Concern'd not man, (since he no further knew,) 170
 Nor alter'd his offence; yet God at last
 To Satan, first in sin, his doom applied;
 Though in mysterious terms, judged as then best:
 And on the serpent thus his curse let fall:
 Because thou hast done this, thou art accursed 175
 Above all cattle, each beast of the field:
 Upon thy belly grovelling thou shalt go,
 And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.
 Between thee and the woman I will put
 Enmity; and between thine and her seed: 180
 Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.
 So spake this oracle, then verified,
 When Jesus, son of Mary, second Eve,
 Saw Satan fall, like lightning, down from heaven,
 Prince of the air; then, rising from his grave, 185
 Spoil'd principalities and powers, triumph'd
 In open show; and, with ascension bright,
 Captivity led captive through the air,
 The realm itself of Satan, long usurp'd;
 Whom he shall tread at last under our feet; 190
 Ev'n he, who now foretold his fatal bruise;
 And to the woman thus his sentence turn'd:
 Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
 By thy conception; children thou shalt bring
 In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will 195
 Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule.
 On Adam last thus judgment he pronounced:
 Because thou hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife,
 And eaten of the tree, concerning which
 I charged thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat thereof; 200
 Curs'd is the ground for thy sake: thou in sorrow
 Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life;
 Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
 Unbid; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field:
 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, 205
 Till thou return unto the ground; for thou
 Out of the ground wast taken; know thy birth;
 For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.
 So judged he man, both Judge and Saviour sent;

169. *More to know*, &c. That is, it did | pent was but the instrument of the
 not concern man to know that the ser- | Devil.

And the instant stroke of death, denounced that day, 210
 Removed far off: then, pitying how they stood
 Before him naked to the air, that now
 Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin
 Thenceforth the form of servant to assume,
 As when he wash'd his servants' feet; so now, 215
 As father of his family, he clad
 Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,
 Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid;
 And thought not much to clothe his enemies:
 Nor he their outward only with the skins 220
 Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
 Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness
 Arraying, cover'd from his Father's sight.
 To him with swift ascent he up return'd,
 Into his blissful bosom reassumed, 225
 In glory, as of old: to him appeased,
 All, though all-knowing, what had pass'd with man
 Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Meanwhile, ere thus was sinn'd and judged on earth,
 Within the gates of hell sat Sin and Death, 230
 In counterview within the gates, that now
 Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
 Far into Chaos, since the fiend pass'd through,
 Sin opening; who thus now to Death began:

O son, why sit we here each other viewing 235
 Idly, while Satan, our great authour, thrives
 In other worlds, and happier seat provides
 For us, his offspring dear? It cannot be
 But that success attends him; if mishap,
 Ere this he had return'd, with fury driven 240
 By his avengers; since no place like this
 Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
 Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
 Wings growing, and dominion given me large,
 Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on, 245
 Or sympathy, or some connatural force,
 Powerful at greatest distance to unite
 With secret amity things of like kind,
 By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade
 Inseparable, must with me along; 250
 For Death from Sin no power can separate.
 But, lest the difficulty of passing back
 Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
 Impassable, impervious, let us try

214. See Phil. ii. 7, and John xiii. 5.

217. *Or slain*: That is, either slain for sacrifice, or they shed their coats, like snakes, and were *repaid* with new ones: "A notion," says Newton, "which we may presume he borrowed from some commentator, rather than advanced of himself."

222. *Robe of righteousness*. Isa. lxi 10.

229. *Ere thus was sinn'd*. Two impersonals: before man had thus sinned, and God had thus judged him, Sin and Death sat in counterview within the gates of Hell:—Sin thus began.

Adventurous work, yet to thy power and mine 255
 Not unagreeable, to found a path
 Over this main from hell to that new world,
 Where Satan now prevails; a monument
 Of merit high to all the infernal host,
 Easing their passage hence, for intercourse, 260
 Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.
 Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
 By this new-felt attraction and instinct.
 Whom thus the meagre shadow answer'd soon:
 Go, whither fate, and inclination strong, 265
 Leads thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err
 The way, thou leading; such a scent I draw
 Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
 The savour of death from all things there that live;
 Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest 270
 Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.
 So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell
 Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
 Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
 Against the day of battel, to a field, 275
 Where armies lie encamp'd, come flying, lured
 With scent of living carcasses design'd
 For death, the following day, in bloody fight:
 So scented the grim feature, and upturn'd
 His nostril wide into the murky air; 280
 Sagacious of his quarry from so far.
 Then both from out hell gates, into the waste
 Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
 Flew diverse; and with power (their power was great)
 Hovering upon the waters, what they met 285
 Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
 Tost up and down, together crowded drove,
 From each side shoaling towards the mouth of hell:
 As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
 Upon the Cronian sea, together drive 290
 Mountains of ice, that stop the imagined way
 Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich
 Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil
 Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
 As with a trident, smote, and fix'd as firm 295
 As Delos, floating once; the rest his look

280. *Intercourse*: Passing frequently backward and forward. *Transmigration*: Quitting Hell once for all, to inhabit the new creation: they were uncertain which their lot should be.—RICHARDSON.

289. *As when*. &c. Sin and Death, flying in to different parts of Chaos, and driving all the matter they meet there in shoals toward the mouth of hell, are compared to two polar winds, north and south, blowing adverse upon the Cronian Sea, the northern frozen sea, and driving together mountains of ice, that stop the

imagined way, the north-east passage, as it is called, *beyond Petsora eastward*, the most north-eastern province of Muscovy, to the rich Cathaian coast, Cathay, or Catay, a country of Asia, and the northern part of China.—NEWTON.

296. *The rest*: That is, the slimy parts, as distinguished from the solid or soil. *Gorgonian rigour*; or *rigour* such as the Gorgons, who turned all persons on whom they looked into stone. *Beach*, shore.

Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move;
 And with asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,
 Deep to the roots of hell the gather'd beach
 They fasten'd, and the mole immense wrought on, 300
 Over the foaming deep high-arch'd, a bridge
 Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
 Immoveable of this now fenceless world,
 Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,
 Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to hell. 305
 So, if great things to small may be compared,
 Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
 From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,
 Came to the sea; and, over Hellespont
 Bridging his way, Europe with Asia join'd, 310
 And scourged with many a stroke the indignant waves.
 Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
 Pontifical, a ridge of pendent rock,
 Over the vex'd abyss, following the track
 Of Satan to the self-same place where he 315
 First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
 From out of Chaos, to the outside bare
 Of this round world: ~~with pins of adamant~~
~~And chains they made all fast; too fast they made~~
~~And durable! And now in little space~~ 320
 The confines met of empyréan heaven,
 And of this world; and, on the left hand, hell
 With long reach interposed; three several ways
 In sight, to each of these three places led.
 And now their way to earth they had descried, 325
 To Paradise first tending; when, behold!
 Satan, in likeness of an angel bright,
 Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering
 His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose:
 Disguised he came; but those his children dear 330
 Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.
 He, after Eve seduced, unminded slunk
 Into the wood fast by; and, changing shape,
 To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
 By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded 335
 Upon her husband; saw their shame that sought
 Vain covertures; but when he saw descend
 The Son of God to judge them, terrified
 He fled; not hoping to escape, but shun

308. *Memnonian*. Susa is called Memnonia by Herodotus.

313. *Pontifical*: "Bridge-making," from *pons*, a bridge; and *facto*, to make. The word may also be interpreted *popish*; and Dr. Johnson thinks that Milton here intended an equivocal satire on popery, implying that the Roman priesthood were as ready to make the way easy to Hell, as Sin and Death did.

328. *Betwixt the Centaur*. Satan, to avoid being discovered (as he had been before, iv. 569) by Uriel, regent of the sun, takes care to keep at as great distance as possible, and therefore, while the sun rose in Aries, he steers his course directly upward *betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion*, two constellations in the opposite part of the heavens.—NEWTON.

The present; fearing, guilty, what his wrath 340
 Might suddenly inflict; that past, return'd
 By night, and listening where the hapless pair
 Sat in their sad discourse and various plaint,
 Thence gather'd his own doom; which understood
 Not instant, but of future time, with joy 345
 And tidings fraught, to hell he now return'd:
 And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
 Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhop'd
 Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
 Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight 350
 Of that stupendous bridge his joy increased.
 Long he admiring stood; till Sin, his fair
 Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke:
 O parent, these are thy magnificent deeds,
 Thy trophies! which thou view'st as not thine own: 355
 Thou art their authour, and prime architect:
 For I no sooner in my heart divin'd,
 (My heart, which by a secret harmony
 Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet)
 That thou on earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks 360
 Now also evidence, but straight I felt,
 Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt
 That I must after thee, with this thy son;
 Such fatal consequence unites us three.
 Hell could no longer hold us in our bounds, 365
 Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
 Detain from following thy illustrious track:
 Thou hast achieved our liberty, confined
 Within hell-gates till now; thou us impower'd
 To fortify thus far, and overlay, 370
 With this portentous bridge, the dark abyss.
 Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won
 What thy hands builded not; thy wisdom gain'd
 With odds what war hath lost; and fully avenged
 Our foil in heaven: here thou shalt monarch reign, 375
 There didst not; there let him still victor sway,
 As battel hath adjudged; from this new world
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated;
 And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
 Of all things, parted by the empyreal bounds, 380
 His quadrature, from thy orbicular world;
 Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne.
 Whom thus the prince of darkness answer'd glad:
 Fair daughter, and thou son and grandchild both:
 High proof ye now have given to be the race 385
 Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
 Antagonist of heaven's Almighty King),

344. Which being understood not now, but of future time: joy and tidings, for joyful tidings.

381. His quadrature. The holy city, the New Jerusalem, is described of this figure. See Rev. xxi. 16.

Amply have merited of me, of all
 The infernal empire, that so near heaven's door
 Triumphal with triumphal act have met, 390
 Mine, with this glorious work; and made one realm,
 Hell and this world, one realm, one continent
 Of easy thoroughfare. Therefore,—while I
 Descend through darkness, on your road, with ease,
 To my associate powers, them to acquaint 395
 With these successes, and with them rejoice;—
 You two this way, among these numerous orbs,
 All yours, right down to Paradise descend;
 There dwell, and reign in bliss; thence on the earth
 Dominion exercise and in the air, 400
 Chiefly on man, sole lord of all declared:
 Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
 My substitutes I send ye, and create
 Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might
 Issuing from me; on your joint vigour now 405
 My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
 Through Sin to Death exposed by my exploit.
 If your joint power prevail, the affairs of hell
 No detriment need fear: go, and be strong!
 So saying, he dismiss'd them; they with speed 410
 Their course through thickest constellations held,
 Spreading their bane; the blasted stars look'd wan;
 And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse
 Then suffer'd. The other way Satan went down
 The causey to hell-gate: on either side 415
 Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaim'd,
 And with rebounding surge the bars assail'd,
 That scorn'd his indignation: through the gate,
 Wide open and unguarded, Satan pass'd,
 And all about found desolate; for those, 420
 Appointed to sit there, had left their charge,
 Flown to the upper world; the rest were all
 Far to the inland retired, about the walls
 Of Pandæmonium, city and proud seat
 Of Lucifer; so by allusion call'd 425
 Of that bright star to Satan paragon'd:
 There kept their watch the legions, while the grand
 In council sat, solicitous what chance
 Might intercept their emperour sent; so he
 Departing gave command, and they observed. 430
 As when the Tartar from his Russian foe,
 By Astracan, over the snowy plains,

413. *Planet-struck*. We say of a thing, when it is blasted and withered, that it is *planet-struck*, and that is now applied to the planets themselves. And what a sublime idea doth it give us of the devastations of Sin and Death!—NEWTON.

432-6. *Astracan*: A city at the mouth

of the Volga. *Sophi*, a title of the king of Persia, called *Bactrian*, from one of his richest provinces. *Turkish crescent*, for Turkish standard or power. *Aladule*, the Greater Armenia, so called from its last king, *Aladulis*. *Casbeen*, or *Kasbin*, a city south of the Caspian Sea, a little north-

Retires; or Bactrian Sophi, from the horns
 Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond
 The realm of Aladule, in his retreat 435
 To Tauris or Casbeen: so these, the late
 Heaven-banished host, left desert utmost hell
 Many a dark league, reduced in careful watch
 Round their metropolis; and now expecting
 Each hour their great adventurer, from the search 440
 Of foreign worlds: he through the midst unmark'd,
 In show plebeian angel militant
 Of lowest order, pass'd; and from the door
 Of that Plutonian hall, invisible
 Ascended his high throne; which, under state 445
 Of richest texture spread, at the upper end
 Was placed in regal lustre. Down awhile
 He sat, and round about him saw, unseen:
 At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head
 And shape star-bright appear'd, or brighter; clad 450
 With what permissive glory since his fall
 Was left him, or false glitter. All amazed
 At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng
 Bent their aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,
 Their mighty chief return'd: loud was the acclaim; 455
 Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting peers,
 Raised from their dark divan, and with like joy
 Congratulant approach'd him; who with hand
 Silence, and with these words attention, won:
 Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers; 460
 For in possession such, not only of right,
 I call ye, and declare ye now; return'd
 Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
 Triumphant out of this infernal pit
 Abominable, accursed, the house of woe, 465
 And dungeon of our tyrant: now possess,
 As lords, a spacious world, to our native heaven
 Little inferiour, by my adventure hard
 With peril great achieved. Long were to tell
 What I have done, what suffer'd; with what pain 470
 Voyaged the unreal, vast, unbounded deep
 Of horrible confusion; over which
 By Sin and Death a broad way now is paved,
 To expedite your glorious march; but I
 Toil'd out my uncouth passage, forced to ride 475
 The untractable abyss, plunged in the womb
 Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild;

west of Teheran, where the Persian monarchs made their residence after the loss of *Tauris*, (Ebatana.)

445. *State*: A canopy, covering.

457. *Divan*. The Devils are frequently described by metaphors taken from the Turks. Satan is called the *sultan* (i. 348) as here the council is styled the *divan*.

The said council is said (i. 795) to *sit in secret conclave*. The Devil, the Turk, and the Pope being commonly thought to be nearly related, and often joined together.—NEWTON.

475. *Uncouth*: Unknown. *Unoriginal*: Not originated, not generated.

That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely opposed
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
 Protesting fate supreme; thence how I found 480
 The new-created world, which fame in heaven
 Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful
 Of absolute perfection! therein man
 Placed in a Paradise, by our exile
 Made happy: him by fraud I have seduced 485
 From his Creator; and, the more to increase
 Your wonder, with an apple; he, thereat
 Offended, worth your laughter! hath given up
 Both his beloved man and all his world,
 To Sin and Death a prey; and so to us, 490
 Without our hazard, labour, or alarm,
 To range in, and to dwell, and over man
 To rule, as over all he should have ruled.
 True is, me also he hath judged, or rather
 Me not, but the brute serpent, in whose shape 495
 Man I deceived: that which to me belongs
 Is enmity, which he will put between
 Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;
 His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head.
 A world who would not purchase with a bruise, 500
 Or much more grievous pain? Ye have the account
 Of my performance: what remains, ye gods,
 But up, and enter now into full bliss?
 So having said, awhile he stood, expecting
 Their universal shout, and high applause, 505
 To fill his ear: when, contrary, he hears
 On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
 A dismal universal hiss, the sound
 Of public scorn: he wonder'd, but not long
 Had leisure, wondering at himself now more: 510
 His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare;
 His arms clung to his ribs; his legs entwining
 Each other, till supplanted down he fell
 A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
Reluctant, but in vain; a greater Power 515
Now ruled him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd,
 According to his doom. He would have spoke,
 But hiss for hiss return'd with forked tongue
 To forked tongue; for now were all transform'd
 Alike, to serpents all, as accessories 520
 To his bold riot: dreadful was the din
 Of hissing through the hall, thick-swarming now
 With complicated monsters head and tail,
 Scorpion, and asp, and amphisbæna dire,

480. *Protesting fate supreme*: Calling upon fate as a witness against my proceedings.

513. *Supplanted*: From the Latin *supplanto*, "to trip up one's heels, to over-

throw,"—a term of the gymnasium; so *reluctant*, "struggling against."

524. *Amphisbæna*, &c. See Webster's Dict. *Ophiusa*, (from the Greek *οφίς*, *ophis*, "a serpent:") a small island in the

Cerastes horn'd, hydrus, and elops drear, 525
 And dipsas, (not so thick swarm'd once the soil
 Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
 Ophiusa;) but still greatest he the midst,
 Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
 Ingender'd in the Pythian vale on slime, 530
 Huge Python, and his power no less he seem'd
 Above the rest still to retain. They all
 Him follow'd, issuing forth to the open field,
 Where all yet left of that revolted rout,
 Heaven-fallen, in station stood or just array; 535
 Sublime with expectation when to see
 In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief.
 They saw, but other sight instead! a crowd
 Of ugly serpents; horreur on them fell,
 And horrid sympathy; for, what they saw, 540
 They felt themselves, now changing: down their arms,
 Down fell both spear and shield; down they as fast;
 And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form
 Catch'd, by contagion; like in punishment,
 As in their crime. Thus was the applause they meant 545
 Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
 Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood
 A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change
 His will who reigns above, to aggravate
 Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that 550
 Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
 Used by the tempter: on that prospect strange
 Their earnest eyes they fix'd, imagining
 For one forbidden tree a multitude
 Now risen, to work them farther woe or shame; 555
 Yet, parch'd with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
 Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;
 But on they roll'd in heaps, and, up the trees
 Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks
 That curl'd Megæra. Greedily they pluck'd 560
 The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
 Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flamed;
 This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
 Deceived: they fondly thinking to allay
 Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit 565
 Chew'd bitter ashes, which the offended taste
 With spattering noise rejected: oft they assay'd,
 Hunger and thirst constraining; drugg'd as oft,
 With hatefulest disrelish writhed their jaws,
 With soot and cinders fill'd; so oft they fell 570
 Into the same illusion, not as man

Mediterranean, off the coast of Spain, the inhabitants of which are said to have quitted it for fear of being devoured by serpents.

525. *Elops*, a serpent spoken of by Pliny.

560. *Megæra*: One of the Furies, whose hair was serpents, like Medusa's.

562. *Bituminous lake*: The Dead Sea.

572. *Triumph'd*: That is, *triumph'd* over. So in line 136 of this book.

Whom they triumph'd once laps'd. Thus were they
plagued,

And worn with famine long, and ceaseless hiss,
Till their lost shape, permitted, they resumed;
Yearly enjoin'd, some say, to undergo 575

This annual humbling certain number'd days,
To dash their pride and joy for man seduced.

However, some tradition they dispersed
Among the heathen of their purchase got;
And fabled how the serpent, whom they call'd 580

Ophion, with Eurynome, the wide-
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
Of high Olympus; thence by Saturn driven
And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.

Meanwhile in Paradise the hellish pair 585
Too soon arrived; Sin, there in power before,
Once actual; now in body, and to dwell

Habitual habitant; behind her Death,
Close following, pace for pace, not mounted yet
On his pale horse; to whom Sin thus began: 590

Second of Satan sprung, all-conquering Death!
What think'st thou of our empire now, though earn'd
With travail difficult? not better far,
Than still at hell's dark threshold to have sat watch,
Unnamed, undreaded, and thyself half-starved? 595

Whom thus the sin-born monster answer'd soon:
To me, who with eternal famine pine,
Alike is hell, or Paradise, or heaven;
There best, where most with ravine I may meet:
Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems 600
To stuff this maw, this vast un-hidebound corpse.

To whom the incestuous mother thus replied:
Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl;
No homely morsels: and whatever thing 605
The scythe of Time mows down, devour unspared;
Till I, in man residing, through the race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect;
And season him thy last and sweetest prey.

This said, they both betook them several ways, 610
Both to destroy, or unimmortal make
All kinds, and for destruction to mature

573. *Worn*: That is, *worn out*. It is better to have the comma after *long*.

579. *Among the heathen*. Milton here is showing the tradition among the heathen, of the great power Satan had obtained over mankind. *Ophion*: The Greek for "serpent." *Eurynome*: "Wide-ruling;" but, *perhaps*, might be called *wide-encroaching*, as extending her rule and dominion further than she should: wanting to be superior to her husband, to be a goddess, &c.—NEWTON.

584. *Dictæan*: From *Dictæ*, a mountain in Crete, where Jupiter was educated.

586. *Sin, there, &c.* The sense is, that before the fall, Sin was *in power*, or potentially in Paradise; that *once*, namely, upon the fall, it was actually there, though not bodily, but that *now* it was there in body, and dwelt as a constant inhabitant.—PEARCE.

593. *Not better*: Is it not better?

601. *Un-hidebound*: Not tight-bound, as when creatures are swollen and full.

Sooner or later; which the Almighty seeing,
 From his transcendent seat the saints among,
 To those bright orders utter'd thus his voice: 615
 See, with what heat these dogs of hell advance
 To waste and havoc yonder world, which I
 So fair and good created; and had still
 Kept in that state, had not the folly of man
 Let in these wasteful furies, who impute 620
 Folly to me; so doth the prince of hell
 And his adherents, that with so much ease
 I suffer them to enter and possess
 A place so heavenly; and, conniving, seem
 To gratify my scornful enemies, 625
 That laugh, as if, transported with some fit
 Of passion, I to them had quitted all,
 At random yielded up to their misrule;
 And know not that I call'd, and drew them thither,
 My hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth 630
 Which man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
 On what was pure; till, cramm'd and gorged, nigh burst
 With suck'd and glutted offal, at one sling
 Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
 Both Sin, and Death, and yawning grave, at last, 635
 Through Chaos hurl'd, obstruct the mouth of hell
 For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.
 Then heaven and earth renew'd shall be made pure
 To sanctity, that shall receive no stain:
 Till then, the curse pronounc'd on both precedes. 640
 He ended, and the heavenly audience loud
 Sung halleluiah, as the sound of seas,
 Through multitude that sung: Just are thy ways,
 Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works:
 Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son, 645
 Destined Restorer of mankind, by whom
 New heaven and earth shall to the ages rise,
 Or down from heaven descend. Such was their song;
 While the Creator, calling forth by name
 His mighty angels, gave them several charge, 650
 As sorted best with present things. The sun
 Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
 As might affect the earth with cold and heat
 Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call

616. *Dogs of hell*, &c. Newton thinks some of the expressions in this description too coarse; but it may be said, in vindication of them, that many of the expressions which characterize the ebullition of human passion are, by the Old-Testament writers, put into the mouth of the Deity. But, as Sir E. Brydges remarks, the difficulty of assigning to the divine displeasure terms of language according with his purity as well as anger, is hardly surmountable.

638. *Heaven and earth* is the Jewish phrase to express our world.

640. *Precedes*: That is, the curse pronounc'd shall go before those ravagers Sin and Death, and shall direct and lead them on. But Dr. Bentley would read *proceed*, meaning that the curse shall go on and continue, till the consummation of all things, and *heaven and earth* shall be restored.

643. See Rev. xv. 3, and xvi. 7.

647. See Rev. xxi. 2.

Decrepit winter; from the south to bring 655
 Solstitial summer's heat. To the blanc moon
 Her office they prescribed: to the other five
 Their planetary motions, and aspécts,
 In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite,
 Of noxious efficacy, and when to join 660
 In synod unbenign; and taught the fix'd
 Their influence malignant when to shower,
 Which of them rising with the sun, or falling,
 Should prove tempestuous: to the winds they set
 Their corners, when with bluster to confound 665
 Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll
 With terrour through the dark aëreal hall.
 Some say, he bid his angels turn askance
 The poles of earth, twice ten degrees and more,
 From the sun's axle; they with labour push'd 670
 Oblique the centric globe: some say, the sun
 Was bid turn reins from the equinoctial road
 Like-distant breadth to Taurus with the seven
 Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,
 Up to the tropic Crab: thence down amain 675
 By Leo, and the Virgin, and the Scales,
 As deep as Capricorn; to bring in change
 Of seasons to each clime; else had the spring
 Perpetual smiled on earth with vernant flowers,
 Equal in days and nights, except to those 680
 Beyond the polar circles; to them day
 Had unbenighted shone; while the low sun,
 To recompense his distance, in their sight
 Had rounded still the horizon, and not known
 Or east or west; which had forbid the snow 685
 From cold Estotiland, and south as far
 Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit,

658. *Aspects*: Their appearance each from the other. When a planet is distant from another by one-sixth of the Zodiac, or 60° , its *aspect* is called *sextile*; if by a fourth, or 90° , *square*; if by a third, or 120° , *trine*; if by one-half, or 180° , *opposite*, which is said to be of *noxious efficacy*, because when so opposed they are thought to strive to overcome each other.

660. *To join in synod*: That is, to be in conjunction. *Fixed*, that is, fixed stars.

668. *He bid his angels*. It was *eternal Spring* before the Fall, (iv. 268) and he is now accounting for the change of seasons after the Fall, and mentions the 'two famous hypotheses.—NEWTON.

671. *Centric globe*, being in the centre of the universe according to the system of Ptolemy. *Taurus*, the constellation so called with the seven stars in his neck. *Crab*, the tropic of Cancer, the sun's farthest range northward: the *Spartan twins*, so called from Castor and Pollux,

the sons of Tyndarus, king of Sparta. 674. *Atlantic Sisters*, the Pleiades.

686. *Estotiland*. In the old Geographical Dictionary of Edmund Bohun, of 1695, I find the following: "Estotilandia, a great Tract of Land in the North of America, towards the Arctic circle and Hudson's Bay, having new France on the South and James's Bay on the West, the first of American shores discovered, being found by some Friesland Fishers that were driven hither by a Tempest almost two hundred years before Columbus."

687. *Magellan*: The straits so called from the distinguished Portuguese navigator who discovered them in 1520.

687. *At that tasted fruit*. Milton means to say that the sun turned away from the tasting of the forbidden fruit of Adam and Eve, as he is fabled to have done when Atreus served up to his brother Thyestes his own children, for a feast. See Thyestes and Atreus, in Smith's or Anthon's classical dictionary.

The sun, as from Thyestean banquet, turn'd
 His course intended; else, how had the world
 Inhabited, though sinless, more than now, 690
 Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?
 These changes in the heavens, though slow, produced
 Like change on sea and land; sidereal blast,
 Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,
 Corrupt and pestilent: now, from the north 695
 Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,
 Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice,
 And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,
 Boreas, and Cæcias, and Argestes loud,
 And Thracias, rend the woods, and seas upturn; 700
 With adverse blast upturns them from the south
 Notus, and Afer black with thunderous clouds
 From Serrationa: thwart of these, as fierce,
 Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,
 Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise, 705
 Sirocco and Libecchio. Thus began
 Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,
 Daughter of Sin, among the irrational
 Death introduced, through fierce antipathy:
 Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl, 710
 And fish with fish: to graze the herb all leaving,
 Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
 Of man, but fled him; or, with countenance grim,
 Glared on him passing. These were from without
 The growing miseries, which Adam saw 715
 Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
 To sorrow abandon'd, but worse felt within;
 And, in a troubled sea of passion tost,
 Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint:
 O miserable of happy! is this the end 720
 Of this new glorious world, and me so late
 The glory of that glory, who now become
 Accursed, of blessed? hide me from the face
 Of God, whom to behold was then my highth
 Of happiness! Yet well, if here would end 725
 The misery; I deserved it, and would bear
 My own deservings; but this will not serve:
 All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
 Is propagated curse. O voice, once heard
 Delightfully, Increase and multiply; 730
 Now death to hear! for what can I increase

696. *Norumbega*. There is no place now known by this name: in Milton's time the science of Geography was in its infancy. Hume merely says, without any authority, that it was "a province of northern America." *Samoed*, the *Samoïdes*, a people in the north of Russia.

699. *Boreas*, the north wind; *Cæcias*, north-west; *Argestes*, north-east; *Thra-*

cias, blowing from Thrace, northward of Greece; *Notus*, south wind; *Afer*, south-west from Africa. *Serrationa*, or Lion Mountains, south-west of Africa, in the vicinity of Cape Verd. The *Levant* and the *Ponent* (the *Eurus* and *Zephyr*) are the east and west winds. Their *lateral noise*, *Sirocco* and *Libecchio*, are the south-east and south-west winds.

Or multiply, but curses on my head?
 Who of all ages to succeed, but, feeling
 The evil on him brought by me, will curse
 My head? Ill fare our ancestor impure! 735
 For this we may thank Adam! but his thanks
 Shall be the execration: so, besides
 Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
 Shall with a fierce reflux on me rebound;
 On me, as on their natural centre, light 740
 Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
 Of Paradise, dear-bought with lasting woes!
 Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
 To mould me man? Did I solicit thee
 From darkness to promote me, or here place 745
 In this delicious garden? As my will
 Concurr'd not to my being, it were but right
 And equal to reduce me to my dust;
 Desirous to resign and render back
 All I received; unable to perform 750
 Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
 The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
 Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
 The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable
 Thy justice seems: yet, to say truth, too late 755
 I thus contest; then should have been refused
 Those terms, whatever, when they were proposed:
 Thou didst accept them; wilt thou enjoy the good,
 Then cavil the conditions? and, though God
 Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son 760
 Prove disobedient, and, reproved, retort,
 Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not:
 Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
 That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,
 But natural necessity begot. 765
 God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
 To serve him; thy reward was of his grace;
 Thy punishment then justly is at his will.
 Be it so, for I submit; his doom is fair,
 That dust I am, and shall to dust return: 770
 O welcome hour whenever! Why delays
 His hand to execute what his decree
 Fix'd on this day? Why do I overlive?
 Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out
 To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet 775
 Mortality my sentence, and be earth

741. *Though in their place.* It was a common notion among the Peripatetics that elementary bodies did not have any gravity, or in other words, weighed nothing in their natural places: thus that air weighed nothing in air, water in water, &c.; so Adam exclaims, "That contrary to the course of nature, his

afflictions will weigh heavy on him though they are in their proper place."

758. *Thou didst.* The change of persons, sometimes speaking of himself in the first, and sometimes to himself in the second, is very remarkable in this place.

762. See Isaiah xlv. 10.

Insensible! How glad would lay me down,
 As in my mother's lap! There I should rest,
 And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more
 Would thunder in my ears; no fear of worse 780
 To me and to my offspring would torment me
 With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
 Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;
 Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of man
 Which God inspired, cannot together perish 785
 With this corporeal clod: then, in the grave,
 Or in some other dismal place, who knows
 But I shall die a living death? O thought
 Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath
 Of life that sinn'd; what dies but what had life 790
 And sin? The body properly hath neither.
 All of me then shall die: let this appease
 The doubt, since human reach no further knows:
 For, though the Lord of all be infinite,
 Is his wrath also? Be it, man is not so, 795
 But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise
 Wrath without end on man, whom death must end?
 Can he make deathless death? That were to make
 Strange contradiction, which to God himself
 Impossible is held; as argument 800
 Of weakness, not of power. Will he draw out,
 For anger's sake, finite to infinite,
 In punish'd man, to satisfy his rigour,
 Satisfied never? That were to extend
 His sentence beyond dust and nature's law, 805
 By which all causes else, according still
 To the reception of their matter, act;
 Not to the extent of their own sphere. But say
 That death be not one stroke, as I supposed,
 Bereaving sense, but endless misery 810
 From this day onward; which I feel begun
 Both in me, and without me; and so last
 To perpetuity:—ay, me! that fear
 Comes thundering back with dreadful revolution
 On my defenceless head; both death and I 815
 Am found eternal, and incorporate both:
 Nor I on my part single; in me all
 Posterity stands cursed: fair patrimony
 That I must leave ye, sons! O, were I able
 To waste it all myself, and leave ye none! 820
 So disinherited, how would you bless
 Me, now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind,

783. *Lest all I.* So Horace, *non omnis moriar*, "I shall not all die;" that is, not every thing comprehended in the word *I*, will die.

805. *Beyond dust.* That is, for God to punish him after death, would be to extend the sentence *beyond dust*.

806. *By which, &c.* That is, all other agents act in proportion to the *reception* or capacity of the subject matter, and not to the utmost extent of their own power.

For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemn'd,
 If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
 But all corrupt: both mind and will depraved, 821
 Not to do only, but to will the same
 With me? How can they then acquitted stand
 In sight of God? Him, after all disputes,
 Forced I absolve: all my evasions vain,
 And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still 830
 But to my own conviction: first and last
 On me, me only, as the source and spring
 Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;
 So might the wrath! Fond wish! couldst thou support
 That burden, heavier than the earth to bear; 835
 Than all the world much heavier, though divided
 With that bad woman? Thus, what thou desir'st,
 And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
 Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
 Beyond all past example and future: 840
 To Satan only like both crime and doom.
 O conscience! into what abyss of fears
 And horrors hast thou driven me; out of which
 I find no way, from deep to deeper plunged!
 Thus Adam to himself lamented loud, 845
 Through the still night; not now, as ere man fell,
 Wholesome, and cool, and mild, but with black air
 Accompanied; with damps and dreadful gloom;
 Which to his evil conscience represented
 All things with double terrour; on the ground 850
 Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground; and oft
 Cursed his creation; death as oft accused
 Of tardy execution, since denounced
 The day of his offence. Why comes not death,
 Said he, with one thrice-acceptable stroke 855
 To end me? Shall truth fail to keep her word,
 Justice divine not hasten to be just?
 But death comes not at call; justice divine
 Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.
 O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers! 860
 With other echo late I taught your shades
 To answer and resound far other song.
 Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
 Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
 Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd; 865
 But her with stern regard he thus repell'd:
 Out of my sight, thou serpent! That name best
 Befits thee with him leagued, thyself as false
 And hateful; nothing wants, but that thy shape,
 Like his, and colour serpentine, may show 870

859. *Her slowest pace, &c.* The most beautiful passages commonly want the fewest notes; and we are sure the reader must not only perceive, but really feel

them, if he has any feeling at all. Nothing in all the ancient tragedies is more moving and pathetic.—NEWTON.

Thy inward fraud; to warn all creatures from thee
 Henceforth; lest that too heavenly form, pretended
 To hellish falsehood, snare them! But for thee
 I had persisted happy: had not thy pride
 And wandering vanity, when least was safe, 875
 Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd
 Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,
 Though by the devil himself, him overweening
 To over-reach; but, with the serpent meeting,
 Fool'd and beguiled; by him thou, I by thee, 880
 To trust thee from my side, imagined wise,
 Constant, mature, proof against all assaults;
 And understood not all was but a show,
 Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib
 Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears, 885
 More to the part sinister, from me drawn;
 Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
 To my just number found. O! why did God,
 Creator wise, that peopled highest heaven
 With spirits masculine, create at last 890
 This novelty on earth, this fair defect
 Of nature, and not fill the world at once
 With men, as angels, without feminine;
 Or find some other way to generate
 Mankind? This mischief had not then befallen, 895
 And more that shall befall; innumerable
 Disturbances on earth through female snares,
 And strait conjunction with this sex: for either
 He never shall find out fit mate, but such
 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake; 900
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain,
 Through her perverseness, but shall see her gain'd
 By a far worse; or, if she love, withheld
 By parents; or his happiest choice too late
 Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock-bound 905
 To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
 Which infinite calamity shall cause
 To human life, and household peace confound.
 He added not, and from her turn'd; but Eve,
 Not so repulsed, with tears that ceased not flowing, 910
 And tresses all disorder'd, at his feet
 Fell humble; and, embracing them, besought
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.
 Forsake me not thus, Adam! witness, Heaven,
 What love sincere, and reverence in my heart 915
 I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
 Unhappily deceived! Thy suppliant,
 I beg, and clasp thy knees: bereave me not,
 Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,

872. *Pretended*. Used in its original Latin sense, (*prætendere*), "held, or placed before;" that is, placed before to cover or conceal *hellish falsehood*.

Thy counsel, in this uttermost distress, 920
 My only strength and stay: forlorn of thee,
 Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
 While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
 Between us two let there be peace; both joining,
 As join'd in injuries, one enmity 925
 Against a foe by doom express assign'd us,
 That cruel serpent: on me exercise not
 Thy hatred for this misery befallen;
 On me already lost, me than thyself
 More miserable! both have sinn'd; but thou 930
Against God only, I against God and thee;
 And to the place of judgment will return,
 There with my cries impórtune Heaven, that all
 The sentence, from thy head removed, may light
 On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe; 935
 Me, me only, just object of his ire!
 She ended weeping; and her lowly plight,
 Immoveable, till peace obtain'd from fault
 Acknowledged and deplored, in Adam wrought
 Commiseration; soon his heart relented 940
 Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,
 Now at his feet submissive in distress;
 Creature so fair his reconcilment seeking,
 His counsel, whom she had displeas'd, his aid:
 As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost; 945
 And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon:
 Unwary, and too desirous, as before,
 So now, of what thou know'st not, who desirest
 The punishment all on thyself; alas!
 Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain 950
 His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
 And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If prayers
 Could alter high decrees, I to that place
 Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
 That on my head all might be visited; 955
 Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,
 To me committed, and by me expos'd.
 But rise; let us no more contend, nor blame
 Each other, blamed enough elsewhere; but strive
In offices of love, how we may lighten 960
Each other's burden, in our share of woe;
 Since this day's death denounced, if aught I see,
 Will prove no sudden, but a slow-paced evil;
 A long day's dying, to augment our pain;
 And to our seed (O hapless seed!) derived. 965
 To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied:
 Adam, by sad experiment I know

940. This picture of Eve's distress, her
 submissive, tender address to her hus-
 band, and his generous reconcilment | to her, are extremely beautiful, I had
 almost said beyond any thing in the
 whole poem.—THYER.

How little weight my words with thee can find,
 Found so erroneous; thence by just event
 Found so unfortunate: nevertheless, 970
 Restored by thee, vile as I am, to place
 Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
 Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart,
 Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
 What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen, 975
 Tending to some relief of our extremes,
 Or end; though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
 As in our evils, and of easier choice.
 If care of our descent perplex us most,
 Which must be born to certain woe, devour'd 980
 By Death at last; and miserable it is,
 To be to others cause of misery,
 Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
 Into this cursed world a woful race,
 That after wretched life must be at last 985
 Food for so foul a monster; in thy power
 It lies, yet ere conception, to prevent
 The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
 Childless thou art, childless remain: so Death
 Shall be deceived his glut, and with us two 990
 Be forced to satisfy his ravenous maw.
 But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
 Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
 From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet;
 And with desire to languish without hope, 995
 Before the present object languishing
 With like desire; which would be misery
 And torment less than none of what we dread;
 Then, both ourselves and seed at once to free
 From what we fear for both, let us make short,— 1000
 Let us seek death; or, he not found, supply
 With our own hands his office on ourselves.
 Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
 That show no end but death; and have the power,
 Of many ways to die the shortest choosing, 1005
 Destruction with destruction to destroy?
 She ended here, or vehement despair
 Broke off the rest; so much of death her thoughts
 Had entertain'd, as dy'd her cheeks with pale.
 But Adam, with such counsel nothing sway'd, 1010
 To better hopes his more attentive mind
 Labouring had raised; and thus to Eve replied:
 Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
 To argue in thee something more sublime

1006. The construction is, "and have the power to destroy destruction with destruction, choosing the shortest of many ways to die."

1012. Eve's speech, as Dr. Gillies remarks, breathes the language of despair; Adam's, the sentiments of a mind enlightened and encouraged by the word of God.—TODD.

And excellent, than what thy mind contemns; 1015
 But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
 That excellence thought in thee; and implies,
 Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
 For loss of life and pleasure overloved.
 Or if thou covet death, as utmost end 1020
 Of misery, so thinking to evade
 The penalty pronounced; doubt not but God
 Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire, than so
 To be forestall'd; much more I fear lest death,
 So snatch'd, will not exempt us from the pain 1025
 We are by doom to pay; rather, such acts
 Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
 /To make death in us live: then let us seek
 Some safer resolution, which methinks
 I have in view, calling to mind with heed 1030
 Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
 The serpent's head; piteous amends! unless
 Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe,
 Satan; who, in the serpent, hath contrived
 Against us this deceit: to crush his head 1035
 Would be revenge indeed! which will be lost
 By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
 Resolved, as thou proposest; so our foe
 Shall 'scape his punishment ordain'd, and we
 Instead shall double ours upon our heads. 1040
 No more be mention'd then of violence
 Against ourselves; and wilful barrenness,
 That cuts us off from hope; and savours only
 Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
 Reluctance against God and his just yoke 1045
 Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
 And gracious temper he both heard and judged
 Without wrath or reviling: we expected
 Immediate dissolution, which we thought
 Was meant by death that day; when, lo! to thee 1050
 Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
 And bringing forth; soon recompensed with joy,
 Fruit of thy womb: on me the curse aslope
 Glanced on the ground; with labour I must earn
 My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse: 1055
 My labour will sustain me; and, lest cold
 Or heat should injure us, his timely care
 Hath, unbesought, provided; and his hands
 Clothed us, unworthy, pitying while he judged;
 How much more, if we pray him, will his ear 1060
 Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
 And teach us farther by what means to shun
 The inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow!
 Which now the sky, with various face, begins
 To show us in this mountain; while the winds 1065
 Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks

Of these fair-spreading trees ; which bids us seek
 Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish
 Our limbs benumb'd, ere this diurnal star
 Leave cold the night, how we his gather'd beams 1070
 Reflected may with matter sere foment ;
 Or, by collision of two bodies, grind
 The air attrite to fire ; as late the clouds
 Justling, or push'd with winds, rude in their shock,
 Tine the slant lightning ; whose thwart flame, driven down,
 Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine, 1076
 And sends a comfortable heat from far,
 Which might supply the sun : such fire to use,
 And what may else be remedy or cure
 To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought, 1080
 He will instruct us praying, and of grace
 Beseeching him ; so as we need not fear
 To pass commodiously this life, sustain'd
 By him with many comforts, till we end
 In dust, our final rest and native home. 1085
 What better can we do, than, to the place
 Repairing where he judg'd us, prostrate fall
 Before him reverent ; and there confess
 Humbly our faults, and pardon beg ; with tears
 Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air 1090
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek ?
 Undoubtedly he will relent, and turn
 From his displeasure ; in whose look serene,
 When angry most he seem'd and most severe, 1095
 What else but favour, grace, and mercy shone ?
 So spake our father penitent ; nor Eve
 Felt less remorse : they, forthwith to the place
 Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell
 Before him reverent ; and both confess'd 1100
 Humbly their faults, and pardon begg'd ; with tears
 Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

1071. *Matter sere*. That is, with dry, withered substances increase the heat received only from the rays of the sun.

1075. *Tine*, from the Saxon *tynan*, to light, to kindle : whence the word *tinder*.

REMARKS ON BOOK XI.

ADDISON observes, that this eleventh book of "Paradise Lost" is not generally reckoned among the most shining books of the poem. How is it possible that every book, where the splendour is so excessive, should blaze equally? Probably there is less invention in this book; but the descriptive parts are not less powerful, nor less important, instructive, and awful in their topics. The Deluge was a trial of strength with the ancients, since it forms so important a feature in Ovid's poems. So far as there is invention in this book, it lies in the selection of circumstances, in picturesque epithets, and in moral, political, and religious reflections: its intellectual compass is vast and stupendous. Such a view opened upon Adam of the fate of his posterity, could only be conceived and comprehended by the splendid force of the poetical eye of Milton. Wonderful as is the liveliness and truth of shape and tint of each part, still the greater wonder is in the united brilliance of the whole.

It is truly said, that Milton everywhere follows the great ancients, and improves upon them: he despises all the petty gildings and artifices, which are so much boasted in modern poetry. His object is, to convey images and ideas—not words; and the plainer the words, so that they do not disgrace the thought, the better! He would never sacrifice the force of the language to the metre. The mark of this is, that when he had occasion to use the terms of the Scripture, he would not derange them for the sake of the rhythm.

On that which pleases us individually, without consulting the feelings and opinions of others, we cannot rely: but when what delights us has made the same impression on gifted persons of all ages, and under all different circumstances, then we may be sure that its charms are intrinsic, and such as it is important to bring out, and render more impressive. Thus Milton is full of imagery, which makes the spell of Homer and Virgil.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Son of God presents to his Father the prayers of our first parents now repenting, and intercedes for them: God accepts them, but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise; sends Michael with a band of cherubim to dispossess them; but first to reveal to Adam future things: Michael's coming down. Adam shows to Eve certain ominous signs; he discerns Michael's approach; goes out to meet him: the angel denounces their departure. Eve's lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits: the angel leads him up to a high hill; sets before him in vision what shall happen till the flood.

THUS they, in lowliest plight, repentant stood,
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above
Prevenient grace descending had removed
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead; that sighs now breathed 5
Unutterable; which the Spirit of prayer
Inspired, and wing'd for heaven with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory: yet their port
Not of mean suitors; nor important less
Seem'd their petition, than when the ancient pair 10
In fables old, less ancient yet than these,
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
The race of mankind drown'd, before the shrine
Of Themis stood devout. To heaven their prayers
Flew up, nor miss'd the way, by envious winds 15
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they pass'd
Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then clad
With incense, where the golden altar fumed,
By their great Intercessour, came in sight
Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son 20
Presenting, thus to intercede began:
See, Father, what first-fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in man; these sighs

1. *Stood*. This word has no relation to the posture, but to the act itself, and the continuance of it. *Stood praying*, therefore, means not only that they prayed or were praying, but that they persevered in their devotions.—GREENWOOD.

6. See Rom. viii. 26.

12. *Deucalion and Pyrrha*. The poet could not have thought of a more apt similitude than this, from Ovid, to illustrate his subject. Milton has often been censured for his frequent allusions to

heathen mythology, and for mixing fables with sacred truths: but it may be observed in favour of him, that what he borrows from the heathen mythology, he commonly applies only by way of similitude; and a similitude from thence may illustrate his subject as well as from any thing else.—NEWTON.

17. *Dimensionless*. Spiritual, not having the dimensions of matter.

18. See Ps. cxli. 2; Rev. viii. 3, 4.

And prayers, which in this golden censer, mix'd
 With incense, I thy priest before thee bring; 25
 Fruits of more pleasing savour, from thy seed
 Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
 Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees
 Of Paradise could have produced, ere fallen
 From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear 30
 To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute:
 Unskilful with what words to pray, let me
 Interpret for him; me, his Advocate
 And propitiation; all his works on me,
 Good or not good, ingraft; my merit those 35
 Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.
 Accept me; and, in me, from these receive
 The smell of peace toward mankind: let him live
 Before thee, reconciled, at least his days
 Number'd, though sad; till death, his doom, (which I 40
 To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse,)
 To better life shall yield him; where with me
 All my redeem'd may dwell in joy and bliss;
 Made one with me, as I with thee am one.
 To whom the Father, without cloud, serene: 45
 All thy request for man, accepted Son,
 Obtain; all thy request was my decree:
 But, longer in that Paradise to dwell
 The law I gave to nature him forbids:
 Those pure immortal elements, that know 50
 No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
 Eject him, tainted now; and purge him off,
 As a distemper, gross, to air as gross,
 And mortal food, as may dispose him best
 For dissolution wrought by sin, that first 55
 Distemper'd all things, and of incorrupt
 Corrupted. I, at first, with two fair gifts
 Created him endow'd; with happiness,
 And immortality: that fondly lost,
 This other served but to eternize woe; 60
 Till I provided death: so death becomes
 His final remedy; and, after life,
 Tried in sharp tribulation, and refined
 By faith and faithful works, to second life,
 Waked in the renovation of the just, 65
 Resigns him up with heaven and earth renew'd.
 But let us call to synod all the bless'd,
 Through heaven's wide bounds: from them I will not hide
 My judgments; how with mankind I proceed,
 As how with peccant angels late they saw; 70
 And in their state, though firm, stood more confirm'd.
 He ended, and the Son gave signal high
 To the bright minister that watch'd: he blew

His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps
 When God descended, and perhaps once more 75
 To sound at general doom. The angelic blast
 Fill'd all the regions: from their blissful bowers
 Of amaranthine shade, fountain or spring,
 By the waters of life, where'er they sat
 In fellowships of joy, the sons of light 80
 Hasted, resorting to the summons high;
 And took their seats: till from his throne supreme
 The Almighty thus pronounced his sovran will:
 O sons, like one of us man is become,
 To know both good and evil, since his taste 85
 Of that defended fruit; but let him boast
 His knowledge of good lost, and evil got;
 Happier, had it sufficed him to have known
 Good by itself, and evil not at all.
 He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite, 90
 My motions in him; longer than they move,
 His heart I know how variable and vain,
 Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand
 Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,
 And live for ever, dream at least to live 95
 For ever, to remove him I decree,
 And send him from the garden forth to till
 The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.
 Michael, this my behest have thou in charge:
 Take to thee from among the cherubim 100
 Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the fiend,
 Or in behalf of man, or to invade
 Vacant possession, some new trouble raise:
 Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God
 Without remorse drive out the sinful pair; 105
 From hallow'd ground the unholy; and denounce
 To them, and to their progeny, from thence
 Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint
 At the sad sentence rigorously urged,
 (For I behold them soften'd, and with tears 110
 Bewailing their excess,) all terrour hide.
 If patiently thy bidding they obey,
 Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
 To Adam what shall come in future days,
 As I shall thee enlighten; intermix 115
 My covenant in the woman's seed renew'd;
 So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace;
 And on the east side of the garden place,
 Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
 Cherubic watch; and of a sword the flame 120
 Wide-waving; all approach far off to fright,

74. *Perhaps*, refers not to the events mentioned, but to the *identity* of the trumpet.

79. See Rev. xxii. 1, and vii. 17.

91. *Longer*, &c. That is, after my motions in him cease to operate.

And guard all passage to the tree of life;
 Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
 To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey;
 With whose stolen fruit man once more to delude. 125

He ceased; and the archangelic power prepared
 For swift descent; with him the cohort bright
 Of watchful cherubim: four faces each
 Had, like a double Janus; all their shape
 Spangled with eyes more numerous than those 130
 Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,
 Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed
 Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile,

To resalute the world with sacred light,
 Leucothéa waked, and with fresh dews embalm'd 135
 The earth; when Adam and first matron Eve
 Had ended now their orisons, and found
 Strength added from above; new hope to spring
 Out of despair; joy, but with fear yet link'd;
 Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew'd: 140

Eve, easily may faith admit, that all
 The good which we enjoy from heaven descends;
 But that from us aught should ascend to Heaven
 So prevalent, as to concern the mind
 Of God high-blest, or to incline his will, 145

Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer,
 Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
 Ev'n to the seat of God: for since I sought
 By prayer the offended Deity to appease,
 Kneel'd, and before him humbled all my heart, 150
 Methought I saw him placable and mild,
 Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew

That I was heard with favour; peace return'd
 Home to my breast, and to my memory
 His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe; 155
 Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now
 Assures me that the bitterness of death

Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,
 Eve, rightly call'd mother of all mankind,
 Mother of all things living, since by thee 160
 Man is to live; and all things live for man.

To whom thus Eve, with sad demeanour, meek:
 Ill-worthy I, such title should belong
 To me transgressour; who, for thee ordain'd
 A help, became thy snare; to me reproach 165
 Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise:
 But infinite in pardon was my Judge,

128. *Four faces.* See Ezek. x. 12, 14.

133. *The opiate rod* of Mercury is his *caduceus*, with which he could give sleep to whomsoever he pleased.

135. *Leucothéa*: The *white goddess*, as the Greek name imports. This is the

last morning in the poem,—the morning of that fatal day when our first parents were expelled out of Paradise. According to Addison, the time of the poem occupies ten days. Newton makes it eleven.

That I, who first brought death on all, am graced
 The source of life; next favourable thou,
 Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st, 170
 Far other name deserving. But the field
 To labour calls us, now with sweat imposed,
 Though after sleepless night: for see! the morn,
 All unconcern'd with our unrest, begins
 Her rosy progress smiling: let us forth; 175
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
 Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoin'd
 Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?
 Here let us live, though in fallen state, content. 180
 So spake, so wish'd, much-humbled Eve; but fate
 Subscribed not: nature first gave signs, impress'd
 On bird, beast, air; air suddenly eclipsed,
 After short blush of morn: nigh in her sight
 The bird of Jove, stoop'd from his æry tour, 185
 Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;
 Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
 First hunter then, pursued a gentle brace,
 Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind:
 Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight. 190
 Adam observed; and with his eye the chase
 Pursuing, not unmoved, to Eve thus spake:
 O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,
 Which Heaven by these mute signs in nature shows
 Forerunners of his purpose; or to warn 195
 Us, haply too secure of our discharge
 From penalty, because from death released
 Some days: how long, and what till then our life,
 Who knows? or more than this, that we are dust,
 And thither must return, and be no more? 200
 Why else this double object in our sight,
 Of flight pursued in the air, and o'er the ground,
 One way the self-same hour? why in the east
 Darkness ere day's mid-course, and morning-light
 More orient in yon western cloud, that draws 205
 O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
 And slow descends with something heavenly fraught?
 He err'd not; for by this the heavenly bands
 Down from a sky of jasper lighted now
 In Paradise, and on a hill made halt; 210
 A glorious apparition, had not doubt
 And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adam's eye.
 Not that more glorious, when the angels met
 Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw
 The field pavilion'd with his guardians bright; 215
 Nor that, which on the flaming mount appear'd

185. *Stoop'd*. A participle, meaning | 214-217. See Gen xxxii. 1, 2, and
 coming down. | 2 Kings vi. 13.

In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire,
 Against the Syrian king, who to surprise
 One man, assassin-like, had levied war,
 War unproclaim'd. The princely hierarch 220
 In their bright stand there left his powers, to seize
 Possession of the garden: he alone,
 To find where Adam shelter'd, took his way,
 Not unperceived of Adam; who to Eve,
 While the great visitant approach'd, thus spake: 225
 Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
 Of us will soon determine, or impose
 New laws to be observed: for I descry,
 From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
 One of the heavenly host; and, by his gait, 230
 None of the meanest: some great potentate,
 Or of the thrones above; such majesty
 Invests him coming: yet not terrible,
 That I should fear; nor sociably mild,
 As Raphael, that I should much confide; 235
 But solemn and sublime; whom not to offend,
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.
 He ended; and the archangel soon drew nigh,
 Not in his shape celestial, but as man
 Clad to meet man: over his lucid arms 240
 A military vest of purple flow'd,
 Livelier than Melibœan, or the grain
 Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old
 In time of truce; Iris had dipt the woof:
 His starry helm unbuckled show'd him prime 245
 In manhood where youth ended: by his side,
 As in a glistening zodiac, hung the sword,
 Satan's dire dread; and in his hand the spear.
 Adam bow'd low: he, kingly, from his state
 Inclined not, but his coming thus declared: 250
 Adam, Heaven's high behest no preface needs:
 Sufficient that thy prayers are heard; and Death,
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
 Defeated of his seizure many days,
 Given thee of grace, wherein thou mayst repent, 255
 And one bad act with many deeds well done
 Mayst cover: well may then thy Lord, appeased,
 Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell
 Permits not: to remove thee I am come, 260
 And send thee from the garden forth, to till
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.
 He added not; for Adam, at the news
 Heart-struck, with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,
 That all his senses bound: Eve, who unseen, 265

242. *Melibœan*. Melibœa was a city of Thessaly, famous for dying the richest purple. *Sarra* was the earlier Latin name for Tyre, also famous for its purple dyes.

Yet all had heard, with audible lament
 Discover'd soon the place of her retire:
 O unexpected stroke, worse than of death!
 Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
 Thee, native soil, these happy walks and shades, 270
 Fit haunt of gods? where I had hope to spend,
 Quiet though sad, the respite of that day
 That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,
 That never will in other climate grow,
 My early visitation, and my last 275
 At even, which I bred up with tender hand
 From the first opening bud, and gave ye names!
 Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
 Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount?
 Thee lastly, nuptial bower! by me adorn'd 280
 With what to sight or smell was sweet! from thee
 How shall I part, and whither wander down
 Into a lower world, to this obscure
 And wild? how shall we breathe in other air
 Less pure, accustom'd to immortal fruits? 285
 Whom thus the angel interrupted mild:
 Lament not, Eve; but patiently resign
 What justly thou hast lost; nor set thy heart,
 Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine:
 Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes 290
 Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound:
 Where he abides, think there thy native soil.
 Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp
 Recovering, and his scatter'd spirits return'd,
 To Michael thus his humble words address'd: 295
 Celestial, whether among the thrones, or named
 Of them the highest; for such of shape may seem
 Prince above princes! gently hast thou told
 Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
 And in performing end us; what besides 300
 Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair,
 Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring;
 Departure from this happy place, our sweet
 Recess, and only consolation left
 Familiar to our eyes; all places else 305
 Inhospitable appear, and desolate,
 Nor knowing us, nor known: and, if by prayer
 Incessant I could hope to change the will
 Of Him who all things can, I would not cease
 To weary him with my assiduous cries: 310
 But prayer against his absolute decree
 No more avails than breath against the wind,
 Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
 Therefore to his great bidding I submit.

268. There is nothing in all poetry more beautiful and affecting than this passage.—BRYDGES.

This most afflicts me, that, departing hence, 315
 As from his face I shall be hid, deprived
 His blessed countenance: here I could frequent
 With worship, place by place, where he vouchsafed
 Presence Divine; and to my sons relate:—
 On this mount he appear'd; under this tree 320
 Stood visible; among these pines his voice
 I heard; here with him at this fountain talk'd:—
 So many grateful altars I would rear
 Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
 Of lustre from the brook, in memory 325
 Or monument to ages; and thereon
 Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers.
 In yonder nether world where shall I seek
 His bright appearances, or footstep trace?
 For though I fled him angry, yet, recall'd 330
 To life prolong'd and promised race, I now
 Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
 Of glory; and far off his steps adore.
 To whom thus Michael with regard benign:
 Adam, thou know'st heaven his, and all the earth; 335
 Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills
 Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
 Fomented by his virtual power and warm'd:
 All the earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
 No despicable gift; surmise not then 340
 His presence to these narrow bounds confined
 Of Paradise, or Eden: this had been
 Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
 All generations; and had hither come
 From all the ends of the earth, to celebrate 345
 And reverence thee, their great progenitor.
 But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down
 To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:
 Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain,
 God is, as here; and will be found alike 350
 Present; and of his presence many a sign
 Still following thee, still compassing thee round
 With goodness and paternal love, his face
 Express, and of his steps the track divine.
 Which that thou mayst believe, and be confirm'd 355
 Ere thou from hence depart, know, I am sent
 To show thee what shall come in future days
 To thee and to thy offspring: good with bad
 Expect to hear, supernal grace contending
 With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn 360
 True patience, and to temper joy with fear
 And pious sorrow; equally inured
 By moderation either state to bear,
 Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead

Safest thy life, and best prepared endure 365
 Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
 This hill; let Eve (for I have drench'd her eyes)
 Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wak'st;
 As once thou slept'st, while she to life was form'd.
 To whom thus Adam gratefully replied: 370
 Ascend; I follow thee, safe guide, the path
 Thou lead'st me; and to the hand of Heaven submit,
 However chastening; to the evil turn
 My obvious breast; arming to overcome
 By suffering, and earn rest from labour won, 375
 If so I may attain. So both ascend
 In the visions of God. It was a hill,
 Of Paradise the highest; from whose top,
 The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken,
 Stretch'd out to the amplest reach of prospect lay. 380
 Not higher that hill, nor wider looking round,
 Whereon, for different cause, the tempter set
 Our second Adam, in the wilderness;
 To show him all earth's kingdoms, and their glory.
 His eye might there command wherever stood 385
 City of old or modern fame, the seat
 Of mightiest empire, from the destined walls
 Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,
 And Samarchand by Oxus, *Temir's* throne, *Ja*
 To Paquin of Sinaean kings; and thence 390
 To Agra and Lahor of Great Mogul,
 Down to the Golden Chersonese; or where
 The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
 In Hispahan; or where the Russian ksar
 In Mosco; or the sultan in Bizance, 395
 Turchestan-born: nor could his eye not ken
 The empire of Negus to his utmost port
 Ercoco, and the less maritim kings,
 Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
 And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm 400
 Of Congo, and Angola farthest south;
 Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount,
 The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,

374. *Obvious*: In the sense of the Latin *obvius*, "opposed to."

377. See Ezek. viii. 3, and xl. 2.

387. *Destined walls*: That is, not yet in being, but designed to be. *Cambalu*: The principal city of Cathay, a province of Tartary, the ancient seat of the Chans. *Temir*: Tamerlane. *Paquin*: Pekin, the royal city of China, the country of the ancient *Sinae*. The *Golden Chersonese*; the peninsula of Malacca. *Bizance*: Byzantium, now Constantinople. *Turchestan-born*: as the Turks came from Turchestan, a province of Tartary. *Negus*: King of upper Ethiopia. *Ercoco*: Erquico, on the Red Sea. *Mom-*

baza, &c.: all near the Equator. *Atabalipa*: the last emperor subdued by Pizarro. *Unspoilt*: that is, not yet invaded and robbed. *Geryon*: an ancient king of Spain; hence the Spaniards are called *Geryon's sons*. *El Dorado*: "The golden region" of Guiana, where Sir Walter Raleigh placed his imaginary gold mine. Hence the phrase has become proverbial, as applied to places of unbounded real or imaginary riches. This long enumeration of sounding names, says Sir E. Brydges, fills the mind, though somewhat vaguely, with an infinity of stirring imagery.

Morocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;
 On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway 405
 The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw
 Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
 Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoil'd
 Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons 410
 Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed,
 Which that false fruit that promised clearer sight
 Had bred; then purged with euphrasy and rue
 The visual nerve, for he had much to see; 415
 And from the well of life three drops instill'd.
 So deep the power of these ingredients pierced,
 Ev'n to the inmost seat of mental sight,
 That Adam, now enforced to close his eyes,
 Sunk down, and all his spirits became entranced; 420
 But him the gentle angel by the hand
 Soon raised, and his attention thus recall'd:
 Adam, now ope thine eyes; and first behold
 The effects, which thy original crime hath wrought
 In some to spring from thee; who never touch'd 425
 The excepted tree; nor with the snake conspired:
 Nor sinn'd thy sin; yet from that sin derive
 Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.
 His eyes he open'd, and beheld a field,
 Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves 430
 New-reap'd; the other part sheep-walks and folds:
 In the midst an altar as the landmark stood
 Rustic, of grassy sord: thither anon
 A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
 First-fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf, 435
 Uncull'd, as came to hand; a shepherd next,
 More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,
 Choicest and best; then, sacrificing, laid
 The inwards and their fat, with incense strow'd,
 On the cleft wood, and all due rites perform'd: 440
 His offering soon propitious fire from heaven
 Consumed with nimble glance, and grateful steam;
 The other's not, for his was not sincere:
 Whereat he inly raged, and, as they talk'd,
 Smote him into the midriff with a stone 445
 That beat out life: he fell; and, deadly pale,
 Groan'd out his soul with gushing blood effused.
 Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
 Dismay'd, and thus in haste to the angel cried:
 O teacher, some great mischief hath befallen 450

411. *Nobler sights*, not only of cities and kingdoms, but of the principal actions of men, to the final consummation of all things.—NEWTON.

414. *Euphrasy*, or "eye-bright:" a pure Greek word.

433. *Sord*, sward.

To that meek man, who well had sacrificed:
Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?

To whom Michael thus, he also moved, replied:
These two are brethren, Adam, and to come
Out of thy loins; the unjust the just hath slain, 455
For envy that his brother's offering found
From Heaven acceptance; but the bloody fact
Will be avenged; and the other's faith approved,
Lose no reward; though here thou see him die,
Rolling in dust and gore. To which our sire: 460

Alas! both for the deed, and for the cause!
But have I now seen death? Is this the way
I must return to native dust? O sight
Of terrour, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel! 465

To whom thus Michael: Death thou hast seen
In his first shape on man; but many shapes
Of death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to sense
More terrible at the entrance, than within. 470

Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die;
By fire, flood, famine, by intemperance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear; that thou mayst know 475

What misery the inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on men. Immediately a place
Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark:
A lazar-house it seem'd; wherein were laid
Numbers of all diseased; all maladies 480

Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,
Demoniac phrensy, moping melancholy, 485

And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide wasting pestilence,
Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch; 490

And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delay'd to strike, though oft invoked
With vows, as their chief good and final hope.
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept, 495

Though not of woman born; compassion quell'd
His best of man, and gave him up to tears
A space, till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess;
And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renew'd:
O miserable mankind, to what fall 500

Degraded, to what wretched state reserved!
Better end here unborn. Why is life given

To be thus wrested from us? rather, why
 Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
 What we receive, would either not accept 505
 Life offer'd, or soon beg to lay it down;
 Glad to be so dismiss'd in peace. Can thus
 The image of God in man, created once
 So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
 To such unsightly sufferings be debased 510
 Under inhuman pains? Why should not man,
 Retaining still divine similitude
 In part, from such deformities be free,
 And, for his Maker's image sake, exempt?
 Their Maker's image, answer'd Michael, then 515
 Forsook them, when themselves they vilified
 To serve ungovern'd appetite; and took
 His image whom they served, a brutish vice,
 Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.
 Therefore so abject is their punishment, 520
 Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own;
 Or if his likeness, by themselves defaced;
 While they pervert pure Nature's healthful rules
 To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they
 God's image did not reverence in themselves. 525
 I yield it just, said Adam, and submit.
 But is there yet no other way, besides
 These painful passages, how we may come
 To death, and mix with our connatural dust?
 There is, said Michael, if thou well observe 530
~~The rule of—Not too much:~~ by temperance taught,
 In what thou eat'st and drink'st; seeking from thence
 Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight;
 Till many years over thy head return,
 So mayst thou live: till, like ripe fruit, thou drop 535
 Into thy mother's lap; or be with ease
 Gather'd, not harshly pluck'd; for death mature:
 This is old age; but then, thou must outlive
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty; which will change
 To wither'd, weak, and gray; thy senses then, 540
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,
 To what thou hast; and, for the air of youth,
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
 A melancholy damp of cold and dry
 To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume 545
 The balm of life. To whom our ancestor:
 Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
 Life much; bent rather, how I may be quit,

538. There is something very just and poetical in this description of the miseries of old age, so finely contrasted as they are with the opposite pleasures of youth. It is indeed short, but vastly expressive, and I think ought to excite

the pity as well as the admiration of the reader; since the poor poet is here, no doubt, describing what he felt at the time he wrote it, being then in the decline of life, and troubled with various infirmities.—TYLER.

Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge;
Which I must keep till my appointed day 550
Of rendering up, and patiently attend
My dissolution. Michael replied:

Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou livest
Live well; how long or short permit to Heaven:
And now prepare thee for another sight. 555

He look'd, and saw a spacious plain, whereon
Were tents of various hue; by some, were herds
Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound
Of instruments, that made melodious chime,

Was heard, of harp and organ; and who moved 560
Their stops and chords was seen; his volant touch
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.

In other part stood one who, at the forge
Labouring, two massy clods of iron and brass 565

Had melted, (whether found where casual fire
Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,
Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot
To some cave's mouth, or whether wash'd by stream
From under ground), the liquid ore he drain'd 570

Into fit moulds prepared; from which he form'd
First his own tools: then, what might else be wrought
Fusil or graven in metal. After these,

But on the hither side, a different sort
From the high neighbouring hills, which was their seat, 575

Down to the plain descended; by their guise
Just men they seem'd, and all their study bent
To worship God aright, and know his works

Not hid; nor those things last, which might preserve
Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain 580

Long had not walk'd, when from the tents, behold!
A bevy of fair women, richly gay

In gems and wanton dress; to the harp they sung
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on.

The men, though grave, eyed them, and let their eyes 585
Rove without rein; till, in the amorous net
Fast caught, they liked: and each his liking chose.

And now of love they treat, till the evening star,
Love's harbinger, appear'd; then, all in heat,

They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke 590
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invoked:
With feast and music all the tents resound.

Such happy interview, and fair event

550. Which I must keep. Job xiv. 14.

557. See Gen. iv. 20, 21, and 22.

563. A *fugue* is, in music, the correspondence of parts, answering one another in the same notes, either above or below; therefore exactly and graphically styled *resonant*, as sounding the same notes over again.—HUME.

573. *After these*; as being the descendants of the younger brother, but on the *hither side*, Cain having been banished into a more distant country: a *different sort*, the posterity of Seth wholly different from that of Cain, having their habitation in the mountains near Paradise.

Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flowers,
 And charming symphonies, attach'd the heart 595
 Of Adam, soon inclined to admit delight,
 The bent of nature; which he thus express'd:

True opener of mine eyes, prime angel blest;
 Much better seems this vision, and more hope
 Of peaceful days portends, than those two past: 600
 Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse;
 Here nature seems fulfill'd in all her ends.

To whom thus Michael: Judge not what is best
 By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet;
 Created as thou art, to nobler end 605
 Holy and pure, conformity divine.

Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
 Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
 Who slew his brother; studious they appear
 Of arts that polish life, inventors rare; 610

Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
 Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledged none.
 Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;
 For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd

Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay, 615
 Yet empty of all good, wherein consists
 Woman's domestic honour and chief praise;
 Bred only and completed to the taste

Of lustful appetence, to sing, to dance,
 To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye;— 620

To these that sober race of men, whose lives
 Religious tittled them the sons of God,
 Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame,
 Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles

Of these fair atheists; and now swim in joy, 625
 Ere long to swim at large; and laugh, for which
 The world ere long a world of tears must weep.

To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft:
 O pity and shame, that they, who to live well
 Enter'd so fair, should turn aside to tread 630
 Paths indirect, or in the midway faint!

But still I see the tenour of man's woe
 Holds on the same, from woman to begin.

From man's effeminate slackness it begins,
 Said the angel, who should better hold his place 635
 By wisdom, and superiour gifts received.
 But now prepare thee for another scene.

He look'd, and saw wide territory spread
 Before him, towns, and rural works between;
 Cities of men with lofty gates and towers, 640
 Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war,

Giants of mighty bone and bold emprise;
 Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
 Single or in array of battle ranged
 Both horse and foot, nor idly mustering stood: 645

One way a band select from forage drives
 A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,
 From a fat meadow-ground; or fleecy flock,
 Ewes and their bleating lambs over the plain,
 Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly, 650
 But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray:
 With cruel tournament the squadrons join;
 Where cattle pastured late, now scatter'd lies
 With carcasses and arms the ensanguined field,
 Deserted: others to a city strong 655
 Lay siege, encamp'd; by battery, scale, and mine,
 Assaulting: others from the wall defend
 With dart and javelin, stones, and sulphurous fire;
 On each hand slaughter, and gigantic deeds.
 In other part the sceptred heralds call 660
 To council, in the city-gates; anon
 Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mix'd,
 Assemble, and harangues are heard, but soon
 In factious opposition; till at last
 Of middle age one rising, eminent 665
 In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
 Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,
 And judgment from above: him old and young
 Exploded, and had seized with violent hands,
 Had not a cloud descending snatch'd him thence, 670
 Unseen amid the throng: so violence
 Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,
 Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.
 Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
 Lamenting turn'd full sad: O, what are these, 675
 Death's ministers, not men? who thus deal death
 Inhumanly to men, and multiply
 Ten thousand-fold the sin of him who slew
 His brother: for of whom such massacre
 Make they, but of their brethren; men of men? 680
 But who was that just man, whom had not Heaven
 Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?
 To whom thus Michael: These are the product
 Of those ill-mated marriages thou saw'st;
 Where good with bad were match'd, who of themselves 685
 Abhor to join; and, by imprudence mix'd,
 Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
 Such were these giants, men of high renown;
 For in those days might only shall be admired,
 And valour and heroic virtue call'd: 690
 To overcome in battle, and subdue
 Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
 Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
 Of human glory, and for glory done

665. *Of middle age.* Enoch is said to be of middle age, as he was, when translated, 365 years old,—a middle age then.

694. *For glory done of triumph:* That is, shall be held the highest pitch of triumph for that glory done, (meaning,

Of triumph, to be styled great conquerours, 695
 Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods;
 Destroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.
 Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth;
 And what most merits fame in silence hid.
 But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheldst 700
 The only righteous in a world perverse,
 And therefore hated, therefore so beset
 With foes, for daring single to be just,
 And utter odious truth, that God would come
 To judge them with his saints; him the Most High, 705
 Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds,
 Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God
 High in salvation and the climes of bliss,
 Exempt from death; to show thee what reward
 Awaits the good, the rest what punishment; 710
 Which now direct thine eyes, and soon behold.
 He look'd, and saw the face of things quite changed:
 The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar;
 All now was turn'd to jollity and game,
 To luxury and riot, feast and dance; 715
 Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
 Rape or adultery, where passing fair
 Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils.
 At length a reverend sire among them came,
 And of their doings great dislike declared, 720
 And testified against their ways: he oft
 Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
 Triumphs or festivals; and to them preach'd
 Conversion and repentance, as to souls .
 In prison, under judgments imminent; 725
 But all in vain: which when he saw, he ceased
 Contending, and removed his tents far off:
 Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,
 Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;
 Measured by cubit, length, and breadth, and highth; 730
 Smear'd round with pitch; and in the side a door
 Contrived; and of provisions laid in large,
 For man and beast: when, lo, a wonder strange!
 Of every beast, and bird, and insect small,
 Came sevens and pairs, and enter'd in as taught 735
 Their order: last the sire and his three sons,
 With their four wives; and God made fast the door.
 Meanwhile the south wind rose, and with black wings
 Wide-hovering, all the clouds together drove
 From under heaven; the hills to their supply 740
 Vapour, and exhalation, dusk and moist,
 Sent up amain: and now the thicken'd sky
 Like a dark ceiling stood; down rush'd the rain

those glorious deeds done,) to be styled,
 &c.—711. Which, governed by behold.

719. Reverend sire, Noah.

724. To souls in prison. 1 Pet. iii. 19, 20.

Impetuous; and continued, till the earth
 No more was seen: the floating vessel swum 745
 Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow
 Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else
 Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp
 Deep under water roll'd: sea cover'd sea,
 Sea without shore; and in their palaces, 750
 Where luxury late reign'd, sea-monsters whelp'd
 And stabled; of mankind, so numerous late,
 All left in one small bottom swum imbark'd.
 How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
 The end of all thy offspring, end so sad, 755
 Depopulation! Thee another flood,
 Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee also drown'd,
 And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently rear'd
 By the angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
 Though comfortless; as when a father mourns 760
 His children all in view destroy'd at once;
 And scarce to the angel utter'dst thus thy plaint:
 O visions ill foreseen! better had I
 Lived ignorant of future! so had borne
 My part of evil only, each day's lot 765
 Enough to bear; those now, that were dispensed
 The burden of many ages, on me light
 At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
 Abortive, to torment me ere their being,
 With thought that they must be. Let no man seek 770
Henceforth to be foretold, what shall befall
Him or his children; evil he may be sure,
 Which neither his foreknowing can prevent;
 And he the future evil shall no less
 In apprehension than in substance feel, 775
 Grievous to bear: but that care now is past;
 Man is not whom to warn: those few escaped
 Famine and anguish will at last consume,
 Wandering that watery desert: I had hope,
 When violence was ceased, and war on earth, 780
 All would have then gone well; peace would have crown'd
 With length of happy days the race of man;
 But I was far deceived; for now I see
 Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
 How comes it thus? unfold, celestial guide, 785
 And whether here the race of man will end.
 To whom thus Michael: Those, whom last thou saw'st
 In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
 First seen in acts of prowess eminent
 And great exploits, but of true virtue void; 790
 Who, having spilt much blood, and done much waste,
 Subduing nations, and achieved thereby
 Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey,
 Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,
 Surfeit, and lust; till wantonness and pride 795

Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
 The conquer'd also, and enslaved by war,
 Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose
 And fear of God; from whom their piety feign'd
 In sharp contést of battel found no aid 800
 Against invaders; therefore, cool'd in zeal,
 Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
 Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords
 Shall leave them to enjoy; for the earth shall bear
 More than enough, that temperance may be tried: 805
 So all shall turn degenerate, all depraved;
 Justice and temperance, truth and faith forgot;
 One man except, the only son of light
 In a dark age, against example good,
 Against allurements, custom, and a world 810
 Offended: fearless of reproach and scorn,
 Or violence, he of their wicked ways
 Shall them admonish; and before them set
 The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,
 And full of peace: denouncing wrath to come 815
 On their impenitence; and shall return
 Of them derided, but of God observed
 The one just man alive; by his command
 Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheldst,
 To save himself and household, from amidst 820
 A world devote to universal wrack.
 No sooner he, with them of man and beast
 Select for life, shall in the ark be lodged,
 And shelter'd round, but all the cataracts
 Of heaven set open on the earth shall pour 825
 Rain, day and night; all fountains of the deep,
 Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
 Beyond all bounds; till inundation rise
 Above the highest hills: then shall this mount
 Of Paradise by might of waves be moved 830
 Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,
 With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,
 Down the great river to the opening gulf,
 And there take root, an island salt and bare,
 The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea-mews' clang; 835

798. *Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose.* Milton everywhere shows his love of liberty; and here he observes very rightly, that the loss of liberty is soon followed by the loss of all virtue and religion. There are such sentiments in several parts of his Prose Works, as well as in Aristotle, and other masters of politics.—NEWTON. This remark of Dr. Newton's might be extended infinitely further, for what English poet can be found, from old John Barbour to William Wordsworth, who has not delighted to sing in praise of freedom.

830. Paradise was doubtless destroyed by the flood, and hence all the attempts to give it a locality on the earth as it now is, have proved so vain. The flood is called *horned*, as, before it was universal, the waters pushed their way along, like vast rivers: and when any thing obstructed their passage, they divided themselves, and became *horned*, as it were, and hence the ancients have compared them to bulls.

835. *Orcs*, a species of whale.

808. *One man*: Noah, literally, but the passage faithfully describes Milton himself.

To teach thee that God attributes to place
 No sanctity, if none be thither brought
 By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
 And now, what farther shall ensue, behold.

He look'd, and saw the ark hull on the flood, 840
 Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,
 Driven by a keen north wind, that, blowing dry,
 Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decay'd;
 And the clear sun on his wide watery glass 845
 Gazed hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,
 As after thirst; which made their flowing shrink
 From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
 With soft foot towards the deep; who now had stopt
 His sluices, as the heaven his windows shut.
 The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground, 850
 Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd.
 And now the tops of hills, as rocks, appear:
 With clamour thence the rapid currents drive,
 Towards the retreating set, their furious tide.
 Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies; 855
 And, after him, the surer messenger,
 A dove, sent forth once and again to spy
 Green tree or ground, whereon his foot may light:
 The second time returning, in his bill
 An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign: 860
 Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
 The ancient sire descends, with all his train:
 Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
 Grateful to Heaven, over his head beholds
 A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow 865
 Conspicuous with three listed colours gay,
 Betokening peace from God, and covenant new:
 Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
 Greatly rejoiced; and thus his joy broke forth:
 O thou, who future things canst represent 870
 As present, heavenly instructor! I revive
 At this last sight; assured that man shall live,
 With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
 Far less I now lament for one whole world
 Of wicked sons destroy'd, than I rejoice 875
 For one man found so perfect, and so just,
 That God vouchsafes to raise another world
 From him, and all his anger to forget.
 But say, what mean those colour'd streaks in heaven
 Distended, as the brow of God appeased? 880
 Or serve they, as a flowery verge, to bind
 The fluid skirts of that same watery cloud
 Lest it again dissolve, and shower the earth?
 To whom the archangel: Dextrously thou aim'st:

866. *Listed*, that is striped. By the colors, red, yellow, and blue, of which three colors are meant the three principal | the others are compounded.

So willingly doth God remit his ire, 885
Though late repenting him of man depraved;
Grieved at his heart, when looking down he saw
The whole earth fill'd with violence, and all flesh
Corrupting each their way; yet, those removed,
Such grace shall one just man find in his sight, 890
That he relents, not to blot out mankind;
And makes a covenant never to destroy
The earth again by flood; nor let the sea
Surpass his bounds; nor rain to drown the world,
With man therein or beast; but, when he brings 895
Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
His triple-colour'd bow, whereon to look,
And call to mind his covenant: day and night,
Seed time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,
Shall hold their course; till fire purge all things new. 900
Both heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell.

REMARKS ON BOOK XII.

THE present twelfth book being only one-half of the original and then concluding tenth, the revelations of the archangel Michael were to be continued from the flood, at which the eleventh book closes: and indeed it was a fortunate circumstance, that Milton, previously to the division, had changed the medium of impression from vision to narration; because it bestows a feature of novelty and distinction upon his concluding book.

It is therefore with some surprise that we meet with any objection to this arrangement of the poet, and the wish that he had imparted all his disclosures in the way of picture and vision, in which they commenced: but Mr. Dunster goes at once to the "heart of the mystery," and inquires, Whether all the coming subjects were equally suited to the specular mount? The plagues of Egypt, as he observes, so represented, must have been tedious. How was the delivery of the law to have been represented, under all its sublime circumstances, in vision? How could the great miracle (related with concise sublimity) of the heavenly bodies standing still at the command of Joshua, be exhibited in vision? Could the nativity, the life and death of our blessed Lord, or his resurrection (each related in a few lines of exquisite beauty) have been so clearly or adequately displayed in picture? or could his ascension, and resumption of his heavenly seat, and his coming again to judge the world, have been adequately exhibited at all?

There is another topic of remark which the concluding book of Milton's divine poem suggests; it is his comparative affluence of invention. The sentence upon Adam might have been attended by immediate expulsion: but how gracious is the divine condescension, to allow some interval of reflection; and, previously to ejection, to fortify the minds of the repentant pair with anticipated knowledge and distant consolation! Thus the interest of the poem is kept alive with the reader to the last line. The whole of the twelfth book closely relates to Adam and his posterity; and so delightfully are these soothing hopes of happiness administered by the archangel, that we, equally with Adam, forget that we are to quit Paradise; and are, like him, heart-struck by the sudden warning, that "the hour is come, the very minute of it;" and attend the "hastening angel" to the gates of exclusion, with all the sad and lingering acquiescence of our first parents.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

BOOK XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE angel Michael continues, from the flood, to relate what shall succeed: then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain who that seed of the woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the Fall; his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension; the state of the church till his second coming. Adam, greatly satisfied and recomforted by these relations and promises, descends the hill with Michael; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams composed to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery sword waving behind them, and the cherubim taking their stations to guard the place.

As one who in his journey bates at noon,
 (Though bent on speed; so here the archangel paused
 Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restored,
 If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
 Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes: 5
 Thus thou hast seen one world begin, and end;
 And man, as from a second stock, proceed.
 Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive
 Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine
 Must needs impair and weary human sense: 10
 Henceforth what is to come I will relate;
 Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.
 This second source of men, while yet but few,
 And while the dread of judgment past remains
 Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity, 15
 With some regard to what is just and right
 Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace;
 Labouring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
 Corn, wine, and oil; and from the herd or flock
 Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid, 20
 With large wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred feast,
 Shall spend their days in joy unblamed; and dwell
 Long time in peace, by families and tribes,
 Under paternal rule: till one shall rise
 Of proud ambitious heart; who, not content 25
 With fair equality, fraternal state,

24. *Till one shall rise.* It is generally agreed that the first governments of the earth were patriarchal, by families and tribes; and that Nimrod was the first who laid the foundations of kingly government among mankind. Milton,

therefore, (who was not a friend to kingly government at the best) represents him in a very bad light, as a most wicked and insolent tyrant; but he has great authorities, both Jewish and Christian, to justify him for so doing.

Will arrogate dominion undeserved
 Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
 Concord and law of nature from the earth;
 Hunting, (and men, not beasts shall be his game) 30
 With war, and hostile snare, such as refuse
 Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
 A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled
 Before the Lord: as in despite of Heaven,
 Or from Heaven, claiming second sovranity; 35
 And from rebellion shall derive his name,
 Though of rebellion others he accuse.
 He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
 With him or under him to tyrannize,
 Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find 40
 The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge
 Boils out from under ground, the mouth of hell:
 Of brick, and of that stuff, they cast to build
 A city and tower, whose top may reach to heaven,
 And get themselves a name; lest, far dispersed 45
 In foreign lands, their memory be lost;
 Regardless whether good or evil fame.
 But God, who oft descends to visit men
 Unseen, and through their habitations walks
 To mark their doings, them beholding soon, 50
 Comes down to see their city, ere the tower
 Obstruct heaven-towers; and in derision sets
 Upon their tongues a various spirit, to raise
 Quite out their native language; and, instead,
 To sow a jangling noise of words unknown: 55
 Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud,
 Among the builders; each to other calls,
 Not understood; till hoarse, and all in rage,
 As mock'd they storm: great laughter was in heaven,
 And looking down, to see the hubbub strange, 60
 And hear the din: thus was the building left
 Ridiculous, and the work Confusion named.
 Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeas'd:
 O execrable son! so to aspire
 Above his brethren; to himself assuming 65
 Authority usurp'd, from God not given:
 He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
 Dominion absolute; that right we hold
 By his donation; but man over men
 He made not lord; such title to himself 70

34. *Before the Lord*: that is, high-handedly, presumptuously, denoting his daring spirit, that he did what he did in defiance of divine authority. The inhabitants of Sodom were called "sinners before the Lord." The inhuman practice of WAR originated with this daring usurper:

Proud Nimrod first the bloody chase began,
 A mighty hunter—and his prey was man.

59. *Great laughter*, &c. See Ps. ii. 4.

64. *O execrable son*, &c. How can any slaveholder read this noble passage, and continue, for a single day longer, to hold his brother man in bondage?—53. *Various spirit*: a spirit varying and confusing the sounds by which they would express their thoughts.

Reserving, human left from human free.
 But this usurper his encroachment proud
 Stays not on man; to God his tower intends
 Siege and defiance: wretched man! what food
 Will he convey up thither, to sustain 75
 Himself and his rash army; where thin air
 Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,
 And famish him of breath, if not of bread?
 To whom thus Michael: Justly thou abhorr'st
 That son, who on the quiet state of men 80
 Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
 Rational liberty; yet know withal,
 Since thy original lapse, true liberty
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
Twinn'd, and from her hath no dividual being: 85
 Reason in man obscured, or not obey'd,
 Immediately inordinate desires
 And upstart passions catch the government
 From reason; and to servitude reduce
 Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits 90
 Within himself unworthy powers to reign
 Over free reason, God, in judgment just,
 Subjects him from without to violent lords;
 Who oft as undeservedly enthrall
 His outward freedom: tyranny must be; 95
 Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
 Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
 From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
 But justice, and some fatal curse annex'd,
 Deprives them of their outward liberty; 100
 Their inward lost: witness the irreverent son
 Of him who built the ark; who, for the shame
 Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,
Servant of servants, on his vicious race.
 Thus will this latter, as the former world, 105
 Still tend from bad to worse; till God at last,
 Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
 His presence from among them, and avert
 His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth
 To leave them to their own polluted ways; 110
 And one peculiar nation to select
 From all the rest, of whom to be invoked,
 A nation from one faithful man to spring:
 Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
 Bred up in idol-worship: O, that men 115
 (Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
 While yet the patriarch lived who 'scaped the flood,
 As to forsake the living God, and fall
 To worship their own work in wood and stone
 For gods! Yet him God the Most High vouchsafes 120

85. *Twinn'd*: That is, right reason (or virtue, line 98) and liberty, are twin sisters.

Abraham
 To call by vision, from his father's house,
 His kindred, and false gods, into a land
 Which he will show him; and from him will raise
 A mighty nation, and upon him shower
 His benediction so, that in his seed 125
 All nations shall be blest: he straight obeys;
 Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes:
 I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
 He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil,
 Ur of Chaldæa, passing now the ford 130
 To Haran; after him a cumbrous train
 Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude;
 Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth
 With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.
 Canaan he now attains; I see his tents 135
 Pitch'd about Sechem, and the neighbouring plain
 Of Moreh; there by promise he receives
 Gift to his progeny of all that land,
 From Hamath northward to the Desert south;
 (Things by their names I call, though yet unnamed,) 140
 From Hermon east to the great western sea;
 Mount Hermon, yonder sea;—each place behold
 In prospect, as I point them; on the shore,
 Mount Carmel; here, the double-founted stream,
 Jordán, true limit eastward; but his sons 145
 Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.
 This ponder, that all nations of the earth
 Shall in his seed be blessed: by that seed
 Is meant thy great Deliverer, who shall bruise
 The serpent's head; whereof to thee anon 150
 Plainlier shall be reveal'd. This patriarch blest,
 Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
 A son, and of his son a grandchild, leaves;
 Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown;
 The grandchild, with twelve sons increased, departs 155
 From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile;
 See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths
 Into the sea: to sojourn in that land
 He comes, invited by a younger son—*Joseph* 160
 In time of dearth; a son, whose worthy deeds
 Raise him to be the second in that realm
 Of Pharaoh: there he dies, and leaves his race
 Growing into a nation; and now grown
 Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks 165
 To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
 Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them sla res
 Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:
 Till by two brethren (these two brethren call
 Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim 170
 His people from enthrallment, they return,
 With glory and spoil, back to their promised land.

- But first, the lawless tyrant, who denies
 To know their God, or message to regard,
 Must be compell'd by signs and judgments dire; 175
 1 To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd;
 2 Frogs, lice, and flies must all his palace fill
 With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;
 3 His cattle must of rot and murren die;
 4 Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss, 180
 5 And all his people; thunder mix'd with hail,
 Hail mix'd with fire, must rend the Egyptian sky,
 And wheel on the earth, devouring where it rolls;
 What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
 6 A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down 185
 Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
 7 Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
 Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;
 8 Last, with one midnight-stroke, all the first-born 190
 Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds
 The river-dragon tamed at length submits
 To let his sojourners depart, and oft
 Humbles his stubborn heart: but still, as ice
 More harden'd after thaw; till, in his rage
 Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea 195
 Swallows him with his host; but them lets pass,
 As on dry land, between two crystal walls;
 Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand
 Divided till his rescued gain their shore:
 Such wondrous power God to his saint will lend, 200
 Though present in his angel; who shall go
 Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire;
 By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire;
 To guide them in their journey, and remove
 Behind them, while the obdurate king pursues: 205
 All night he will pursue; but his approach
 Darkness defends between till morning watch;
 Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud,
 God looking forth will trouble all his host,
 And craze their chariot-wheels: when by command 210
 Moses once more his potent rod extends
 Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;
 On their embattel'd ranks the waves return,
 And overwhelm their war: the race elect
 Safe towards Canaan from the shore advance 215
 Through the wild Desert; not the readiest way,
 Lest, entering on the Canaanite alarm'd,
 War terrify them inexpert, and fear
 Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
 Inglorious life with servitude; for life 220
 To noble and ignoble is more sweet
 Untrain'd in arms, where rashness leads not on.

This also shall they gain by their delay
 In the wide wilderness; there they shall found
 Their government, and their great senate choose 225
 Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordain'd:
 God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top
 Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
 In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets' sound,
 Ordain them laws; part, such as appertain 230
 To civil justice; part, religious rites
 Of sacrifice; informing them, by types
 And shadows, of that destined Seed to bruise
 The serpent, by what means he shall achieve
 Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God 235
 To mortal ear is dreadful: they beseech
 That Moses might report to them his will,
 And terrour cease: he grants what they besought,
 Instructed that to God is no access
 Without mediator; whose high office now 240
 Moses in figure bears, to introduce
 One greater, of whose day he shall foretell;
 And all the prophets in their age the times
 Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus, laws and rites
 Establish'd, such delight hath God in men 245
 Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
 Among them to set up his tabernacle;—
 The Holy One with mortal men to dwell:
 By his prescript a sanctuary is framed
 Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein 250
 An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
 The records of his covenant; over these
 A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings
 Of two bright cherubim; before him burn
 Seven lamps, as in a zodiac representing 255
 The heavenly fires; over the tent a cloud
 Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night;
 Save when they journey, and at length they come,
 Conducted by his angel, to the land
 Promised to Abraham and his seed: the rest 260
 Were long to tell; how many battles fought;
 How many kings destroy'd, and kingdoms won
 Or how the sun shall in mid heaven stand still
 A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
 Man's voice commanding,—Sun, in Gibeon stand, 265
 And thou, moon, in the vale of Aialon,
 Till Israel overcome!—so call the third
 From Abraham, son of Isaac; and from him
 His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.
 Here Adam interposed: O sent from Heaven, 270
 Enlightener of my darkness, gracious things
 Thou hast reveal'd; those chiefly, which concern

Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find
 Mine eyes true opening, and my heart much eased;
 Erewhile perplex'd with thoughts, what would become 275
 Of me and all mankind: but now I see
 His day, in whom all nations shall be blest;
 Favour unmerited by me, who sought
 Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
 This yet I apprehend not; why to those, 280
 Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth,
 So many and so various laws are given:
 So many laws argue so many sins
 Among them: how can God with such reside?
 To whom thus Michael: Doubt not but that sin 285
 Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
 And therefore was law given them, to evince
 Their natural pravity, by stirring up
 Sin against law to fight; that when they see
 Law can discover sin, but not remove, 290
 Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
 The blood of bulls and goats; they may conclude
 Some blood more precious must be paid for man;
 Just for unjust; that in such righteousness
 To them by faith imputed, they may find 295
 Justification towards God, and peace
 Of conscience; which the law by ceremonies
 Cannot appease; nor man the moral part
 Perform; and, not performing, cannot live.
 So law appears imperfect; and but given 300
 With purpose to resign them, in full time,
 Up to a better covenant; disciplined
 From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit;
 From imposition of strict laws to free
 Acceptance of large grace; from servile fear 305
 To filial; works of law to works of faith.
 And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
 Highly beloved, being but the minister
 Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
 But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call, 310
 His name and office bearing, who shall quell
 The adversary-serpent, and bring back
 Through the world's wilderness long-wander'd man
 Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
 Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan placed, 315
 Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins

277. *His day.* John viii. 56.

283-306. Compare the following texts with the poet:—Gal. iii. 11, 12, 19, 23, and iv. 7; Rom. vii. 7, 8; iii. 20; iv. 22, 23, 24; and v. 1; Heb. ix. 13, 14; x. 1, 4, 5; vii. 18, 19. Milton has here, in a few verses, admirably summed up the argument of these and more texts of Scripture. It is really wonderful, how he could comprise

so much divinity in so few words, and at the same time express it with so much strength and perspicuity.—NEWTON.

311. Joshua was in many things a type of Jesus, and the names are the same, (Joshua according to the Hebrew, and Jesus in Greek,) both signifying a Saviour.

National interrupt their public peace,
 Provoking God to raise them enemies;
 From whom as oft he saves them penitent
 By judges first, then under kings; of whom 320
 The second, both for piety renown'd
 And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
 Irrevocable, that his regal throne
 For ever shall endure; the like shall sing
 All prophecy, that of the royal stock 325
 Of David (so I name this king) shall rise
 A son, the woman's seed to thee foretold,
 Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
 All nations; and to kings foretold, of kings
 The last; for of his reign shall be no end. 330
 But first, a long succession must ensue;
 And his next son, for wealth and wisdom famed,
 The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
 Wandering, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.
 Such follow him as shall be register'd 335
 Part good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll:
 Whose foul idolatries, and other faults
 Heap'd to the popular sum, will so incense
 God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
 Their city, his temple, and his holy ark, 340
 With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
 To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st
 Left in confusion; Babylon thence call'd.
 There in captivity he lets them dwell
 The space of seventy years; then brings them back, 345
 Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn
 To David, 'stablish'd as the days of heaven.
 Return'd from Babylon by leave of kings
 Their lords, whom God disposed, the house of God
 They first re-edify; and for a while 350
 In mean estate live moderate; till, grown
 In wealth and multitude, factious they grow:
 But first among the priests dissension springs,
 Men who attend the altar, and should most
 Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings 355
 Upon the temple itself: at last they seize
 The sceptre, and regard not David's sons;
 Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
 Anointed King Messiah might be born
 Barr'd of his right; yet at his birth a star, 360
 Unseen before in heaven, proclaims him come;
 And guides the eastern sages, who inquire
 His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold:
 His place of birth a solemn angel tells
 To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night: 365
 They gladly thither haste, and by a quire
 Of squadron'd angels hear his carol sung.
 A virgin is his mother, but his sire

The power of the Most High: he shall ascend
 The throne hereditary, and bound his reign 370
 With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the heavens.
 He ceased; discerning Adam with such joy
 Surcharged, as had like grief been dew'd in tears,
 Without the vent of words; which these he breathed:
 O prophet of glad tidings, finisher 375
 Of utmost hope; now clear I understand
 What oft my steadiest thoughts have search'd in vain;
 Why our great Expectation should be call'd
 The seed of woman: virgin mother, hail,
 High in the love of Heaven; yet from my loins 380
 Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
 Of God Most High; so God with man unites.
 Needs must the serpent now his capital bruise
 Expect with mortal pain: say where and when
 Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel? 385
 To whom thus Michael: Dream not of their fight,
 As of a duel, or the local wounds
 Of head or heel: not therefore joins the Son
 Manhood to godhead, with more strength to foil
 Thy enemy; nor so is overcome 390
 Satan, whose fall from heaven, a deadlier bruise,
 Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound;
 Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,
 Not by destroying Satan, but his works
 In thee, and in thy seed: nor can this be, 395
 But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
 Obedience to the law of God, imposed
 On penalty of death; and suffering death,
 The penalty to thy transgression due,
 And due to theirs which out of thine will grow: 400
 So only can high justice rest appaid.
 The law of God exact he shall fulfil
 Both by obedience and by love, though love
 Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment
 He shall endure, by coming in the flesh 405
 To a reproachful life and cursed death;
 Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
 In his redemption; and that his obedience,
 Imputed, becomes theirs by faith; his merits
 To save them, not their own, though legal, works. 410
 For this he shall live hated, be blasphemed,
 Seized on by force, judged, and to death condemn'd
 As shameful and accursed, nail'd to the cross
 By his own nation; slain for bringing life:
 But to the cross he nails thy enemies, 415

394. *But his works.* See 1 John iii. 8.

408. *That his obedience.* That is, and shall believe that his obedience imputed, becomes theirs by faith; and shall believe

that his merits shall be able to save them, and not their own works, though legal, or in conformity to the law.

415. See Coloss. ii. 14.

401. *Appaid*, satisfied.

The law that is against thee, and the sins
 Of all mankind with him there crucified,
 Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
 In this his satisfaction: so he dies,
 But soon revives; death over him no power 420
 Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
 Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
 Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
 Thy ransom paid, which man from death redeems,
 His death for man, as many as offer'd life 425
 Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
 By faith not void of works: this godlike act
 Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have died,
 In sin for ever lost from life; this act
 Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength, 430
 Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms;
 And fix far deeper in his head their stings
 Than temporal death shall bruise the victor's heel,
 Or theirs whom he redeems; a death, like sleep,
 A gentle wafting to immortal life. 435
 Nor after resurrection shall he stay
 Longer on earth, than certain times to appear
 To his disciples, men who in his life
 Still follow'd him; to them shall leave in charge
 To teach all nations what of him they learn'd 440
 And his salvation: them who shall believe
 Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
 Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
 Pure, and in mind prepared, if so befall,
 For death, like that which the Redeemer died. 445
 All nations they shall teach; for, from that day,
 Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
 Salvation shall be preach'd, but to the sons
 Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;
 So in his seed all nations shall be blest. 450
 Then to the heaven of heavens he shall ascend
 With victory, triumphing through the air
 Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
 The serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains
 Through all his realm, and there confounded leave; 455
 Then enter into glory, and resume
 His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
 Above all names in heaven; and thence shall come,
 When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
 With glory and power to judge both quick and dead; 460
 To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward
 His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
 Whether in heaven or earth; for then the earth
 Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
 Than this of Eden, and far happier days. 465

So spake the archangel Michael; then paused,
 As at the world's great period; and our sire,
 Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied:
 O, goodness infinite, goodness immense!
 That all this good of evil shall produce, 470
 And evil turn to good; more wonderful
 Than that which by creation first brought forth
 Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,
 Whether I should repent me now of sin
 By me done, and occasion'd; or rejoice 475
 Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring;
 To God more glory, more good-will to men
 From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.
 But say, if our Deliverer up to heaven
 Must reascend, what will betide the few 480
 His faithful, left among the unfaithful herd,
 The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide
 His people, who defend? Will they not deal
 Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?
 Be sure they will, said the angel; but from Heaven 485
 He to his own a Comforter will send,
 The promise of the Father, who shall dwell
 His Spirit within them; and the law of faith,
 Working through love, upon their hearts shall write,
 To guide them in all truth; and also arm 490
 With spiritual armour, able to resist
 Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts;
 What man can do against them, not afraid,
 Though to the death: against such cruelties
 With inward consolations recompensed, 495
 And oft supported so as shall amaze
 Their proudest persecutors; for the Spirit,
 Pour'd first on his apostles, whom he sends
 To evangelize the nations, then on all
 Baptized, shall them with wondrous gifts endue 500
 To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
 As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
 Great numbers of each nation to receive
 With joy the tidings brought from Heaven: at length,
 Their ministry perform'd, and race well run, 505
 Their doctrine and their story written left,
 They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,
 Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
 Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven
 To their own vile advantages shall turn 510
 Of lucre and ambition; and the truth
 With superstitions and traditions taint,
 Left only in those written records pure,
 Though not but by the Spirit understood.
 Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names, 515
 Places, and titles, and with these to join
 Secular power; though feigning still to act

By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
 The Spirit of God, promised alike, and given
 To all believers; and, from that pretence, 520
 Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force
 On every conscience; laws, which none shall find
 Left them inroll'd, or what the Spirit within
 Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
 But force the Spirit of grace itself, and bind 525
 His consort Liberty? what but unbuild
 His living temples, built by faith to stand,
 Their own faith, not another's? for on earth
 Who against faith and conscience can be heard
 Infallible? yet many will presume: 530
 Whence heavy persecution shall arise
 On all, who in the worship persevere
 Of spirit and truth; the rest, far greater part,
 Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
 Religion satisfied; truth shall retire 535
 Bestuck with slanderous darts, and works of faith
 Rarely be found: so shall the world go on,
 To good malignant, to bad men benign;
 Under her own weight groaning; till the day
 Appear of respiration to the just, 540
 And vengeance to the wicked, at return
 Of him so lately promised to thy aid,
 The woman's seed; obscurely then foretold,
 Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord:
 Last, in the clouds, from heaven to be reveal'd 545
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve
 Satan with his perverted world; then raise
 From the conflagrant mass, purged and refined,
 New heavens, new earth, ages of endless date,
 Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love; 550
 To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.
 He ended; and thus Adam last replied:
 How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,
 Measured this transient world, the race of time,
 Till time stand fix'd! Beyond is all abyss, 555
 Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
 Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
 Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
 Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;
 Beyond which was my folly to aspire. 560
 Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
 And love with fear the only God; to walk
 As in his presence, ever to observe

522. *Laws which none shall find, &c.* Laws, as Newton and Hume observe, neither agreeable to revealed or natural religion: neither to be found in Holy Scripture nor written on their hearts by the Spirit of God, according to the promise in Jer. xxxi. 33.

527. *His living temples.* Christians are called the "temples of God." See 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17, and vi. 19.

540. *Respiration.* This is called in Scripture "the times of refreshing." See Acts iii. 19; Matt. xvi. 27.

His providence, and on him sole depend,
 Merciful over all his works, with good 565
 Still overcoming evil, and by small
 Accomplishing great things, by things deem'd weak
 Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
 By simply meek: that suffering for truth's sake
 Is fortitude to highest victory; 570
 And, to the faithful, death the gate of life;
 Taught this by his example, whom I now
 Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.
 To whom thus also the angel last replied:
 This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd the sum 575
 Of wisdom: hope no higher, though all the stars
 Thou knew'st by name, and all the ethereal powers,
 All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,
 Or works of God in heaven, air, earth, or sea,
 And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst, 580
 And all the rule, one empire: only add
 Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,
 Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,
 By name to come call'd charity, the soul
 Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loth 585
 To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
 A paradise within thee, happier far.
 Let us descend now therefore from this top
 Of speculation; for the hour precise
 Exacts our parting hence; and, see! the guards, 590
 By me encamp'd on yonder hill, expect
 Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round.
 We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;
 Her also I with gentle dreams have calm'd, 595
 Portending good, and all her spirits composed
 To meek submission: thou, at season fit,
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard;
 Chiefly, what may concern her faith to know,
 The great deliverance by her seed to come 600
 (For by the woman's seed) on all mankind;
 That ye may live, which will be many days,
 Both in one faith unanimous, though sad,
 With cause, for evils past; yet much more cheer'd
 With meditation on the happy end. 605
 He ended, and they both descend the hill:
 Descended, Adam to the bower, where Eve
 Lay sleeping, ran before; but found her waked;
 And thus with words not sad she him received:
 Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know; 610
 For God is also in sleep; and dreams advise,
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good

588. *This top of speculation*; from this hill of prophecy and prediction: the word *speculation* being used in the sense of the Latin *specula*, "a watch-tower"

Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
 Wearied I fell asleep: but now lead on;
 In me is no delay; with thee to go, 615
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
 Is to go hence unwilling: thou to me
 Art all things under heaven, all places thou,
 Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence.
 This further consolation yet secure 620
 I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
 Such favour I unworthy am vouchsafed,
 By me the promised Seed shall all restore.
 ✓ So spake our mother Eve, and Adam heard
 Well pleased, but answer'd not: for now, too nigh 625
 The archangel stood; and from the other hill
 To their fix'd station, all in bright array
 The cherubim descended; on the ground
 Gliding meteorous, as evening-mist
 Risen from a river o'er the marish glides, 630
 And gathers ground fast at the labourer's heel
 Homeward returning. High in front advanced,
 The brandish'd sword of God before them blazed,
 Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
 And vapour as the Libyan air adust, 635
 Began to parch that temperate clime: whereat
 In either hand the hastening angel caught
 Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate
 Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
 To the subjected plain; then disappear'd. 640
 They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld
 Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
 Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate
 With dreadful faces throng'd, and fiery arms.
 Some natural tears they dropt, but wiped them soon: 645
 The world was all before them, where to choose
 Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.
 They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
 Through Eden took their solitary way.

THE eleventh and twelfth books are built upon the single circumstance of the removal of our first parents from Paradise; but though this is not in itself so great a subject as that in most of the foregoing books, it is extended and diversified with so many surprising incidents and pleasing episodes, that these last two books can by no means be looked upon as unequal parts of this divine poem.

Milton, after having represented in vision the history of mankind to the first great period of nature, dispatches the remaining part of it in narration.

In some places the author has been so attentive to his divinity that he has neglected his poetry: the narrative, however, rises very happily on several occasions, where the subject is capable of poetical ornaments; as particularly in the confusion which he describes among the builders of

Babel, and in his short sketch of the plagues of Egypt. The storm of hail and fire, and the darkness that overspread the land for three days, are described with great strength: the beautiful passage which follows is raised upon noble hints in Scripture:—

Thus with ten wounds
The river-dragon tamed, at length submits
To let his sojourners depart, &c.

The river-dragon is an allusion to the crocodile, which inhabits the Nile, from whence Egypt derives her plenty. This allusion is taken from that sublime passage in Ezekiel:—"Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I am against thee, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great dragon that lyeth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is my own, and I have made it for myself." Milton has given us another very noble and poetical image in the same description, which is copied almost word for word out of the history of Moses:—

All night he will pursue, but his approach
Darkness defends between, till morning watch.

As the principal design of this episode was to give Adam an idea of the Holy Person who was to reinstate human nature in that happiness and perfection from which it had fallen, the poet confines himself to the line of Abraham, from whence the Messiah was to descend. The angel is described as seeing the patriarch actually travelling towards the Land of Promise, which gives a particular liveliness to this part of the description, from ver. 128 to ver. 140.

The poet has very finely represented the joy and gladness of heart which rises in Adam upon his discovery of the Messiah. As he sees his day at a distance through types and shadows, he rejoices in it; but when he finds the redemption of man completed, and Paradise again renewed, he breaks forth in rapture and transport:—

O goodness infinite, goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce, &c.

Milton's poem ends very nobly. The last speeches of Adam and the archangel are full of moral and instructive sentiments. The sleep that fell upon Eve, and the effects it had in quieting the disorders of her mind, produce the same kind of consolation in the reader; who cannot peruse the last beautiful speech which is ascribed to the mother of mankind, without a secret pleasure and satisfaction. The following lines, which conclude the poem, rise in a most glorious blaze of poetical images and expressions.—ADDISON.

In the concluding passage of the poem there is brought together, with uncommon strength of fancy, and rapidity of narrative, a number of circumstances wonderfully adapted to the purpose of filling the mind with ideas of terrific grandeur:—the descent of the cherubim; the flaming sword; the archangel leading in haste our first parents down from the heights of Paradise, and then disappearing; and, above all, the scene that presents itself on their looking behind them:—

They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd, and fiery arms:

to which the remaining verses form the most striking contrast that can be imagined. The final couplet renews our sorrow, by exhibiting, with picturesque accuracy, the most mournful scene in nature; which yet is so prepared, as to raise comfort, and dispose to resignation. And thus,

while we are at once melting in tenderness, elevated with pious hope, and overwhelmed with the grandeur of description, the divine poem concludes.—BEATTIE.

If ever any poem was truly poetical, if ever any abounded with poetry, it is "Paradise Lost." What an expansion of facts from a small seed of history! What worlds are invented, what embellishments of nature upon what our senses present us with! Divine things are more nobly, more divinely represented to the imagination, than by any other poem; a more beautiful idea is given of nature than any poet has pretended to,—nature, as just come out of the hand of God, in all its virgin loveliness, glory, and purity: and the human race is shown, not, as Homer's, more gigantic, more robust, more valiant; but without comparison more truly amiable, more so than by the pictures and statues of the greatest masters; and all these sublime ideas are conveyed to us in the most effectual and engaging manner. The mind of the reader is tempered and prepared by pleasure; it is drawn and allured; it is awakened and invigorated to receive such impressions as the poet intended to give it. The poem opens the fountains of knowledge, piety, and virtue; and pours along full streams of peace, comfort, and joy, to such as can penetrate the true sense of the writer, and obediently listen to his song. In reading the *Illiad* or *Æneid* we treasure up a collection of fine imaginative pictures, as when we read "Paradise Lost;" only that from thence we have (to speak like a connoisseur) more *Rafaelles*, *Correggios*, *Guidos*, &c. Milton's pictures are more sublime and great, divine and lovely, than Homer's or Virgil's, or those of any other poets, ancient or modern.—RICHARDSON.

Throughout the whole of "Paradise Lost" the author appears to have been a most critical reader and passionate admirer of Holy Scripture: he is indebted to Scripture infinitely more than to Homer and Virgil, and all other books whatever. Not only the principal fable, but all his episodes are founded upon Scripture: the Scripture has not only furnished him with the noblest hints, raised his thoughts, and fired his imagination; but has also very much enriched his language, given a certain solemnity and majesty to his diction, and supplied him with many of his choicest, happiest expressions. Let men, therefore, learn from this instance to reverence the Sacred Writings: if any man can pretend to deride or despise them, it must be said of him, at least, that he has a taste and genius the most different from Milton's that can be imagined. Whoever has any true taste and genius, we are confident, will esteem this poem the best of modern productions, and the Scriptures the best of all ancient ones.—NEWTON.

Milton opened his inimitable poem with the sublimely grand horror of the infernal regions; from whence he soared at once into the celestial mansions and the heaven of heavens; and then carried us into the beautiful scenes of a terrestrial paradise, with every delightful circumstance attendant on human beings in a state of the purest innocence and truest happiness. Having alternated in these three various regions, through the progress of his argument to the catastrophe of it, he, in the tenth book, intimates and prepares us for the great change, elementary as well as moral, introduced into the world by the fall of man, and the consequent entrance of sin and death. The eleventh and twelfth books gradually bring us into the world, in the state in which we are actually placed in it; and in this state the poet leaves us with admonitions of the most salu-

tary kind for our conduct in it, so as best to regain that happiness which our first parents had lost, and that further secured to us everlastingly and unchangeably in a blessed eternity. When we thus consider the *four different regions*, in which the scene of the poem is in fact laid, we can well account for what the critics have said respecting the eleventh and twelfth books falling short of the majesty, sublimity, and beauty of the rest. In censuring the poem in this respect, *they in fact wish that whatever relates to this world, and the state of mankind in it since the fall, had been omitted, and that the scene and descriptions had been confined to the delights of the "happy seat," the sublime horrors of the "dark sojourn," and the divine glories of the empyreal region and the "heaven of heavens."*

But, Milton, even while "rapt above the pole" he meditated his vast design, was fully aware that he was "standing upon the earth," and writing to the inhabitants of it for their instruction as well as their delight. A poem, however wonderfully pregnant with the *delectare*, will be wanting in its most essential part, if it does not close with the *monere*, or materially involve it. This, I much incline to believe, could not have been done in the present poem, in a more judicious, momentous, dignified, and truly poetical manner, than that of our author.—DUNSTER.

Johnson's criticism, inserted in his "Life of Milton," is so universally known, that I shall not repeat it here: it shows the critic to have been a master of language, and of perspicuity and method of ideas: it has not, however, the sensibility, the grace, and the nice perceptions of Addison: it is analytical and dry. As it does not illustrate any of the abstract positions by cited instances, it requires a philosophical mind to feel its full force: it has wrapped up the praises, which were popularly expressed by Addison, in language adapted to the learned. The truth is, that Johnson's head was more the parent of that panegyric than his heart: he speaks by rule; and by rule he is forced to admire. Rules are vain, to which the heart does not assent. Many of the attractions of Milton's poem are not at all indicated by the general words of Johnson. From Addison's critique, we can learn distinctly its character and colours; we can be taught how to appreciate; and can judge by the examples produced, how far our own sympathies go with the commentator: we cannot read therefore without being made converts, where the comment is right. It is not only in the grand outline that Milton's mighty excellence lies; it is in filling up all the parts even to the least minutiae: the images, the sentiments, the long argumentative passages, are all admirable, taken separately; they form a double force as essential parts of one large and magnificent whole. The images are of two sorts; inventive and reflective; the first are, of course, of the highest order.

If our conceptions were confined to what reality and experience have impressed upon us, our minds would be narrow, and our faculties without light. The power of inventive imagination approaches to something above humanity: it makes us participant of other worlds and other states of being. Still mere invention is nothing, unless its quality be high and beautiful. Shakspeare's invention was in the most eminent degree rich; but still it was mere human invention. The invention of the character of Satan, and of the good and bad angels, and of the seats of bliss, and of Pandæmonium, and of Chaos and the gates of hell, and of Sin and Death, and other supernatural agencies, is unquestionably of a far loftier and more astonishing order.

Though the arts of composition, carried one step beyond the point which brings out the thought most clearly and forcibly, do harm rather than good; yet up to this point they are of course great aids; and all these Milton possessed in the utmost perfection: all the strength of lan-

guage, all its turns, breaks, and varieties, all its flows and harmonies, and all its learned allusions, were his. In Pope there is a monotony and technical melliflence: in Milton there is strength with harmony, and simplicity with elevation. He is never stilted, never gilded with tinsel; never more cramped than if he were writing in prose: and, while he has all the elevation, he has all the freedom of unshackled language. To render metre during a long poem unfatiguing, there must be an infinite diversity of combinations of sound and position of words, which no English bard but Milton has reached. Johnson, assuming that the English heroic line ought to consist of iambics, has tried it by false tests: it admits as many varied feet as Horace's Odes; and so scanned, all Milton's lines are accented right.

If we consider the "Paradise Lost" with respect to instruction, it is the deepest and the wisest of all the uninspired poems which ever were written: and what poem can be good, which does not satisfy the understanding?

Of almost all other poems it may be said, that they are intended more for delight than instruction; and instruction in poetry will not do without delight: yet when to the highest delight is added the most profound instruction, what fame can equal the value of the composition? Such unquestionably is the compound merit of the "Paradise Lost." It is a duty imperious on him who has an intellect capable of receiving this instruction, not to neglect the cultivation of it: in him who understands the English language, the neglect to study this poem is the neglect of a positive duty: here is to be found in combination what can be learned no where else.

There is a mode of presenting objects to the imagination, which purifies, sharpens, and exalts the mind: there may be mere sports of the imagination, which may be innocent, but fruitless. Such is never Milton's produce; he never indulges in mere ornament or display; his light is fire, and nutriment, and guidance: like the dawn of returning day to the vegetation of the earth, which dispels the noxious vapours of night, and pierces the incumbent weight of the air; it withdraws the mantle of dim shadows from common minds, and irradiates them with a shining lamp. As to what are called the figures of poetry, in which Pope deals so much, they are never admitted by the solid and stern richness of Milton.

The generality even of the better classes of poetry is not the food of the mind, but its mere luxury; Milton's is its substance, its life, its essence: he introduces the gravest, the most abstruse, the most learned topics into his poetry; and by a spiritual process, which he only possesses, converts them into the very essence of poetical inspiration. I assert, in defiance of Dryden, that there are no flats in Milton: inequalities there are; but they are not flats in Dryden's sense of the word. Dryden was a man of vigorous talent, but he was an artist in poetry: if active and powerful talent is genius, then he had genius; otherwise not: a clear perception and vigorous expression is not genius. Dryden had not a creative mind; Milton was all creation: we want new ideas, not old ones better dressed. Dryden thought that what was not worked up into a pointed iambic couplet was flat: he valued not the ore; he deemed that the whole merit lay in the use of the tool, and the skill of its application. Milton said, "I am content to draw the pure golden ore from the mine, and I will not weaken it by over polish."

The merit of Milton was, that he used his gigantic imagination to bring into play his immense knowledge. Heaven, Hell, Chaos, and the Earth, are stupendous subjects of contemplation: three of them we can conceive only by the strength of imagination; the fourth is partly exposed to our senses, but can be only dimly and partially viewed except through the same power. Who then shall dare to say, that the genius most fitted to delineate and illustrate these shadowy and evanescent wonders, and who has executed this work in a manner exceeding all human

hope, has not performed the most instructive, as well as the most delightful of tasks? and who shall dare to deny that such a production ought to be made the universal study of the nation which brought it forth?

Before such a performance all technical beauties sink to nothing. The question is,—are the ideas mighty, and just, and authorized; and are they adequately expressed? If this is admitted, then ought not every one to read this poem next to the Bible? So thought Bishop Newton. But Johnson had the effrontery to assert, that though it may be read as a duty, it can give no pleasure: for this, Newton seems to have pronounced by anticipation the stigma due to him. Is any intellectual delight equal to that, which a high and sensitive mind derives from the perusal of innumerable passages in every book of this inimitable work of poetical fiction?—The very story never relaxes: it is thick-wove with incident, as well as sentiment and argumentative grandeur: and how it closes, when the archangel waves the “flaming brand” over the eastern gate of Paradise; and, on looking back, Adam and Eve saw the “dreadful faces” and “fiery arms” that “throng’d” round it!—In what other poem is any passage so heart-rending and so terrible as this?—SIR EGER-TON BRYDGES.

In Dante, and even more universally in Tasso, the terror of the sublimity is of the physical kind, and the impression is produced upon the imagination of the reader by the dread fidelity with which the picture is copied from some known or fancied reality: their demons have colossal size indeed, but they are furnished with the horns, the hoofs, the tails, and the talons of the monkish demonology of the Middle Ages: Milton’s sublimest pictures, on the contrary, have none of this material or earthly horror about them, but are terrible thoughts, grim abstractions, whose lineaments are veiled and undefined, and which are only the more irresistible in the solemn dread they inspire, as they address themselves, so to say, not to the eye, but to the imagination: they are fragments of the primeval dark, passionless, formless, terrible. Speaking of Death, he says,—

The other Shape,
If shape it might be call’d, that shape had none
Distinguishable, in member, form, or limb:

and again, in the same passage, which all the critics have agreed in calling one of the most wonderful embodiments of supernatural terror which ever was conceived by poet,—

What seem’d his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.

In these and many other passages the poet seems perpetually on the point of giving way to that tendency so natural in the human mind, to *describe*; but his genius puts a bridle upon the *realizing* power, and the dread image is left in the awful vagueness of its mystery, becoming, like the veiled Isis, a thousand times more august and terrible from the cloud that shuts it from our eyes. The greatest of all poets, Homer, Æschylus, Shakspeare, not to mention the Hebrew Scriptures, are full of this kind of *reticence*, by which the grandeur of the object is rendered more terrible by the gloom and indefiniteness which surround it.

No language that we could use would be sufficiently strong to express the extent and exactness of this writer’s learning; a word which we use in its largest and most comprehensive sense: no species of literature, no language, no book, no art or science seems to have escaped his curiosity, or resisted the combined ardour and patience of his industry. His works may be considered as a vast arsenal of ideas drawn from every region of human speculation, and either themselves the condensed quintessence of

knowledge and wisdom, or dressing and adorning the fairest and most majestic conceptions. If Shakspeare's immortal dramas are like the rich vegetation of a primeval paradise, in which all that is sweet, healing, and beautiful springs up uncultured from a virgin soil, the productions of Milton may justly be compared to one of those stately and magnificent gardens so much admired in a former age, in which the perceptible art and regularity rather sets off and adorns nature—a stately solitude perfumed by the breath of all home-born and exotic flowers, with lofty and airy music ever and anon floating through its moonlit solitudes, decorated by the divine forms of antique sculpture—now a Grace, a Cupid, or a Nymph of Phidias; now a Prophet or a Sibyl of Michael Angelo.

In his delineation of what was perhaps the most difficult portion of his vast picture, the beauty, purity, and innocence of our first parents, he has shown not only a fertility of invention, but a severe and Scriptural purity of taste as surprising as it is rare. His Adam and Eve, without ceasing for a moment to be human, are beings worthy of the Paradise they inhabit.—SHAW.

Was there ever any thing so delightful as the music of the Paradise Lost? It is like that of a fine organ: it has the deepest tones of majesty, with all the softness and elegance of the Dorian flute; variety without end, and never equalled.—COWPER.

Among the victories gained by Milton, one of the most signal is that which he obtained over all the prejudices of Johnson, who was compelled to make a most vigorous, though evidently a reluctant effort, to do justice to the fame and genius of THE GREATEST OF ENGLISH POETS.—SIR JAMES MACKINTOSH.

In Milton's mind there were purity and piety absolute: an imagination to which neither the past nor the present were interesting, except as far as they called forth and enlivened the great ideal in which and for which he lived; a keen love of truth, which, after many weary pursuits, found a harbour in a sublime listening to the still voice of his own spirit; and as keen a love of his country, which, after a disappointment still more depressive, expanded and soared into a love of man as a probationer of immortality. These were, these alone could be the conditions under which such a work as the Paradise Lost could be conceived and accomplished. By a life-long study, Milton had known—

What was of use to know,
What best to say could say, to do had done;
His actions to his words agreed, his words
To his large heart gave utterance due; his heart
Contained of good, wise, fair, the perfect shape;

and he left the imperishable total, as a bequest to the ages coming, in the PARADISE LOST.—COLERIDGE.

I wish the Paradise Lost were more carefully read and studied than I can see any ground for believing it is, especially those parts which, from the habit of always looking for a story in poetry, are scarcely read at all,—as, for example, Adam's vision of future events, in the 11th and 12th books. No one can rise from a perusal of this immortal poem, without a deep sense of the grandeur and purity of Milton's soul.—COLERIDGE.

No Poet, either ancient or modern, ever charmed me as Milton does; and frequently—nay, almost daily as I read him, it is always with increased delight. But it would require a tongue like his own to speak his praises. He invigorates our understanding, he purifies our affections, he lifts our hearts to God. His strains have never been equalled on Earth, and can only be excelled in Heaven.—WILLIAM PETER.

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S O N P

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And Paradise	iii.	733	her own will	ix.	1182
Descends thither himself, and			His superiority over her, given		
informs Gabriel of Satan's			him by God	x.	145, 195
pre-descent	iv.	555, 561	A novelty, defect of nature,		
Encounters Adramelech, (a			&c. (sarcastically)	x.	891
fallen Angel,) wounds, and			The advantage of her social		
puts him to flight	vi.	363	over her artificial accom-		
See <i>Similes</i> .			plishments	xi.	614
Uzziel	iv.	782	Every way the cause of man's		
War, properly the original of it			misery (sarcastically)	xi.	632
The corruptions of peace equal			Works, with faith in Christ,		
to its wastes	xi.	783	eternal life	xii.	426
Waters separated from the			World, the convex of its outer-		
earth	vii.	282	most orb described	iii.	418
See <i>Similes</i> .			By whom possessed (sarcastically)		
Wife, her duty in danger, dis-	ix.	267	iii.	444, 463
treas, &c.	xi.	290	The creation of the world,		
Wind, the tempestuous power			committed by the Father		
of it, an effect of Adam's			to the Son	vii.	163
fall	x.	664, 695	Described	vii.	218
Wisdom, the sum of it the love			Situation of it, respecting		
of God	xii.	575	Heaven and Hell	x.	320
Wolves, (or false teachers,) the			See <i>Earth</i> .		
Apostles' successors, de-			Zephon (a guardian Angel of		
scribed	xii.	507	Paradise)	iv.	788
Woman, conjugal obedience her			Reprehends Satan's first at-		
happiness	iv.	635	tempt on Eve there	iv.	823
Man's love towards her, how			Reply to his answer	iv.	834
consistent with his superi-			Zophiel (a Cherub)	vi.	535
ority	viii.	567	Alarms the celestial army, on		
Two of her loveliest quali-			the approach of Satan's to		
ties	ix.	232	renew the battle	vi.	537

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APPENDIX

...

PARADISE REGAINED.

REMARKS ON PARADISE REGAINED.

THE "Paradise Regained" bears the same character, compared with the "Paradise Lost," as the New Testament bears, compared with the Old: it is more subdued, more didactic, more simple and unornamented, more practical, and less imaginative. The holy poet seems to have been awed by his subject, and to have given less of his own, either of thought, matter, or language: he appears rather the oracle or channel, through which the voice of the Divinity speaks. There is less of human learning, but more than human wisdom;—less of that visionariness of dimly-embodied, half-spiritual forms; and none of that gorgeous display of sublime creation, which the pictures everywhere abounding in "Paradise Lost" exhibit. All in the "Paradise Regained" wears a sober, serene majesty, like the mellow light of the moon in a calm autumnal evening.

It is true that the essence of poetry is not merely imagination or invention, but invention of a particular quality; and this belongs to the "Paradise Lost" more than to the "Paradise Regained:" as, for instance, to Satan's escape from hell, and his first sight of the newly-created globe of earth, and Adam and Eve placed in the enjoyment of it, than to the description of Christ's entry into the wilderness, and Satan in disguise first accosting him: but though the latter description is less grandly imaginative, it is still rich with invention, and invention which is truly poetical: still it is a representation of actual existences, though not a copy of them.

Milton is here pre-eminent in designing character and sentiment: his dialogue is supported with miraculous power and force; and its strength and sublimity shine out the more from the extreme plainness of the language: the task was perilous to find adequate arguments for the contest between the Divine Humanity and the devil. The reader who is not deeply moved, and deeply instructed by it, must be one of brutish and hopeless stupidity. I have said before, that I deemed it an unquestionable duty of every one who understands the English language to study Milton next to the Holy Writings: this remark more especially applies to the description of the temptation of Christ in the wilderness. The "Paradise Lost" is moral and didactic, but less so than the "Paradise Regained."

The reader may not here look for what are thought the common ornaments or spells of poetry: he must look for stern truths; for sublime sentiments; for a naked grandeur of imagery; for an absence of all the rhetorical flourishes of literary composition; for the dictates of a lofty and divine virtue; for a bold and gigantic dispersion of the veil from the delusions of human vanity; for the blaze of an Evil Spirit eclipsed by the splendour of a Good and Divine Spirit, illumined by the lamp of Heaven.

But though a great part of the poem is intellectual and argumentative, another large portion is full of grand or beautiful imagery: the description of the wilderness at the opening abounds with sublime scenery: the picture of the storm at the close of the last book, with the bright morning which succeeded, may vie with any of the noblest passages in the "Paradise Lost:" perhaps in expression, while it loses nothing of grandeur, it is more polished than any other to be found.

Milton intended this poem as the brief or didactic epic, of which he considered the book of Job to be a model, such as he notices in the se-

cond book of his "Reason of Church Government." "Milton," says Hayley, "had already executed one extensive divine poem, peculiarly distinguished by richness and sublimity of description: in framing a second, he naturally wished to vary its effect; to make it rich in moral sentiment, and sublime in its mode of unfolding the highest wisdom that man can learn: for this purpose it was necessary to keep all the ornamental parts of the poem in due subordination to the preceptive. This delicate and difficult point is accomplished with such felicity; they are blended together with such exquisite harmony and mutual aid; that, instead of arraigning the plan, we might rather doubt if any possible change could improve it. Assuredly, there is no poem of an epic form, where the sublimest moral is so forcibly and abundantly united to poetical delight: the splendour of the poem does not blaze indeed so intensely as in his larger production: here he resembles the Apollo of Ovid; softening his glory in speaking to his son; and avoiding to dazzle the fancy, that he may descend into the heart."

In another place, Hayley, having spoken of the "uncommon energy and felicity of composition in Milton's two poems, however different in design, dimension, and effect," adds,—"to censure the 'Paradise Regained,' because it does not more resemble the 'Paradise Lost,' is hardly less absurd, than it would be to condemn the moon for not being a sun; instead of admiring the two different luminaries, and feeling that both the greater and the less are equally the work of the same divine and inimitable Power."

The origin of this poem is attributed to the suggestion of Ellwood, the quaker. Milton had lent this friend, in 1665, his "Paradise Lost," then completed in manuscript, at Chalfont, St. Giles'; desiring him to peruse it at his leisure, and give his judgment of it;—"which I modestly but freely told him," says Ellwood, in his Life of Himself; "and, after some farther discourse of it, I pleasantly said to him, 'Thou hast said much of Paradise Lost, but what hast thou to say of Paradise Found?' He made me no answer, but sat some time in a muse; then broke off that discourse, and fell upon another subject." When Ellwood afterwards waited on him in London, Milton showed him his "Paradise Regained;" and, in a pleasant tone, said to him,—"This is owing to you; for you put it into my head by the question you put to me at Chalfont, which before I had not thought of."

Milton, in the opening of this poem, speaking of his Muse, as prompted

to tell of deeds
Above heroick,

considers the subject of it, as well as of "Paradise Lost," to be of much greater dignity and difficulty than the argument of Homer and Virgil. But the difference here is, as Richardson observes, that he confines himself "to nature's bounds;" not as in the "Paradise Lost," where he soars "above the visible diurnal sphere:" and so far "Paradise Regained" is less poetical, because it is less imaginative.

"'Paradise Regained' has not met with the approbation that it deserves," says Jortin; "it has not the harmony of numbers, the sublimity of thought, and the beauties of diction, which are in 'Paradise Lost:' it is composed in a lower and less striking style;—a style suited to the subject. Artful sophistry, false reasoning, set off in the most specious manner, and refuted by the Son of God with strong unaffected eloquence, is the peculiar excellence of this poem." SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

REMARKS ON BOOK I.

THE very outline of the subject of this book of sublime wisdom, argument, and eloquence, is of the highest character of poetry. Our Saviour, in a fit of meditative abstraction, and just beginning to feel his divinity from the signs imparted to him at the baptism of St. John, wanders into a desert and barren wilderness, where he loses himself, and fasts for forty days. There Satan encounters him, first in disguise; and, when detected, in his avowed name, to tempt him to his fall; as he had formerly successfully tempted Eve, and thus effected the ruin of the human race.

The descriptive parts are here only occasional; but when they do occur, they are magnificent and picturesque. The argumentative parts form the main matter. Satan argues with the wicked power of a rebellious and perverted angel; but Christ, feeling within him the growing illumination of his mighty mission, always overcomes him: yet the fiend is as subtle, crafty, flattering, and persuasive, as he is ingenious and vigorous. Our Saviour had yet scarcely plumed his wings; he was doubtful of his own strength; yet a secret Spirit from heaven now whispered to him, that he was born for the trial. The dialogue is supported with amazing force and splendour on both sides: the mind of the profound reader is kept in anxious and trembling suspense. The flash of the demon comes strong and dazzling: then follows the sublime and overwhelming answer, which eclipses it at once; and which moves the soul and heart by its acute and moral grandeur, and its heroic self-denial.

But let it be remembered, that in addition to Satan's alarming artifices, our Saviour had to sustain hunger, thirst, want of shelter, loneliness in a desert of terrific gloominess, out of which he could not find his way: this gives the story a sort of breathless interest, in which the human imagination can find the strongest sympathy. As a divinity, we should not feel the same interest in the fate of the hero of this poem; unless he had, for the execution of his great mission, clothed himself with a nature which subjected him to all the evils of humanity.

The art with which the poet interests us in Satan himself, is miraculous: the demon's plausibilities sometimes almost make us pity him. His self-exculpations, his cunning arguments, to induce a belief that he means no ill-will to man, and that he has no interest in hating him, are invented with astonishing colour and wiliness: our Saviour's calm detection of Satan's sophistries is delightful and exalting. The reader, who feels in this no human sympathy; no glow at intellectual force; no electrification at the spell of mighty genius; no expansion of the brain; no light to the ideas; no elation and renovation of our fallen nature;—must be unspiritualized, and half-imbruted. If any man finds himself cold and dull at first, let him consider it a duty to endeavour by degrees to warm himself. The hardest ice will melt at last by the continual impulse of a glowing sun.

Our business is to improve our understandings, and exalt our hearts; to be taught to detect the delusions of sin and the devil; and to bear the sorrows and wrongs of life with a magnanimous fortitude. What poem does this like "Paradise Regained?" What poem therefore ought we so to study, and become familiar with? The very authorities, on which its chief doctrines are built, are in themselves treasures of wisdom.

But I am at a loss to guess, what, even on the mere principles of poetry, there is of excellence wanting in this poem. Invention, character,

sentiment, language,—all in a high degree,—cannot be denied it. Here is unbounded expanse of thought, and profundity of wisdom: here is all the moral eloquence, which is to be found in the noblest authors of antiquity: here is much of the essence of the inspired writings: here is what perhaps popular readers like best of all,—the most condensed and solid brevity: here is inexhaustible richness of thought combined with extreme plainness, and a scriptural simplicity of expression. I believe that no one ever read florid language for any number of pages without satiety and disgust.

Beautiful as the first book of the “Paradise Regained” is, I think that the poem continues to rise to the last: here is the difficulty; but it would be a fault if it did not. This book is principally occupied in Satan’s exculpation of himself: the other books set forth the fiend’s temptations, both material and intellectual; and our Saviour’s sublime arguments in answer to him.

The style with which the “Paradise Regained” opens, is generally considered more sober, and less removed from its authorities, than that of the “Paradise Lost;” and this is supposed to have partly arisen from the poet’s awe of his subject, and partly from the weakness of rapidly declining age. With respect to the style, so far as it is more subdued, (if it be so,) I believe that it has purely been caused by the choice of his subject, and the plainer and simpler language of the New Testament, which disdains all ornament, and in which the story gives less scope to imagination. Where we are relating recorded facts, from which we dare not vary, our language is necessarily more controlled and tame.

I am only surprised at the boldness of the poet in choosing this sublime theme: he could not but have foreseen all its difficulties; but knowing his own perfect familiarity with the scriptural language, his gigantic mind hazarded the task. This alone is a proof that he was not conscious of any “failure of strength;” and there is not a single passage in the execution which indicates any such failure: with whatever else compared of his immortal writings, the imagery is as distinct and picturesque; the spiritual part, the thoughts and arguments, are at least equally vigorous, original, discriminative, and profound, and perhaps more abundant: nor has the language less of that naked strength, which supports itself by its own intrinsic power.

SIR EGERTON BRIDGES.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE subject proposed. Invocation of the Holy Spirit. The poem opens with John baptizing at the river Jordan: Jesus coming there is baptized; and is attested, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, and by a voice from heaven, to be the Son of God. Satan, who is present, upon this immediately flies up into the regions of the air; where, summoning his infernal council, he acquaints them with his apprehensions that Jesus is that seed of the woman, destined to destroy all their power; and points out to them the immediate necessity of bringing the matter to proof, and of attempting, by snares and fraud, to counteract and defeat the person, from whom they have so much to dread: this office he offers himself to undertake: and, his offer being accepted, sets out on his enterprise. In the mean time, God, in the assembly of holy angels, declares that he has given up his Son to be tempted by Satan; but foretels that the tempter shall be completely defeated by him: upon which the angels sing a hymn of triumph. Jesus is led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, while he is meditating on the commencement of his great office of Saviour of mankind. Pursuing his meditations, he narrates, in a soliloquy, what divine and philanthropic impulses he had felt from his early youth, and how his mother Mary, on perceiving these dispositions in him, had acquainted him with the circumstances of his birth, and informed him that he was no less a person than the Son of God; to which he adds what his own inquiries and reflections had supplied in confirmation of this great truth, and particularly dwells on the recent attestation of it at the river Jordan. Our Lord passes forty days, fasting, in the wilderness; where the wild beasts become mild and harmless in his presence. Satan now appears under the form of an old peasant; and enters into discourse with our Lord, wondering what could have brought him alone into so dangerous a place, and at the same time professing to recognize him for the person lately acknowledged by John at the river Jordan, to be the Son of God. Jesus briefly replies. Satan rejoins with a description of the difficulty of supporting life in the wilderness; and entreats Jesus, if he be really the Son of God, to manifest his divine power, by changing some of the stones into bread. Jesus reproves him, and at the same time tells him that he knows who he is. Satan instantly avows himself, and offers an artful apology for himself and his conduct. Our blessed Lord severely reprimands him, and refutes every part of his justification. Satan, with much semblance of humility, still endeavours to justify himself; and professing his admiration of Jesus and his regard for virtue, requests to be permitted, at a future time, to hear more of his conversation; but is answered, that this must be as he shall find permission from above. Satan then disappears, and the book closes with a short description of night coming on in the desert.

I, who erewhile the happy garden sung
 By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
 Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
 By one man's firm obedience fully tried
 Through all temptation, and the tempter foil'd 5
 In all his wiles, defeated and repulsed,
 And Eden raised in the waste wilderness.

Thou Spirit, who ledst this glorious eremite
 Into the desert, his victorious field,
 Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence 10
 By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire,
 As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute;
 And bear, through highth or depth of Nature's bounds,
 With prosperous wing full summ'd, to tell of deeds
 Above heroick, though in secret done, 15
 And unrecorded left through many an age;
 Worthy to have not remain'd so long unsung.

Now had the great proclaimer, with a voice
 More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried
 Repentance, and Heaven's kingdom nigh at hand 20
 To all baptized: to his great baptism flock'd
 With awe the regions round, and with them came
 From Nazareth the son of Joseph deem'd
 To the flood Jordan; came, as then obscure,
 Unmark'd, unknown; but him the Baptist soon 25
 Descried, divinely warn'd, and witness bore
 As to his worthier, and would have resign'd
 To him his heavenly office; nor was long
 His witness unconfirm'd: on him baptized
 Heaven open'd, and in likeness of a dove 30
 The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice
 From heaven pronounced him his beloved Son.
 That heard the adversary, who, roving still
 About the world, at that assembly famed
 Would not be last; and, with the voice divine 35
 Nigh thunder-struck, the exalted man, to whom
 Such high attest was given, awhile survey'd
 With wonder; then, with envy fraught and rage,
 Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
 To council summons all his mighty peers, 40
 Within thick clouds and dark tenfold involved,
 A gloomy consistory: and them amidst,
 With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake:

2. See Rom. v. 19.

8. This invocation is so supremely beautiful, that it is hardly possible to give the preference even to that in the opening of the *Paradise Lost*. This has the merit of more conciseness.—DUNSTER.

11. *Inspire*, &c. See the very fine opening in the ninth book of *Paradise Lost*, and also his invocation of Urania, at the beginning of the seventh book. See also

his presentiment that he would undertake something like these two great poems, in his "Reasons of Church Government urged against Prelacy," quoted in the "Compendium of English Literature," page 265.

14. *Full summ'd*. See note on *Paradise Lost*, vii. 421.

26. *Divinely warn'd*. See John i. 33.

42. *Consistory*. By this word I suppose Milton intends to glance at the meeting

O ancient powers of air, and this wide world;
 (For much more willingly I mention air, 45
 This our old conquest, than remember hell,
 Our hated habitation,) well ye know,
 How many ages, as the years of men,
 This universe we have possess'd, and ruled, 50
 In manner at our will, the affairs of earth,
 Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
 Lost Paradise, deceived by me; though since
 With dread attending when that fatal wound
 Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
 Upon my head. Long the decrees of Heaven 55
 Delay, for longest time to him is short;
 And now, too soon for us, the circling hours
 This dreaded time have compass'd, wherein we
 Must bide the stroke of that long-threaten'd wound,
 At least, if so we can; and, by the head 60
 Broken, be not intended all our power
 To be infringed, our freedom and our being,
 In this fair empire won of earth and air:
 For this ill news I bring; the woman's Seed,
 Destined to this, is late of woman born: 65
 His birth to our just fear gave no small cause;
 But his growth now to youth's full flower, displaying
 All virtue, grace, and wisdom to achieve
 Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
 Before him a great prophet, to proclaim 70
 His coming, is sent harbinger, who all
 Invites, and in the consecrated stream
 Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them, so
 Purified, to receive him pure; or rather 75
 To do him honour as their King: all come,
 And he himself among them was baptized;
 Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
 The testimony of Heaven, that who he is
 Thenceforth the nations may not doubt. I saw
 The prophet do him reverence; on him, rising 80
 Out of the water, Heaven above the clouds
 Unfold her crystal doors; thence on his head
 A perfect dove descend, (whate'er it meant)
 And out of Heaven the sovran voice I heard,—
 This is my Son beloved,—in him am pleased. 85
 His mother then is mortal, but his Sire
 He who obtains the monarchy of Heaven:
 And what will he not do to advance his Son?

of the pope and cardinals so named, or perhaps at the episcopal tribunal, to all which sorts of courts or assemblies he was an avowed enemy.—*TYER.*

44. *O ancient powers.* They who have been taught to think, by the cant of common critics, that this poem is unworthy of the great genius of Milton,

may read the first two speeches in it; this of Satan with which the book judiciously opens; and that of God, at verse 130 of this book.—*I. WHARTON.*

53. *Attending,* that is, waiting, expecting.

87. *Obtains* in the sense of the Latin *oblineo*, to hold, retain, or govern.

His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,
 When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep. 90
 Who this is we must learn; for man he seems
 In all his lineaments; though in his face
 The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.
 Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
 Of hazard, which admits no long debate, 95
 But must with something sudden be opposed,
 (Not force, but well-couch'd fraud, well-woven snares,)
 Ere in the head of nations he appear,
 Their king, their leader, and supreme on earth.
 I, when no other durst, sole undertook 100
 The dismal expedition, to find out
 And ruin Adam; and the exploit perform'd
 Successfully: a calmer voyage now
 Will waft me; and the way, found prosperous once,
 Induces best to hope of like success. 105
 He ended, and his words impression left
 Of much amazement to the infernal crew,
 Distracted and surprised with deep dismay
 At these sad tidings; but no time was then
 For long indulgence to their fears or grief: 110
 Unanimous they all commit the care
 And management of this main enterprise
 To him, their great dictator, whose attempt
 At first against mankind so well had thrived
 In Adam's overthrow, and led their march 115
 From hell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,
 Regents, and potentates, and kings, yea, gods,
 Of many a pleasant realm and province wide.
 So to the coast of Jordan he directs
 His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles, 120
 Where he might likeliest find this new-declared,
 This man of men, attested Son of God,
 Temptation and all guile on him to try;
 So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd
 To end his reign on earth, so long enjoy'd: 125
 But, contrary, unweeting he fulfill'd
 The purposed counsel, pre-ordain'd and fix'd,
 Of the Most High; who, in full frequency bright
 Of angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake:

89 and 90. See Par. Lost, vi. 834, &c., for the account of the Messiah's driving the rebel angels out of Heaven.

97. *Well-couch'd*, that is, fraud couching closely down like a tiger, ready to spring upon its prey: a most expressive epithet.

100. *When no other durst*. The fear and unwillingness of the other of the fallen angels to undertake this dismal expedition is particularly described in Paradise Lost, ii. 420.—DUNSTER.

119. *Coast of Jordan*. The wilderness where our Saviour underwent his forty days' temptation, was on the same

bank of Jordan where John was baptized.

120. *Girded with snaky wiles*. Though this phrase may allude to the habits of sorcerers and necromancers who were represented in prints as girded about the middle with the skins of serpents; yet, as Dunster says, it rather is used here in a metaphorical sense, as the Christian is described in the "Ephesians," as having his "loins girt about with truth." So in the beginning of the third book of this poem Satan is described, as

"At length collecting all his serpent wiles."

Gabriel, this day by proof thou shalt behold, 130
 Thou and all angels conversant on earth
 With man or men's affairs, how I begin
 To verify that solemn message, late
 On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure
 In Galilee, that she should bear a son, 135
 Great in renown, and call'd the Son of God;
 Then told'st her, doubting how these things could be
 To her a virgin, that on her should come
 The Holy Ghost, and the power of the Highest
 O'ershadow her. This man, born and now upgrown, 140
 To show him worthy of his birth divine
 And high prediction, henceforth I expose
 To Satan: let him tempt, and now assay
 His utmost subtlety; because he boasts
 And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng 145
 Of his apostasy: he might have learnt
 Less overweening, since he fail'd in Job,
 Whose constant perseverance overcame
 Whate'er his cruel malice could invent.
 He now shall know I can produce a man, 150
 Of female seed, far abler to resist
 All his solicitations, and at length
 All his vast force, and drive him back to hell;
 Winning, by conquest, what the first man lost,
 By fallacy surpris'd. But first I mean 155
 To exercise him in the wilderness:
 There he shall first lay down the rudiments
 Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
 To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes,
 By humiliation and strong sufferance: 160
 His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength,
 And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;
 That all the angels and ethereal powers,
 They now, and men hereafter, may discern,
 From what consummate virtue I have chose 165
 This perfect man, by merit call'd my Son,
 To earn salvation for the sons of men.
 So spake the Eternal Father, and all heaven
 Admiring stood a space; then into hymns
 Burst forth, and in celestial measures moved, 170

137. *Told'st*; this is, *thou told'st*.

146. *Apostasy*, for apostates, the abstract for the concrete: this alludes to his boasting of his having "ruined Adam," line 102.

162. *O'ercome all the world*, John xvi. 33.

168. *All Heaven admiring stood*. We cannot but notice the great art of the poet, in setting forth the dignity and importance of his subject. He represents all beings as interested one way or other in the event. A council of Devils is summoned: an assembly of Angels is held. Satan is the speaker in the one, the Al-

mighty in the other. Satan expresses his diffidence, but still resolves to make trial of this Son of God; the Father declares his purpose of proving and illustrating his Son. The infernal crew are distracted and surpris'd with deep dismay; all Heaven stands awhile in admiration. The fiends are silent through fear and grief; the Angels burst forth into singing with joy and the assured hopes of success. And their attention is thus engaged, the better to engage the attention of the reader.—NEWTON.

Circling the throne and singing, while the hand
Sung with the voice, and this the argument:

Victory and triumph to the Son of God,
Now entering his great duel, not of arms,
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles! 175

The Father knows the Son; therefore secure
Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,
Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,
Allure, or terrify, or undermine.

Be frustrate, all ye stratagems of hell; 180
And, devilish machinations, come to naught!

So they in heaven their odes and vigils tuned:
Meanwhile the Son of God, who yet some days
Lodged in Bethabara, where John baptized,
Musing, and much revolving in his breast, 185

How best the mighty work he might begin
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
Publish his godlike office now mature,
One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading,
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse 190

With solitude, till, far from track of men,
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
He enter'd now the bordering desert wild;
And, with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
His holy meditations thus pursued: 195

O, what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awaken'd in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compared! 200

When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do,
What might be public good; myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth, 205

All righteous things: therefore, above my years,
The law of God I read, and found it sweet,
Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
To such perfection, that, ere yet my age
Had measured twice six years, at our great feast 210

I went into the temple, there to hear
The teachers of our law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge or their own;
And was admired by all: yet this not all
To which my spirit aspired; victorious deeds 215

174. *Now entering his great duel*; that is, now entering the lists to prove, in personal combat with his avowed antagonist, the reality of his divinity.

182. *Vigils*, the songs which they sung while keeping their watches.

184. *Bethabara*. John i. 28.

189. *One day walk'd forth alone*. In

what a fine light does Milton here place that text of Scripture, where it is said that *Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the Wilderness!* He adheres strictly to the inspired historian, and at the same time gives it a turn which is extremely poetical.—THYER.

205. *To promote all truth*. John xviii. 37.

Flamed in my heart, heroic acts; one while
 To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke;
 Then to subdue and quell, o'er all the earth,
 Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
 Till truth were freed, and equity restored: 220
 Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first
 By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
 And make persuasion do the work of fear;
 At least to try, and teach the erring soul,
 Not wilfully misdoing, but unaware 225
 Misled; the stubborn only to subdue.
 These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving,
 By words at times cast forth, inly rejoiced,
 And said to me apart:—High are thy thoughts,
 O Son, but nourish them, and let them soar 230
 To what highth sacred virtue and true worth
 Can raise them, though above example high:
 By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire.
 For know, thou art no son of mortal man,
 Though men esteem thee low of parentage; 235
 Thy Father is the Eternal King who rules
 All heaven and earth, angels and sons of men:
 A messenger from God foretold thy birth
 Conceived in me a virgin; he foretold
 Thou shouldst be great, and sit on David's throne, 240
 And of thy kingdom there should be no end.
 At thy nativity, a glorious quire
 Of angels, in the fields of Bethlehem, sung
 To shepherds, watching at their folds by night,
 And told them the Messiah now was born, 245
 Where they might see him, and to thee they came,
 Directed to the manger where thou lay'st,
 For in the inn was left no better room:
 A star, not seen before, in heaven appearing,
 Guided the wise men thither from the east, 250
 To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold;
 By whose bright course led on they found the place,
 Affirming it thy star, new-graven in heaven,
 By which they knew the King of Israel born.
 Just Simeon and prophetick Anna, warn'd 255
 By vision, found thee in the temple, and spake,
 Before the altar and the vested priest,
 Like things of thee to all that present stood.—
 This having heard, straight I again revolved
 The law and prophets, searching what was writ 260
 Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes
 Known partly, and soon found, of whom they spake
 I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie

241. *There should be no end.* Luke i. 32, 33.

257. *The vested priest.* The epithet *vested* is singularly proper, because the

vestments of the Jewish priest were enjoined and particularly described by God himself. Ex. xxviii. 43.

Through many a hard assay, ev'n to the death,
 Ere I the promised kingdom can attain, 265
 Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins'
 Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.
 Yet, neither thus dishearten'd or dismay'd,
 The time prefix'd I waited; when behold
 The Baptist, (of whose birth I oft had heard, 270
 Not knew by sight,) now come, who was to come
 Before Messiah, and his way prepare!
 I, as all others, to his baptism came,
 Which I believed was from above; but he
 Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaim'd 275
 Me him, (for it was shown him so from Heaven)
 Me him, whose harbinger he was; and first
 Refused on me his baptism to confer,
 As much his greater, and was hardly won:
 But, as I rose out of the laving stream, 280
 Heaven open'd her eternal doors, from whence
 The Spirit descended on me like a dove;
 And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice,
 Audibly heard from heaven, pronounced me his,
 Me his beloved Son, in whom alone 285
 He was well pleased; by which I knew the time
 Now full, that I no more should live obscure;
 But openly begin, as best becomes,
 The authority which I derived from Heaven.
 And now by some strong motion I am led 290
 Into this wilderness, to what intent
 I learn not yet; perhaps I need not know;
 For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.
 So spake our Morning Star, then in his rise,
 And, looking round, on every side beheld 295
 A pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades:
 The way he came not having mark'd, return
 Was difficult, by human steps untrod;
 And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
 Accompanied of things past and to come 300
 Lodged in his breast, as well might recommend
 Such solitude before choicest society.
 Full forty days he pass'd, whether on hill
 Sometimes, anon on shady vale, each night
 Under the covert of some ancient oak 305
 Or cedar to defend him from the dew,

266. *Whose sins, &c.* Isa. liii. 6.

271. *Not knew by sight.* Though Jesus and John the Baptist were related, yet they were brought up in different countries, and had no manner of intimacy or acquaintance with each other. John the Baptist says expressly, (John i. 31,) "and I knew him not." He did not so much as know him by sight till our Saviour came to his baptism; and it does not ap-

pear that they ever afterwards conversed together.—NEWTON.

294. *Morning star.* See Rev. xxii. 16.

306. *Dew.* Maundrell, in his travels, when within a little more than half a day's journey from this mountain, says, "we were sufficiently instructed by experience what the holy Psalmist means by the 'dew of Hermon,' our tents being as wet with it as if it had rained all night."

Or harbour'd in one cave, is not reveal'd;
 Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt,
 Till those days ended; hunger'd then at last
 Among wild beasts: they at his sight grew mild, 310
 Nor sleeping him nor waking harm'd; his walk
 The fiery serpent fled and noxious worm,
 The lion and fierce tiger glared aloof.
 But now an aged man in rural weeds,
 Following, as seem'd, the quest of some stray ewe, 315
 Or wither'd sticks to gather, which might serve
 Against a winter's day, when winds blow keen,
 To warm him wet return'd from field at eve,
 He saw approach, who first with curious eye
 Perused him, then with words thus utter'd spake: 320
 Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place
 So far from path or road of men, who pass
 In troop or caravan? for single none
 Durst ever, who return'd, and dropt not here
 His carcass, pined with hunger and with drouth. 325
 I ask the rather, and the more admire,
 For that to me thou seem'st the man, whom late
 Our new baptizing prophet at the ford
 Of Jordan honour'd so, and call'd the Son
 Of God: I saw and heard, for we sometimes 330
 Who dwell this wild, constrain'd by want, come forth
 To town or village nigh, (nighest is far)
 Where aught we hear, and curious are to hear
 What happens new; fame also finds us out.
 To whom the Son of God:—Who brought me hither, 335
 Will bring me hence; no other guide I seek.
 By miracle he may, replied the swain;
 What other way I see not; for we here
 Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inured
 More than the camel, and to drink go far, 340
 Men to much misery and hardship born:
 But, if thou be the Son of God, command
 That out of these hard stones be made thee bread;
 So shalt thou save thyself, and us relieve
 With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste. 345
 He ended, and the Son of God replied:
 Think'st thou such force in bread? Is it not written,
 (For I discern thee other than thou seem'st)
 Man lives not by bread only, but each word
 Proceeding from the mouth of God; who fed 350

310. *Wild beasts.* Mark i. 13.

314. *But now an aged man.* As the Scriptures are entirely silent about what personage the Tempter assumed, the Poet was at liberty to indulge his own fancy, and nothing I think could be better conceived for his present purpose, or more likely to prevent suspicion or fraud.—THYER.

330, &c. *I saw and heard, &c.* All this is finely in character with the assumed person of the Tempter, and tends, at the same time, to give more effect to the preceding descriptions.—DUNSTER.

339. *Stubs,* (not shrubs as Thyer proposes.) is undoubtedly the right word as connected with roots.

Our fathers here with manna? in the mount
 Moses was forty days, nor eat, nor drank;
 And forty days Elijah, without food,
 Wander'd this barren waste; the same I now:
 Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust, 355
 Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?
 Whom thus answer'd the arch-fiend, now undisguis'd:—
 'Tis true, I am that spirit unfortunate,
 Who, leagu'd with millions more in rash revolt,
 Kept not my happy station, but was driven 360
 With them from bliss to the bottomless deep;
 Yet to that hideous place not so confined
 By rigour unconniving, but that oft,
 Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy
 Large liberty to round this globe of earth, 365
 Or range in the air; nor from the heaven of heavens
 Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.
 I came among the sons of God, when he
 Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job,
 To prove him and illustrate his high worth; 370
 And, when to all his angels he proposed
 To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud,
 That he might fall in Ramoth; they demurring,
 I undertook that office, and the tongues
 Of all his flattering prophets glibb'd with lies 375
 To his destruction, as I had in charge;
 For what he bids I do: though I have lost
 Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
 To be beloved of God; I have not lost
 To love, at least contemplate and admire, 380
 What I see excellent in good, or fair,
 Or virtuous; I should so have lost all sense:
 What can be then less in me than desire
 To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
 Declared the Son of God, to hear attent 385
 Thy wisdom, and behold thy godlike deeds?
 Men generally think me much a foe
 To all mankind: why should I? they to me
 Never did wrong or violence; by them
 I lost not what I lost, rather by them 390
 I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell,
 Copartner in these regions of the world,
 If not disposer; lend them oft my aid,
 Oft my advice by presages and signs,
 And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams, 395
 Whereby they may direct their future life.
 Envy they say excites me, thus to gain

356. *Knowing who I am.* See line 385.
 358. *'Tis true.* Satan's instantaneous
 avowal of himself here, has a great and
 fine effect. It is consistent with a cer-
 tain dignity of character which is given

in general, through the whole of Para-
 dise Lost.—DUNSTER.

372. *The proud king Ahab.* See 1 Kings
 xxii. 20, 21, and 22.

Companions of my misery and woe.
 At first it may be; but, long since with woe
 Nearer acquainted, now I feel by proof, 400
 That fellowship in pain divides not smart,
 Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load.
 Small consolation then, were man adjoin'd;
 This wounds me most; (what can it less?) that man,
 Man fallen shall be restored, I never more. 405
 To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied:—
 Deservedly thou griev'st, composed of lies
 From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;
 Who boast'st release from hell, and leave to come
 Into the heaven of heavens: thou com'st indeed, 410
 As a poor miserable captive thrall
 Comes to the place where he before had sat
 Among the prime in splendour, now deposed,
 Ejected, emptied, gazed, unpitied, shunn'd,
 A spectacle of ruin, or of scorn, 415
 To all the host of heaven: the happy place
 Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy;
 Rather inflames thy torment; representing
 Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,
 So never more in hell than when in heaven. 420
 But thou art serviceable to Heaven's King.
 Wilt thou impute to obedience what thy fear
 Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?
 What but thy malice moved thee to misdeem
 Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him 425
 With all inflictions? but his patience won.
 The other service was thy chosen task,
 To be a liar in four hundred mouths;
 For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.
 Yet thou pretend'st to truth; all oracles 430
 By thee are given, and what confess'd more true
 Among the nations? that hath been thy craft,
 By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.
 But what have been thy answers, what but dark,
 Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding, 435
 Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,
 And not well understood as good not known?
 Who ever by consulting at thy shrine
 Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct,

404. *This wounds me most.* Very artificial: as he could not acquit himself of envy and mischief, he endeavours to soften his crimes by assigning this cause of them.—WARBURTON.

428. *In four hundred mouths.* See 1 Kings xxii. 6.

435. *Double sense.* The ancient oracles were famed for giving such answers as could be turned either way. Thus, when Cyrus was about to invade Croesus' dominions, the latter applied to the Oracle

at Delphi, to know what to do. The oracle gave answer, "If Croesus crosses the Halys" (the eastern boundary of his dominions) "a large kingdom will be destroyed." He interpreted this to mean Cyrus' kingdom, and so crossed the Halys, and gave him battle. But being utterly defeated, he learned too late that the answer of the credit-saving oracle could be interpreted the other way.

439. *Instruct for instructed.* So ii. 399. *Suspect for suspected.*

To fly or follow what concern'd him most, 440
 And run not sooner to his fatal snare?
 For God hath justly given the nations up
 To thy delusions; justly, since they fell
 Idolatrous: but, when his purpose is
 Among them to declare his providence 445
 To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,
 But from him, or his angels president
 In every province, who themselves disdain
 To approach thy temples, give thee in command
 What, to the smallest tittle, thou shalt say 450
 To thy adorers? Thou with trembling fear,
 Or like a fawning parasite, obey'st:
 Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.
 But this thy glory shall be soon retrench'd;
 No more shalt thou by oracling abuse 455
 The Gentiles; henceforth oracles are ceased,
 And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice
 Shalt be inquired at Delphos, or elsewhere;
 At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
 God hath now sent his living oracle 460
 Into the world to teach his final will;
 And sends his Spirit of truth henceforth to dwell
 In pious hearts, an inward oracle
 To all truth requisite for men to know.
 So spake our Saviour; but the subtle fiend, 465
 Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
 Dissembled, and this answer smooth return'd:—
 Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,
 And urged me hard with doings, which not will,
 But misery hath wrested from me. Where 470
 Easily canst thou find one miserable,
 And not enforced oft-times to part from truth,
 If it may stand him more in stead to lie,
 Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
 But thou art placed above me, thou art Lord; 475
 From thee I can, and must, submiss, endure
 Check or reproof, and glad to 'scape so quit.
 Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,
 Smooth on the tongue discoursed, pleasing to the ear,
 And tunable as sylvan pipe or song: 480
 What wonder then if I delight to hear
 Her dictates from thy mouth? Most men admire
 Virtue, who follow not her lore: permit me
 To hear thee when I come, (since no man comes)

456. *Oracles are ceased.* As Milton had before adopted the ancient opinion of oracles being the operations of the fallen angels, so here he makes them cease at the coming of the Saviour. See "Ode on the Nativity," line 173.

"The oracles are dumb." &c.

468. *Sharply thou hast, &c.* The smoothness and hypocrisy of this speech of Satan's are artful in the extreme, and cannot be passed over unobserved.—J. WARTON.

And talk at least, though I despair to attain. 485
 Thy Father, who is holy, wise, and pure,
 Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
 To tread his sacred courts, and minister
 About his altar, handling holy things,
 Praying or vowing; and vouchsafed his voice 490
 To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
 Inspired: disdain not such access to me.
 To whom our Saviour, with unalter'd brow:
 Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,
 I bid not, or forbid; do as thou find'st 495
 Permission from above; thou canst not more.
 He added not; and Satan, bowing low
 His gray dissimulation, disappear'd,
 Into thin air diffused: for now began
 Night with her sullen wings to double-shade 500
 The desert: fowls in their clay nests were couch'd;
 And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

487. *Atheous priest to tread, &c.* See Is. i. 12. There are two kinds of atheism, *theoretical* and *practical*; and that minister of religion who studies to preach "smooth things" and "deceits," rather than "right things;" (Is. xxx. 10) to say what will please his congregation, rather than faithfully rebuke them for their individual or national sins, shows a *practical* disbelief of the commands of God.

502. The whole conclusion of this book abounds so much in closeness of reasoning, grandeur of sentiment, elevation of style, and harmony of numbers, that it may well be questioned whether poetry on such a subject, and especially in the form of dialogue, ever produced any thing superior to it.—DUNSTER.

498. *Gray dissimulation*: head gray with dissimulation.

REMARKS ON BOOK II.

It is sometimes useful to warn the reader what he is to expect in each portion of a long poem, as it is offered to him. The second book of the "Paradise Regained" begins soberly,—perhaps in a tone almost prosaic. To begin low, and rise by a gradual climax, is admitted to be one of the great arts of beautiful composition.

The anxiety and alarm felt by the disciples of Jesus, at missing him so soon, while detained in the wilderness, coming suddenly on their joy at the discovery of his advent; and the pathetic yet patient reflections of Mary at the loss of her son, though related with extreme plainness, are full of deep interest, and the most affecting natural touches: they abound in passages which excite human sympathy.

Satan, hitherto defeated in his temptations of our Saviour, now resorts again to his council of peers; at which occurs that magnificent dialogue between the sensual Belial and him, which is at any rate as rich and poetical as the finest in "Paradise Lost;" and shows a vein of warmth, and imagery, and invention, and language, that is evidence how strongly the poet's genius was yet in its full bloom and verdure. Satan's answer to Belial is the more powerful, as coming from the prince of darkness himself: how then does the lustful fiend stand rebuked!

Now Jesus had fasted forty days, and began to suffer by hunger: Satan seizes the occasion, and resolves to take advantage of it. Our Saviour, weary and exhausted, slept under the cover of trees, and dreamed of food supplied by an angel, who invited him to eat. He waked with the morning, and found that all was but a dream:—

Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting waked.

He walked to the top of a hill, to see if there was any human habitation within reach; and there a rich but solitary landscape displayed itself before him, raised magically by Satan and his imps, for the purposes of the delusion which was to follow.

While gazing upon this magnificent prospect, Satan again accosts him, and endeavours to alarm his faith at being left thus destitute:—

As his words had end,
Our Saviour, lifting up his eyes, beheld,
In ample space, under the broadest shade,
A dinner spread, &c.

Here is an invented array, than which nothing in "Paradise Lost" can be richer either in imagery or poetical language.

Our Saviour rejects with scorn the temptation: he says:—

I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
Command a table in this wilderness,
And call swift flights of angels ministrant,
Array'd in glory on my cup to attend:
Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence
In vain, where no acceptance it can find?
And with my hunger what hast thou to do
Thy pompous delicacies I contemn,
And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles.

Satan grows angry at the refusal, and

With that
Both table and provision vanish'd quite,
With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard.

The tempter was not yet to be foiled: he now makes an offer of riches, and descants upon their advantages for the purposes of that dominion which he assumes that our Saviour was sent to obtain.

Jesus answers, that wealth without virtue, valour, and wisdom, is impotent; and that the highest deeds have been performed in the lowest poverty: he then expounds what are the duties and what are the cares of a king; and how much more desirable it is to surrender a sceptre than to gain one.

Were there in this book nothing but the spiritual and intellectual part, the thoughts and the sentiments, I, for one, should not think the less of it; but it is not so: there are duly intermixed that material, those picturesque descriptions, those striking incidents of fact, which the common critics and the generality of readers more especially deem to be poetry.

The whole story (and it is a beautiful story) is in part practical, though operated on by immaterial beings, whose delusive powers over our earthly conduct and fate are consistent with our belief. The temptations are such as a mere human being could not have resisted; and to have resisted them is a true test of Christ's divinity.

But the arguments by which they were resisted, contain the most profound doctrines of religion and morals, such as for ever apply to human life, extend and purify the understanding, and elevate the heart. We should have been glad to have learned the grand results at which the mighty mind of Milton had arrived, even if they had been expressed in prose; but how much more, when arranged in all the glowing eloquence of poetry! when interwoven in a sublime story, and deriving practical application from their embodiments and their progressive influences!

The reply to the allurements of female beauty, and still more to the impotent splendour of wealth, unaccompanied by virtue and talent, is an outburst of imaginative strength and sublimity: it is wisdom irradiated by glory. Whoever does not find himself better and happier by reading and reflecting upon those grand and sentimental arguments, has neither head nor heart, but is a stagnant congeries of clayey coldness and inanimate insusceptibility.

We may be forgiven for dispensing with all poetry of which the mere result is innocent pleasure; that is, they may lay it aside to whom it is no pleasure. But this is not the case with Milton's poetry: his is the voice of instruction and wisdom, to which he who refuses to listen, is guilty of a crime. If we are so dull, that we cannot understand him without labour and pain, still we are bound to undergo that labour and pain. They who are not ashamed of their own ignorance and inapprehensiveness, are lost.

For the purpose of fixing attention, I suspect that Milton's latinized style is best calculated. He who has more acquired knowledge than native and quick taste, ought to study him as he studies Virgil and Homer: in him he will find all that is profound and eloquent in the ancient classics, amalgamated, and exalted at the same time by the aid of the sacred writings; all working together in the plastic mind of the most powerful and sublime of human poets.

Strength, not grace, was Milton's characteristic: his grasp was that of an unsparing giant; he showed the sinews and muscles of his naked form: he put on no soft garments of a dove-like tenderness; he neither adorned himself with jewels nor gold leaf; all was plain as nature made him.

Thus his descriptions of scenery, of the seasons, of morning and evening, were rich, but not embellished or sophisticated. In this book, the break of the dawn, the gathering of the night shades, the dark covering of the umbrageous forests, the open and sunny glades, are all painted in the sober hues of visible reality.

There is nothing enfeebling in any of Milton's visionariness. His bold

and vigorous mind braces us for action ; his strains beget a patient loftiness, prepared for temptations, difficulties, and dangers.

It is in vain for authors to attempt to effectuate this tone by practising the artifices of composition : it is produced solely by the poet's belief in what he writes ; by his being under the impulse of the ideal presence of what he represents. He does not conjure up factitious images, factitious feelings, and factitious language. Where the soul is wanting, the dress or form will be of no avail.

Milton's purpose was to represent the embodiment and refraction of what he believed to be truth. What was visible to himself, but not palpable to common eyes, except by the Muse's aid, he wanted to make palpable and distinct to others. The immaterial world is covered with a mist, or a veil, to all but the gifted ; unless they become a mirror for duller sights.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE disciples of Jesus, uneasy at his long absence, reason amongst themselves concerning it. Mary also gives vent to her maternal anxiety; in the expression of which she recapitulates many circumstances respecting the birth and early life of her Son.—Satan again meets his infernal council, reports the bad success of his first temptation of our blessed Lord, and calls upon them for counsel and assistance. Belial proposes the tempting of Jesus with women. Satan rebukes Belial for his dissoluteness, charging on him all the profligacy of that kind ascribed by the poets to the heathen gods, and rejects his proposal as in no respect likely to succeed. Satan then suggests other modes of temptation, particularly proposing to avail himself of the circumstance of our Lord's hungering; and, taking a band of chosen spirits with him, returns to resume his enterprise.—Jesus hungers in the desert.—Night comes on; the manner in which our Saviour passes the night is described.—Morning advances.—Satan again appears to Jesus; and, after expressing wonder that he should be so entirely neglected in the wilderness, where others had been miraculously fed, tempts him with a sumptuous banquet of the most luxurious kind. This he rejects, and the banquet vanishes.—Satan, finding our Lord not to be assailed on the ground of appetite, tempts him again by offering him riches, as the means of acquiring power: this Jesus also rejects, producing many instances of great actions performed by persons under virtuous poverty, and specifying the danger of riches, and the cares and pains inseparable from power and greatness.

MEANWHILE the new-baptized, who yet remain'd
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
Him whom they heard so late expressly call'd
Jesus, Messiah, Son of God declared,
And on that high authority had believed, 5
And with him talk'd, and with him lodged; I mean
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
With others though in Holy Writ not named;
Now missing him, their joy so lately found,
(So lately found, and so abruptly gone) 10
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
And, as the days increased, increased their doubt.
Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,
And for a time caught up to God, as once
Moses was in the mount and missing long; 15
And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels
Rode up to heaven, yet once again to come.

16. *The great Thisbite.* Elijah.

17. *Yet once again to come.* It hath been the opinion of the church, that

there would be an Elias before Christ's second coming, as well as before his first. Mal. iv. 5; Matt. xvii. 11. But as it was

Therefore, as those young prophets then with care
 Sought lost Elijah; so in each place these
 Nigh to Bethabara, in Jericho 20
 The city of palms, Ænon, and Salem old,
 Machærus, and each town or city wall'd
 On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
 Or in Peræa; but return'd in vain.
 Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek, 25
 Where winds with reeds and osiers whispering play,
 Plain fishermen, (no greater men them call)
 Close in a cottage low together got,
 Their unexpected loss and complaints out breathed:
 Alas, from what high hope to what relapse 30
 Unlook'd for are we fallen! our eyes beheld
 Messiah certainly now come, so long
 Expected of our fathers; we have heard
 His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth:
 Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand; 35
 The kingdom shall to Israel be restored:
 Thus we rejoiced, but soon our joy is turn'd
 Into perplexity and new amaze:
 For whither is he gone? what accident
 Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire 40
 After appearance, and again prolong
 Our expectation? God of Israel,
 Send thy Messiah forth; the time is come!
 Behold the kings of the earth, how they oppress
 Thy chosen; to what highth their power unjust 45
 They have exalted, and behind them cast
 All fear of thee: arise, and vindicate
 Thy glory; free thy people from their yoke!
 But let us wait; thus far He hath perform'd,
 Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him, 50
 By his great prophet, pointed at and shown
 In publick, and with him we have conversed:
 Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
 Lay on his Providence; He will not fail,
 Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall, 55
 Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence;
 Soon we shall see our Hope, our Joy, return.
 Thus they, out of their complaints, new hope resume
 To find whom at the first they found unsought:
 But, to his mother Mary, when she saw 60

not Elias in person, but only in spirit, who appeared before our Saviour's first coming, so it will also be before his second.—NEWTON.

20. *Nigh to Bethabara.* Our author makes the disciples seek for Jesus first at Bethabara, on the Jordan, a little north of the Dead Sea; thence, going to Ænon and Salem, further north, on the west of the Jordan; thence, crossing

over the Jordan, and going through Peræa, on the east side of it, as far down as the town and castle of Machærus, south of Mount Nebo.

44. *Kings of the earth.* Ps. ii. 2.

60. *To his mother.* A Latinism, corresponding to the dative of the remote object, or the dative for the genitive: "within her breast," that is, the breast of Mary.

Others return'd from baptism, not her Son,
 Nor left at Jordan, tidings of him none;
 Within her breast though calm, her breast though pure,
 Motherly cares and fears got head, and raised
 Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad: 65
 O, what avails me now that honour high
 To have conceived of God, or that salute,—
 Hail, highly favour'd among women blest!
 While I to sorrows am no less advanced,
 And fears as eminent, above the lot 70
 Of other women, by the birth I bore;
 In such a season born, when scarce a shed
 Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me
 From the bleak air; a stable was our warmth,
 A manger his; yet soon enforced to fly 75
 Thence into Egypt, till the murderous king
 Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd
 With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem:
 From Egypt home returned, in Nazareth
 Hath been our dwelling many years; his life 80
 Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
 Little suspicious to any king; but now,
 Full grown to man, acknowledged, as I hear,
 By John the Baptist, and in publick shown,
 Son own'd from heaven by his Father's voice, 85
 I look'd for some great change; to honour? no;
 But trouble as old Simeon plain foretold,
 That to the fall and rising he should be
 Of many in Israel, and to a sign
 Spoken against, that through my very soul 90
 A sword shall pierce: this is my favour'd lot,
 My exaltation to afflictions high:
 Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;
 I will not argue that, nor will repine.
 But where delays he now? some great intent 95
 Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had seen,
 I lost him, but so found, as well I saw
 He could not lose himself, but went about
 His Father's business: what he meant I mused,
 Since understand; much more his absence now 100
 Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.
 But I to wait with patience am inured;
 My heart hath been a storehouse long of things
 And sayings laid up, portending strange events,
 Thus Mary, pondering oft, and oft to mind 105
 Recalling what remarkably had pass'd
 Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
 Meekly composed awaited the fulfilling:
 The while her Son, tracing the desert wild,
 Sole, but with holiest meditations fed, 110

105. *Pondering.* See Luke ii. 19.

Into himself descended, and at once
 All his great work to come before him set;
 How to begin, how to accomplish best
 His end of being on earth, and mission high:
 For Satan, with sly preface to return, 115
 Had left him vacant; and with speed was gone
 Up to the middle region of thick air,
 Where all his potentates in council sat:
 There, without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
 Solicitous and blank, he thus began: 120
 Princes, Heaven's ancient sons, ethereal thrones;
 Demonian spirits now, from the element
 Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd
 Powers of fire, air, water, and earth beneath!
 (So may we hold our place and these mild seats 125
 Without new trouble!) such an enemy
 Is risen to invade us, who no less
 Threatens than our expulsion down to hell;
 I, as I undertook, and with a vote
 Consenting in full frequency was impower'd, 130
 Have found him, view'd him, tasted him; but find
 Far other labour to be undergone
 Than when I dealt with Adam, first of men:
 Though Adam by his wife's allurements fell,
 However to this man inferior far, 135
 If he be man, by mother's side at least,
 With more than human gifts from Heaven adorn'd,
 Perfections absolute, graces divine,
 And amplitude of mind to greatest deeds.
 Therefore I am return'd, lest confidence 140
 Of my success with Eve in Paradise
 Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure
 Of like succeeding here: I summon all
 Rather to be in readiness, with hand
 Or counsel to assist; lest I, who erst 145
 Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.
 So spake the old Serpent, doubting; and from all
 With clamour was assured their utmost aid
 At his command: when from amidst them rose
 Belial, the dissolutes spirit that fell, 150
 The sensualest; and, after Asmodai,
 The fleshliest Incubus; and thus advised:
 Set women in his eye, and in his walk,

131. *Tasted, experienced, made trial of.* Ps. xxxiv. 8, "Oh taste and see that the Lord is good."

136. *If he be man, &c.* Newton has followed here the punctuation of Milton's own edition, with a comma after *side*; but I prefer that of Mr. Dunster, who places one after man, for the Tempter could have had no doubt of Christ's being a *Man by his mother's side.* After least

supply *he is*, and read *by mother's side at least* as a sort of parenthesis: for it is the object of Satan not to say any thing to the evil spirits that may lessen, but every thing that may raise their idea of his antagonist.

151. *Asmodai*, the lustful angel who loved Sarah the daughter of Raguel, and destroyed her seven husbands. See book of Tobit, chap. iv.

Among daughters of men the fairest found:
 Many are in each region passing fair 155
 As the noon sky; more like to goddesses
 Than mortal creatures; graceful and discreet;
 Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues
 Persuasive, virgin majesty with mild
 And sweet allay'd, yet terrible to approach; 160
 Skill'd to retire, and, in retiring, draw
 Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.
 Such object hath the power to soften and tame
 Severest temper, smoothe the rugged'st brow,
 Eneer, and with voluptuous hope dissolve, 165
 Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
 At will the manliest, resolute breast,
 As the magnetick hardest iron draws.
 Women, when nothing else, beguiled the heart
 Of wisest Solomon, and made him build, 170
 And made him bow to the gods of his wives.
 To whom quick answer Satan thus return'd:
 Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st
 All others by thyself; because of old
 Thou thyself doat'dst on womankind, admiring
 Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace, 175
 None are, thou think'st, but taken with such toys.
 Before the flood thou with thy lusty crew,
 False titled sons of God, roaming the earth,
 Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men, 180
 And coupled with them, and begot a race.
 Have we not seen, or by relation heard,
 In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'st,
 In wood or grove, by mossy fountain side,
 In valley or green meadow, to way-lay 185
 Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,
 Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
 Or Anymone, Syrinx, many more
 Too long; then lay'st thy scapes on names ador'd,
 Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan, 190
 Satyr, or Faun, or Sylvan? But these haunts

153. *Let women, &c.* As this temptation is not mentioned in the Gospels, it could not with any propriety have been proposed to our Saviour: it is much more fitly made the subject of debate among the wicked spirits themselves. All that can be said in praise of the power of beauty, and all that can be alleged to depreciate it, is here summed up with greater force and elegance than I ever remember to have seen in any other author.—NEWTON.

178. *False titled, &c.* It is to be lamented that our author has so often adopted the vulgar notion of the angels having commerce with women, founded upon that mistaken text of Scripture, Gen. vi. 2. (See *Paradise Lost*, iii. 463.) But though

he seems to favour that opinion, as we may suppose, to embellish his poetry, yet he shows elsewhere that he understood the text rightly, of the sons of Seth, who were the worshippers of the true God, intermarrying with the daughters of wicked Cain. *Paradise Lost*, xi. 621, 625.—NEWTON.

189. *Scapes*, vicious frolics, acts of lewdness, a word common in old English poetry.

190. *Apollo, &c. Calisto, Semele, and Antiopa* were mistresses to Jupiter; *Clymene* and *Daphne* to Apollo, and *Syrinx* to Pan. Both here and elsewhere Milton considers the Gods of the heathens as Demons or Devils.—NEWTON.

Delight not all: among the sons of men,
 How many have with a smile made small account
 Of beauty and her lures, easily scorn'd
 All her assaults, on worthier things intent! 195
 Remember that Pellean conquerour,
 A youth, how all the beauties of the East
 He slightly view'd, and slightly overpass'd;
 How he, surnamed of Africa, dismiss'd,
 In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid. 200
 For Solomon, he lived at ease; and, full
 Of honour, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond
 Higher design than to enjoy his state;
 Thence to the bait of women lay exposed:
 But he, whom we attempt, is wiser far 205
 Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,
 Made and set wholly on the accomplishment
 Of greatest things. What woman will you find,
 Though of this age the wonder and the fame,
 On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye 210
 Of fond desire? Or should she, confident,
 As sitting queen adored on beauty's throne,
 Descend with all her winning charms begirt
 To enamour, as the zone of Venus once
 Wrought that effect on Jove, so fables tell; 215
 How would one look from his majestick brow,
 Seated as on the top of Virtue's hill,
 Discountenance her despis'd, and put to rout
 All her array; her female pride deject
 Or turn to reverent awe! for beauty stands 220
 In the admiration only of weak minds
 Led captive. Cease to admire, and all her plumes
 Fall flat, and shrink into a trivial toy,
 At every sudden slighting quite abash'd.
 Therefore with manlier objects we must try 225
 His constancy; with such as have more show
 Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise;
 Rocks, whereon greatest men have ofttest wreck'd;
 Or that which only seems to satisfy
 Lawful desires of nature, not beyond: 230
 And now I know he hungers, where no food
 Is to be found, in the wide wilderness:
 The rest commit to me; I shall let pass
 No advantage, and his strength as oft assay.
 He ceased, and heard their grant in loud acclaim, 235

196. *Pellean conquerour*: Alexander, born at Pella in Macedonia.

199. *Surnamed*: Scipio Africanus.

222. *Cease to admire*, that is, if you cease.

191-225. The whole of this part of Satan's speech seems to breathe such a sincere and deep sense of the charms of real goodness, that we almost forget who

is the real speaker. His description of the little effect which the most powerful enticements can produce on the resolute mind of the virtuous, while it is heightened with many beautiful turns of language, is, in its general tenor, of the most superior and dignified kind.—DUNSTER.

Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
 Of spirits, likest to himself in guile,
 To be at hand, and at his beck appear,
 If cause were to unfold some active scene
 Of various persons, each to know his part; 240
 Then to the desert takes with these his flight;
 Where still from shade to shade the Son of God,
 After forty days fasting, had remain'd,
 Now hungering first, and to himself thus said:
 Where will this end? four times ten days I've pass'd 245
 Wandering this woody maze, and human food
 Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that fast
 To virtue I impute not, or count part
 Of what I suffer here; if nature need not,
 Or God support nature without repast 250
 Though needing, what praise is it to endure?
 But now I feel I hunger, which declares
 Nature hath need of what she asks; yet God
 Can satisfy that need some other way,
 Though hunger still remain: so it remain 255
 Without this body's wasting, I content me,
 And from the sting of famine fear no harm;
 Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts, that feed
 Me hungering more to do my Father's will.
 It was the hour of night, when thus the Son 260
 Communed in silent walk, then laid him down
 Under the hospitable covert nigh
 Of trees thick interwoven; there he slept,
 And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,
 Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet: 265
 Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
 And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
 Food to Elijah bringing, even and morn,
 Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they
 brought:
 He saw the prophet also, how he fled 270
 Into the desert, and how there he slept
 Under a juniper; then how, awaked,
 He found his supper on the coals prepared
 And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
 And eat the second time after repose, 275
 The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:
 Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
 Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
 Thus wore out night; and now the herald lark
 Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry 280
 The morn's approach, and greet her with his song:
 As lightly from his grassy couch up rose
 Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream;

259. *Me hungering.* John iv. 34.266. *Him thought*, an ancient phraseology of the same construction as *me**thought.* *Cherith*: see 1 Kings xvii. 5, 6 and xix. 4.278. *Daniel*: see Dan. chap. 1.

Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting waked.
 Up to a hill anon his steps he rear'd, 285
 From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
 If cottage were in view, sheep-cote, or herd;
 But cottage, herd, or sheep-cote, none he saw;
 Only in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,
 With chant of tuneful birds resounding loud: 290
 Thither he bent his way, determined there
 To rest at noon; and enter'd soon the shade
 High roof'd, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,
 That open'd in the midst a woody scene:
 Nature's own work it seem'd, (Nature taught art) 295
 And, to a superstitious eye, the haunt
 Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs: he view'd it round;
 When suddenly a man before him stood;
 Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,
 As one in city, or court, or palace bred; 300
 And with fair speech these words to him address'd:
 With granted leave officious I return;
 But much more wonder that the Son of God
 In this wild solitude so long should bide,
 Of all things destitute; and, well I know, 305
 Not without hunger. Others of some note,
 As story tells, have trod this wilderness;
 The fugitive bond-woman, with her son,
 Outcast Nebaioth, yet found here relief
 By a providing angel: all the race 310
 Of Israel here had famish'd, had not God
 Rain'd from heaven manna; and that prophet bold,
 Native of Thebez, wandering here was fed
 Twice by a voice inviting him to eat.
 Of thee these forty days none hath regard, 315
 Forty and more deserted here indeed.
 To whom thus Jesus:—What conclud'st thou hence?
 They all had need; I, as thou seest, have none.
 How hast thou hunger then? Satan replied.
 Tell me, if food were now before thee set, 320
 Wouldst thou not eat?—Thereafter as I like
 The giver, answer'd Jesus.—Why should that
 Cause thy refusal? said the subtle fiend:
 Hast thou not right to all created things?
 Owe not all creatures by just right to thee 325
 Duty and service, nor to stay till bid,
 But tender all their power? Nor mention I
 Meats by the law unclean, or offer'd first
 To idols; those young Daniel could refuse:
 Nor proffer'd by an enemy; though who 330
 Would scruple that, with want oppress'd? Behold,

308. *Fugitive bond-woman.* Hagar. See Gen. xvi. 6, and xxi. *Nebaioth*, was the eldest son of Ishmael, and seems here to be put for Ishmael himself.
 312. *Prophet bold.* Elijah.

Nature ashamed, or, better to express,
 Troubled, that thou shouldst hunger, hath purvey'd
 From all the elements her choicest store,
 To treat thee, as beseems, and as her Lord,
 With honour: only deign to sit and eat. 335

He spake no dream; for, as his words had end,
 Our Saviour, lifting up his eyes, beheld,
 In ample space under the broadest shade,
 A table richly spread, in regal mode, 340

With dishes piled, and meats of noblest sort
 And savour; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
 In pastry built, or from the spit, or boil'd,
 Gris-amber-steam'd; all fish, from sea or shore,
 Freshet or purling brook, of shell or fin, 345

And exquisitest name, for which was drain'd
 Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Africk coast:
 (Alas, how simple, to these cates compared,
 Was that crude apple that diverted Eve!)

And at a stately sideboard, by the wine, 350
 That fragrant smell diffused, in order stood
 Tall stripling youths rich clad, of fairer hue
 Than Ganymed or Hylas; distant more

Under the trees now tripp'd, now solemn stood,
 Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades 355

With fruits and flowers from Amalthea's horn,
 And ladies of the Hesperides, that seem'd
 Fairer than feign'd of old, or fabled since
 Of fairy damsels, met in forest wide

By knights of Logres, or of Lyones, 360
 Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore;

And all the while harmonious airs were heard
 Of chiming strings, or charming pipes; and winds
 Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fann'd
 From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells. 365

Such was the splendour; and the tempter now
 His invitation earnestly renew'd:

What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?
 These are not fruits forbidden; no interdict
 Defends the touching of these viands pure: 370
 Their taste no knowledge works, at least of evil;
 But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,

344. *Gris-amber-steamed*, for *ambergris*, which has a fragrant odor. In Osborne's *Memoirs of James I.* vol. ii. 157, we read "a whole pye, reckoned to my lord at ten pounds, being composed of *amber-greece*, magisterial of pearl, musk." *All fish*. Milton had here in his mind the excessive luxury of the Romans in the article of fish. *Freshet*, fresh running stream.

349. *Diverted*, in the sense of the Latin *divertere*, "to turn aside."

352. *Tall youth's*, &c. This is in the style of Eastern magnificence.

359. *Fairy damsels*. Whenever Milton takes any images from his favourite romances, he immediately rises, as here, into the most exquisite poetry; and seems to finish his lines with peculiar pleasure and art.—J. WARTON.

360. *Logres*. Sir *Lancelot*, *Pelleas*, and *Pellenore* are personages in old romance. In the "Life and Death of King Athur" Sir *Lancelot* is there called of *Logris*, (an old name for England,) and Sir *Tristram* is named of *Lyones*, an old name for Cornwall.

Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.
 All these are spirits of air, and woods, and springs,
 Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay 375
 Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord.
 What doubt'st thou, Son of God? Sit down and eat.
 To whom thus Jesus temperately replied:—
 Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?
 And who withholds my power that right to use? 380
 Shall I receive by gift, what of my own,
 When and where likes me best, I can command?
 I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
 Command a table in this wilderness,
 And call swift flights of angels ministrant 385
 Array'd in glory on my cup to attend:
 Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence,
 In vain, where no acceptance it can find?
 And with my hunger what hast thou to do?
 Thy pompous delicacies I contemn, 390
 And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles.
 To whom thus answer'd Satan malecontent:
 That I have also power to give, thou seest;
 If of that power I bring thee voluntary
 What I might have bestow'd on whom I pleased, 395
 And rather opportunely in this place
 Chose to impart to thy apparent need,
 Why shouldst thou not accept it? but I see
 What I can do or offer is suspect;
 Of these things others quickly will dispose, 400
 Whose pains have earn'd the far-fet spoil. With that,
 Both table and provision vanish'd quite
 With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard:
 Only the impörtune tempter still remain'd,
 And with these words his temptation pursued: 405
 By hunger, that each other creature tames,
 Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not moved;
 Thy temperance invincible besides,
 For no allurement yields to appetite;
 And all thy heart is set on high designs, 410
 High actions: but wherewith to be achieved?
 Great acts require great means of enterprise:
 Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
 A carpenter thy father known, thyself
 Bred up in poverty and straits at home; 415
 Lost in a desert here and hunger-bit.
 Which way, or from what hope, dost thou aspire
 To greatness? whence authority deriv'st?
 What followers, what retinue canst thou gain,
 Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude, 420
 Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?
 Money brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms:

What raised Antipater the Edomite,
 And his son Herod placed on Judah's throne,
 (Thy throne) but gold, that got him puissant friends? 425
 Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,
 Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap,
 Not difficult, if thou hearken to me:
 Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand:
 They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain; 430
 While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want.
 To whom thus Jesus patiently replied:
 Yet wealth, without these three, is impotent
 To gain dominion, or to keep it gain'd. 435
 Witness those ancient empires of the earth,
 In highth of all their flowing wealth dissolved:
 But men endued with these have oft attain'd
 In lowest poverty to highest deeds;
 Gideon, and Jephthah, and the shepherd lad,
 Whose offspring on the throne of Judah sat 440
 So many ages, and shall yet regain
 That seat, and reign in Israel without end.
 Among the heathen, (for throughout the world
 To me is not unknown what hath been done
 Worthy of memorial) canst thou not remember 445
 Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus?
 For I esteem those names of men so poor,
 Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
 Riches, though offer'd from the hand of kings.
 And what in me seems wanting, but that I 450
 May also in this poverty as soon
 Accomplish what they did, perhaps and more?
 Extol not riches then, the toil of fools,
 The wise man's cumbrance, if not snare; more apt
 To slacken Virtue, and abate her edge, 455
 Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.
 What if with like aversion I reject
 Riches and realms? yet not, for that a crown,
 Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
 Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights, 460
 To him who wears the regal diadem,
 When on his shoulders each man's burden lies;
 For therein stands the office of a king,
 His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise,
 That for the publick all this weight he bears. 465
 Yet he, who reigns within himself, and rules
 Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king;
 Which every wise and virtuous man attains;

423. *Antipater*. Josephus speaks of Antipater as abounding with great riches: and his son Herod was declared King of Judea by the favour of Mark Antony, partly for the sake of the money which he promised to give him.—NEWTON.

453. *Extol not riches*. Milton concludes

this book, and our Saviour's reply to Satan, with a series of thoughts as noble and just, and as worthy of the speaker, as can possibly be imagined.—TYLER.

466. *Yet he who reigns*, &c. Mr. Hayley, in his life of Milton very justly remarks that "The Paradise Regained is a

And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
 Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes, 470
 Subject himself to anarchy within,
 Or lawless passions in him, which he serves.
 But to guide nations in the way of truth
 By saving doctrine, and from error lead
 To know, and knowing worship God aright, 475
 Is yet more kingly; this attracts the soul,
 Governs the inner man, the nobler part:
 That other o'er the body only reigns,
 And oft by force; which, to a generous mind,
 So reigning, can be no sincere delight. 480
 Besides, to give a kingdom hath been thought
 Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
 Far more magnanimous, than to assume.
 Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
 And for thy reason why they should be sought, 485
 To gain a sceptre, ofttest better miss'd.

poem that particularly deserves to be recommended to ardent and ingenuous youth, as it is admirably calculated to inspire that spirit of self-command, which is, as Milton esteemed it, the truest heroism, and the triumph of Christianity."

REMARKS ON BOOK III.

THE third book of the "Paradise Regained" continues to be argumentative: but Satan, having found himself hitherto foiled, begins by the most wily and flattering compliments. He now dwells upon the attractions and delights of worldly glory; and tells our Saviour how he is fitted to attain it above all other beings, both by counsel and action; and that it is his duty not to throw away his gifts, and pass his life in obscurity: he says, that men, at a more youthful age than his, have conquered the world. Our Saviour replies calmly:—

Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
For empire's sake, nor empire to affect
For glory's sake, by all thy argument:
For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
The people's praise, if always praise unmix'd?

He then describes what is true glory; and instances Job, who was more famous in heaven than known on earth.

He next expatiates on the false glory of conquerors:—

Till conquerour Death discovers them scarce men,
Rolling in brutish vices, and deform'd;
Violent or shameful death their due reward.

After Job, he next names Socrates; who, he says, lives now

Equal in fame to proudest conquerours.

I must here draw the reader's notice to Thyer's observation, who praises "the author's great art, in weaving into the body of so short a work so many grand points of the Christian theology and morality." Jesus exclaims:—

But why should man seek glory, who of his own
Hath nothing; and to whom nothing belongs,
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?

Satan, not silenced, takes up another ground: he appeals to Christ's duty to free his country from heathen servitude. Our Saviour answers that this must be done in the Almighty's time, and by the Almighty's means: but demands of Satan, why he should be anxious for his rise, when it would be his own fall.

Satan's cunning reply is one of the finest of all that Milton has invented of him. Then it was that he took Christ to a high mountain, to show him the monarchies of the earth. The description of the prospect at the foot of the mountain is in the richest style of picturesque poetry; he now points out the Assyrian empire.

After going through an immense geographical view, conducted with wonderful art, skill, and learning, and everywhere discriminated by the happiest epithets;—Satan says,

All these the Parthian (now some ages past,
By great Arsaces led, who founded first
That empire) under his dominion holds,
From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.

Then comes a most magnificent picture of great armies going out to battle. This is done, to show our Saviour the necessity of worldly power, and numerous military preparations, to enable him to fulfil the duties for which he supposes him to be sent on earth;—the recovery of the throne of David. For this end he offers to secure for him the Parthian alliance.

Our Saviour, in answer, speaks with scorn "of the cumbersome luggage of war;" and at the same time reproaches Satan with the insidiousness of his pretended zeal for the welfare of Israel, or David, or his throne, when he had hitherto proved their greatest enemy.

Of the poetry of this character it is scarcely necessary to urge the exalted merits. Imagination exerts itself in various tracks, and various forms: here it executes its duty in filling up the outlines of a divine story;—that is, a story of inspired wisdom,—of holiest virtue,—of superiority to all worldly temptations,—of patient suffering,—of faith in the Supreme Being,—of examples of the punishment of the wicked,—and of the inappeasable malice of Satan. It is necessarily therefore more intellectual, spiritual, and didactic, in every part, than material: and yet it is so intermixed with a due portion of imagery, that the fertility of a rich poetical genius pervades the whole poem.

Mind is of more value than matter: it is the soul which belongs to the image, rather than the image itself, which is the gem: thought, opinion, conclusion, the impression of the heart,—these are what instruct us, and elevate our nature. Of these, what poem is so full as "Paradise Regained?" Its mere learning is miraculous; but that is of comparatively less interest. Yet the more enlarged is the author's experience, the wider the field whence he derives his deductions and convictions, the more numerous the eminent minds by whose wisdom he is aided, the richer and more sure must be the intellectual fruits at which he arrives.

Milton is so familiar with the ancient classics, that he perpetually falls, not only into a concurrence of observation and sympathy of feeling, but into their very expressions: yet not as if it was borrowed, but as if it was simultaneous: its freshness and its force prove its originality.

Our Saviour's answer to Satan, in assertion of the vanity of human glory, astonishes by its vigour of thought and blaze of eloquence. It is like the beams of the cheering sun let in upon a billowy and blinding mist: the understanding ratifies it; the conscience hails it. That no doctrine can be more pure, more noble, more sound, more useful than this, will scarcely be denied: its poetical character depends upon its loftiness, which also is of the most decisive kind.

The poetry of mere style, the artifices of language, are nothing: great thoughts and great images will support themselves. The necessity of illustration proves that the primary idea or image is dark, or weak, or trifling. Grandeur or beauty wants no dress: metaphorical phrases are often corrupt; and similes are generally superfluous and impertinent: yet these are taken to be the essence of modern poetry. I mention this, because the mere reader of the productions of our own times is apt to suppose Milton prosaic, when his strains are of the most poetical tone; because his style is simple and pure. The finest passages in our Saviour's exposition of the nothingness of human glory, are the plainest: till poets learn this, they will be but frivolous and gaudy pretenders. Whoever *thinks* magnificently, scorns the aid of flowers and spangles.

If we could bring back poetry, even in mere style, to what it was in the times of Spenser, and Shakspeare, and Milton, we should indeed be gaining an immense benefit to the world of English readers, and redeeming the splendour of the Muse's name and office. The unmeaning gaudiness, the gilded inanity of the greater part of modern verses, has turned the public taste for poetical composition into loathing. Let the reader study Milton's energetic thought and chaste manner day and night; and if at first any factitious taste may render it more a duty than a pleasure, his diseased habit will soon amend itself, and be changed to simplicity and purity. Then he will find his momentary delight followed by no satiety; but the wholesome food strengthen his mind, and grow with his growth. If the "Paradise Regained" does not please him, let him be sure that he has much to amend in his intellectual qualifications.

SIR EGERTON BRIDGES.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

SATAN, in a speech of much flattering commendation, endeavours to awaken in Jesus a passion for glory, by particularising various instances of conquests achieved, and great actions performed, by persons at an early period of life. Our Lord replies, by showing the vanity of worldly fame, and the improper means by which it is generally attained; and contrasts with it the true glory of religious patience and virtuous wisdom, as exemplified in the character of Job. Satan justifies the love of glory from the example of God himself, who requires it from all his creatures. Jesus detects the fallacy of this argument, by showing that, as goodness is the true ground on which glory is due to the great Creator of all things, sinful man can have no right whatever to it.—Satan then urges our Lord respecting his claim to the throne of David: he tells him, that the kingdom of Judea, being at that time a province of Rome, cannot be got possession of without much personal exertion on his part, and presses him to lose no time in beginning to reign. Jesus refers him to the time allotted for this, as for all other things; and, after intimating somewhat respecting his own previous sufferings, asks Satan, why he should be so solicitous for the exaltation of one, whose rising was destined to be his fall. Satan replies, that his own desperate state, by excluding all hope, leaves little room for fear; and that, as his own punishment was equally doomed, he is not interested in preventing the reign of one, from whose apparent benevolence he might rather hope for some interference in his favour.—Satan still pursues his former incitements; and supposing that the seeming reluctance of Jesus to be thus advanced might arise from his being unacquainted with the world and its glories, conveys him to the summit of a high mountain, and from thence shows him most of the kingdoms of Asia, particularly pointing out to his notice some extraordinary military preparations of the Parthians to resist the incursions of the Scythians. He then informs our Lord, that he showed him this purposely, that he might see how necessary military exertions are to retain the possession of kingdoms, as well as to subdue them at first; and advises him to consider how impossible it was to maintain Judea against two such powerful neighbours as the Romans and Parthians, and how necessary it would be to form an alliance with one or other of them. At the same time, he recommends, and engages to secure to him, that of the Parthians; and tells him that by this means his power will be defended from any thing that Rome or Cæsar might attempt against it, and that he will be able to extend his glory wide, and especially to accomplish what was particularly necessary to make the throne of Judea really the throne of David, the deliverance and restoration of the ten tribes, still in a state of captivity. Jesus, having briefly noticed the vanity of military efforts and the weakness of the arm of flesh, says, that when the time comes for ascending his allotted throne, he shall not be slack: he remarks on Satan's extraordinary zeal for the deliverance of the Israelites, to whom he had always showed himself an enemy; and declares their servitude to be the consequence of their idolatry; but adds, that at a future time it may perhaps please God to recall them, and restore them to their liberty and native land.

So spake the Son of God; and Satan stood
 Awhile, as mute, confounded what to say,
 What to reply, confuted, and convinced
 Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift:
 At length, collecting all his serpent wiles, 5
 With soothing words renew'd him thus accosts:—
 I see thou know'st what is of use to know,
 What best to say canst say, to do canst do;
 Thy actions to thy words accord; thy words
 To thy large heart give utterance due; thy heart 10
 Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.
 Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,
 Thy counsel would be as the oracle
 Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems
 On Aaron's breast; or tongue of seers old 15
 Infallible: or wert thou sought to deeds
 That might require the array of war, thy skill
 Of conduct would be such, that all the world
 Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist
 In battel, though against thy few in arms. 20
 These godlike virtues wherefore dost thou hide,
 Affecting private life, or more obscure
 In savage wilderness? Wherefore deprive
 All earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself
 The fame and glory: glory, the reward 25
 That sole excites to high attempts, the flame
 Of most erected spirits, most temper'd pure
 Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,
 All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
 And dignities and powers all but the highest? 30
 Thy years are ripe and over-ripe: the son
 Of Macedonian Philip had ere these
 Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held
 At his dispose; young Scipio had brought down
 The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey quell'd 35
 The Pontick king, and in triúmph had rode.
 Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
 Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
 Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
 The more he grew in years, the more inflamed 40
 With glory, wept that he had lived so long
 Inglorious: but thou yet art not too late.

6. HIM THUS ACCOSTS. I consider the opening of this book, with the arguments in favour of worldly glory, and especially our Saviour's answer, to be the finest of the whole poem, notwithstanding that it comes under the classes of character, and sentiment, and language, rather than of story. Its sublime distinctions, its exalted feelings, its magnificent plainness of style, fill one with a sort of glowing approbation, which seems to spiritualize and uplift our nature.—BRIDGES.

25. *Glory.* Our Saviour having withstood the allurements of riches, Satan attacks him in the next place with the charms of glory.

31. *Thy years, &c.* Our Saviour was now "about thirty years of age." Luke iii. 23. Alexander was but twenty years old when he began to reign, and died at thirty-two. Scipio Africanus was but twenty-four when sent Proconsul into Spain.

41. *Wept, at the tomb of Alexander.*

To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied:—
 Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
 For empire's sake, nor empire to affect 45
 For glory's sake, by all thy argument.
 For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
 The people's praise, if always praise unmix'd?
 And what the people but a herd confused,
 A miscellaneous rabble, who extol 50
 Things vulgar, and, well weigh'd, scarce worth the praise?
 They praise, and they admire, they know not what,
 And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
 And what delight to be by such extoll'd,
 To live upon their tongues, and be their talk, 55
 Of whom to be dispraised were no small praise?
 His lot who dares be singularly good.
 The intelligent among them and the wise
 Are few, and glory scarce of few is raised.
 This is true glory and renown; when God, 60
 Looking on the earth, with approbation marks
 The just man, and divulges him through heaven
 To all his angels, who with true applause
 Recount his praises: thus he did to Job,
 When, to extend his fame through heaven and earth, 65
 As thou to thy reproach mayst well remember,
 He ask'd thee,—Hast thou seen my servant Job?
 Famous he was in heaven, on earth less known;
 Where glory is false glory, attributed
 To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame. 70
 They err, who count it glorious to subdue
 By conquest far and wide, to overrun
 Large countries, and in field great battles win,
 Great cities by assault: what do these worthies,
 But rob, and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave 75
 Peaceable nations, neighbouring or remote,
 Made captive, yet deserving freedom more
 Than those their conquerours, who leave behind
 Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,
 And all the flourishing works of peace destroy; 80
 Then swell with pride, and must be titled gods,
 Great benefactors of mankind, deliverers,
 Worshipp'd with temple, priest, and sacrifice?
 One is the son of Jove, of Mars the other;
 Till conquerour Death discover them scarce men, 85
 Rolling in brutish vices, and deform'd,
 Violent or shameful death their due reward.

44. *Thou neither, &c.* How admirably does Milton in this speech expose the emptiness and uncertainty of a popular character, and found true glory upon its only sure basis, the approbation of the God of truth!—THYER.

62. *Divulges*, publishes, makes known.

69. *False glory*. True glory, says Cl-

ero, is the praise of good men, the echo of virtue: but that ape of glory, the random, injudicious applause of the multitude, is often bestowed upon the worst of actors.

84. *Son of Jove, of Mars*. Alexander is intended by the former, and Romulus by the latter.

But if there be in glory aught of good,
 It may by means far different be attain'd,
 Without ambition, war, or violence; 90
 By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
 By patience, temperance: I mention still
 Him, whom thy wrongs, with saintly patience borne,
 Made famous in a land and times obscure:
 Who names not now with honour patient Job? 95
 Poor Socrates, (who next more memorable?)
 By what he taught, and suffer'd for so doing,
 For truth's sake suffering death unjust, lives now
 Equal in fame to proudest conquerours.
 Yet if for fame and glory aught be done, 100
 Aught suffer'd; if young African for fame
 His wasted country freed from Punick rage;
 The deed becomes unpraised, the man at least,
 And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
 Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek, 105
 Oft not deserved? I seek not mine, but his
 Who sent me; and thereby witness whence I am.
 To whom the tempter murmuring thus replied:—
 Think not so slight of glory; therein least
 Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory, 110
 And for his glory all things made, all things
 Orders and governs; not content in heaven,
 By all his angels glorified, requires
 Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,
 Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption; 115
 Above all sacrifice or hallow'd gift,
 Glory he requires, and glory he receives.
 Promiscuous from all nations, Jew or Greek,
 Or barbarous, nor exception hath declared:
 From us, his foes pronounced, glory he exacts. 120
 To whom our Saviour fervently replied:
 And reason: since his Word all things produced,
 Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
 But to show forth his goodness, and impart
 His good communicable to every soul 125
 Freely; of whom what could he less expect
 Than glory and benediction, that is, thanks,
 The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense
 From them who could return him nothing else;
 And, not returning that, would likeliest render 130

101. The younger Scipio Africanus, who transferred the seat of the second Punic war, from Italy to Africa, and conquered Hannibal at Zama, 202, B. C.

109. *Think not so slight of glory.* There is nothing throughout the whole poem more expressive of the true character of the Tempter than this reply. There is in it all the real falsehood of the *Father of lies*, and the glossing subtlety of an in-

sidious deceiver. The poet, by introducing this, has furnished himself with an opportunity of explaining the great question in divinity, why God created the world, and what is meant by that glory which he expects from his creatures. What great art, too, has the author shown, in weaving into the body of so short a work so many grand points of the Christian theology and morality.—TYLER.

Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?
 Hard recompense, unsuitable return
 For so much good, so much beneficence!
 But why should man seek glory, who of his own
 Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs, 135
 But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?
 Who, for so many benefits received,
 Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,
 And so of all true good himself despoil'd:
 Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take 140
 That which to God alone of right belongs:
 Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace;
 That who advance his glory, not their own,
 Them he himself to glory will advance.
 So spake the Son of God: and here again 145
 Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
 With guilt of his own sin; for he himself,
 Insatiable of glory, had lost all:
 Yet of another plea bethought him soon.
 Of glory, as thou wilt, said he, so deem; 150
 Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass.
 But to a kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
 To sit upon thy father David's throne,
 By mother's side thy father; though thy right
 Be now in powerful hands, that will not part 155
 Easily from possession won with arms:
 Judea now and all the Promised Land,
 Reduced a province under Roman yoke,
 Obeys Tiberius; nor is always ruled
 With temperate sway: oft have they violated 160
 The temple, oft the law, with foul affronts,
 Abominations rather, as did once
 Antiochus: and think'st thou to regain
 Thy right, by sitting still, or thus retiring?
 So did not Maccabeus: he indeed 165
 Retired into the desert, but with arms;
 And o'er a mighty king so oft prevail'd,
 That by strong hand his family obtain'd,
 Though priests, the crown, and David's throne usurp'd,
 With Modin and her suburbs once content. 170
 If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal
 And duty; zeal and duty are not slow,
 But on occasion's forelock watchful wait:
 They themselves rather are occasion best:
 Zeal of thy father's house, duty to free 175
 Thy country from her heathen servitude.
 So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify
 The prophets old, who sung thy endless reign;
 The happier reign, the sooner it begins:
 Reign then; what canst thou better do the while? 180

170. *Modin*, the country of the Maccabees.

To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd:
 All things are best fulfill'd in their due time;
 And time there is for all things, Truth hath said.
 If of my reign Prophetick Writ hath told,
 That it shall never end; so when begin 185
 The Father in his purpose hath decreed;
 He, in whose hand all times and seasons roll.
 What if he hath decreed that I shall first
 Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,
 By tribulations, injuries, insults, 190
 Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,
 Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting,
 Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
 What I can suffer, how obey? Who best
 Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first 195
 Well hath obey'd; just trial, ere I merit
 My exaltation without change or end.
 But what concerns it thee, when I begin
 My everlasting kingdom? Why art thou
 Solicitous? What moves thy inquisition? 200
 Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,
 And my promotion will be thy destruction?
 To whom the tempter, inly rack'd, replied
 Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
 Of my reception into grace: what worse? 205
 For where no hope is left, is left no fear:
 If there be worse, the expectation more
 Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
 I would be at the worst: worst is my port,
 My harbour, and my ultimate repose: 210
 The end I would attain, my final good.
 My errour was my errour, and my crime
 My crime; whatever, for itself condemn'd;
 And will alike be punish'd, whether thou
 Reign or reign not; though to that gentle brow 215
 Willingly I could fly, and hope thy reign,
 From that placid aspect and meek regard,
 Rather than aggravate my evil state,
 Would stand between me and thy Father's ire,
 (Whose ire I dread more than the fire of hell) 220
 A shelter, and a kind of shading cool
 Interposition, as a summer's cloud.
 If I then to the worst that can be haste,
 Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,
 Happiest, both to thyself and all the world, 225
 That thou, who worthiest art, shouldst be their king?
 Perhaps thou linger'st, in deep thoughts detain'd
 Of the enterprise so hazardous and high!
 No wonder; for, though in thee be united
 What of perfection can in man be found, 230
 Or human nature can receive, consider,
 Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent

At home, scarce view'd the Galilean towns,
 And once a year Jerusalem, few days
 Short sojourn; and what thence couldst thou observe? 235
 The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
 Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts,
 Best school of best experience, quickest insight
 In all things that to greatest actions lead.
 The wisest, unexperienced, will be ever 240
 Timorous and loth, with novice modesty,
 (As he who, seeking asses, found a kingdom)
 Irresolute, unhardy, unadventurous:
 But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
 Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes 245
 The monarchies of the earth, their pomp and state;
 Sufficient introduction to inform
 Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts
 And regal mysteries; that thou mayst know
 How best their opposition to withstand. 250
 With that, (such power was given him then) he took
 The Son of God up to a mountain high.
 It was a mountain, at whose verdant feet
A spacious plain, outstretch'd in circuit wide,
Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flow'd, 255
 The one winding, the other straight, and left between
 Fair champain with less rivers intervein'd,
 Then meeting join'd their tribute to the sea:
 Fertile of corn the glebe, of oil and wine;
 With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks the hills; 260
 Huge cities and high-tower'd, that well might seem
 The seats of mightiest monarchs; and so large
 The prospect was, that here and there was room
 For barren desert, fountainless and dry.
 To this high mountain top the tempter brought 265
 Our Saviour, and new train of words began:
 Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,
 Forest and field and flood, temples and towers,
 Cut shorter many a league: here thou behold'st
 Assyria, and her empire's ancient bounds, 270
 Araxes and the Caspian lake; thence on
 As far as Indus east, Euphrates west,
 And oft beyond: to south the Persian bay,
 And, inaccessible, the Arabian drouth:
 Here Nineveh, of length within her wall 275
 Several days' journey, built by Ninus old,
 Of that first golden monarchy the seat,

242. *As he, &c.* Saul. See 1 Sam. ix. 20, 21.

253. *It was a mountain.* As the Scriptures have not mentioned the particular mountain, the poet was at liberty to select such as answered his purpose best. He has therefore selected, probably, Mount Niphates, a high range of moun-

tains in Armenia, and a part of the great chain of Mount Taurus, from the top of which the Caspian Sea, the ancient Assyrian empire, the sources of "two rivers," the Euphrates and Tigris, &c., could be seen.

257. *Fair champain.* Mesopotamia.

277. *Golden,* alluding to its great riches.

And seat of Salmanassar, whose success
 Israel in long captivity still mourns:
 There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues, 280
 As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice
 Judah and all thy father David's house
 Led captive, and Jerusalem laid waste,
 Till Cyrus set them free; Persepolis,
 His city, there thou seest, and Bactra there; 285
 Ecbatana her structure vast there shows,
 And Hecatompylos her hundred gates;
 There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,
 The drink of none but kings; of later fame,
 Built by Emathian or by Parthian hands, 290
 The great Seleucia, Nisibis, and there
 Artaxata, Terebon, Ctesiphon,
 Turning with easy eye, thou mayst behold.
 All these the Parthian, (now some ages past,
 By great Arsaces led, who founded first 295
 That empire) under his dominion holds,
 From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.
 And just in time thou com'st to have a view
 Of his great power; for now the Parthian king
 In Ctesiphon hath gather'd all his host 300
 Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild
 Have wasted Sogdiana; to her aid
 He marches now in haste: see, though from far,
 His thousands, in what martial equipage
 They issue forth, steel bows and shafts their arms, 305
 Of equal dread in flight or in pursuit;
 All horsemen, in which fight they most excel:
 See how in warlike muster they appear,
 In rhombs, and wedges, and half-moons, and wings.
 He look'd, and saw what numbers numberless 310
 The city gates out-pour'd, light-armed troops,
 In coats of mail and military pride;
 In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
 Prauncing their riders bore, the flower and choice
 Of many provinces from bound to bound; 315
 From Arachosia, from Candaor east,
 And Margiana to the Hyrcanian cliffs

284. *Persepolis*, the capital of the Persian empire. *Bactra*, the chief city of Bactriana. *Ecbatana*, the capital of Media. *Hecatompylos*, the capital of Parthia.

288. *Susa*, the Shushan of Daniel (viii. 2.) The *Choaspes*, the same as the Euleus, or Ulai. The kings of Persia, according to Herodotus (i. 188) drank no other water, and wherever they went they were attended by a number of four-wheeled carriages, drawn by mules, in which the water of this river, being first boiled, was deposited in vessels of silver.

290. *Emathia* was the ancient name

of Macedonia. *Parthian hands*, the successors of Alexander.

291. *Seleucia* on the Tigris. *Nisibis* in Mesopotamia. *Artaxata* on the Araxes. *Terebon* near the Persian Gulf. *Ctesiphon* near Seleucia.

314. *Arachosia*, a province of the Persian empire, west of the Indus, and north of Gedrosia. *Candaor*, same as Candahar, a province of Afghanistan. *Margiana*, and *Hyrcania* were south of the river Oxus. *Adiabene*, east of the Tigris, and between the greater and lesser Zab. *Bassara* same as Bassorah, at the head of the Persian Gulf.

Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales;
 From Atropatia and the neighbouring plains
 Of Adiabene, Media, and the south 320
 Of Susiana, to Balsara's haven.
 He saw them in their forms of battel ranged,
 How quick they wheel'd, and flying behind them shot
 Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face
 Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight: 325
 The field all iron cast a gleaming brown:
 Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn
 Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
 Chariots, or elephants indorsed with towers
 Of archers; nor of labouring pioneers 330
 A multitude, with spades and axes arm'd
 To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,
 Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay
 With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke:
 Mules after these, camels and dromedaries, 335
 And waggons, fraught with utensils of war.
 Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
 When Agrican with all his northern powers
 Besieged Albracca, as romances tell,
 The city of Gallaphrone, from thence to win 340
 The fairest of her sex, Angelica,
 His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,
 Both Paynim, and the peers of Charlemain.
 Such and so numerous was their chivalry:
 At sight whereof the fiend yet more presumed, 345
 And to our Saviour thus, his words renew'd;
 That thou mayst know I seek not to engage
 Thy virtue, and not every way secure
 On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark,
 To what end I have brought thee hither, and shown 350
 All this fair sight: thy kingdom, though foretold
 By prophet or by angel, unless thou
 Endeavour, as thy father David did,
 Thou never shalt obtain; prediction still
 In all things, and all men, supposes means; 355
 Without means used, what it predicts revokes.
 But, say thou wert possess'd of David's throne,
 By free consent of all, none opposite,
 Samaritan or Jew; how couldst thou hope
 Long to enjoy it, quiet and secure, 360
 Between two such enclosing enemies,

329. *Indorsed*, from the Latin *in* and *dorsum*, on the back.

338. *Agrican*. What Milton here alludes to is related in Bolardo's *Orlando Innamorato*. The number of forces said to be there assembled is incredible, and extravagant even beyond the common extravagancy of romances. Agrican the Tartar king brings into the field no less

than two millions two hundred thousand. *Angelica* is the same character that afterwards made her appearance in Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, which was intended as a continuation of the story which Boiardo had begun.—THYER.

342. *Prowest*, the superlative of *prow*, from the old French *preux*, valiant.

Roman and Parthian? Therefore one of these
 Thou must make sure thy own; the Parthian first
 By my advice, as nearer and of late
 Found able by invasion to annoy 365
 Thy country, and captive lead away her kings,
 Antigonus and old Hyrcanus, bound,
 Maugre the Roman: it shall be my task
 To render thee the Parthian at dispose;
 Choose which thou wilt, by conquest or by league: 370
 By him thou shalt regain, without him not,
 That which alone can truly re-install thee
 In David's royal seat, his true successour,
 Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten tribes,
 Whose offspring in his territory yet serve, 375
 In Habor, and among the Medes dispersed:
 Ten sons of Jacob, two of Joseph, lost
 Thus long from Israel, serving, as of old
 Their fathers in the land of Egypt served,
 This offer sets before thee to deliver. 380
 These if from servitude thou shalt restore
 To their inheritance; then, nor till then,
 Thou on the throne of David in full glory,
 From Egypt to Euphrates, and beyond,
 Shalt reign, and Rome or Cæsar not need fear. 385
 To whom our Saviour answer'd thus, unmoved:
 Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm
 And fragile arms, much instrument of war,
 Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
 Before mine eyes thou hast set; and in my ear 390
 Vented much policy, and projects deep
 Of enemies, of aids, battels, and leagues,
 Plausible to the world, to me worth naught.
 Means I must use, thou say'st; prediction else
 Will unpredict, and fail me of the throne. 395
 My time, I told thee, (and that time for thee
 Were better farthest off) is not yet come:
 When that comes, think not thou to find me slack
 On my part aught endeavouring, or to need
 Thy politick maxims, or that cumbersome 400
 Luggage of war there shown me, argument
 Of human weakness rather than of strength.
 My brethren, as thou call'st them, those ten tribes,

374. *Ten tribes.* These were the ten tribes whom Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, carried captive into Assyria, "and put them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes." 2 Kings xviii. 11; which cities were now under the dominion of the Parthians.—NEWTON.

377. *Ten sons, &c.* The ten captive tribes were Reuben, Simeon, Zebulon, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, Naphtali, Ephraim, and Manasseh. Only eight

of these were sons of Jacob; the two others were sons of Joseph. I would suppose, therefore, that the poet meant to give it,

Eight sons of Jacob, two of Joseph lost.

Otherwise he must have included in the ten sons of Jacob both Levi and Joseph. It seems incorrect to refer to Joseph as the head of a tribe when he was really merged in the tribes of his two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.

I must deliver, if I mean to reign
 David's true heir, and his full sceptre sway 405
 To just extent over all Israel's sons.
 But whence to thee this zeal? where was it then
 For Israel, or for David, or his throne,
 When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride
 Of numbering Israel, which cost the lives 410
 Of threescore and ten thousand Israelites
 By three days' pestilence? Such was thy zeal
 To Israel then; the same that now to me!
 As for those captive tribes, themselves were they
 Who wrought their own captivity, fell off 415
 From God to worship calves, the deities
 Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroth,
 And all the idolatries of heathen round,
 Besides their other worse than heathenish crimes;
 Nor in the land of their captivity 420
 Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
 The God of their forefathers; but so died
 Impenitent, and left a race behind
 Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
 From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain; 425
 And God with idols in their worship join'd.
 Should I of these the liberty regard,
 Who, freed, as to their ancient patrimony,
 Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreform'd,
 Headlong would follow; and to their gods perhaps 430
 Of Bethel and of Dan? No; let them serve
 Their enemies, who serve idols with God.
 Yet he at length, (time to himself best known)
 Remembering Abraham, by some wondrous call
 May bring them back repentant and sincere, 435
 And at their passing cleave the Assyrian flood,
 While to their native land with joy they haste:
 As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,
 When to the Promised Land their fathers pass'd:
 To his due time and providence I leave them. 440
 So spake Israel's true king, and to the fiend
 Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.
 So fares it when with truth falsehood contends.

409. *When thou stood'st.* 1 Chron. xxi. 1.
 414. *Captive tribes.* The captivity of the
 ten tribes was a punishment owing to
 their idolatry and wickedness. See 1 Kings
 xvi. 31 and 32, and xi. 5.

430. *Headlong would follow.* Dunster
 would read—"Headlong would fall unto
 their gods," &c.: but there is no need of
 any emendation of the text: the mean-

ing is clear: *headlong would follow* on in
 their old ways, and return to their idol
 gods. *Bethel*, about twelve miles north of
 Jerusalem, and *Dan* the northernmost
 city of Palestine, were desecrated by the
 idolatrous worship of two golden calves
 erected by Jeroboam. See 1 Kings xii.
 28-33.

636. *Assyrian flood*, the Euphrates.

REMARKS ON BOOK IV.

DUNSTER observes, that great poems have generally fallen off, and grown languid, at the close; but that this is not the case with the "Paradise Regained." The greater part of this fourth book is still dialogue and argument; first in favour of the military power and splendid trophies of Rome; then of the intellectual eminence and spiritual charms of Athens; but it is accompanied by more of action; as the storm in the wilderness raised by Satan, which is one of the grandest descriptions in all poetry; and the carrying off our Saviour by force to the temple of Jerusalem, and placing him on the top of a pinnacle. This is the last trial, and here Satan gives himself up as completely overcome.

The dialogues are always supported with surprising knowledge and power on both sides, though of course with an overcoming superiority on the part of Christ. The reasonings or the pleadings on the part of Satan are often so plausible, that the reader is kept on the anxious stretch how they are to be answered; and feels an electric glow at the unexpected force with which the ready answer is supplied. This never allows these argumentative parts to languish, but keeps the mind in full exercise and constant emotion. It is true, that the learning is so immense, that few can, in the perusal, follow the allusions; but the epithets are so picturesque or striking, that they rouse the mind with a general and strong, though indefinable activity and pleasure: we feel a master-spirit instructing and overawing us, and we believe: we do not take it as the flourish of rhetoric, but acknowledge its sincerity and predominance of thought. A divine intelligence is enlightening us, on the grandeur of creation, on the mysteries of our being, and on the purposes, vanities, and delusions of this terrestrial world.

Perhaps it may be urged, that this may be useful doctrine, but not poetry. Poetry must represent truths through the medium of imagination. Are not Rome and Athens so delineated by Milton, that we have both lively imagery and accurate comments? We are taught to view them in their proper and undisguised characters.

Speaking of the wise men of Athens, and their different sects, the heathen philosophers, Milton says,

who therefore seeks in these
True wisdom, finds her not; or, by delusion,
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets,
An empty cloud. However, many books,
Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superiour,
(And what he brings what needs he elsewhere seek?)
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep versed in books, and shallow in himself;
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;
As children gathering pebbles on the shore.

The praise of such a passage as this would be like an attempt to gild the sunbeam.

When Satan was thus silenced, in his attempt to seduce our Saviour by the splendours of Athenian literature, there follows, at verse 363, an outburst of tremendous force, beginning,

Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,

and continuing for twenty-five lines.

Satan, in a rage at his defeat, thus resorts to threats :—

So saying, he took, (for still he knew his power
Not yet expired,) and to the wilderness
Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose, &c.

Then follows the frightful storm, when “either tropic began thunder, and both ends of heaven;” and the “winds rush’d abroad from the four hinges of the world.” This is followed by a bright morning, which, Joseph Warton says, “exhibits some of the finest lines which Milton has written in all his poems.” Yet perhaps the storm is still finer: the contrast between the two is enchanting and most glorious. This intermixture of the intellectual, the speculative, and the descriptive, makes the perfect charm, that renders poetry divine.

Man is nothing but as his mind operates upon matter; and matter is nothing but as it is associated in its effects upon mind. Mere description is but imperfect poetry: but the spell is not confined to what is said and thought; much depends upon the character whence it comes. Every word assigned by Milton to Satan belongs to his proper character: thus his outburst of ungovernable anger at being confuted, and his consequent threats and evil prophecies, succeed to his winning and profuse flatteries. The sudden turn is conceived and expressed with that power of imagination and sagacity which fills us with admiration. Satan seems to say in a taunt;—“You refuse all my splendid offers; but I dare to hope that you can so little finally resist them, that I will now impose upon you the condition of falling down to worship me, or I will leave you to your fate.” Thus the arch-fiend in his passion defeated himself at once: he now has recourse to bodily violence; and there also is finally foiled, and is obliged to leave the field, and give up the attempt, conquered and abased.

Thus the poet rises to the last: then break forth the hymns and songs of angels and archangels, to celebrate the victory of our Saviour; and thus the poem concludes. I do not think that it would have been advisable to carry this subject farther: it is a perfect whole in itself. Our Saviour’s death and resurrection might have formed the subject of another poem.

It always seems to me injudicious to attempt to weigh the comparative excellence of two compositions of a different nature. Certainly, the “Paradise Regained” does not allow scope for so much inventive imagination as the “Paradise Lost.” Adam and Eve were human beings, and of them the holiest poet may create a thousand visions; but of Christ his contemplations are more controlled by awe.

As one of the most marked qualities of this poem is its extraordinary plainness of style, which many have deemed to be too prosaic: it is the more necessary to set this subject in its true light. This plainness is the result of the loftiness of the theme, and of the thoughts and images of which it consists: these support themselves, and require not to be elevated by language: the simplest words do best, provided they are not vulgar. Perhaps no one else would have undertaken so grand a topic; and if any one had, he would have failed: he would have failed by false effort, and extravagant bigness of phrase.

Still it is probable, that one of the causes why this poem has not been as popular as it ought, is this very plainness. The world cannot be brought to think that there is poetry where there is not gaudy language: and I am afraid that almost all secondary poets think the same; and are not misled merely by a desire to conform to the bad models which they observe to be the common taste.

Whoever is endowed with a particular power, will follow that power; he will not be restrained by attempting what he cannot do, and neglecting what he can: but this is only true of power which is quite original and decided; it is not true of any faculties which are feeble or imitative: even in the first case, the proposition is not without exceptions; there may be a meek and timid heart, with a great genius.

Bad critics, the advocates and defenders of that bad judgment in literature which the multitude are so apt to indulge, do sometimes nip genius in the bud, and warm nauseous and hurtful fruit into birth and maturity: it is of essential service therefore to give to excellence its due praise, and to endeavour to impress the people with those extraordinary merits to which they have been hitherto blind.

The mass of mankind cannot easily be brought to believe that one man has been born with gifts so pre-eminent over others: they suspect therefore the worth of that superiority which is claimed for him. Dryden and Pope did not follow a different track from Milton in obedience to the public taste, but in obedience to the nature of their own inborn faculties: neither in fable, thought, nor style, could they have ever followed Milton.

Of almost all poets but Milton, it may be said, as he himself says of the Athenians,—

Remove their swelling epithets, thick laid
As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
Thin sown with aught of profit or delight,

will be found bare and fruitless; at least, it will seem so, when we compare it with the celestial feast of the mighty author of "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained." With him we rise to the stern simplicity of inspired wisdom: he leaves us in no state of factitious heat, to fall again, like Icarus, after having mounted on false wings: we find breathed into us a calm fortitude; we expect sorrows, and wrongs, and dangers, and are prepared for them; we covet no inebriate visions, and thus expose ourselves to no blights on a diseased susceptibility. The elevation is sublime; yet by its sublimity gives us mastery to grapple with earth.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

SATAN, persisting in the temptation of our Lord, shows him Imperial Rome in its greatest pomp and splendour, as a power which he probably would prefer before that of the Parthians; and tells him that he might with the greatest ease expel Tiberius, restore the Romans to their liberty, and make himself master not only of the Roman empire, but, by so doing, of the whole world, and inclusively of the throne of David. Our Lord, in reply, expresses his contempt of grandeur and worldly power; notices the luxury, vanity, and profligacy of the Romans, declaring how little they merited to be restored to that liberty which they had lost by their misconduct; and briefly refers to the greatness of his own future kingdom. Satan, now desperate, to enhance the value of his proffered gifts, professes that the only terms, on which he will bestow them, are our Saviour's falling down and worshipping him. Our Lord expresses a firm but temperate indignation at such a proposition, and rebukes the tempter by the title of "Satan for ever damn'd." Satan, abashed, attempts to justify himself: he then assumes a new ground of temptation; and, proposing to Jesus the intellectual gratifications of wisdom and knowledge, points out to him the celebrated seat of ancient learning, Athens, its schools, and other various resorts of learned teachers and their disciples; accompanying the view with a highly finished panegyric on the Grecian musicians, poets, orators, and philosophers of the different sects. Jesus replies, by showing the vanity and insufficiency of the boasted heathen philosophy; and prefers to the music, poetry, eloquence, and didactic policy of the Greeks, those of the inspired Hebrew writers. Satan, irritated at the failure of all his attempts, upbraids the indiscretion of our Saviour in rejecting his offers; and, having, in ridicule of his expected kingdom, foretold the sufferings that our Lord was to undergo, carries him back into the wilderness, and leaves him there. Night comes on: Satan raises a tremendous storm, and attempts further to alarm Jesus with frightful dreams, and terrific threatening spectres: which however have no effect upon him. A calm, bright, beautiful morning succeeds to the horrors of the night. Satan again presents himself to our blessed Lord; and, from noticing the storm of the preceding night as pointed chiefly at him, takes occasion once more to insult him with an account of the sufferings which he was certainly to undergo. This only draws from our Lord a brief rebuke. Satan, now at the highth of his desperation, confesses that he had frequently watched Jesus from his birth, purposely to discover if he was the true Messiah; and, collecting from what passed at the river Jordan that he most probably was so, he had from that time more assiduously followed him, in hopes of gaining some advantage over him, which would most effectually prove that he was not really that Divine Person destined to be his "fatal enemy." In this he acknowledges that he has hitherto completely failed; but still determines to make one more trial of him. Accordingly, he conveys him to the temple at Jerusalem; and, placing him on a pointed eminence, requires him to prove his divinity either by standing there, or casting himself down with safety. Our Lord reproves the tempter, and at the same time manifests his own divinity by standing on this dangerous point. Satan, amazed and terrified, instantly falls; and repairs to his infernal compeers, to relate the bad success of his enterprise. Angels, in the mean time, convey our blessed Lord to a beautiful valley; and, while they minister to him a repast of celestial food, celebrate his victory in a triumphant hymn.

PERPLEX'D and troubled at his bad success
 The tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
 Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope
 So oft, and the persuasive rhetoric
 That sleek'd his tongue, and won so much on Eve, 5
 So little here, nay, lost: but Eve was Eve;
 This far his over-match, who, self-deceived
 And rash, beforehand had no better weigh'd
 The strength he was to cope with, or his own:
 But as a man, who had been matchless held 10
 In cunning, over-reach'd where least he thought,
 To salve his credit, and for very spite,
 Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
 And never cease, though to his shame the more;
 Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time, 15
 About the wine-press where sweet must is pour'd,
 Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
 Or surging waves against a solid rock,
 Though all to shivers dash'd, the assault renew,
 (Vain battery!) and in froth or bubbles end; 20
 So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
 Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
 Yet gives not o'er, though desperate of success,
 And his vain importunity pursues.
 He brought our Saviour to the western side 25
 Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
 Another plain, long, but in breadth not wide,
 Wash'd by the southern sea; and, on the north,
 To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills,
 That screen'd the fruits of the earth, and seats of men, 30
 From cold Septentrion blasts; thence in the midst
 Divided by a river, of whose banks
 On each side an imperial city stood,
 With towers and temples proudly elevate
 On seven small hills, with palaces adorn'd, 35
 Porches, and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
 Statues, and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
 Gardens, and groves, presented to his eyes,
 Above the highth of mountains interposed:
 (By what strange parallax, or optick skill 40
 Of vision, multiplied through air, or glass

10. *But as a man.* Our author here follows the example of Homer, and presents us with a string of similes together. The first has too much sameness with the subject that it would illustrate, and gives us no new ideas. The second is low, but is at the same time very natural. The third is free from the defects of the other two, and rises up to Milton's usual dignity and majesty.

27. *Another plain:* Italy.

35. *Palaces, &c.* The extravagance and luxury of the Romans, in the latter

periods of the Republic and under the emperors, were such as we can scarcely conceive. Clodius, the antagonist of Milo, lived in a house that cost about half a million of dollars, our money. Cicero in one that cost \$200,000. Caesar, at his first triumph, feasted the people at 22,000 tables, and made presents of money, about ten dollars each, to 320,000; and 3000 golden crowns were borne before his triumphal car. Pompey exhibited, at the public games, 500 lions and 18 elephants, &c.

Of telescope, were curious to inquire:)
 And now the tempter thus his silence broke:—
 The city, which thou seest, no other deem
 Than great and glorious Rome, queen of the earth, 45
 So far renown'd, and with the spoils enrich'd
 Of nations: there the Capitol thou seest,
 Above the rest lifting his stately head
 On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
 Impregnable; and there Mount Palatine, 50
 The imperial palace, compass huge, and high
 The structure, skill of noblest architects,
 With gilded battlements conspicuous far,
 Turrets, and terraces, and glittering spires:
 Many a fair edifice besides, more like 55
 Houses of gods, (so well I have disposed
 My aery microscope,) thou mayst behold,
 Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs,
 Carved work, the hand of famed artificers,
 In cedar, marble, ivory, or gold. 60
 Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
 What conflux issuing forth, or entering in;
 Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces
 Hasting, or on return, in robes of state,
 Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power, 65
 Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings:
 Or embassies from regions far remote,
 In various habits, on the Appian road,
 Or on the Emilian: some from farthest south,
 Syene, and where the shadow both way falls, 70
 Meroe, Nilotick isle; and, more to west,
 The realm of Bocchus to the Black-moor sea;
 From the Asian kings, and Parthian among these;
 From India and the golden Chersonese,
 And utmost Indian isle Taprobane, 75
 Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreathed;
 From Gallia, Gades, and the British west;
 Germans, and Scythians, and Sarmatians, north
 Beyond Danubius to the Taurick pool.
 All nations now to Rome obedience pay; 80
 To Rome's great emperour, whose wide domain,
 In ample territory, wealth, and power,
 Civility of manners, arts, and arms,

66. *Turms*: Troops, from the Latin *turma*.

68. *The Appian road* led towards the south, to Brundisium, whence travellers embarked for Greece. The *Æmilian* led towards the north.

69. *Farthest south, Syene*, the limit of the Roman empire, south. *Meroe* was an island with a city of the same name, in Ethiopia, south of the tropic of Cancer, and of course at the summer solstice had its shadow fall to the south.

72. *Realm of Bocchus*. Bocchus was king of Gætulia, a province of Africa, south of Numidia. By *Black-moor sea*, Milton probably means that part of the Mediterranean along the coast of Mauritania, the country of the black or dark Moors.

74. *Golden Chersonese*: Malacca. *Taprobane*: Ceylon.

77. *Gades*: Cadiz. *Taurick pool*: the Palus Mæotis, or Sea of Azof.

And long renown, thou justly mayst prefer
 Before the Parthian. These two thrones except, 85
 The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,
 Shared among petty kings too far removed.
 These having shown thee, I have shown thee all
 The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory.
 This emperor hath no son, and now is old, 90
 Old and lascivious, and from Rome retired
 To Capreae, an island small, but strong,
 On the Campanian shore; with purpose there
 His horrid lusts in private to enjoy;
 Committing to a wicked favourite 95
 All publick cares, and yet of him suspicious;
 Hated of all, and hating. With what ease,
 Endued with regal virtues, as thou art,
 Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
 Mightst thou expel this monster from his throne, 100
 Now made a stye; and, in his place ascending,
 A victor people free from servile yoke!
 And with my help thou mayst: to me the power
 Is given, and by that right I give it thee.
 Aim therefore at no less than all the world; 105
 Aim at the highest: without the highest attain'd,
 Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,
 On David's throne, be prophesied what will.
 To whom the Son of God, unmoved, replied:—
 Nor doth this grandeur and majestick show 110
 Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
 More than of arms before, allure mine eye,
 Much less my mind; though thou shouldst add to tell
 Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
 On citron tables or Atlantick stone, 115
 (For I have also heard, perhaps have read,)
 Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,
 Chios, and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,
 Crystal, and myrrhine cups, emboss'd with gems
 And studs of pearl, to me shouldst tell, who thirst 120
 And hunger still. Then embassies thou show'st
 From nations far and nigh: what honour that,
 But tedious waste of time, to sit and hear
 So many hollow compliments and lies,
 Outlandish flatteries? Then proceed'st to talk 125
 Of the emperor, how easily subdued,
 How gloriously: I shall, thou say'st, expel
 A brutish monster: what if I withal

90. *This emperor*: Tiberius. *Wicked favourite*: Sejanus.

115. *Citron tables, &c.* This citron wood, which grew upon Mount Atlas in Mauritania, was held by the Romans equally valuable with gold. *Atlantick*, therefore, must have a reference to this citron wood, for it does not appear that the Romans

ever used marble for tables. It was probably called *Atlantick stone*, from its marble-like appearance, being veined and spotted.—DUNSTER.

117. *Their wines, &c.* The first three mentioned were the most famous Campanian wines of the Romans, of which the Falernian was considered the best.

Expel a devil who first made him such ?
 Let his tormentor conscience find him out ; 130
 For him I was not sent, nor yet to free
 That people, victor once, now vile and base ;
 Deservedly made vassal ; who, once just,
 Frugal, and mild, and temperate, conquer'd well ;
 But govern ill the nations under yoke, 135
 Peeling their provinces, exhausted all
 By lust and rapine ; first ambitious grown
 Of triumph, that insulting vanity ;
 Then cruel, by their sports to blood inured
 Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts exposed ; 140
 Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still ;
 And from the daily scene effeminate.
 What wise and valiant man would seek to free
 These, thus degenerate, by themselves enslaved ?
 Or could of inward slaves make outward free ? 145
 Know, therefore, when my season comes to sit
 On David's throne, it shall be like a tree
 Spreading and overshadowing all the earth ;
 Or as a stone, that shall to pieces dash
 All monarchies besides throughout the world ; 150
 And of my kingdom there shall be no end :
 Means there shall be to this ; but what the means,
 Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.
 To whom the tempter, impudent, replied :
 I see all offers made by me how slight 155
 Thou valuest, because offer'd, and reject'st :
 Nothing will please the difficult and nice,
 Or nothing more than still to contradict :
 On the other side, know also thou, that I
 On what I offer set as high esteem, 160
 Nor what I part with mean to give for naught :
 All these, which in a moment thou behold'st,
 The kingdoms of the world, to thee I give,
 (For, given to me, I give to whom I please,)
 No trifle ; yet with this reserve, not else, 165
 On this condition ; if thou wilt fall down,
 And worship me as thy superiour lord,
 (Easily done,) and hold them all of me ;
 For what can less so great a gift deserve ?
 Whom thus our Saviour answer'd with disdain : 170
 I never liked thy talk, thy offers less ;
 Now both abhor, since thou hast dared to utter
 The abominable terms, impious condition :

132. *That people, &c.* This description of the corruption and decline of the Roman empire, contained in this and the following ten lines, is at once concisely fine and accurately just.—DUNSTER.

139. The connection of luxury, cruelty, and effeminacy, has been often remarked in all ages.

140. Not only *men to beasts exposed*, but men to men, as the gladiators. In the gladiatorial school at Capua, 40,000 men were regularly trained to kill each other—or, as Byron has it—

Butcher'd, to make a Roman holiday.

147. *Tree, &c.* See Matt. xiii. 32 ; Dan. iv. 11, and ii. 44 ; Luke i. 33.

But I endure the time, till which expired
 Thou hast permission on me. It is written, 175
 The first of all commandments, Thou shalt worship
 The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve;
 And darest thou to the Son of God propound
 To worship thee accursed? now more accursed
 For this attempt, bolder than that on Eve, 180
 And more blasphemous; which expect to rue.
 The kingdoms of the world to thee were given?
 Permitted rather, and by thee usurp'd;
 Other donation none thou canst produce.
 If given, by whom but by the King of kings, 185
 God over all supreme? If given to thee,
 By thee how fairly is the Giver now
 Repaid? But gratitude in thee is lost
 Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
 As offer them to me, the Son of God? 190
 To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
 That I fall down and worship thee as God?
 Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'st
 That evil one, Satan for ever damn'd.
 To whom the fiend, with fear abash'd, replied: 195
 Be not so sore offended, Son of God,
 Though sons of God both angels are and men,
 If I, to try whether in higher sort
 Than these thou bear'st that title, have proposed
 What both from men and angels I receive, 200
 Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth,
 Nations besides from all the quarter'd winds,
 God of this world invoked, and world beneath:
 Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
 To me most fatal, me it most concerns: 205
 The trial hath indamaged thee no way,
 Rather more honour left, and more esteem;
 Me naught advantaged, missing what I aim'd.
 Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
 The kingdoms of this world; I shall no more 210
 Advise thee; gain them as thou canst, or not:
 And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclined
 Than to a worldly crown; addicted more
 To contemplation and profound dispute;
 As by that early action may be judged, 215
 When, slipping from thy mother's eye, thou went'st
 Alone into the temple; there wast found
 Among the gravest rabbies, disputant
 On points and questions fitting Moses' chair,
 Teaching, not taught. The childhood shows the man, 220
 As morning shows the day: be famous then

185. *King of kings.* 1 Tim. vi. 15; Rom. ix. 5.

203. The devil, in Scripture, is termed *the God of this world*: 2 Cor. iv. 4.

219. *Moses' chair* was the chair in which the doctors expounded the Law. See Matt. xxiii. 2.

By wisdom; as thy empire must extend,
 So let extend thy mind o'er all the world
 In knowledge, all things in it comprehend. 225
 All knowledge is not couch'd in Moses' law,
 The Pentateuch, or what the prophets wrote:
 The Gentiles also know, and write, and teach
 To admiration, led by Nature's light,
 And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,
 Ruling them by persuasion, as thou mean'st; 230
 Without their learning, how wilt thou with them,
 Or they with thee, hold conversation meet?
 How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
 Their idolisms, traditions, paradoxes?
 Error by his own arms is best evinced. 235
 Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,
 Westward, much nearer by south-west, behold;
 Where on the Ægean shore a city stands,
 Built nobly; pure the air, and light the soil;
 Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts 240
 And eloquence, native to famous wits
 Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
 City or suburban, studious walks and shades.
 See there the olive grove of Academe,
 Plato's retirement, where the Attick bird 245
 Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
 There flowery hill Hymettus, with the sound
 Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites
 To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
 His whispering stream: within the walls then view 250
 The schools of ancient sages; his, who bred
 Great Alexander to subdue the world,
 Lyceum there, and painted Stoa next:
 There shalt thou hear and learn the secret power
 Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit 255
 By voice or hand; and various-measured verse,
 Æolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,

240. *The eye of Greece.* Athens and Sparta were called the two eyes of Greece; but the metaphor is infinitely more proper as applied to the former city, so distinguished for its learning and wisdom, while the latter is known only for its brute force, and military skill and valor.

242. *Hospitable:* That is, *hospitable* to wits of other countries, by admitting all persons, whatever, to the benefit of the instructions communicated by her philosophers.

244. *Academe.* Dr. Newton has justly observed that Plato's Academy was never more beautifully described.

245. *Attick bird.* Philomela, who, according to the fable, was changed into a nightingale, was the daughter of Pandion, King of Athens. Of line 246, Dr. Newton observes that "there never was

a verse more expressive of the harmony" (melody?) "of the nightingale, than this."

251. *Who bred great Alexander.* When Alexander was born, his father Philip wrote to Aristotle that he thanked the gods not so much for the birth of a son, as that he was born at a time when he could receive the benefit of his instruction.

252. *Painted Stoa.* The *Stoa* or *Portico* was the school of Zeno, whose disciples were therefore called *Stoicks*. The building was adorned with various paintings, and hence the appropriate epithet, *paint-ed*, by our poet, whose epithets are always not only exceedingly beautiful, but critically correct.

257. *Æolian charms,* referring to the poets *Acæus* and *Sappho*, who were both

And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
 Blind Melesigenes, thence Homer call'd,
 Whose poem Phœbus challenged for his own : 260
 Thence what the lofty grave tragedians taught
 In chorus or iambick, teachers best
 Of moral prudence, with delight received
 In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
 Of fate, and chance, and change in human life, 265
 High actions and high passions best describing :
 Thence to the famous orators repair,
 Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
 Wielded at will that fierce democratic,
 Shook the arsenal, and fulmined over Greece 270
 To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne :
 To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,
 From Heaven descended to the low-roof'd house
 Of Socrates; see there his tenement,
 Whom well inspired the oracle pronounced 275
 Wisest of men; from whose mouth issued forth
 Mellifluous streams, that water'd all the schools
 Of Academicks old and new, with those
 Surnamed Peripateticks, and the sect
 Epicurean, and the Stoick severe. 280
 These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st, at home,
 Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight :
 These rules will render thee a king complete
 Within thyself, much more with empire join'd.
 To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied : 285
 Think not but that I know these things, or think
 I know them not; not therefore am I short
 Of knowing what I ought: he, who receives

of Mitylene in Lesbos, an island of the Æolians. *Dorian*: the odes of Pindar.

259. *Melesigenes*. Milton here follows the opinion of some, that Homer was born near the Meles, a river of Asia Minor, near Smyrna.

261. Tragedy was termed *lofty* by the ancients, from its style, but at the same time not without a reference to the elevated buskin which the actors wore.

262. *Chorus* or *Iambick*. The two constituent parts of the ancient tragedy were—the dialogue, written in *Iambick* measure, and the *Chorus*, which consisted of various measures. The character here given by our author of the ancient tragedy, is very just and noble; and the English reader cannot form a better idea of it in its highest beauty and perfection, than by reading our author's "Samson Agonistes."—NEWTON.

271. As Pericles and others *fulmined over Greece to Artaxerxes' throne*, against the Persian king, so Demosthenes was the orator particularly who *fulmined over Greece to Macedon*, against Philip; especially when he was besieging Olynthus, a tributary city of Athens. Hence some

of his orations are called "Philippics" and others "Olynthiacs."

278. *Old and new*. The academick sect of Philosophers, like the Greek comedy, had its three epochs—old, middle, and new. Plato was at the head of the old academy, Arceilas of the middle, and Carneades of the new.—DUNSTER.

283. *These rules*: Rather, *their rules*; or the word *these* may refer to line 264—to the *brief sententious precepts*.

285. *To whom, &c.* This answer of our Saviour is as much to be admired for solid reasoning, and the many sublime truths contained in it, as the preceding speech of Satan is for that fine vein of poetry which runs through it. And we may observe in general, that Milton has quite, throughout this work, thrown the ornaments of poetry on the side of error, whether it was that he thought great truths best expressed in a grave, unaffected style, or intended to suggest this fine moral to the reader—that simple, naked truth will always be an over-match for falsehood, though recommended by the gayest rhetoric and adorned with the most bewitching colours.—THYER.

Light from above, from the fountain of light,
 No other doctrine needs, though granted true; 290
 But these are false, or little else but dreams,
 Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
 The first and wisest of them all profess'd
 To know this only, that he nothing knew;
 The next to fabling fell, and smooth conceits; 295
 A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense:
 Others in virtue placed felicity,
 But virtue join'd with riches and long life;
 In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease:
 The Stoick last in philosophick pride, 300
 By him call'd virtue; and his virtuous man,
 Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing
 Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,
 As fearing God nor man, contemning all
 Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life, 305
 Which, when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can,
 For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
 Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
 Alas! what can they teach, and not mislead,
 Ignorant of themselves, of God much more, 310
 And how the world began, and how man fell
 Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
 Much of the soul they talk, but all awry,
 And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
 All glory arrogate, to God give none; 315
 Rather accuse him under usual names,
 Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite
 Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
 True wisdom, finds her not; or, by delusion,
 Far worse, her false resemblance only meets, 320
 An empty cloud. However, many books,
 Wise men have said, are wearisome: who reads
 Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
 A spirit and judgment equal or superiour,
 (And what he brings what need he elsewhere seek?) 325
 Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
 Deep versed in books, and shallow in himself,
 Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
 And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;
 As children gathering pebbles on the shore. 330
 Or, if I would delight my private hours
 With musick or with poem; where, so soon
 As in our native language, can I find

293. *The first*: Socrates. *The next*: Plato, whom our author, in one of his Latin poems, terms "*fabulator maximus*."

296. *A third sort*: Scepticks, the disciples of Pyrrho. *Others*: the Platonicks and Peripateticks.

299. *In corporal pleasure he*: Epicurus.

327. *Deep versed, &c.*

Knowledge is proud that he has learn'd so much;

Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.
Cowper.

329. *Worth a sponge*. As the sponge is used for blotting out, so *worth a sponge* literally means not worth preserving.

That solace? All our law and story strew'd
 With hymns, our psalms with artful terms inscribed, 335
 Our Hebrew songs and harps, in Babylon
 That pleased so well our victors' ear, declare
 That rather Greece from us these arts derived;
 Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
 The vices of their deities, and their own, 340
 In fable, hymn, or song, so personating
 Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
 Remove their swelling epithets, thick laid
 As varnish on a harlot's cheek; the rest,
 Thin sown with aught of profit or delight, 345
 Will far be found unworthy to compare
 With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,
 Where God is praised aright, and godlike men,
 The Holiest of Holies, and his saints,
 (Such are from God inspired, not such from thee,) 350
 Unless where moral virtue is express'd
 By light of Nature, not in all quite lost.
 Their orators thou then extoll'st, as those
 The top of eloquence; statists indeed,
 And lovers of their country, as may seem; 355
 But herein to our prophets far beneath,
 As men divinely taught, and better teaching
 The solid rules of civil government,
 In their majestick unaffected style,
 Than all the oratory of Greece and Rome. 360
 In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
 What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so;
 What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat:
 These only with our law best form a king.
 So spake the Son of God: but Satan, now 365
 Quite at a loss, (for all his darts were spent,)
 Thus to our Saviour with stern brow replied:
 Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,
 Kingdom nor empire pleases thee, nor aught 370
 By me proposed in life contemplative
 Or active, tended on by glory or fame,
 What dost thou in this world? The wilderness
 For thee is fittest place; I found thee there,
 And thither will return thee: yet remember
 What I foretell thee: soon thou shalt have cause 375
 To wish thou never hadst rejected, thus
 Nicely or cautiously, my offer'd aid,

341. *Personating*: To celebrate loudly; from the Latin *persona*.

346. *Will far be found, &c.* Undoubtedly these were Milton's own sentiments, though delivered in an assumed character. It must, however, be observed, that Christ is here answering Satan's speech, and counteracting his exquisite panegyric on the philosophers, poets, and

orators of Athens. Yet at the same time I can conceive that Satan's speech, which here he means to confute, and which no man was more able to write than himself, came from the heart. The writers of dialogue in feigned characters have great advantage.—J. WARTON.

354. *Statists*: Statesmen.

Which would have set thee in short time with ease
 On David's throne, or throne of all the world,
 Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season, 380
 When prophecies of thee are best fulfilled.
 Now contrary, if I read aught in heaven,
 Or heaven write aught of fate, by what the stars
 Voluminous, or single characters,
 In their conjunction met, give me to spell; 385
 Sorrows, and labours, opposition, hate
 Attend thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
 Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death:
 A kingdom they portend thee; but what kingdom,
 Real or allegorick, I discern not; 390
 Nor when; eternal sure, as without end,
 Without beginning; for no date prefix'd
 Directs me in the starry rubrick set.
 So saying, he took, (for still he knew his power
 Not yet expired,) and to the wilderness 395
 Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
 Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,
 As daylight sunk, and brought in lowering Night,
 Her shadowy offspring; unsubstantial both,
 Privation mere of light and absent day. 400
 Our Saviour meek, and with untroubled mind
 After his aery jaunt, though hurried sore,
 Hungry and cold, betook him to his rest,
 Wherever, under some concourse of shades,
 Whose branching arms thick intertwined might shield 405
 From dews and damps of night his shelter'd head;
 But, shelter'd, slept in vain; for at his head
 The tempter watch'd, and soon with ugly dreams
 Disturb'd his sleep. And either tropick now
 'Gan thunder, and both ends of heaven; the clouds, 410
 From many a horrid rift, abortive pour'd
 Fierce rain with lightning mix'd, water with fire
 In ruin reconciled: nor slept the winds
 Within their stony caves, but rush'd abroad
 From the four hinges of the world, and fell 415
 On the vex'd wilderness, whose tallest pines,
 Though rooted deep as high; and sturdiest oaks,
 Bow'd their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,
 Or torn up sheer. Ill wast thou shrouded then,
 O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st 420
 Unshaken! Nor yet stay'd the terrour there;
 Infernal ghosts and hellish furies round
 Environ'd thee; some howl'd, some yell'd, some shriek'd,
 Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou

415. *Four hinges*: That is, from the four cardinal points,—the word *cardo*, in Latin, meaning “a hinge,” upon which any thing turns.

419. *Or torn up sheer*. This magnificent description of a storm thus raised by Satan in the wilderness, is so admirable and striking, that it need not be enlarged upon.—BRYDGES.

Sat'st unappall'd in calm and sinless peace! 425
 Thus pass'd the night so foul, till Morning fair
 Came forth, with pilgrim steps, in amice gray;
 Who with her radiant finger still'd the roar
 Of thunder, chased the clouds, and laid the winds,
 And grisly spectres, which the fiend had raised 430
 To tempt the Son of God with terrours dire.
 And now the sun with more effectual beams
 Had cheer'd the face of earth, and dried the wet
 From drooping plant or dropping tree; the birds,
 Who all things now behold more fresh and green, 435
 After a night of storm so ruinous,
 Clear'd up their choicest notes in bush and spray,
 To gratulate the sweet return of morn.
 Nor yet, amidst this joy and brightest morn,
 Was absent, after all his mischief done, 440
 The prince of darkness; glad would also seem
 Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came;
 Yet with no new device; (they all were spent,
 Rather by this his last affront resolved,
 Desperate of better course, to vent his rage 445
 And mad despite to be so oft repell'd.
 Him walking on a sunny hill he found,
 Back'd on the north and west by a thick wood.
 Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape,
 And in a careless mood thus to him said: 450
 Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,
 After a dismal night: I heard the wrack,
 As earth and sky would mingle; but myself
 Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear them
 As dangerous to the pillar'd frame of heaven, 455
 Or to the earth's dark basis underneath,
 Are to the main as inconsiderable
 And harmless, if not wholesome, as a sneeze
 To man's less universe, and soon are gone:
 Yet, as being oftentimes noxious where they light 460
 On man, beast, plant, wasteful and turbulent,
 Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,
 Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,
 They oft fore-signify, and threaten ill:
 This tempest at this desert most was bent; 465
 Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
 Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject

427. *Amice Gray*: From the Latin *amicio*, to clothe. The combination *amicie gray*, is from what is called *graius amictus*, a gray habit worn by ecclesiastics and pilgrims.

432. *And now the sun*, &c. "There is, in this description, all the bloom of Milton's youthful fancy."—THYER. "It is impossible to forbear remarking that this description exhibits some of the finest

lines which Milton has written in all his poems."—J. WARTON.

449. *In wonted shape*: That is, in his own proper shape, and under no disguise.

467. *Did I not tell thee*, &c. Here is something to be understood: the thing told, we may suppose to be what Satan had before said, iii. 351—

—Thy kingdom though foretold
 By prophet or by angel, unless thou
 Eudeavour, as thy father David did
 Thou never shalt obtain.

The perfect season offer'd with my aid
 To win thy destined seat, but wilt prolong
 All to the push of fate, pursue thy way 470
 Of gaining David's throne, no man knows when,
 For both the when and how is no where told?
 Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt;
 For angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing
 The time and means. Each act is rightliest done, 475
 Not when it must, but when it may be best:

If thou observe not this, be sure to find,
 What I foretold thee, many a hard assay
 Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,
 Ere thou of Israel's sceptre get fast hold; 480
 Whereof this ominous night, that closed thee round,
 So many terrours, voices, prodigies,
 May warn thee, as a sure foregoing sign.

So talk'd he, while the Son of God went on
 And stay'd not, but in brief him answer'd thus: 485

Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm,
 Those terrours, which thou speak'st of, did me none:
 I never fear'd they could, though noising loud
 And threatening nigh: what they can do, as signs
 Betokening, or ill boding, I contemn 490

As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;
 Who, knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,
 Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I, accepting,
 At least might seem to hold all power of thee,
 Ambitious spirit! and wouldst be thought my God; 495
 And storm'st refused, thinking to terrify
 Me to thy will! desist, (thou art discern'd,
 And toil'st in vain,) nor me in vain molest.

To whom the fiend, now swoln with rage, replied:
 Then hear, O Son of David, virgin-born, 500
 For Son of God to me is yet in doubt;
 Of the Messiah I had heard foretold

By all the prophets; of thy birth at length,
 Announced by Gabriel, with the first I knew;
 And of the angelick song in Bethlehem field, 505
 On thy birth-night that sung thee Saviour born.

From that time seldom have I ceased to eye
 Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth;
 Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;
 Till at the ford of Jordan, whither all 510

Flock'd to the Baptist, I among the rest,
 (Though not to be baptized,) by voice from heaven
 Heard thee pronounc'd the Son of God beloved.
 Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view

And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn 515
 In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
 The Son of God; which bears no single sense.

The son of God I also am, or was;
 And if I was, I am; relation stands;

All men are sons of God; yet thee I thought 520
 In some respect far higher so declared:
 Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour,
 And follow'd thee still on to this waste wild;
 Where, by all best conjectures, I collect
 Thou art to be my fatal enemy: 525
 Good reason then, if I before-hand seek
 To understand my adversary, who
 And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent;
 By parl or composition, truce or league,
 To win him, or win from him what I can: 530
 And opportunity I here have had
 To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
 Proof against all temptation, as a rock
 Of adamant, and, as a centre, firm;
 To the utmost of mere man both wise and good, 535
 Not more; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,
 Have been before contemn'd, and may again.
 Therefore to know what more thou art than man,
 Worth naming Son of God by voice from heaven,
 Another method I must now begin. 540
 So saying, he caught him up, and, without wing
 Of hippogrif, bore through the air sublime,
 Over the wilderness and o'er the plain;
 Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,
 The holy city, lifted high her towers, 545
 And higher yet the glorious temple rear'd
 Her pile, far off appearing like a mount
 Of alabaster, topt with golden spires:
 There, on the highest pinnacle, he set
 The Son of God; and added thus in scorn: 550
 There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright
 Will ask thee skill: I to thy Father's house
 Have brought thee, and highest placed: highest is best:
 Now show thy progeny; if not to stand,
 Cast thyself down; safely, if Son of God: 555
 For it is written,—He will give command
 Concerning thee to his angels: in their hands
 They shall uplift thee, lest at any time
 Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.
 To whom thus Jesus: Also it is written, 560
 Tempt not the Lord thy God. He said, and stood:

561. *He said and stood.* The tempter sets our Saviour on a pinnacle of the temple, and there requires of him a proof of his divinity, either by standing or casting himself down, as he might safely do if he was the Son of God, according to the quotation from the Psalmist. To this our Saviour answers, as he answers in the Gospels,—“It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God,” tacitly inferring that his casting himself down would be tempting God.

He said, that is, he gave this reason for not casting himself down, *and stood*. His standing properly makes the discovery, and is the principal proof of his progeny that the Tempter required. *Now show thy progeny.* His *standing* convinces Satan. His *standing* is considered as the display of his divinity, and the immediate cause of Satan's fall; and the grand contrast is formed between the *standing* of the one, and the *fall* of the other.—NEWTON.

But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell.
 As when Earth's son, Antæus, (to compare
 Small things with greatest,) in Irassa strove
 With Jove's Alcides, and, oft foil'd, still rose, 565
 Receiving from his mother Earth new strength
 Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple join'd;
 Throttled at length in the air, expired and fell:
 So, after many a foil, the tempter proud,
 Renewing fresh assaults amidst his pride, 570
 Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall:
 And as that Theban monster, that proposed
 Her riddle, and him who solved it not, devour'd;
 That once found out and solved, for grief and spite
 Cast herself headlong from the Ismenian steep: 575
 So, struck with dread and anguish, fell the fiend;
 And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
 (Joyless triumphals of his hoped success)
 Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,
 Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God. 580
 So Satan fell;—and straight a fiery globe
 Of angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
 Who on their plummy vans received him soft
 From his uneasy station, and upbore,
 As on a floating couch, through the blithe air: 585
 Then, in a flowery valley, set him down
 On a green bank, and set before him spread
 A table of celestial food, divine
 Ambrosial fruits, fetch'd from the tree of life,
 And, from the fount of life, ambrosial drink, 590
 That soon refresh'd him wearied, and repair'd
 What hunger, if aught hunger, had impair'd,
 Or thirst; and, as he fed, angelick quires
 Sung heavenly anthems of his victory
 Over temptation and the tempter proud: 595
 True image of the Father; whether throned
 In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
 Conceiving; or, remote from heaven, enshrined
 In fleshly tabernacle, and human form,

564. *Irassa* or *Iresus*, a beautiful country of Libya, not far from Cyrene.

565. *Jove's Alcides*: Hercules.

572. *Theban monster*: The Sphinx, whose riddle *Œdipus* solved; whereupon she cast herself headlong from the citadel of Thebes—termed the *Ismenian steep*, from the *Ismenus*, which ran by Thebes.

583. *Him*, according to the common construction of language, certainly must refer to Satan, the person last mentioned. The intended sense of this passage cannot indeed be misunderstood; but we grieve to find any inaccuracy in a part of the poem so eminently beautiful.—

DUNSTER.

585. *Blithe air*: Glad, merry, cheerful,

as pleased with its burden: a beautiful figure.

596. *True image, &c.* All the poems that ever were written must yield, even *Paradise Lost* must yield to the *Regained*, in the grandeur of its close. Christ stands triumphant on the pointed eminence. The Demon falls with amazement and terrour, on this full proof of His being that very Son of God whose thunder forced him out of Heaven. The blessed Angels receive new knowledge. They behold a sublime truth established, which was a secret to them at the beginning of the temptation, and the great discovery gives a proper opening to their hymn on the victory of Christ and the defeat of the Tempter.—COLTON.

Wandering the wilderness; whatever place, 600
 Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
 The Son of God, with godlike force endued
 Against the attempter of thy Father's throne,
 And thief of Paradise! Him long of old
 Thou didst debel, and down from heaven cast 605
 With all his army: now thou hast avenged
 Supplanted Adam, and, by vanquishing
 Temptation, hast regain'd lost Paradise,
 And frustrated the conquest fraudulent.
 He never more henceforth will dare set foot 610
 In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke:
 For though that seat of earthly bliss be fail'd,
 A fairer Paradise is founded now
 For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou,
 A Saviour, art come down to re-install, 615
 Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be,
 Of tempter and temptation without fear.
 But thou, infernal serpent! shalt not long
 Rule in the clouds; like an autumnal star,
 Or lightning, thou shalt fall from heaven, trod down 620
 Under his feet: for proof, ere this thou feel'st
 Thy wound, (yet not thy last and deadliest wound,)
 By this repulse received, and hold'st in hell
 No triumph: in all her gates Abaddon rues 625
 Thy bold attempt. Hereafter learn with awe
 To dread the Son of God: he, all unarm'd,
 Shall chase thee, with the terrour of his voice,
 From thy demoniack holds, possession foul,
 Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly,
 And beg to hide them in a herd of swine, 630
 Lest he command them down into the deep,
 Bound, and to torment sent before their time.—
 Hail, Son of the Most High, heir of both worlds,
 Queller of Satan! On thy glorious work
 Now enter; and begin to save mankind. 635
 Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,
 Sung victor, and from heavenly feast refresh'd,
 Brought on his way with joy: he, unobserved,
 Home to his mother's house private return'd.

619. *Autumnal stars*, and *Sirius* in particular, were supposed to produce mischief to mankind. *Lightning*: see Luke x. 18.

624. *Abaddon*. The name of the angel

of the bottomless pit (Rev. ix. 11) is here applied to the bottomless pit itself.

629. *Yelling*, &c. See Matt. viii. 28, and Rev. xx. 1, 2, 3.

605. *Debel*, defeat.

It has been observed of almost all the great epic poems, that they fall off, and become languid, in the conclusion. This last book of the "Paradise Regained" is one of the finest conclusions of a poem, that can be produced. They who talk of our author's genius being in the decline when he wrote his second poem, and who therefore turn from it, as from a dry prosaic composition, are, I will venture to say, no judges of poetry. With a fancy such as Milton's, it must have been more difficult to forbear poetic decorations, than to furnish them; and a glaring profusion of ornament would, I conceive, have more decidedly betrayed the *poeta senescens*,* than a want of it. The first book of the "Paradise Lost" abounds in similies, and is, in other respects, as elevated and sublime as any in the whole poem: but here the poet's plan was totally different. Though it may be said of the "Paradise Regained," as Longinus has said of the "Odyssey," that it is the epilogue of the preceding poem; still the design and conduct of it is as different as that of the "Georgics" from the "Æneid." The "Paradise Regained" has something of the didactic character: it teaches not merely by the general moral, and by the character and conduct of its hero; but has also many positive precepts everywhere interspersed. It is written for the most part in a style admirably condensed, and with a studied reserve of ornament: it is nevertheless illuminated with beauties of the most captivating kind. Its leading feature throughout is that "excellence of composition," which, as Lord Monboddo justly observes, so eminently distinguished the writings of the ancients; and in which, of all modern authors, Milton most resembles them.

At the commencement of this book the argument of the poem is considerably advanced. Satan appears hopeless of success, but still persisting in his enterprise: the desperate folly and vain pertinacity of this conduct are perfectly well exemplified and illustrated by three apposite similies, each successively rising in beauty above the other. The busyness of the temptation being thus resumed, the tempter takes our Lord to the western side of the mountain, and shows to him Italy, the situation of which the poet marks with singular accuracy; and, having traced the Tiber from its source in the Apennines to Rome, he briefly enumerates the most conspicuous objects that may be supposed at first to strike the eye on a distant view of this celebrated city. Satan now becomes the speaker; and, in an admirably descriptive speech, points out more particularly the magnificent public and private buildings of ancient Rome, descanting on the splendour and power of its state, which he particularly exemplifies in the superb pomp with which their provincial magistrates proceed to their respective governments; and in the numerous ambassadors that arrive from every quarter of the habitable globe, to solicit the protection of Rome and the emperor. These are two pictures of the most highly finished kind: the numerous figures are in motion before us; we absolutely see

Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces
Hasting, or on return, in robes of state,
Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
Legions and cohorts, &c.

Having observed that such a power as this of Rome must reasonably be preferred to that of the Parthians, which he had displayed in the preceding book, and that there were no other powers worth our Lord's attention; the tempter now begins to apply all this to his purpose: by a strongly drawn description of the vicious and detestable character of Tiberius, he shows how easy it would be to expel him, to take possession of his throne, and to free the Roman people from that slavery in which they were then held. This he proffers to accomplish for our Lord, whom he incites to accept the offer, not only from a principle of ambition, but

* "The poet growing old."

as the best means of securing to himself his promised inheritance, the throne of David. Our Lord, in reply, scarcely notices the arguments which Satan had been urging to him; and only takes occasion, from the description which had been given of the splendour and magnificence of Rome, to arraign the superlatively extravagant luxury of the Romans,* and briefly to sum up those vices and misconducts then rapidly advancing to their height, which soon brought on the decline, and in the end effectuated the fall, of the Roman power. The next object which our author had in view, in his proposed display of heathen excellence, was a scene of a different, but no less intoxicating kind; Athens, in all its pride of literature and philosophy: but he seems to have been well aware that an immediate transition, from the view of Rome to that of Athens, must have diminished the effect of each. The intermediate space he has finely occupied. Our Lord, unmoved by the splendid scene displayed to captivate him, and having only been led by it to notice the vices and corruptions of the heathen world, in the conclusion of his speech marks the vanity of all earthly power, by referring to his own future kingdom, as that which by supernatural means should destroy "all monarchies besides throughout the world."

The fiend hereupon, urged by the violence of his desperation to an indiscretion which he had not before showed, endeavours to enhance the value of his offers, by declaring that the only terms, on which he would bestow them, were those of our Lord's falling down and worshipping him. To this our Saviour answers in a speech of marked abhorrence blended with contempt. This draws from Satan a reply of as much art, and as finely written, as any in the poem; in which he endeavours, by an artful justification of himself, to repair the indiscretion of his blasphemous proposal, and to soften the effect of it on our blessed Lord, so far at least as to be enabled to resume the process of his enterprise. The transition, (line 212,) to his new ground of temptation is peculiarly happy: having given up all prospect of working upon our Lord by the incitements of ambition, he now compliments him on his predilection for wisdom, and his early display of superior knowledge; and recommends it to him, for the purpose of accomplishing his professed design of reforming and converting mankind, to cultivate the literature and philosophy, for which the most polished part of the heathen world, and Greece in particular, was so eminent. This leads to his view of Athens; which is given, with singular effect, after the preceding dialogue; where the blasphemous rage of the tempter, and the art with which he endeavours to recover it, serve, by the variety of the subject and the interesting nature of the circumstance, materially to relieve the preceding and ensuing descriptions. The tempter, resuming his usual plausibility of language, now becomes the hierophant of the scene, which he describes, as he shows it, with so much accuracy, that we discern every object distinctly before us. The general view of Athens, with its most celebrated buildings and places of learned resort, is beautiful and original; and the description of its musicians, poets, orators, and philosophers is given with the hand of a master, and with all the fond affection of an enthusiast in Greek literature. Our Lord's reply is no less admirable; particularly where he displays the fallacy of the heathen philosophy, and points out the errors of its most admired sects, with the greatest acuteness of argument, and at the same time in a noble strain of poetry. His contrasting the poetry and policy of the Hebrews with those of the Greeks, on the ground of what had been advanced by some learned men in this respect, is highly consistent with the argument of this poem; and is so far from originating in that fanaticism, with which some of his ablest commentators have chosen to brand our author, that it serves duly to counterbalance his preceding

* Possibly not without a glance of the poet at the manners of the English court at that time.

éloge on heathen literature. The next speech of the tempter, (line 368,) is one of those master-pieces of plain composition, for which Milton is so eminent: the sufferings of our blessed Lord are therein foretold with an energetic brevity, that, on such subjects, has an effect superior to the most flowery and decorated language. The dialogue here ceases for a short time. The poet, in his own person, now describes, (line 394, &c.,) our Lord's being conveyed by Satan back to the wilderness, the storm which the tempter there raises, the tremendous night which our Lord passes, and the beautiful morning by which it is succeeded. How exquisitely sublime and beautiful is all this!—Yet this is the poem, from which the ardent admirers of Milton's other works turn, as from a cold, uninteresting composition, the produce of his dotage, of a palsied hand, no longer able to hold the pencil of poetry! The dialogue which ensues, is worthy of this book, and carries on the subject in the best manner to its concluding temptation. The last speech of Satan is particularly deserving our notice. The fiend, now "sworn with rage" at the repeated failure of his attacks, breaks out into a language of gross insult; professing to doubt whether our Lord, whom he had before frequently addressed as the Son of God, is in any way entitled to that appellation. From this wantonly blasphemous obloquy he still recovers himself, and offers, with his usual art, a qualification of what he had last said, and a justification of his persisting in farther attempts on the Divine Person, by whom he had been so constantly foiled. These are the masterly discriminating touches, with which the poet has admirably drawn the character of the tempter: the general colouring is that of plausible hypocrisy, through which, when elicited by the sudden irritation of defeat, his diabolical malignity frequently flashes out, and displays itself with singular effect. We now come to the catastrophe of the poem. The tempter conveys our blessed Lord to the temple at Jerusalem, where the description of the holy city and of the temple is pleasingly drawn. Satan has now little to say; he brings the question to a decisive point, in which any persuasion of rhetorical language on his part can be of no avail; he therefore speaks in his own undisguised person and character, and his language accordingly is that of scornful insult. The result of the trial is given with the utmost brevity; and its consequences are admirably painted. The despair and fall of Satan, with its successive illustrations, (line 562 to line 580,) have all the boldness of Salvator Rosa; while the angels supporting our Lord, "as on a floating couch, through the blithe air," is a sweetly pleasing and highly finished picture from the pencil of Guido. The refreshment ministered to our Lord by the angels is an intended and striking contrast to the luxurious banquet with which he had been tempted in the preceding part of the poem. The angelic hymn, which concludes the book, is at once poetical and scriptural: we may justly apply to it, and to this whole poem, an observation, which Fuller, in his "Worthies of Essex," first applied to Quarles; and which the ingenious Mr. Headley, in the "Biographical Sketches," prefixed to his "Select Beauties of Ancient English Poetry," has transferred to the only poet to whom it is truly appropriate:—"To mix the waters of Jordan and Helicon in the same cup, was reserved for the hand of Milton; and for him, and him only, to find the bays of Mount Olivet equally verdant with those of Parnassus." It may farther be observed, that Milton is himself an eminent instance of one of his own observations in his "Tractate of Education;" having practically demonstrated, what he invites the juvenile student in poetry theoretically to learn;—"what religious, what glorious, and magnificent use might be made of poetry."—DUNSTER.

Milton had already executed one extensive divine poem, peculiarly distinguished by richness and sublimity of description. In framing a second, he naturally wished to vary its effect,—to make it rich in moral

sentiment, and sublime in its mode of unfolding the highest wisdom that man can learn: for this purpose it was necessary to keep all the ornamental parts of the poem in due subordination to the precept. This delicate and difficult point is accomplished with such felicity, they are blended together with such exquisite harmony and mutual aid, that, instead of arraigning the plan, we might rather doubt if any possible change could improve it. Assuredly there is no poem of an epic form, where the sublimest moral is so forcibly and so abundantly united to poetical delight. The splendour of the poet does not blaze indeed so intensely as in his larger productions: here he resembles the Apollo of Ovid, softening his glory in speaking to his son, and avoiding to dazzle the fancy that he may descend into the heart. To censure the *Paradise Regained* because it does not more resemble the *Paradise Lost*, is hardly less absurd than it would be to condemn the Moon for not being a Sun, instead of admiring the two different luminaries, and feeling that both the greater and the less are equally the work of the same divine and inimitable power.—HAYLEY.

“*Paradise Regained*,” could it have possibly been introduced into the “*Paradise Lost*” as an Episodical Vision, would have been thought not inferior in power to any other part of the poem, except the first two books; and in exquisite simplicity and gentle dignity, equal to any thing in it all. But the title suggested a large plan, which the poem did not realize. Its name was ambitious, itself was short and unpretending, and it seemed to come to an abrupt and unartistic close. It avoided the grand subjects of Christ’s Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Second Advent, any or all of which the title was broad enough to have included. It should have been called Christ’s Temptation, a Poem. It was not, in short, a proper pendant to the “*Paradise Lost*.” The one was the huge Orion or Great Bear, covering a half of the heavens; the other, the small tear-twinkling Pleiades. Hence it was a disappointment at first, and has never since received its due meed of praise. And yet, if comparatively a fragment, what a true, shapely, beautiful fragment it is! Its power so quiet, its elegance so unconscious, its costume of language so Grecian, its general tone so scripturally simple, while its occasional speeches and descriptions are so gorgeous, and so faultless! The views from the Mountain, the storm in the Wilderness, the dreams of Christ when he was an hungered, so exquisitely true to his waking character—

“Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens, with their horny beaks,
Food to Elijah bringing even and morn,
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought:
He saw the Prophet also, how he fled
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how awak’d,
And found his supper on the coals prepared:
Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse”—(ii. 266)

are in the Poet’s very highest style, and one or two of them, indeed, have a gloss of perfection about them, as well as an ease and freedom of touch rarely to be found in his larger poem. In the “*Paradise Lost*,” he is a giant tossing mountains to heaven with far-seen struggle, and in evident trial of strength. In the “*Paradise Regained*,” he is a giant gently putting his foot on a rock, and leaving a mark inimitable, indelible, visible to all after time.—GILFILLAN.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

REMARKS ON SAMSON AGONISTES.

THE excellence of this drama, which strictly follows the Greek model, lies principally in its majestic moral strength: the two preceding poems are divine epics; this deals entirely in topics of human nature and human manners. It is not adapted to exhibition on the stage: it is too didactic; and has too few actors and too few incidents. The fable, the characters, the sentiments, and the language are all admirably preserved: the story does not linger, as some have pretended; but goes forward with intense interest to the end. The opening is in the chastest style of poetical beauty. "The breath of heaven fresh-blowing" gives ease to Samson's body, but not to his mind, which, when in solitude and at leisure, agonises his heart with regrets. Nothing can be more pathetic than the comparison of his present fallen state with his early hopes and past glories; and then the reflection that for this change he had no one to blame but himself:—

O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!
Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annul'd, which might in part my grief have eased, &c.

The observations of the Chorus, descriptive of Samson's dejected appearance in this situation, are very fine, contrasted with the recollection of his former mighty actions and triumphs:—

O mirrour of our fickle state,
Since man on earth unparallel'd,
The rarer thy example stands,
By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
Strongest of mortal men,
To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fallen.

The dialogues between Samson and his father are everywhere supported with force, elevation, and moral wisdom; and the unexampled simplicity of the language in which they are conveyed augments the deep impression which they everywhere make.

Perhaps, as a summary of divine dispensations, nothing even in Milton can be found so awful and comprehensive.

Then bursts forth, at line 667, that complaint of most deep and stupendous eloquence, beginning,—

God of our fathers, what is man!

Then enters Dalila, with the renewal of all her arts, and coquetries, and false smiles. With what a proud and overwhelming scorn does the hero treat her insidious advances! what a contrast is Dalila to Eve, even when, like Eve to Adam, she affects to own her transgression! Samson exclaims, line 748.

Out, out, hyæna! these are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then, as repentant, to submit, beseech,
And reconciliation move with feign'd remorse,
Confess, and promise wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urged his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail:

Then with more cautious and instructed skill
 Again transgresses, and again submits;
 That wisest and best men full oft beguiled,
 With goodness principled not to reject
 The penitent, but ever to forgive,
 Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
 Entangled with a poisonous bosom snake,
 If not by quick destruction soon cut off,
 As I by thee, to ages an example.

As the dialogue goes on, each party speaks in that natural train which leads to the consummation of the tragedy; and with poetic force and plenitude of rich sentiment, which belong to Milton alone.

All poetry of a high order is produced by a union of all the best faculties of the mind, and all the noblest emotions of the heart. What is called the understanding, or reason, alone, will produce no poetry at all: even the imagination added to it will not be sufficient, unless there be sentiment and pathos raised by what that imagination presents. To supply the materials of that imagination, there must be observation, knowledge, learning, and memory. In the amalgamation of all these Milton's drama excels.

The character of Samson Agonistes is magnificently supported: he speaks always in a tone becoming his circumstances, his position, his sufferings, and his destiny: every thing is grand, animated, natural, and soul-elating.

It is a minor sort of poetry to relate things as a stander-by: the author must throw himself into the character of the person represented, and speak in his name. Pope, in his characters of men and women, tells us their several opinions and passions; but these opinions and passions should be uttered by themselves. There is a sympathy we feel with the eloquent relator of his own sorrows, which cannot be raised by the relation of a third person.

The character of Manoah, Samson's father, is full of nature and parental affection.

The Chorus is everywhere attractive by poetry, moral wisdom, and eloquent pathos. I will not disguise my opinion, that the versification of these lyrical parts is occasionally, and only occasionally, inharmonious, abrupt, and harsh; and such as my ear can scarcely reconcile to any sort of metre.

The sudden presage which prompted Samson to consent to exhibit himself in the theatre, after the stern reluctance he had previously expressed, is very sublime.

The tone of the whole drama is in the highest degree of elevation: the thoughts, sentiments, and words are those of a mental giant.

Added to the mighty interest which these create, is the conviction that through the whole the poet has a relation to his own case;—his blindness, his proscription, his poverty,

With darkness, and with danger compass'd round;—

his fortitude, his defiance, his unimpaired strength, his loftiness of soul, his conscious power from the vastness of his intellect, and the firmness of his principles.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

THE ARGUMENT.

SAMSON, made captive, blind, and now in prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common workhouse, on a festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open air, to a place nigh, somewhat retired, there to sit awhile and bemoan his condition; where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can; then by his old father Manoah, who endeavours the like, and withal tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this feast was proclaimed by the Philistines as a day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson, which yet more troubles him. Manoah then departs to prosecute his endeavour with the Philistine lords for Samson's redemption; who in the mean while is visited by other persons, and lastly by a public officer to require his coming to the feast before the lords and people, to play or show his strength in their presence: he at first refuses, dismissing the public officer with absolute denial to come; at length, persuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatenings to fetch him: the Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoah returns full of joyful hope, to procure ere long his son's deliverance: in the midst of which discourse a Hebrew comes in haste, confusedly at first, and afterwards more distinctly, relating the catastrophe, what Samson had done to the Philistines, and by accident to himself; wherewith the tragedy ends.

THE PERSONS.

SAMSON. HARAPHA, of Gath.
MANOAH, the father of Samson. Publick Officer.
DALILA, his wife. Messenger.

Chorus of Danites.

The scene before the prison in Gaza.

SAMSON, (*Attendant leading him.*)

A LITTLE onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little further on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade;
There I am wont to sit, when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me,

Samson Agonistes, that is, Samson the Champion, the combatant, from the Greek *Αγωνιστης*, (*agonistes*) a combatant or *athlete* at the Public Games.

1. *A little onward*. Milton, after the example of the Greek tragedians, whom

he professes to imitate, opens his drama with introducing one of its principal personages explaining the story upon which it is founded.—THYER. The words of this opening are very poetical, beautiful, and affecting.—BRYDGES.

Where I, a prisoner, chain'd, scarce freely draw
 The air imprison'd also, close and damp,
 Unwholesome draught: but here I feel amends,
 The breath of heaven fresh blowing, pure and sweet, 10
 With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.—
 This day a solemn feast the people hold
 To Dagon their sea-idol, and forbid
 Laborious works; unwillingly this rest
 Their superstition yields me; hence with leave 15
 Retiring from the popular noise, I seek
 This unfrequented place to find some ease,
 Ease to the body some, none to the mind
 From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm
 Of hornets arm'd, no sooner found alone, 20
 But rush upon me thronging, and present
 Times past, what once I was, and what am now.
 O, wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold
 Twice by an angel, who at last in sight
 Of both my parents all in flames ascended 25
 From off the altar, where an offering burn'd,
 As in a fiery column charioting
 His godlike presence, and from some great act
 Or benefit reveal'd to Abraham's race?
 Why was my breeding order'd and prescribed 30
 As of a person separate to God,
 Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
 Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out,
 Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze;
 To grind in brazen fetters under task 35
 With this heaven-gifted strength? O glorious strength,
 Put to the labour of a beast, debased
 Lower than bond-slave! Promise was, that I
 Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver:
 Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him 40
 Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,
 Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke:
 Yet stay; let me not rashly call in doubt
 Divine prediction: what if all foretold
 Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default, 45
 Whom have I to complain of but myself?
 Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
 In what part lodged, how easily bereft me,
 Under the seal of silence could not keep,
 But weakly to a woman must reveal it, 50
 O'ercome with importunity and tears.
 O impotence of mind, in body strong!

10. *The breath of heaven.* This line and the next are exquisite.—BRYDGES.

21. *But rush upon me thronging.* The whole of this passage is pathetic, moral, and full of force.—BRYDGES.

24. *Twice by an angel.* Once to his mother, and again to his father Manoah

and his mother both. Of all the wonderful acquirements of Milton, not the least is his astonishingly critical reading and retentive memory of the Scriptures, making every portion of them subservient to his grand and holy designs.

28. *And from, that is, and as from.*

But what is strength without a double share
 Of wisdom? vast, unwieldy, burdensome,
 Proudly secure, yet liable to fall 55
 By weakest subtleties; not made to rule,
 But to subserve where wisdom bears command!
 God, when he gave me strength, to show withal
 How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.
 But peace, I must not quarrel with the will 60
 Of highest dispensation, which herein
 Haply had ends above my reach to know:
 Suffices that to me strength is my bane,
 And proves the source of all my miseries;
 So many, and so huge, that each apart 65
 Would ask a life to wail; but chief of all,
 O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
 Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
 Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!
 Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct, 70
 And all her various objects of delight
 Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eased,
 Inferiour to the vilest now become
 Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me:
 They creep, yet see; I, dark in light, exposed 75
 To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
 Within doors or without, still as a fool,
 In power of others, never in my own;
 Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.
 O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
 Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse 80
 Without all hope of day!
 O first-created Beam, and thou great Word,
 "Let there be light, and light was over all;"
 Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree? 85
 The sun to me is dark
 And silent as the moon,
 When she deserts the night,
 Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
 Since light so necessary is to life, 90
 And almost life itself, if it be true
 That light is in the soul,

75. *I, dark in light, &c.* In these lines the poet seems to paint himself. The litigation of his will produced a collection of evidence relating to the testator, which renders the discovery of those long-forgotten papers peculiarly interesting: they show very forcibly, and in new points of view, his domestic infelicity, and his amiable disposition. The tender and sublime poet, whose sensibility and sufferings were so great, appears to have been almost as unfortunate in his daughters as the Lear of Shakspeare. A servant declares in evidence, that her deceased master, a little before his last marriage, had lamented to her the ingrati-

tude and cruelty of his children. He complained that they combined to defraud him in the economy of his house, and sold several of his books in the basest manner. His feelings on such an outrage, both as a parent and a scholar, must have been singularly painful: perhaps they suggested to him these very pathetic lines.—HAYLEY.

80. *O dark, dark, dark, &c.* Few passages in poetry are so affecting as this, and the tone of expression is peculiarly Miltonic.—BRYDGES. Indeed there is very extraordinary power of poetry in the whole passage, down to line 109.

She all in every part; why was the sight
 To such a tender ball as the eye confined,
 So obvious and so easy to be quench'd? 95
 And not, as feeling, through all parts diffused,
 That she might look at will through every pore?
 Then had I not been thus exil'd from light,
 As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
 To live a life half dead, a living death, 100
 And buried; but, O yet more miserable!
 My self my sepulchre, a moving grave;
 Buried, yet not exempt,
 By privilege of death and burial,
 From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs; 105
 But made hereby obnoxious more
 To all the miseries of life,
 Life in captivity
 Among inhuman foes.
 But who are these? for with joint pace I hear 110
 The tread of many feet steering this way;
 Perhaps my enemies, who come to stare
 At my affliction, and perhaps to insult,
 Their daily practice to afflict me more.

Enter CHORUS.

CHO. This, this is he; softly awhile; 115
 Let us not break in upon him:
 O change beyond report, thought, or belief!
 See how he lies at random, carelessly diffused,
 With languish'd head unpropp'd,
 As one past hope, abandon'd, 120
 And by himself given over;
 In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds
 O'erworn and soil'd;
 Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
 That heroick, that renown'd, 125
 Irresistible Samson? whom unarm'd
 No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;
 Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid;
 Ran on embattel'd armies clad in iron;
 And, weaponless himself, 130
 Made arms ridiculous useless the forgery
 Of brazen shield and spear, the hammer'd cuirass,
 Chalybean temper'd steel, and frock of mail

118. *Diffused*. This beautiful application of *diffused*, Milton has taken from the Latin, *fusus*, and *diffusus*. No one English word, and hardly any combination of words, can express its full, peculiar, and luscious meaning, which is, as near as I can define it, *stretched upon the ground with relaxed and careless limbs*. Spenser says—
Pour'd out in looseness on the grassy ground.

And again,
 There he him found all carelessly *displaid*.
 So Akenside—
 ———But Waller longs
 To *spread* his careless limbs amid the cool
 Of plantane shades, &c.

133. *Chalybean*. The Chalybes were a people of Pontus, famous for their iron works.

Adamantéan proof?

But safest he who stood aloof, 135

When insupportably his foot advanced,
In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
Spurn'd them to death by troops. The bold Ascalonite
Fled from his lion ramp; old warriors turn'd

Their plated backs under his heel; 140

Or, grovelling, soil'd their crested helmets in the dust.

Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,

The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,

A thousand foreskins fell, the flower of Palestine,
In Ramath-lechi, famous to this day. 145

Then by main force pull'd up, and on his shoulders bore

The gates of Azza, post, and massy bar,

Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old,

No journey of a sabbath-day, and loaded so;

Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up heaven. 150 *allos*

Which shall I first bewail,

Thy bondage or lost sight.

Prison within prison

Inseparably dark?

Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!) 155

The dungeon of thyself; thy soul,

(Which men enjoying sight oft without cause complain,)

Imprison'd now indeed,

In real darkness of the body dwells,

Shut up from outward light 160

To incorporate with gloomy night;

For inward light, alas!

Puts forth no visual beam.

O mirrour of our fickle state!

Since man on earth unparallel'd, 165

The rarer thy example stands,

By how much from the top of wondrous glory,

Strongest of mortal men,

To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fallen.

For him I reckon not in high estate, 170

Whom long descent of birth,

Or the sphere of fortune raises;

But thee, whose strength, while virtue was her mate,

Might have subdued the earth,

Universally crown'd with highest praises. 175

Sams. I hear the sound of words; their sense the air

Dissolves unjointed ere it reach my ear.

Cho. He speaks: let us draw nigh. Matchless in might,

The glory late of Israel, now the grief,

133. *Ascalonite*: An inhabitant of Ascalon.

145. *Ramath-lechi*. See Judges xv. 17.

147. *Azza*, another name for Gaza.

148. *Hebron*. See Josh. xv. 13, 14; Numb. xiii. 33.

172. *Sphere of fortune*: Alluding to the fact of Fortune being represented on a rolling stone, as in the "Tablature of Cebes."

We come, thy friends and neighbours not unknown, 180
 From Eshtaol and Zora's fruitful vale,
 To visit or bewail thee; or, if better,
 Counsel or consolation we may bring,
 Salve to thy sores: apt words have power to swage
 The tumours of a troubled mind, 185
 And are as balm to fester'd wounds.

SAMS. Your coming, friends, revives me; for I learn
 Now of my own experience, not by talk,
 How counterfeit a coin they are who friends
 Bear in their superscription, (of the most 190
 I would be understood;) in prosperous days
 They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head,
 Not to be found, though sought. Ye see, O friends,
 How many evils have inclosed me round;
 Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me, 195
 Blindness; for had I sight, confused with shame,
 How could I once look up, or heave the head,
 Who like a foolish pilot, have shipwreck'd
 My vessel trusted to me from above,
 Gloriously rigg'd; and for a word, a tear, 200
 Fool! have divulged the secret gift of God
 To a deceitful woman? tell me, friends,
 Am I not sung and proverb'd for a fool
 In every street? do they not say, how well
 Are come upon him his deserts? yet why? 205
 Immeasurable strength they might behold
 In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean:
 This with the other should, at least, have pair'd;
 These two, proportion'd ill, drove me transverse.

CHO. Tax not divine disposal; wisest men 210
 Have err'd, and by bad women been deceived;
 And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.
 Deject not then so overmuch thyself,
 Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides:
 Yet, truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder 215
 Why thou shouldst wed Philistian women rather,
 Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,
 At least of thy own nation, and as noble.

SAMS. The first I saw at Timna, and she pleased

181. *Eshtaol and Zora* were two towns of the tribe of Dan—Josh. xix. 41—the latter Samson's birthplace. They were both in the valley, (Josh. xv. 33,) and therefore Milton, with his unerring precision in the use of epithets, speaks of their *fruitful vale*.

184. *Salve to thy sores*. So Sidney, in his *Arcadia*: "But no outward cherishing could *salve* the inward *sore* of her mind."

219. *The first I saw at Timna*. None of the critics have observed that Milton here alludes to some of the particulars of his first match. To say nothing of the

dissatisfaction his first wife had conceived at her husband's unsocial and philosophical system of life, so different from the convivial cheerfulness and plenty of her father's family, it is probable that the quarrel was owing to party, which also might operate mutually. But when Cromwell proved victorious, her father, who had taken a very forward part in assisting the king, finding his affairs falling into distress, for prudential reasons strove to bring about an agreement between the separated couple. And thus the reconciliation was interested; nor was it effected but by her unsolicited and

N.B.

Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed 220
 The daughter of an infidel: they knew not
 That what I motion'd was of God; I knew
 From intimate impulse, and therefore urged
 The marriage on; that by occasion hence
 I might begin Israel's deliverance, 225
 The work to which I was divinely call'd.
 She proving false, the next I took to wife
 (O, that I never had! fond wish too late!)
 Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,
 That specious monster, my accomplish'd snare. 230
 I thought it lawful from my former act,
 And the same end; still watching to oppress
 Israel's oppressours: of what now I suffer
 She was not the prime cause, but I myself,
 Who, vanquish'd with a peal of words, (O, weakness!) 235
 Gave up my fort of silence to a woman.

CHO. In seeking just occasion to provoke
 The Philistine, thy country's enemy,
 Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness:
 Yet Israel still serves with all his sons. 240

SAMS. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
 On Israel's governours and heads of tribes,
 Who, seeing those great acts which God had done
 Singly by me against their conquerours,
 Acknowledged not, or not at all consider'd, 245
 Deliverance offer'd: I on the other side,
 Used no ambition to commend my deeds;
 The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the doer;
 But they persisted deaf, and would not seem
 To count them things worth notice, till at length 250
 Their lords the Philistines with gather'd powers
 Enter'd Judea seeking me, who then
 Safe to the rock of Etham was retired;
 Not flying, but forecasting in what place
 To set upon them, what advantaged best: 255
 Meanwhile the men of Judah, to prevent
 The harass of their land, beset me round:
 I willingly on some conditions came
 Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me
 To the uncircumcised a welcome prey, 260
 Bound with two cords; but cords to me were threads
 Touch'd with the flame: on their whole host I flew
 Unarm'd, and with a trivial weapon fell'd

apparently humble submission, and after the most earnest intreaties, which the husband for some time resisted. And I think it clear, that Milton's own experience in the course of this marriage, furnished the substance of the sentiments in another speech of Samson, lines 750-763. Phillips says that Milton was inclined to pardon his repudiated bride

"partly from his own generous nature, more inclinable to reconciliation than to perseverance in anger and revenge."—T. WARTON.

226. *Divinely*: Latin, *divinitus*.

230. *Accomplish'd snare*: "Ironical.

247. *Ambition*, in the sense of the Latin *ambitio*, "a going around to gain favour"

253. *Rock of Etham*. Judges xv. 8.

Their choicest youth; they only lived who fled. 265
 Had Judah that day join'd, or one whole tribe,
 They had by this possess'd the towers of Gath,
 And lorded over them whom now they serve:
 But what more oft, in nations grown corrupt
 And by their vices brought to servitude,
 Than to love bondage more than liberty, 270
 Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty;
 And to despise, or envy, or suspect
 Whom God hath of his special favour raised
 As their deliverer? if he aught begin,
 How frequent to desert him, and at last 275
 To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?
 CHO. Thy words to my remembrance bring
 How Succoth and the fort of Penuel
 Their great deliverer contemn'd,
 The matchless Gideon, in pursuit 280
 Of Madian and her vanquish'd kings:
 And how ingrateful Ephraim
 Had dealt with Jephthah, who by argument,
 Not worse than by his shield and spear,
 Defended Israel from the Ammonite, 285
 Had not his prowess quell'd their pride
 In that sore battel, when so many died
 Without reprieve, adjudged to death,
 For want of well pronouncing Shibboleth.
 SAMS. Of such examples add me to the roll; 290
 Me easily indeed mine may neglect,
 But God's proposed deliverance not so.
 CHO. Just are the ways of God,
 And justifiable to men;
 Unless there be who think not God at all: 295
 If any be, they walk obscure;
 For of such doctrine never was there school,
 But the heart of the fool,
 And no man therein doctor but himself.
 Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just, 300
 As to his own edicts found contradicting,
 Then give the reins to wandering thought,
 Regardless of his glory's diminution;
 Till, by their own perplexities involved,
 They ravel more, still less resolved, 305
 But never find self-satisfying solution.
 As if they would confine the Interminable,
 And tie him to his own prescript,
 Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,
 And hath full right to exempt 310

278. *Succoth*. See Judges viii. 4-9.

282. *Ephraim*. See Judges xi. 15-27,
and xii 1-6.

299. *And no man, &c.* There is some-
thing rather too quaint and fanciful in

this conceit; and it appears the worse, as
this speech of the Chorus is of so serious
a nature, and filled with so many deep
and solemn truths.—THYER.

Whom so it pleases him by choice
From national obstruction, without taint
Of sin, or legal debt;
For with his own laws he can best dispense.

He would not else, who never wanted means, 315
Nor in respect of the enemy just cause,
To set his people free,
Have prompted this heroick Nazarite,
Against his vow of strictest purity,
To seek in marriage that fallacious bride, 320
Unclean, unchaste.

Down, reason, then; at least, vain reasonings, down;
Though reason here aver,
That moral verdict quits her of unclean:
Unchaste was subsequent; her stain not his. 325

But see, here comes thy reverend sire
With careful steps, locks white as down,
Old Manoah: advise
Forthwith how thou ought'st to receive him.

SAMS. Ay me! Another inward grief, awak'd 330
With mention of that name, renews the assault.

Enter MANOAH.

MAN. Brethren and men of Dan, for such ye seem,
Though in this uncouth place; if old respect
As I suppose, towards your once gloried friend,
My son, now captive, hither hath inform'd 335
Your younger feet, while mine cast back with age
Came lagging after; say if he be here.

CHO. As signal now in low dejected state,
As erst in highest, behold him where he lies. 340

MAN. O miserable change! is this the man,
That invincible Samson, far renown'd,
The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength
Equivalent to angels, walk'd their streets,
None offering fight; who single combatant
Duell'd their armies rank'd in proud array, 345
Himself an army, now unequal match
To save himself against a coward arm'd
At one spear's length! O ever-failing trust
In mortal strength! and, O, what not in man
Deceivable and vain? Nay, what thing good 350
Pray'd for, but often proves our woe, our bane?
I pray'd for children, and thought barrenness
In wedlock a reproach; I gain'd a son,
And such a son as all men hail'd me happy:--
Who would be now a father in my stead? 355
O, wherefore did God grant me my request,

324. *Quits her of unclean.* That is, by the law of nature a Philistine woman was not unclean, yet the law of Moses held her to be so, as the best means to prevent intermarriages with them.—WARBURTON.

And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd?
 Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
 Our earnest prayers; then, given with solemn hand
 As graces, draw a scorpion's tail behind? 360
 For this did the angel twice descend? for this
 Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a plant
 Select and sacred, glorious for a while,
 The miracle of men; then in an hour
 Ensnared, assaulted, overcome, led bound, 365
 Thy foes' derision, captive, poor, and blind,
 Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves?
 Alas! methinks whom God hath chosen once
 To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,
 He should not so o'erwhelm, and as a thrall 370
 Subject him to so foul indignities,
 Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.
not slave SAMS. Appoint not heavenly disposition, father:
 Nothing of all these evils hath befallen me
 But justly; I myself have brought them on, 375
 Sole authour I, sole cause: if aught seem vile,
 As vile hath been my folly, who have profaned
 The mystery of God given me under pledge
 Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,
 A Canaanite, my faithless enemy. 380
 This well I knew, nor was at all surprised,
 But warn'd by oft experience: did not she
 Of Timna first betray me, and reveal
 The secret wrested from me in her highth
 Of nuptial love profess'd, carrying it straight 385
 To them who had corrupted her, my spies,
 And rivals? In this other was there found
 More faith, who also in her prime of love,
 Spousal embraces, vitiated with gold,
 Though offer'd only, by the scent conceived 390
 Her spurious first-born, treason against me?
 Thrice she assay'd with flattering prayers and sighs,
 And amorous reproaches, to win from me
 My capital secret; in what part my strength
 Lay stored, in what part summ'd, that she might know:
 Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport 396
 Her importunity, each time perceiving
 How openly, and with what impudence
 She purposed to betray me; and (which was worse
 Than undissembled hate) with what contempt 400
 She sought to make me traitor to myself:
 Yet the fourth time, when, mustering all her wiles,
 With blandish'd parlies, feminine assaults,
 Tongue-batteries, she surceased not, day nor night,

360. *Scorpion's tail.* He has raised this beautiful imagery on Luke xi. 12.

373. *Appoint not:* Do not point to it for censure—lay not the fault upon.

404. *Tongue-batteries.* See Judges xvi. 16, 17.

To storm me over-watch'd and wearied out, 405
 At times when men seek most repose and rest,
 I yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart,
 Who, with a grain of manhood well resolved,
 Might easily have shook off all her snares:
 But foul effeminacy held me yoked 410
 Her bond-slave; O indignity, O blot
 To honour and religion! servile mind
 Rewarded well with servile punishment!
 The base degree to which I now am fallen,
 These rags, this grinding, is not yet so base 415
 As was my former servitude, ignoble,
 Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
 True slavery; and that blindness worse than this,
 That saw not how degenerately I served.

MAN. I cannot praise thy marriage-choices, son, 420
 Rather approved them not; but thou didst plead
 Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st
 Find some occasion to infest our foes.
 I state not that; this I am sure, our foes 425
 Found soon occasion thereby to make thee
 Their captive and their triumph; thou the sooner
 Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms,
 To violate the sacred trust of silence
 Deposited within thee; which to have kept
 Tacit, was in thy power: true; and thou bear'st 430
 Enough, and more, the burden of that fault;
 Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying,
 That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains:
 This day the Philistines a popular feast
 Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim 435
 Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud,
 To Dagon, as their god, who hath deliver'd
 Thee, Samson, bound and blind into their hands,
 Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.
 So Dagon shall be magnified, and God, 440
 Besides whom is no god, compared with idols,
 Disglorified, blasphemed, and had in scorn
 By the idolatrous rout amidst their wine;
 Which to have come to pass by means of thee,
 Samson, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest, 445
 Of all reproach the most with shame that ever
 Could have befallen thee and thy father's house.

SAMS. Father, I do acknowledge and confess,
 That I this honour, I this pomp, have brought
 To Dagon, and advanced his praises high 450

411. *O indignity*, &c. Nothing could give the reader a better idea of a great and heroic spirit in the circumstances of Samson, than this sudden gust of indignation and passionate self-reproach, upon the mentioning of his weakness.

Besides, there is something vastly grand and noble in his reflection upon his present condition on this occasion.—
 THYER.

434. *This day*, &c. See Judges xvi. 23.

442. *Disglorified*: Deprived of glory.

Among the heathen round; to God have brought
 Dishonour, obloquy, and oped the mouths
 Of idolists and atheists; have brought scandal
 To Israel, diffidence of God, and doubt
 In feeble hearts, propense enough before 455
 To waver, or fall off and join with idols;
 Which is my chief affliction, shame and sorrow,
 The anguish of my soul, that suffers not
 Mine eye to harbour sleep or thoughts to rest.
 This only hope relieves me, that the strife 460
 With me hath end; all the contést is now
 'Twixt God and Dagon; Dagon hath presumed,
 Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
 His deity comparing and preferring 465
 Before the God of Abraham. He, be sure,
 Will not connive or linger, thus provoked;
 But will arise, and his great name assert:
 Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
 Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
 Of all these boasted trophies won on me, 470
 And with confusion blank his worshippers.

MAN. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
 I as a prophecy receive; for God,
 Nothing more certain, will not long defer
 To vindicate the glory of his name 475
 Against all competition, nor will long
 Endure it doubtful whether God be Lord,
 Or Dagon. But for thee what shall be done?
 Thou must not in the meanwhile here forgot,
 Lie in this miserable loathsome plight, 480
 Neglected. I already have made way
 To some Philistian lords, with whom to treat
 About thy ransom: well they may by this
 Have satisfied their utmost of revenge
 By pains and slaveries, worse than death, inflicted 485
 On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

SAMS. Spare that proposal, father; spare the trouble
 Of that solicitation; let me here,
 As I deserve, pay on my punishment,
 And expiate, if possible, my crime, 490
 Shameful garrulity. To have reveal'd
 Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
 How heinous had the fact been, how deserving
 Contempt, and scorn of all, to be excluded
 All friendship, and avoided as a blab, 495
 The mark of fool set on his front! But I
 God's counsel have not kept, his holy secret
 Presumptuously have publish'd, impiously,
 Weakly at least, and shamefully; a sin

471. *Blank*: That is, confound.

499. *A sin that Gentiles*. Alluding to the story of Tantalus, who, for revealing

the secrets of the gods, was condemned to the pains of Hell.

That Gentiles in their parables condemn 500
To their abyss and horrid pains confined.

MAN. Be penitent, and for thy fault contrite;

But act not in thy own affliction, son;

Repent the sin; but, if the punishment

Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids; 505

Or the execution leave to high disposal,

And let another hand, not thine, exact

Thy penal forfeit from thyself: perhaps

God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;

Who ever more approves, and more accepts, 510

(Best pleased with humble and filial submission)

Him, who, imploring mercy, sues for life,

Than who, self-rigorous, chooses death as due;

Which argues over-just, and self-displeas'd

For self-offence, more than for God offended. 515

Reject not then what offer'd means, who knows

But God hath set before us, to return thee

Home to thy country and his sacred house,

Where thou may'st bring thy offerings, to avert

His further ire, with prayers and vows renew'd? 520

✓ SAMS. His pardon I implore; but as for life,

To what end should I seek it? when in strength

All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes,

With youthful courage, and magnanimous thoughts

Of birth from Heaven foretold, and high exploits, 525

Full of divine instinct, after some proof

Of acts indeed heroick, far beyond

The sons of Anak, famous now and blaz'd;

Fearless of danger, like a petty god

I walk'd about, admir'd of all, and dreaded 530

On hostile ground, none daring my affront;

Then swollen with pride, into the snare I fell

Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,

Soften'd with pleasure and voluptuous life;

At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge 535

Of all my strength in the lascivious lap

Of a deceitful concubine, who shore me,

Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece;

Then turn'd me out ridiculous, despoil'd,

Shaven, and disarm'd among mine enemies. 540

CHO. Desire of wine, and all delicious drinks,

✓ Which many a famous warrior overturns,

Thou couldst repress; nor did the dancing ruby,

Sparkling, out-pour'd, the flavour, or the smell,

Or taste that cheers the heart of gods and men, 545

Allure thee from the cool crystalline stream.

516. *Reject not then*, &c. The expression is a little hard, but to this effect: "Reject not these means of ransom, which, for any thing we can tell, God may have set before us, or suggested to us, in order to return thee," &c.—HURD.

543. *Dancing ruby*. Alluding to Prov. xxiii. 31.

545. *Heart of gods*: Meaning the heroes of the Heathen.

SAMS. Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd
 Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure
 With touch ethereal of Heaven's fiery rod,
 I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying 550
 Thirst, and refresh'd; nor envied them the grape,
 Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

CHO. O, madness, to think use of strongest wines
 And strongest drinks our chief support of health,
 When God with these forbidden made choice to rear 555
 His mighty champion, strong above compare,
 Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

SAMS. But what avail'd this temperance, not complete
 Against another object more enticing?
 What boots it at one gate to make defence, 560
 And at another to let in the foe,
 Effeminately vanquish'd? by which means,
 Now blind, dishearten'd, shamed, dishonour'd, quell'd,
 To what can I be useful, wherein serve
 My nation, and the work from Heaven imposed, 565
 But to sit idle on the household hearth,
 A burdenous drone; to visitants a gaze,
 Or pitied object; these redundant locks,
 Robustious to no purpose, clustering down,
 Vain monument of strength; till length of years 570
 And sedentary numness craze my limbs
 To a contemptible old age obscure?
 Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread;
 Till vermin, or the draff of servile food,
 Consume me, and oft-invocated death 575
 Hasten the welcome end of all my pains.

MAN. Wilt thou then serve the Philistines with that gift
 Which was expressly given thee to annoy them?
 Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle, 580
 Inglorious, unemployed, with age outworn.
 But God, who caused a fountain at thy prayer
 From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst to allay
 After the brunt of battel; can as easy
 Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,
 Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast; 585
 And I persuade me so: why else this strength
 Miraculous yet remaining in those locks?
 His might continues in thee not for naught,
 Nor shall his wondrous gifts be frustrate thus.

SAMS. All otherwise to me my thoughts portend, 590

553. *O, madness, &c.* Milton exemplified, in his life, the truth of these noble lines,—being a singular example of temperance and abstemiousness.

557. *Whose drink.* Judges xiii. 7.

581. *Caused a fountain.* See Judges xv. 18, 19. Milton differs from our translation, which says that "God clave an hollow place that was in the jaw;" Milton,

that "he caused a fountain from the dry ground to spring;" and herein he follows the Chaldee paraphrase and the best commentators, who understand it that God made a cleft in some part of the ground or rock, in the place called *Lehi*: this word signifying both a jaw and a place so called.—NEWTON.

That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,
 Nor th' other light of life continue long,
 But yield to double darkness nigh at hand :
 So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
 My hopes all flat, Nature within me seems 595
 In all her functions weary of herself ;
 My race of glory run, and race of shame ;
 And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

MAN. Believe not these suggestions, which proceed
 From anguish of the mind and humours black, 600
 That mingle with thy fancy. I however
 Must not omit a father's timely care
 To prosecute the means of thy deliverance
 By ransom, or how else: meanwhile be calm,
 And healing words from these thy friends admit. 605

[Exit.]

SAMS. O, that torment should not be confined
 To the body's wounds and sores,
 With maladies innumerable
 In heart, head, breast, and reins ;
 But must secret passage find 610
 To the inmost mind,
 There exercise all his fierce accidents,
 And on her purest spirits prey,
 As on entrails, joints, and limbs,
 With answerable pains, but more intense, 615
 Though void of corporal sense.

My griefs not only pain me
 As a lingering disease,
 But, finding no redress, ferment and rage ;
 Nor less than wounds immedicable 620
 Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,
 To black mortification.
 Thoughts, my tormentors, arm'd with deadly stings,
 Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
 Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise 625
 Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
 Or med'cinal liquor can assuage,
 Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp.
 Sleep hath forsook and given me o'er
 To death's benumbing opium as my only cure: 630
 Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,
 And sense of Heaven's desertion.

594. *So much I feel, &c.* Here Milton, in the person of Samson, describes exactly his own case—what he felt and what he thought in some of his melancholy hours: he could not have written so well, but from his own feeling and experience; and the very flow of the verses is melancholy, and excellently adapted to the subject. As Mr. Thyer expresses it, there is a remarkable solemnity and air of melancholy in the very sound of these

verses; and the reader will find it very difficult to pronounce them without that grave and serious tone of voice which is proper for the occasion.—NEWTON.

627. *Med'cinal*, for *medicinal*, as Milton spells it also in his prose works.

628. *Alp*, from the Greek *αλφος*, "white," means any mountain "white" with snow. It is now particularly appropriated to the celebrated mountains of Switzerland.

I was his nursling once, and choice delight,
 His destined from the womb,
 Promised by heavenly message twice descending: 635
 Under his special eye
 Abstemious I grew up, and thriv'd amain:
 He led me on to mightiest deeds,
 Above the nerve of mortal arm,
 Against the uncircumcised, our enemies: 640
 But now hath cast me off as never known,
 And to those cruel enemies,
 Whom I by his appointment had provoked,
 Left me all helpless, with the irreparable loss
 Of sight, reserved alive to be repeated 645
 The subject of their cruelty or scorn.
 Nor am I in the list of them that hope:
 Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless:
 This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
 No long petition, speedy death, 650
 The close of all my miseries, and the balm.

Cho. Many are the sayings of the wise,
 In ancient and in modern books inroll'd,
 Extolling patience as the truest fortitude;
 And to the bearing well of all calamities, 655
 All chances incident to man's frail life,
 Consolatories writ
 With studied argument, and much persuasion sought,
 Lenient of grief and anxious thought:
 But with the afflicted in his pangs their sound 660
 Little prevails, or rather seems a tune
 Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint;
 Unless he feel within
 Some source of consolation from above,
 Secret refreshings, that repair his strength, 665
 And fainting spirits uphold.

God of our fathers, what is man!
 That thou towards him with hand so various,
 Or might I say contrarious,
 Temper'st thy providence through his short course, 670
 Not evenly, as thou rulest
 The angelick orders, and inferiour creatures mute,
 Irrational and brute.
 Nor do I name of men the common rout,
 That, wandering loose about, 675
 Grow up and perish, as the summer-fly,
 Heads without name, no more remember'd;
 But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
 With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd,
 To some great work, thy glory, 680
 And people's safety, which in part they effect:
 Yet toward these thus dignified, thou oft

Amidst their highth of noon,
 Changest thy countenance, and thy hand, with no regard
 Of highest favours past 685
 From thee on them, or them to thee of service.

Nor only dost degrade them, or remit
 To life obscured, which were a fair dismissal;
 But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them high;
 Unseemly falls in human eye, 690

Too grievous for the trespass or omission;
 Oft leavest them to the hostile sword
 Of heathen and profane, their carcasses
 To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv'd;

Or to the unjust tribunals, under change of times, 695
And condemnation of the ingrateful multitude.

~~If these they 'scape, perhaps in poverty~~
 With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
 Painful diseases and deform'd,
 In crude old age; 700

Though not disordinate, yet causeless suffering
 The punishment of dissolute days: in fine,
 Just or unjust, alike seem miserable,
 For oft alike both come to evil end.

So deal not with this once thy glorious champion, 705
 The image of thy strength, and mighty minister.

What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already!
 Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn
 His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end.

But who is this, what thing of sea or land? 710
 Female of sex it seems,

That so bedeck'd, ornate, and gay,
 Comes this way sailing

Like a stately ship
 Of Tarsus, bound for the isles 715

Of Javan or Gadire
 With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
 Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,

695. *Or to the unjust tribunals.* Here, no doubt, Milton reflected upon the trials and sufferings of his party after the Restoration; and probably he might have had in mind particularly the case of Sir Harry Vane, whom he has so highly celebrated in one of his sonnets.

697. *If these they 'scape, &c.* This was his own case: he escaped with life, but lived in poverty; and though he was always strictly sober and temperate, yet he was much afflicted with the gout and other "painful diseases in crude old age," when he was not yet a very old man. *Crude* is used for *premature*, and *coming before his time*.

708. *Behold him in this state, &c.* The concluding verses of this beautiful Chorus appear to me particularly affecting, from the persuasion that Milton, in com-

posing them, addressed the last two immediately to Heaven, as a prayer for himself. If the conjecture of this application be just, we may add, that never was the prevalence of a righteous prayer more happily conspicuous; and let me here remark, that however various the opinions of men may be concerning Milton's political character, the integrity of his heart appears to have secured to him the favour of Providence; since it pleased the Giver of all good not only to turn his labours to a peaceful end, but to irradiate his declining life with the most abundant portion of those pure and sublime mental powers, for which he had constantly and fervently prayed, as the choicest bounty of Heaven.—HAYLEY.

715. *Isles of Javan: Greece. Gadire: Gadez, Cadiz.*

untrue
B
selection in woman
the Roman
spelled

Courted by all the winds that hold them play,
 An amber scent of odorous perfume 720
 Her harbinger, a damsel train behind:
 Some rich Philistian matron she may seem;
 And now, at nearer view, no other certain
 Than Dalila thy wife. 724

SAMS. My wife! my traitress: let her not come near me.

CHO. Yet on she moves, now stands and eyes thee fix'd,
 About to have spoke; but now, with head declined,
 Like a fair flower surcharged with dew, she weeps,
 And words address'd seem into tears dissolved,
 Wetting the borders of her silken veil: 730
 But now again she makes address to speak.

Enter DALILA.

DAL. With doubtful feet and wavering resolution
 I came, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson;
 Which to have merited, without excuse,
 I cannot but acknowledge; yet, if tears 735
 May expiate, (though the fact more evil drew
 In the perverse event than I foresaw,)
 My penance hath not slacken'd, though my pardon
 No way assured. But conjugal affection,
 Prevailing over fear and timorous doubt, 740
 Hath led me on, desirous to behold
 Once more thy face, and know of thy estate,
 If aught in my ability may serve
 To lighten what thou suffer'st, and appease
 Thy mind with what amends is in my power, 745
 Though late, yet in some part to recompense
 My rash, but more unfortunate misdeed.

SAMS. Out, out, hyæna! these are thy wonted arts,
 And arts of every woman false like thee,
 To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray, 750
 Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
 And reconciliation move with feign'd remorse,
 Confess, and promise wonders in her change:
 Not truly penitent, but chief to try
 Her husband, how far urged his patience bears, 755
 His virtue or weakness which way to assail:
 Then with more cautious and instructed skill
 Again transgresses, and again submits;
 That wisest and best men, full off beguiled,

732. *With doubtful feet.* The scene between Samson and Dalila is drawn up with great judgment and particular beauty. One cannot conceive a more artful, soft, and persuasive eloquence, than that which is put into the mouth of Dalila; nor is the part of Samson less to be admired for that stern and resolute firmness which runs through it. What also gives both parts a great additional

beauty, is their forming so fine a contrast to each other.—THYER.

743. The *Hyæna* is a creature somewhat like a wolf, and is said to imitate a human voice so aptly as to draw people to it, and then devour them.—NEWTON.

759. *That wisest and best men, &c.* Milton had reason to lament that excess of indulgence with which he forgave and received again his disobedient and long

With goodness principled not to reject 760
 The penitent, but ever to forgive,
 Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
 Entangled with a poisonous bosom snake,
 If not by quick destruction soon cut off,
 As I by thee, to ages an example. 765
 DAL. Yet hear me, Samson; not that I endeavour
 To lessen or extenuate my offence;
 But that, on the other side, if it be weigh'd
 By itself, with aggravations not surcharged,
 Or else with just allowance counterpoised, 770
 I may, if possible, thy pardon find
 The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.
 First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
 In me, but incident to all our sex,
 Curiosity, inquisitive, importune 775
 Of secrets, then with like infirmity
 To publish them, both common female faults;
 Was it not weakness also to make known
 For importunity, that is, for naught,
 Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety? 780
 To what I did thou show'dst me first the way.
 But I to enemies reveal'd and should not:
 Nor shouldst thou have trusted that to woman's frailty:
 Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.
 Let weakness then with weakness come to parle, 785
 So near related, or the same of kind,
 Thine forgive mine; that men may censure thine
 The gentler, if severely thou exact not
 More strength from me than in thyself was found.
 And what if love, which thou interpret'st hate, 790
 The jealousy of love, powerful of sway
 In human hearts, nor less in mine towards thee,
 Caused what I did? I saw thee mutable
 Of fancy, fear'd lest one day thou wouldst leave me
 As her at Timna, sought by all means therefore 795
 How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest:
 No better way I saw than by importuning
 To learn thy secrets, get into my power
 The key of strength and safety: thou wilt say,
 Why then reveal'd? I was assured by those 800
 Who tempted me, that nothing was design'd
 Against thee but safe custody, and hold:
 That made for me; I knew that liberty
 Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,
 While I at home sat full of cares and fears, 805
 Wailing thy absence in my widow'd bed:
 Here I should still enjoy thee, day and night,

alienated wife; since their re-union not
 only disquieted his days, but gave birth
 to daughters who seem to have inherited
 the perversity of their mother. These

pathetic lines strike me as a forcible allu-
 sion to his own connubial infelicity.—
 HAYLEY.

Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines';
 Whole to myself, unhazarded abroad,
 Fearless at home of partners in my love. 810
 These reasons in love's law have pass'd for good,
 Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps;
 And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much woe,
 Yet always pity or pardon hath obtain'd.
 Be not unlike all others, not austere 815
 As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.
 If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,
 In uncompassionate anger do not so.

SAMS. How cunningly the sorceress displays
 Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine! 820
 That malice, not repentance, brought thee hither,
 By this appears: I gave, thou say'st, the example;
 I led the way: bitter reproach, but true:
 I to myself was false ere thou to me;
 Such pardon therefore as I give my folly, 825
 Take to thy wicked deed; which when thou seest
 Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
 Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
 Confess it feign'd. Weakness is thy excuse,
 And I believe it; weakness to resist 830
 Philistian gold: if weakness may excuse,
 What murderer, what traitor, parricide,
 Incestuous, sacrilegious, but may plead it?
 All wickedness is weakness: that plea therefore
 With God or man will gain thee no remission. 835
 But love constrain'd thee; call it furious rage
 To satisfy thy lust: love seeks to have love;
 My love how couldst thou hope, who took'st the way
 To raise in me inexpiable hate,
 Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betray'd? 840
 In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,
 Or by evasions thy crime uncover'st more.

DAL. Since thou determinest weakness for no plea
 In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
 Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides, 845
 What sieges girt me round, ere I consented;
 Which might have awed the best-resolved of men,
 The constantest, to have yielded without blame.
 It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,
 That wrought with me: thou know'st, the magistrates 850
 And princes of my country came in person,
 Solicited, commanded, threaten'd, urged,
 Adjured by all the bonds of civil duty
 And of religion, press'd how just it was,
 How honourable, how glorious, to entrap 855

825. *Such pardon, &c.* These sentiments of self-condemnation are expressed with wonderful dignity, reflecting all the noble and resolute virtue of the poet's own highly-principled mind.—DUNSTER.
 850. *Thou know'st, &c.* See Judges xvi. 5.

A common enemy, who had destroy'd
 Such numbers of our nation: and the priest
 Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
 Preaching how meritorious with the gods
 It would be to ensnare an irreligious 860
 Dishonourer of Dagon: what had I
 To oppose against such powerful arguments?
 Only my love of thee held long debate,
 And combated in silence all these reasons
 With hard contest: at length, that grounded maxim, 865
 So rife and celebrated in the mouths
 Of wisest men, that—To the publick good
 Private respects must yield—with grave authority
 Took full possession of me, and prevail'd;
 Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty, so enjoining, 870
 SAMS. I thought where all thy circling wiles would end;
 In feign'd religion, smooth hypocrisy!
 But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
 Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee 875
 Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
 I, before all the daughters of my tribe
 And of my nation, chose thee from among
 My enemies, loved thee, as too well thou knew'st;
 Too well; unbosom'd all my secrets to thee,
 Not out of levity, but overpower'd 880
 By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;
 Yet now am judged an enemy. Why then
 Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband,
 Then, as since then, thy country's foe profess'd?
 Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave 885
 Parents and country; nor was I their subject,
 Nor under their protection, but my own;
 Thou mine, not theirs: if aught against my life
 Thy country sought of thee, it sought unjustly,
 Against the law of nature, law of nations; 890
 No more thy country, but an impious crew
 Of men conspiring to uphold their state
 By worse than hostile deeds; violating the ends

857. *And the priest, &c.* The character of the priest, which makes a conspicuous figure here, is the poet's own addition to the scriptural account. It is obviously a satire on the ministers of the church.—DUNSTER. But have not "ministers of the church" in no small numbers, been found, in all ages, apologists for wrong? Did not the abolition of the slave-trade by England find some of its strongest opponents among the bishops in the House of Lords? And who have exerted a greater influence in our own country, in apologizing for and sustaining our own iniquitous system of slavery, than many "ministers," of all denominations, both North and South.

867. *That to the publick good Private respects must yield.* How ingenious has the great Adversary of souls been, in all ages, in suggesting to men arguments that would quiet their consciences in the perpetration of crime! So in our own day it has been blasphemously asserted by thousands high in position and influence, that a man is bound to obey an infamous law of the land, however his conscience may tell him it conflicts with the "higher law" of God.
 885. *Being once a wife, &c.* Here seems again an allusion to the poet's own case, with reference to the cause of the Parliamentarians against that of the King, to which his wife was attached.—BRIDGES.

MB

For which our country is a name so dear;
 Not therefore to be obey'd. But zeal moved thee: 895
 To please thy gods thou didst it: gods unable
 To acquit themselves and prosecute their foes
 But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
 Of their own deity, gods cannot be;
 Less therefore to be pleased, obey'd, or fear'd. 900
 These false pretexs and varnish'd colours failing,
 Bare in thy guilt, how foul must thou appear!
 DAL. In argument with men a woman ever
 Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.
 SAMS. For want of words no doubt, or lack of breath: 905
 Witness when I was worried with thy peals.
 DAL. I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken
 In what I thought would have succeeded best.
 Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, Samson;
 Afford me place to show what recompense 910
 Towards thee I intend for what I have misdome,
 Misguided; only what remains past cure
 Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist
 To afflict thyself in vain: though sight be lost,
 Life yet hath many solaces, enjoy'd 915
 Where other senses want not their delights
 At home in leisure and domestick ease,
 Exempt from many a care and chance, to which
 Eye-sight exposes daily men abroad.
 I to the lords will intercede, not doubting 920
 Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee
 From forth this loathsome prison-house, to abide
 With me, where my redoubled love and care
 With nursing diligence, to me glad office,
 May ever tend about thee to old age 925
 With all things grateful cheer'd, and so supplied,
 That, what by me thou hast lost, thou least shalt miss.
 SAMS. No, no; of my condition take no care;
 It fits not; thou and I long since are twain:
 Nor think me so unwary or accursed, 930
 To bring my feet again into the snare
 Where once I have been caught: I know thy trains,
 Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils:
 Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms,
 No more on me have power; their force is null'd; 935
 So much of adder's wisdom I have learn'd,
 To fence my ear against thy sorceries.
 If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
 Loved, honour'd, fear'd me, thou alone couldst hate me
 Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forego me; 940
 How wouldst thou use me now, blind, and thereby
 Deceivable, in most things as a child
 Helpless, thence easily contemn'd, and scorn'd,

And last neglected! How wouldst thou insult,
 When I must live uxorious to thy will 945
 In perfect thralldom; how again betray me,
 Bearing my words and doings to the lords
 To gloss upon, and, censuring, frown or smile!
 This jail I count the house of liberty
 To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter. 950

DAL. Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand.

SAMS. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance wake
 My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.
 At distance I forgive thee; go with that:
 Bewail thy falsehood, and the pious works 955
 It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
 Among illustrious women, faithful wives!
 Cherish thy hasten'd widowhood with the gold
 Of matrimonial treason! so farewell.

DAL. I see thou art implacable, more deaf 960
 To prayers than winds and seas; yet winds to seas
 Are reconciled at length, and sea to shore:
 Thy anger, unappeasable, still rages,
 Eternal tempest, never to be calm'd.

Why do I humble thus myself, and, suing 965
 For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate;
 Bid go with evil omen, and the brand
 Of infamy upon my name denounced?

To mix with thy concernments I desist
 Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own. 970
 Fame, if not double-faced, is double-mouth'd,
 And with contráry blast proclaims most deeds;
 On both his wings, one black, the other white,
 Bears greatest names in his wild aery flight.

My name perhaps among the circumcised 975
 In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes,
 To all posterity may stand defamed,
 With malediction mention'd, and the blot
 Of falsehood most unconjugal traduced:

But in my country, where I most desire, 980
 In Ecron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath,
 I shall be named among the famousest
 Of women, sung at solemn festivals,
 Living and dead recorded, who, to save

Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose 985
 Above the faith of wedlock-bands; my tomb
 With odours visited and annual flowers;
 Not less renown'd than in Mount Ephraim
 Jael, who with inhospitable guile
 Smote Sisera sleeping, through the temples nail'd. 990

973. *On both his wings.* I do not recollect any instance of Fame having two wings of different colours assigned by any of the Roman poets. Milton seems to have equipped his deity very characteristically, by borrowing one wing from

Infamy, and another from Victory or Glory.—DUNSTER.

989. *Jael* is celebrated in the noble song of Deborah and Barak, Judges v. See also, Judges iv. 5.

Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy
 The publick marks of honour and reward,
 Conferr'd upon me for the piety,
 Which to my country I was judged to have shown.
 At this whoever envies or repines, 995
 I leave him to his lot, and like my own. [Exit.

CHO. She's gone, a manifest serpent by her sting,
 Discover'd in the end, till now conceal'd.

SAMS. So let her go; God sent her to debase me,
 And aggravate my folly, who committed 1000
 To such a viper his most sacred trust
 Of secrecy, my safety and my life.

CHO. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange power,
 After offence returning, to regain 1005
 Love once possess'd, nor can be easily
 Repulsed, without much inward passion felt,
 And secret sting of amorous remorse.

SAMS. Love-quarrels oft in pleasing concord end,
 Not wedlock treachery endangering life.

CHO. It is not virtue, wisdom, valour, wit, 1010

Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit,
 That woman's love can win or long inherit;
 But what it is, hard is to say,
 Harder to hit,

Which way soever men refer it; 1015

Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day
 Or seven, though one should musing sit.

If any of these, or all, the Timnian bride
 Had not so soon preferr'd 1020
 Thy paranymp, worthless to thee compared,
 Successour in thy bed,

Nor both so loosely disallied
 Their nuptials, nor this last so treacherously
 Had shorn the fatal harvest of thy head. 1025
 Is it for that such outward ornament

Was lavish'd on their sex, that inward gifts -
 Were left for haste unfinish'd, judgment scant,
 Capacity not raised to apprehend
 Or value what is best

In choice, but ofttest to affect the wrong? 1030

Or was too much of self-love mix'd,
 Of constancy no root infix'd,
 That either they love nothing, or not long?

Whate'er it be, to wisest men and best 1035
 Seeming at first all heavenly under virgin veil,
 Soft, modest, meek, demure,
 Once join'd, the contrary she proves, a thorn
 Intestine, far within defensive arms

1003. *Yet beauty, &c.* This truth Milton has finely exemplified in Adam's forgiving Eve, and he had full experience of it in his own case.—NEWTON.

1020. *Paranymp*, a bride-man, one who leads the bride to her marriage. See Judges xiv. 20.

A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue
Adverse and turbulent, or by her charms 1040
Draws him awry enslaved

With dotage, and his sense depraved
To folly and shameful deeds, which ruin ends.
What pilot so expert but needs must wreck,
Imbark'd with such a steers-mate at the helm? 1045

Favour'd of Heaven, who finds
One virtuous, rarely found,
That in domestick good combines;
Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:
But virtue, which breaks through all opposition, 1050
And all temptation can remove,

Most shines, and most is acceptable above.
Therefore God's universal law
Gave to the man despotick power
Over his female in due awe, 1055

Nor from that right to part an hour,
Smile she or lour:
So shall he least confusion draw
On his whole life, not sway'd
By female usurpation, nor dismay'd. 1060

But had we best retire? I see a storm.

SAMS. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.

CHO. But this another kind of tempest brings.

SAMS. Be less abstruse; my riddling days are past.

CHO. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear 1065

The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward; I know him by his stride
The giant Harapha of Gath, his look
Haughty, as is his pile high-built and proud.
Comes he in peace? what wind hath blown him hither 1070

I less conjecture than when first I saw
The sumptuous Dalila floating this way;
His habit carries peace, his brow defiance,

SAMS. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes. 1074

CHO. His fraught we soon shall know: he now arrives.

Enter HARAPHA.

HAR. I come not, Samson, to condole thy chance,
As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
Though for no friendly intent. I am of Gath;
Men call me Harapha, of stock renown'd
As Og, or Anak, and the Emims old 1080

1039. *A cleaving mischief.* These words allude to the poisoned shirt sent to Hercules by his wife Dejanira.

1046. *Favour'd of Heaven, &c.* If Milton, like Solomon and the Son of Sirach, satirizes the women in general, like them too he commends the virtuous and good, and esteems a good wife a blessing from the Lord. See Prov. xviii. 22, xix. 14, and Ecclesiasticus, xxvi. 1, 2.

1068. *Harapha.* This character is fictitious, but is properly introduced by the poet, and not without some foundation in Scripture. Arapha, or rather Rapha, (says Calmet) was father of the giants of Raphaim.—NEWTON.

1075. *Fraught,* for freight.

1080. *Og.* See Deut. iii. 11, and ii. 10, 11.

That Kiriathaim held: thou know'st me now,
 If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
 Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd,
 Incredible to me, in this displeas'd,
 That I was never present on the place 1085
 Of those encounters, where we might have tried
 Each other's force in camp or listed field;
 And now am come to see of whom such noise
 Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
 If thy appearance answer loud report. 1090

SAMS. The way to know were not to see, but taste.

HAR. Dost thou already single me? I thought
 Gyves and the mill had tamed thee. O, that fortune
 Had brought me to the field, where thou art famed
 To have wrought such wonders with an ass's jaw! 1095
 I should have forced thee soon with other arms,
 Or left thy carcass where the ass lay thrown:
 So had the glory of prowess been recover'd
 To Palestine, won by a Philistine
 From the unforeskinn'd race, of whom thou bear'st 1100
 The highest name for valiant acts: that honour,
 Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,
 I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

SAMS. Boast not of what thou wouldst have done, but do
 What then thou wouldst; thou seest it in thy hand. 1105

HAR. To combat with a blind man I disdain;
 And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.

SAMS. Such usage as your honourable lords
 Afford me, assassinated and betray'd,
 Who durst not with their whole united powers 1110
 In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,
 Nor in the house with chamber-ambushes
 Close-banded durst attack me, no, not sleeping,
 Till they had hired a woman with their gold,
 Breaking her marriage faith, to circumvent me. 1115
 Therefore, without feign'd shifts, let be assign'd
 Some narrow place enclosed, where sight may give thee,
 Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;
 Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet
 And brigandine of brass, thy broad habergeon, 1120
 Vant-brass, and greves, and gauntlet; add thy spear,
 A weaver's beam, and seven-times-folded shield:
 I only with an oaken staff will meet thee,
 And raise such outcries on thy clatter'd iron,
 Which long shall not withhold me from thy head, 1125
 That in a little time, while breath remains thee,
 Thou oft shalt wish thyself at Gath, to boast
 Again in safety what thou wouldst have done
 To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

1081. *Kiriathaim*. See Gen. xiv. 5.

1113. *Close-banded*, secretly leagued.

1120. *Brigandine*, a coat of mail: *habergeon*, made for the neck and shoulders:

vant-brass, (*avant-bras*) armor for the arms; *greves*, for the legs: *gauntlet*, an iron glove. See 1 Sam. xvii. 6.

HAR. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms, 1130
 Which greatest heroes have in battle worn,
 Their ornament and safety, had not spells
 And black enchantments, some magician's art,
 Arm'd thee or charm'd thee strong, which thou from
 Heaven

Feign'dst at thy birth was given thee in thy hair, 1135
 Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs
 Were bristles ranged like those that ridge the back
 Of chaf'd wild boars, or ruffled porcupines.

SAMS. I know no spells, use no forbidden arts:
 My trust is in the Living God, who gave me 1140
 At my nativity this strength, diffused
 No less through all my sinews, joints, and bones,
 Than thine, while I preserved these locks unshorn,
 The pledge of my unviolated vow.

For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy god, 1145
 Go to his temple, invoke his aid
 With solemnest devotion, spread before him
 How highly it concerns his glory now
 To frustrate and dissolve these magick spells,

Which I to be the power of Israel's God 1150
 Avow and challenge Dagon to the test,
 Offering to combat thee his champion bold,
 With the utmost of his godhead seconded:
 Then thou shalt see, or rather, to thy sorrow,
 Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine. 1155

HAR. Presume not on thy God, whate'er he be;
 Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
 Quite from his people, and deliver'd up
 Into thy enemies' hand, permitted them
 To put out both thine eyes, and fetter'd send thee 1160
 Into the common prison, there to grind
 Among the slaves and asses, thy comrâdes,
 As good for nothing else; no better service
 With those thy boisterous locks, no worthy match
 For valour to assail, nor by the sword 1165
 Of noble warrior, so to stain his honour,
 But by the barber's razor best subdued.

SAMS. All these indignities, for such they are
 From thine, these evils I deserve, and more,
 Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me 1170
 Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon,
 Whose ear is ever open, and his eye
 Gracious to re-admit the suppliant:

In confidence whereof I once again
 Defy thee to the trial of mortal fight, 1175
 By combat to decide whose god is God,
 Thine, or whom I with Israel's sons adore.

HAR. Fair honour that thou dost thy God, in trusting
 He will accept thee to defend his cause,
 A murderer, a revolter, and a robber! 1180

SAMS. Tongue-doughty giant, how dost thou prove me these?

HAR. Is not thy nation subject to our lords?

Their magistrates confess'd it, when they took thee
 As a league-breaker, and deliver'd bound
 Into our hands: for hadst thou not committed 1185
 Notorious murder on those thirty men
 At Ascalon, who never did thee harm,
 Then like a robber stripp'dst them of their robes?
 The Philistines, when thou hadst broke the league,
 Went up with armed powers thee only seeking, 1190
 To others did no violence nor spoil.

SAMS. Among the daughters of the Philistines
 I chose a wife, which argued me no foe;
 And in your city held my nuptial feast:
 But your ill-meaning politician lords, 1195
 Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,
 Appointed to await me thirty spies,
 Who, threatening cruel death, constrain'd the bride
 To wring from me, and tell to them, my secret,
 That solved the riddle which I had proposed. 1200
 When I perceived all set on enmity,
 As on my enemies, wherever chanced,
 I used hostility, and took their spoil,
 To pay my underminers in their coin.
 My nation was subjected to your lords; 1205
 It was the force of conquest: force with force
 Is well ejected when the conquer'd can.
 But I, a private person, whom my country
 As a league-breaker gave up bound, presumed
 Single rebellion, and did hostile acts. 1210
 I was no private, but a person raised
 With strength sufficient, and command from Heaven,
 To free my country: if their servile minds
 Me, their deliverer sent, would not receive,
 But to their masters gave me up for naught, 1215
 The unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.
 I was to do my part from Heaven assign'd,
 And had perform'd it, if my known offence
 Had not disabled me, not all your force:
 These shifts refuted, answer thy appelland, 1220
 Though by his blindness maim'd for high attempts,
 Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,
 As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

HAR. With thee? a man condemn'd, a slave inroll'd,
 Due by the law to capital punishment? 1225
 To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

SAMS. Cam'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,
 To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict?
 Come nearer; part not hence so slight inform'd;
 But take good heed my hand survey not thee. 1230

HAR. O Baal-zebub! can my ears unused
 Hear these dishonours, and not render death?

SAMS. No man withhold thee, nothing from thy hand
 Fear I incurable; bring up thy van:
 My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free. 1235

HAR. This insolence other kind of answer fits.

SAMS. Go, baffled coward! lest I run upon thee,
 Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,
 And with one buffet lay thy structure low,
 Or swing thee in the air, then dash thee down 1240
 To the hazard of thy brains and shatter'd sides.

HAR. By Ashtaroth, ere long thou shalt lament
 These braveries, in irons loaden on thee. [*Exit.*]

CHO. His giantship is gone somewhat crest-fallen,
 Stalking with less unconscionable strides, 1245
 And lower looks, but in a sultry chafe.

SAMS. I dread him not, nor all his giant brood,
 Though Fame divulge him father of five sons,
 All of gigantick size, Goliath chief.

CHO. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
 And with malicious counsel stir them up
 Some way or other yet further to afflict thee. 1250

SAMS. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
 Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
 Whether he durst accept the offer or not; 1255

And, that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.
 Much more affliction than already felt
 They cannot well impose, nor I sustain;
 If they intend advantage of my labours,
 The work of many hands, which earns my keeping 1260
 With no small profit daily to my owners.

But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove
 My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence;
 The worst that he can give, to me the best.
 Yet so it may fall out, because their end 1265
 Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
 Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.

CHO. O, how comely it is, and how reviving
 To the spirits of just men long oppress'd,
 When God into the hands of their deliverer 1270
 Puts invincible might

To quell the mighty of the earth, the oppressour,
 The brute and boisterous force of violent men,
 Hardy and industrious to support
 Tyrannick power, but raging to pursue 1275
 The righteous, and all such as honour truth!

He all their ammunition
 And feats of war defeats,
 With plain heroick magnitude of mind
 And celestial vigour arm'd; 1280
 Their armouries and magazines contemns,
 Renders them useless; while
 With winged expedition,
 Swift as the lightning glance, he executes

His errand on the wicked, who, surprised, 1285
 Lose their defence, distracted and amazed.
 But patience is more oft the exercise
 Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,
 Making them each his own deliverer,
 And victor over all 1290
 That tyranny or fortune can inflict.
 Either of these is in thy lot,
 Samson, with might endued
 Above the sons of men; but sight bereaved
 May chance to number thee with those 1295
 Whom patience finally must crown.
 This idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest,
 Labouring thy mind
 More than the working day thy hands.
 And yet perhaps more trouble is behind, 1300
 For I descry this way
 Some other tending; in his hand
 A sceptre or quaint staff he bears,
 Comes on amain, speed in his look.
 By his habit I discern him now 1305
 A publick officer, and now at hand:
 His message will be short and voluble.

Enter OFFICER.

OFF. Hebrews, the prisoner Samson here I seek.
 CHO. His manacles remark him; there he sits.
 OFF. Samson, to thee our lords thus bid me say: 1310
 This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,
 With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games:
 Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,
 And now some publick proof thereof require
 To honour this great feast and great assembly: 1315
 Rise therefore with all speed, and come along,
 Where I will see thee hearten'd, and fresh clad,
 To appear, as fits, before the illustrious lords.
 SAMS. Thou know'st I am an Hebrew, therefore tell them,
 Our law forbids at their religious rites 1320
 My presence; for that cause I cannot come.
 OFF. This answer, be assured, will not content them.
 SAMS. Have they not sword-players, and every sort
 Of gymnick artists, wrestlers, riders, runners,
 Juglers, and dancers, anticks, mummers, mimicks, 1325
 But they must pick me out, with shackles tired,
 And over-labour'd at their publick mill,
 To make them sport with blind activity?
 Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels
 On my refusal to distress me more, 1330
 Or make a game of my calamities?
 Return the way thou cam'st; I will not come.

OFF. Regard thyself; this will offend them highly.

SAMS. Myself? my conscience, and internal peace.
Can they think me so broken, so debased 1335

With corporal servitude, that my mind ever
Will condescend to such absurd commands?
Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester,
And in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief
To show them feats, and play before their god, 1340
The worst of all indignities, yet on me
Join'd with extreme contempt? I will not come.

OFF. My message was imposed on me with speed,
Brooks no delay: is this thy resolution?

SAMS. So take it with what speed thy message needs. 1345

OFF. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce.

[Exit.

SAMS. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.

CHO. Consider, Samson; matters now are strain'd
Up to the highth, whether to hold or break:
He's gone, and who knows how he may report 1350
Thy words, by adding fuel to the flame?
Expect another message more imperious,
More lordly thundering than thou well wilt bear.

SAMS. Shall I abuse this consecrated gift
Of strength, again returning with my hair 1355

After my great transgression; so requite
Favour renew'd, and add a greater sin
By prostituting holy things to idols?
A Nazarite in place abominable
Vaunting my strength in honour to their Dagon! 1360
Besides, how vile, contemptible, ridiculous!
What act more execrably unclean, profane?

CHO. Yet with this strength thou servest the Philistines,
Idolatrous, uncircumcised, unclean.

SAMS. Not in their idol-worship, but by labour 1365
Honest and lawful to deserve my food
Of those who have me in their civil power.

CHO. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.

SAMS. Where outward force constrains, the sentence
holds.

But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon, 1370
Not dragging? the Philistian lords command.

Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, venturing to displease
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind: which in his jealousy 1375
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.
Yet that he may dispense with me, or thee,

1347. *Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.* Here the catastrophe is anticipated, as before, (lines 1266-7.) Such anticipations are usual with the best dramatic writers, who, knowing their

own plan, open it by degrees, and drop such hints as cannot be perfectly comprehended till they are fully explained by the event.—NEWTON.

Present in temples at idolatrous rites

For some important cause, thou need'st not doubt.

CHO. How thou wilt here come off surmounts my reach

SAMS. Be of good courage; I begin to feel 1381

Some rousing motions in me, which dispose

To something extraordinary my thoughts.

I with this messenger will go along,

Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour 1385

Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.

If there be aught of presage in the mind,

This day will be remarkable in my life

By some great act, or of my days the last.

CHO. In time thou hast resolved; the man returns. 1390

OFF. Samson, this second message from our lords

To thee I am bid say. Art thou our slave,

Our captive, at the publick mill our drudge,

And dar'st thou at our sending and command

Dispute thy coming? come without delay; 1395

Or we shall find such engines to assail

And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,

Though thou wert firmlier fasten'd than a rock.

SAMS. I could be well content to try their art,
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious. 1400

Yet, knowing their advantages too many,

Because they shall not trail me through their streets

Like a wild beast, I am content to go.

Masters' commands come with a power resistless

To such as owe them absolute subjection; 1405

And for a life who will not change his purpose?

(So mutable are all the ways of men!)

Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply

Scandalous or forbidden in our law.

OFF. I praise thy resolution: doff these links: 1410

By this compliance thou wilt win the lords

To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.

SAMS. Brethren, farewell; your company along

I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them

To see me girt with friends; and how the sight 1415

Of me, as of a common enemy,

So dreaded once, may now exasperate them,

I know not: lords are lordliest in their wine;

And the well-feasted priest then soonest fired

With zeal, if aught religion seem concern'd; 1420

No less the people, on their holy-days,

Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable:

Happen what may, of me expect to hear

Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy

Our God, our law, my nation, or myself, 1425

The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

[Exit, with the Officer.]

1384. *This messenger*, said in expectation of the return of the officer.

1410. *Thy resolution*, that is, of going.

CHO. Go, and the Holy One
 Of Israel be thy guide
 To what may serve his glory best, and spread his name
 Great among the heathen round; 1430
 Send thee the angel of thy birth, to stand
 Fast by thy side, who from thy father's field
 Rode up in flames after his message told
 Of thy conception, and be now a shield
 Of fire; that spirit, that first rush'd on thee 1435
 In the camp of Dan,
 Be efficacious in thee now at need!
 For never was from Heaven imparted
 Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,
 As in thy wondrous actions hath been seen. 1440
 But wherefore comes old Manoaah in such haste
 With youthful steps? much livelier than erewhile
 He seems; supposing here to find his son,
 Or of him bringing to us some glad news?

Enter MANOAH.

MAN. Peace with you, brethren; my inducement hither
 Was not at present here to find my son, 1446
 By order of the lords new parted hence
 To come and play before them at their feast.
 I heard all as I came; the city rings,
 And numbers thither flock: I had no will, 1450
 Lest I should see him forced to things unseemly.
 But that, which moved my coming now, was chiefly
 To give ye part with me what hope I have
 With good success to work his liberty.

CHO. That hope would much rejoice us to partake 1455
 With thee; say, reverend sire; we thirst to hear.

MAN. I have attempted one by one the lords
 Either at home, or through the high street passing,
 With supplication prone and father's tears,
 To accept of ransom for my son their prisoner. 1460
 Some much averse I found and wondrous harsh,
 Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;
 That part most revered Dagon and his priests:
 Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
 Private reward, for which both God and state 1465
 They easily would set to sale: a third
 More generous far and civil, who confess'd
 They had enough revenged, having reduced
 Their foe to misery beneath their fears;
 The rest was magnanimity to remit, 1470
 If some convenient ransom were proposed.

What noise or shout was that? it tore the sky.

CHO. Doubtless, the people shouting to behold
 Their once great dread, captive and blind before them,
 Or at some proof of strength before them shown. 1475

MAN. His ransom, if my whole inheritance

- May compass it, shall willingly be paid
 And number'd down: much rather I shall choose
 To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest,
 And he in that calamitous prison left. 1480
 No, I am fix'd, not to part hence without him.
 For his redemption all my patrimony,
 If need be, I am ready to forego
 And quit: not wanting him, I shall want nothing.
- CHO. Fathers are wont to lay up for their sons, 1485
 Thou for thy son art bent to lay out all:
 Sons wont to nurse their parents in old age,
 Thou in old age car'st how to nurse thy son,
 Made older than thy age through eye-sight lost.
- MAN. It shall be my delight to tend his eyes, 1490
 And view him sitting in the house ennobl'd
 With all those high exploits by him achieved,
 And on his shoulders waving down those locks,
 That of a nation arm'd the strength contain'd;
 And I persuade me, God had not permitted 1495
 His strength again to grow up with his hair,
 Garrison'd round about him like a camp
 Of faithful soldiery, were not his purpose
 To use him further yet in some great service;
 Not to sit idle with so great a gift 1500
 Useless, and thence ridiculous, about him.
- And since his strength with eye-sight was not lost,
 God will restore him eye-sight to his strength.
- CHO. Thy hopes are not ill founded, nor seem vain 1505
 Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon
 Conceived, agreeable to a father's love,
 In both which we, as next, participate.
- MAN. I know your friendly minds, and—O, what noise!
 Mercy of Heaven! what hideous noise was that?
 Horribly loud, unlike the former shout. 1510
- CHO. Noise call you it, or universal groan,
 As if the whole inhabitation perish'd!
 Blood, death, and deathful deeds are in that noise,
 Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.

1490. *It shall be my delight, &c.* The character of a fond parent is extremely well supported in the person of Manoah quite through the whole performance, but there is in my opinion something peculiarly natural and moving in this speech. The circumstance of the old man's feeding and soothing his fancy with the thoughts of tending his son, and contemplating him ennobl'd with so many famous exploits, is vastly expressive of the doating fondness of an old father. Nor is the poet less to be admired for his making Manoah, under the influence of this pleasing imagination, go on still further, and flatter himself even with the

hopes of God's restoring his eyes again.—
 THYER.

1508. *O, what noise!* Observe with what art and judgment Milton prepares the reader for the relation of the catastrophe of this tragedy. This abrupt start of Manoah upon hearing the hideous noise, and the description of it by the Chorus in their answer, in terms so full of dread and terror, naturally fill the mind with a presaging horror proper for the occasion.—
 THYER. Nothing can be more impressive, more calculated to excite pity, than the revolution of Samson's fate, which is now developed.—
 TODD.

MAN. Of ruin indeed methought I heard the noise: 1515
O! it continues: they have slain my son.

CHO. Thy son is rather slaying them; that outcry
From slaughter of one foe could not ascend.

MAN. Some dismal accident it needs must be:
What shall we do: stay here, or run and see? 1520

CHO. Best keep together here, lest, running thither,
We unawares run into danger's mouth.
This evil on the Philistines is fallen;
From whom could else a general cry be heard?
The sufferers then will scarce molest us here: 1525
From other hands we need not much to fear.

What if, his eye-sight (for to Israel's God
Nothing is hard) by miracle restored,
He now be dealing dole among his foes,
And over heaps of slaughter'd walk his way? 1530

MAN. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

CHO. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old; what hinders now?

MAN. He can, I know, but doubt to think he will;
Yet hope would fain subscribe, and tempts belief. 1535
A little stay will bring some notice hither.

CHO. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
For evil news rides post, while good news baits;
And to our wish I see one hither speeding;
An Hebrew, as I guess, and of our tribe. 1540

Enter MESSENGER.

MES. O, whither shall I run, or which way fly
The sight of this so horrid spectacle,
Which erst my eyes beheld, and yet behold?
For dire imagination still pursues me.
But providence or instinct of nature seems, 1545
Or reason, though disturb'd, and scarce consulted,
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To thee first, reverend Manoah, and to these
My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining,
As at some distance from the place of horreur, 1550
So in the sad event too much concern'd.

MAN. The accident was loud, and here before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not:
No preface needs; thou seest we long to know.

MES. It would burst forth, but I recover breath 1555
And sense distract, to know well what I utter.

MAN. Tell us the sum, the circumstance defer.

MES. Gaza yet stands, but all her sons are fallen
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fallen.

MAN. Sad, but thou know'st to Israelites not saddest 1560
The desolation of a hostile city.

MES. Feed on that first: there may in grief be surfeit.

MAN. Relate by whom.

MES. By Samson.

- MAN. That still lessens
The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.
- MES. Ah! Manoah, I refrain too suddenly 1565
To utter what will come at last too soon;
Lest evil tidings, with too rude irruption
Hitting thy aged ear, should pierce too deep.
- MAN. Suspense in news is torture; speak them out.
- MES. Take then the worst in brief: Samson is dead. 1570
- MAN. The worst indeed! O, all my hopes defeated
To free him hence! but death, who sets all free,
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceived
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves 1575
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring,
Nipp'd with the lagging rear of winter's frost!
Yet ere I give the reins to grief, say first,
How died he; death to life is crown or shame.
All by him fell, thou say'st; by whom fell he? 1580
What glorious hand gave Samson his death's wound?
- MES. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.
- MAN. Wearied with slaughter then, or how? explain.
- MES. By his own hands.
- MAN. Self-violence? what cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself 1585
Among his foes?
- MES. Inevitable cause,
At once both to destroy, and be destroyed.
The edifice, where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pull'd.
- MAN. O, lastly over-strong against thyself! 1590
A dreadful way thou took'st to thy revenge.
More than enough we know; but while things yet
Are in confusion, give us, if thou canst,
Eye-witness of what first or last was done,
Relation more particular and distinct. 1595
- MES. Occasions drew me early to this city;
And as the gates I enter'd with sunrise,
The morning trumpets festival proclaim'd
Through each high street: little I had despatch'd,

1565. The reader cannot fail to observe and to feel the art of the poet, in very gradually unfolding the catastrophe.—
JOS. WARTON.

1590. *Occasions drew me early*, &c. As I observed before, that Milton had, with great art, excited the reader's attention to this grand event, so here he is no less careful to gratify it by the relation. It is circumstantial, as the importance of it required, but not so as to be tedious or too long, to delay our expectation. It would be found difficult, I believe, to retrench one article without making it defective, or to add one which would not appear redundant. The picture of Sam-

son in particular, *with head inclined and eyes fix'd*, as if he was addressing himself to that God who had given him such a measure of strength, and was summing up all his force and resolution, has a very fine effect upon the imagination. Milton is no less happy in the sublimity of his description of this grand exploit, than judicious in the choice of the circumstances preceding it. The poetry rises as the subject becomes more interesting, and one may say, without extravagance, that the poet seems to exert no less force of genius in describing, than Samson does strength of body in executing.—
THYER.

When all abroad was rumour'd that this day 1600
 Samson should be brought forth to show the people
 Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games:
 I sorrow'd at his captive state, but minded
 Not to be absent at that spectacle.
 The building was a spacious theatre 1605
 Half-round, on two main pillars vaulted high,
 With seats, where all the lords, and each degree
 Of sort, might sit in order to behold;
 The other side was open, where the throng
 On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand; 1610
 I among these aloof obscurely stood.
 The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice
 Had fill'd their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine,
 When to their sports they turn'd. Immediately
 Was Samson as a publick servant brought, 1615
 In their state livery clad; before him pipes
 And timbrels, on each side went armed guards,
 Both horse and foot, before him and behind,
 Archers and slingers, cataphracts and spears. *Horsemen in*
 At sight of him, the people with a shout 1620
 Rifted the air, clamouring their god with praise,
 Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.
 He, patient, but undaunted, where they led him,
 Came to the place; and what was set before him,
 Which without help of eye might be assay'd, 1625
 To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still perform'd
 All with incredible, stupendous force;
 None daring to appear antagonist.
 At length for intermission sake they led him
 Between the pillars; he his guide requested 1630
 (For so from such as nearer stood we heard)
 As over-tired to let him lean awhile
 With both his arms on those two massy pillars,
 That to the arched roof gave main support.
 He, unsuspecting, led him; which when Samson 1635
 Felt in his arms, with head awhile inclined,
 And eyes fast fix'd he stood, as one who pray'd,
 Or some great matter in his mind revolved:
 At last with head erect thus cried aloud:—
 Hitherto, lords, what your commands imposed 1640
 I have perform'd, as reason was, obeying,
 Not without wonder or delight beheld:
 Now of my own accord such other trial
 I mean to show you of my strength, yet greater,
 As with amaze shall strike all who behold. 1645
 This utter'd, straining all his nerves he bow'd:
 As with the force of winds and waters pent,
 When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars
 With horrible convulsion to and fro

He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came, and drew 1650
 The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder
 Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
 Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, or priests,
 Their choice nobility and flower, not only
 Of this, but each Philistian city round, 1655
 Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.
 Samson, with these immix'd, inevitably
 Pull'd down the same destruction on himself;
 The vulgar only 'scaped who stood without.

CHO. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious! 1660
 Living or dying thou hast fulfill'd
 The work for which thou wast foretold
 To Israel, and now liest victorious
 Among thy slain, self-kill'd,
 Not willingly, but tangled in the fold 1665
 Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd
 Thee with thy slaughter'd foes in number more
 Than all thy life had slain before.

1. SEMI-CHOR. While their hearts were jocund and sublime,
 Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine, 1670
 And fat regorged of bulls and goats,
 Chanting their idol, and preferring
 Before our Living Dread who dwells
 In Silo, his bright sanctuary;
 Among them he a spirit of phrenzy sent, 1675
 Who hurt their minds,
 And urged them on with mad desire,
 To call in haste for their destroyer:
 They, only set on sport and play,
 Unweetingly importuned 1680
 Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.
 So fond are mortal men,
 Fallen into wrath divine,
 As their own ruin on themselves to invite,
 Insensate left, or to sense reprobate, 1685
 And with blindness internal struck.

2. SEMI-CHOR. But he, though blind of sight,
 Despised, and thought extinguish'd quite,
 With inward eyes illuminated,
 His fiery virtue roused 1690
 From under ashes into sudden flame,
 And as an evening dragon came,
 Assailant on the perched roosts
 And nests in order ranged
 Of tame villatick fowl: but as an eagle 1695

1660. *O dearly-bought revenge, &c.* It is judicious to make the Chorus and Semi-Chorus speak first after this dreadful account of Samson's death, and not his father Manoah, who makes no answer till after a considerable pause, as he may

be supposed to be struck dumb with the unexpected event.—JOS. WARTON.

1667. *In number more.* Judges xvi. 30.

1674. *In Silo,* where the tabernacle and ark then were.

His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.
 So Virtue, given for lost,
 Depress'd and overthrown, as seem'd,
 Like that self-begotten bird
 In the Arabian woods embost, 1700
 That no second knows nor third,
 And lay erewhile a holocaust,
 From out her ashy womb now teem'd,
 Revives, reflowerishes, then vigorous most
 When most unactive deem'd; 1705
 And, though her body die, her fame survives
 A secular bird ages of lives.
 MAN. Come, come; no time for lamentation now,
 Nor much more cause; Samson hath quit himself
 Like Samson, and heroickly hath finish'd 1710
 A life heroick; on his enemies
 Fully revenged, hath left them years of mourning,
 And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor
 Through all Philistian bounds: to Israel
 Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them 1715
 Find courage to lay hold on this occasion;
 To himself and father's house eternal fame;
 And, which is best and happiest yet, all this
 With God not parted from him as was fear'd,
 But favouring and assisting to the end. 1720
 Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
 Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,
 Dispraise, or blame; nothing but well and fair,
 And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
 Let us go find the body where it lies 1725
 Soak'd in his enemies' blood; and from the stream,
 With lavers pure and cleansing herbs, wash off
 The clotted gore. I, with what speed the while,
 (Gaza is not in plight to say us nay,) 1730
 Will send for all my kindred, all my friends,
 To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend
 With silent obsequy, and funeral train,
 Home to his father's house; there will I build him
 A monument, and plant it round with shade
 Of laurel ever green, and branching palm, 1735
 With all his trophies hung, and acts inroll'd
 In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.

1699. *Self-begotten bird*: The Phoenix.

1700. *Embost*: Enclosed in a wood.

1706. *Her fame*, &c. The construction is this: Virtue, given for lost, like the Phoenix consumed and now teemed from out her ashy womb, revives, reflowerishes; and, though her body die, which was the case of Samson, yet her fame survives a Phoenix many ages: that is, the fame of virtue survives, outlives, this secular bird many ages.—NEWTON.

1713. *Sons of Caphtor*: The Philis-

tines, originally of the island Caphtor or Crete.

1721. *Nothing is here for tears*. The whole of this speech of Manoah is in a high degree pleasing and interesting. From this place to the conclusion it gradually rises in beauty, so as to form one of the most captivating parts of this admirable tragedy.—DUNSTER.

1730. *Will send*, &c. This is founded on what is said in Judges xvi. 31, which the poet has finely improved.

Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
 And from his memory inflame their breasts
 To matchless valour, and adventures high: 1740
 The virgins also shall, on feastful days,
 Visit his tomb with flowers; only bewailing
 His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
 From whence captivity and loss of eyes.
 CHO. All is best, though we oft doubt 1745
 What the unsearchable dispose
 Of Highest Wisdom brings about,
 And ever best found in the close.
 Oft he seems to hide his face,
 But unexpectedly returns, 1750
 And to his faithful champion hath in place
 Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns,
 And all that band them to resist
 His uncontrollable intent:
 His servants he, with new acquist 1755
 Of true experience, from this great event,
 With peace and consolation hath dismiss'd,
 And calm of mind, all passion spent.

1757. *With peace, &c.* This moral lesson in the conclusion is very fine, and excellently suited to the beginning. For Milton had chosen for the motto to this piece a passage out of Aristotle, which may show what was his design in writing this tragedy, and the sense of which he hath expressed in the preface, that

“Tragedy is of power, by raising pity and fear or terror, to purge the mind of those and such like passions,” &c. This he exemplifies here in Manoah and the Chorus, after their various agitations of passion, acquiescing in the Divine dispensations, and thereby inculcating a most instructive lesson to the reader.—NEWTON.

NB
me
 “SAMSON AGONISTES” is the only tragedy that Milton finished, though he sketched out the plans of several, and proposed the subjects of more, in his manuscript preserved in Trinity College, Cambridge: and we may suppose that he was determined to the choice of this particular subject by the similitude of his own circumstances to those of Samson blind and among the Philistines. This I conceive to be the last of his poetical pieces; and it is written in the very spirit of the ancients, and equals, if not exceeds, any of the most perfect tragedies which were ever exhibited on the Athenian stage, when Greece was in its glory. As this work was never intended for the stage, the division into acts and scenes is omitted. Bishop Atterbury had an intention of getting Pope to divide it into acts and scenes, and of having it acted at Westminster; but his commitment to the Tower put an end to that design. It has since been brought upon the stage in the form of an Oratorio; and Handel’s music is never employed to greater advantage, than when it is adapted to Milton’s words. That great artist has done equal justice to our author’s “L’Allegro” and “Il Penseroso;” as if the same spirit possessed both masters, and as if the god of music and of verse was still one and the same.—NEWTON.

The nephew of Milton has told us, that he could not ascertain the time when this drama was written; but it probably flowed from the heart of the indignant poet soon after his spirit had been wounded by the calamitous destiny of his friends, to which he alludes with so much energy and

pathos, in the chorus, line 652, &c. He did not design the drama for a theatre, nor has it the kind of action requisite for theatrical interest: but in one point of view the "Samson Agonistes" is the most singularly affecting composition that was ever produced by sensibility of heart and vigour of imagination. To give it this particular effect, we must remember, that the lot of Milton had a marvellous coincidence with that of his hero in three remarkable points: first, (but we should regard this as the most inconsiderable article of resemblance) he had been tormented by a beautiful, but disaffectionate and disobedient wife; secondly, he had been the great champion of his country, and as such the idol of public admiration; lastly, he had fallen from that height of unrivalled glory, and had experienced the most humiliating reverse of fortune. In delineating the greater part of Samson's sensations under calamity, he had only to describe his own. No dramatist can have ever conformed so literally as Milton to the Horatian precept, *Si vis me flere, &c.*, "If you wish me to weep, you must first weep yourself;" and if, in reading the "Samson Agonistes," we observe how many passages, expressed with the most energetic sensibility, exhibit to our fancy the sufferings and real sentiments of the poet, as well as those of his hero, we may derive from this extraordinary composition a kind of pathetic delight, that no other drama can afford; we may applaud the felicity of genius, that contrived, in this manner, to relieve a heart overburdened with anguish and indignation, and to pay a half-concealed, yet hallowed tribute, to the memories of dear though dishonoured friends, whom the state of the times allowed not the afflicted poet more openly to deplore.—HAYLEY.

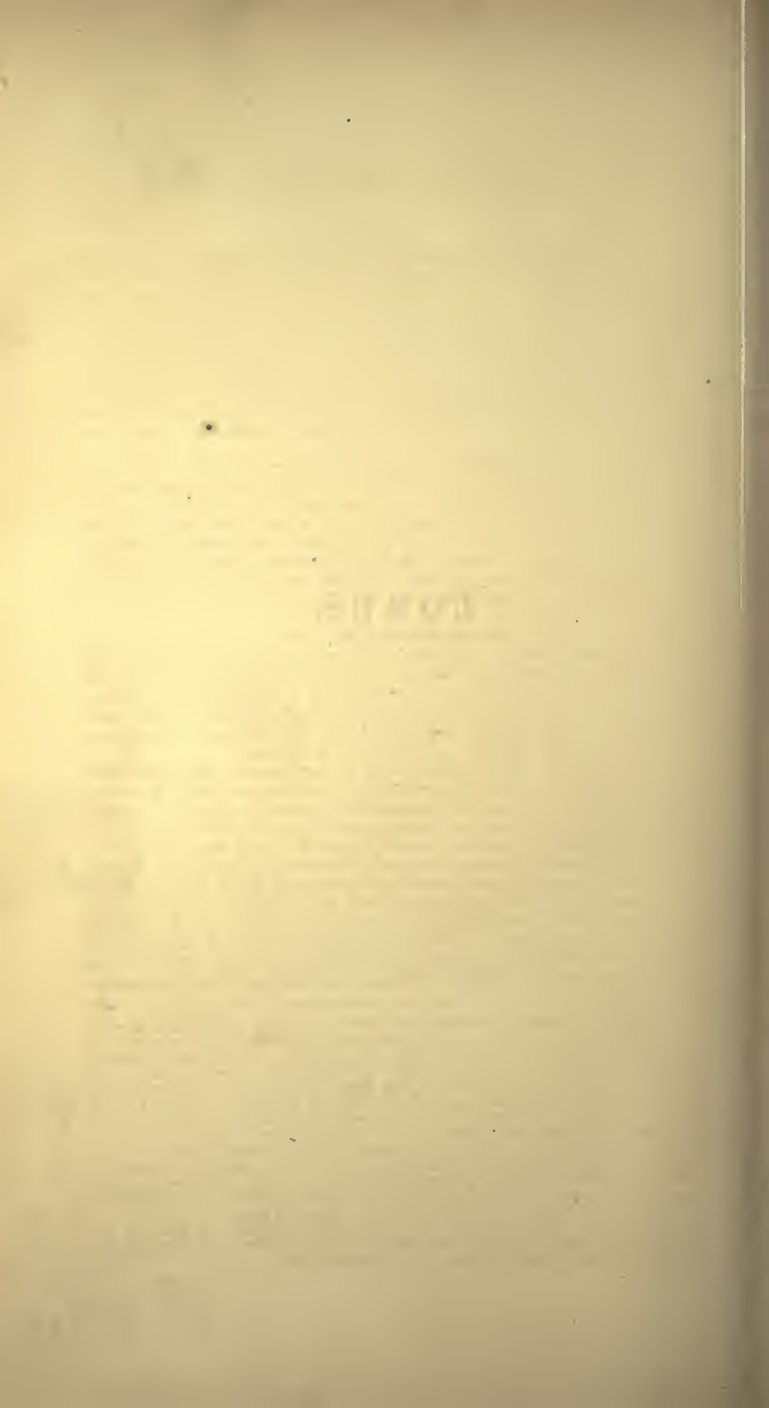
In "Samson Agonistes" Milton has given us, in English, a perfect Sophoclean tragedy, in which every minutest peculiarity of the Attic scene is so faithfully and exactly reproduced, that a reader unacquainted with the Greek language will form a much more just and correct notion of classical tragedy from reading "Samson," than from studying even the finest and most accurate translations of the great dramas of the Athenian theatre. This may appear extravagant, nay, even paradoxical; but we speak advisedly. The Greek tragedies were grand historical compositions, founded upon the traditional or mythologic legends of the people for whom they were written, and whose religious and patriotic feelings were in the highest degree appealed to by what they considered as a sacred and affecting representation: exactly as the rude audience of the Middle Ages had their sensibilities powerfully excited by the mysteries. Now the legends of classical mythology necessarily affect no less than the stories of the Scripture history; and consequently the "Samson" (being in all points of structure and arrangement an exact *fac-simile* of a Greek tragedy) produces upon us, Christians, an effect infinitely more analogous to that made upon an Athenian by a tragedy of Sophocles, than could be produced by our reading the best *mere translation* of a tragedy of Sophocles that the skill of man ever executed.—SHAW.

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409.

COMUS.



REMARKS ON COMUS.

"Comus" is perhaps more familiar to the modern English reader than any other of Milton's poems, except "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso:" its poetical merits are generally felt and acknowledged: its visionary and picturesque inventiveness give it a full title to a prime place in our admiration. Thyer and Warburton both remark that the author has here imitated Shakspeare's manner more than in the rest of his compositions.

The spirits of the air were favourite idols of Milton: he had from early youth become intimately acquainted with all that learning, all that superstition, and all that popular belief had related regarding them; and he had added all that his own rich and creative imagination could combine with it.

It seems that an accidental event, which occurred to the family of his patron, John Egerton,* Earl of Bridgewater, then keeping his court at Ludlow Castle,† as lord president of Wales, gave birth to this fable. The earl's two sons, and daughter Lady Alice, were benighted, and lost their way in Haywood-forest; and the two brothers, in the attempt to explore their path, left the sister alone, in a track of country rudely inhabited by sets of boors and savage peasants. On these simple facts the poet raised a superstructure of such fairy spells and poetical delight, as has never since been equalled.

Masks,‡ as I have already remarked, were then in fashion with the court and great nobility; and when the lord president entered upon the state of his new office, this entertainment was properly deemed a splendid mode of recommending himself to the country in the opening of his high function. Milton was the poet on whom Lord Bridgewater would naturally call; the bard having already produced the "Arcades" for the countess's mother, Lady Derby, at Harefield, in Middlesex.

Comus discovers the beautiful Lady in her forlorn and unprotected state; and, to secure her as a prize for his unprincipled voluptuousness, addresses her in the disguised character of a peasant, offering to conduct her to his own lowly but loyal cottage, until he hears of her stray attendants: meanwhile, the brothers, unable to find their way back to their sister, become dreadfully uneasy lest some harm should befall her: nevertheless, they comfort themselves with the protection which Heaven affords to innocence; but the good Spirit, with whom the poem opens, now enters, and informs them of the character of Comus, and his wicked designs upon their sister. Under his guidance, they rush in on Comus and his crew, who had already carried off the Lady: put them to the rout; and release the captive, imprisoned by their spells, by the counter-

* Sir Egerton Brydges, in his edition of Milton, has a long genealogical dissertation upon the Egerton family. This is natural and pardonable, for who would not be proud to have his family inseparably connected with one of the most beautiful poetical productions of the human mind. But then he closes his dissertation with these fine remarks, which, considering how much he has done for English Literature, are eminently applicable to himself—"DESCENT IS NOTHING UNLESS IT STIMULATES TO ACCOMPLISH THE MIND WITH HIGH DECORATIONS, TO NURSE HIGH PURSUITS, AND TO CHERISH HIGH EMOTIONS OF THE HEART. WHO SLEEPS UPON HIS HONOURS—WHO RELIES ONLY ON REFLECTED GLORY,—IS AN IMBECILE AND CULPABLE CIPHER."

† Ludlow Castle, was in the old town of Ludlow, in the county of Shropshire, about one hundred and forty miles west-north-west of London. The ancient castle, immortalized as the theatre of the first display of the poetical powers of Milton, and long a place of great strength and celebrity, is now in ruins.

‡ [The Mask, or Masque, was a kind of theatrical drama much in favour in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For an account of these entertainments, see Warton's History of English Poetry, vol. iii. page 224, &c.]

spells of Sabrina. She is then carried back to her father's court, received in joy and triumph; and here the Mask ends.

Who but Milton, unless perhaps Shakspeare, could have made this the subject of a thousand lines,—in which not only every verse, but literally every word, is pure and exquisite poetry? Never was there such a copiousness of picturesque rural images brought together: every epithet is racy, glowing, beautiful, and appropriate. But this is not all;—the sentiments are tender, or lofty, refined, philosophical, virtuous, and wise. The chaste and graceful eloquence of the Lady is enchanting;—the language flowing, harmonious, elegant, and almost ethereal. As Cowper said of his feelings when he first perused Milton, we, in reading these dialogues, “dance for joy.”

But almost even more than this part, the contrasted descriptions given by the good Spirit and Comus, of their respective offices and occupations, by carrying us into a visionary world, have a surprising sort of poetical magic.

This was the undoubted forerunner of that sort of spiritual invention, which more than thirty years afterwards produced “Paradise Lost” and “Paradise Regained;” but with this characteristic and essential difference; that “Comus” was written in youth, in joy and hope, and buoyancy, and playfulness; and those majestic and sublime epics, in the shadowed experience of age, in sorrow and disappointment,—

With darkness and with dangers compass'd round.

The latter therefore are bolder, deeper, grander, more heavenward, and more instructive; the smile-loving taste of blooming youth may, and will, for these reasons, relish “Comus” most.

“Comus” is almost all description; a large portion of the epics is argumentative grandeur: the sentiments of the Mask have a platonic fancifulness; those of the epics have an awful, religious, and scriptural solemnity: the rebellion of angels, the fall of man, and the wily temptations of Satan in the wilderness, fill us with grave and sorrowful imaginations; but “Comus” is all pleasure; and the cool shadows of the leafy woods, the dewy morning, and the fragrant evening, and all the laughing scenery of rural nature,—the murmurs of the streams, and the enchanting songs of Echo,—the abodes of fairies, and sylvan deities,—convey nothing but cheerfulness and joy to the eyes or the heart. In the epics we enter into the realms of trial and suffering: there all is mightiness,—but mainly overshadowed by the darkness of crime, and regrets at the forfeiture of a state of heavenly and inexpressible enjoyment. When life grows sober from experience, and misfortunes, and wrongs, we take pleasure in these representations, because they are more congenial to the gloom of our own bosoms: we require stronger and deeper excitements: and we become more intellectual, and less fascinated by external beauty: we are no longer contented with mere description, but seek what will satisfy the reason, the soul, and the conscience; we examine the depths of learning, and the authorities which cannot deceive. But “Comus” glitters like a bright landscape under the glowing beams of the morning sun, when they first disperse the vapours of night: the scenery is such as youthful bards dream in their slumbers on the banks of some haunted river: every thing of pastoral imagery is brought together with a profusion, a freshness, a distinctness, a picturesque radiance, which enchants like magic: every epithet is chosen with the most inimitable felicity, and is a picture in itself. Perhaps every word may be found in Shakspeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Spenser, Jonson, Drayton, or other predecessors; but the array of all these words is nowhere else to be found in such close and happy combination. In all other poets these descriptions are patches;—there is no continued web. Thomson is beautiful in rural description, but he has not the distinctness and fairyism of Milton. Add to this the magic inventiveness of the spiritual beings, by which all this landscape is

inhabited and animated. The mind is thus kept in a sort of delicious dream.

This Mask has every quality of genuine poetry. Here is a beautiful fable of pure invention: here is character, sentiment, and rich and harmonious language. The author carries us out of the world of mere matter, and places us in an Elysium. Shakspeare shows an equal imagination in the "Tempest;" but he has always coarseness intermixed: I am not sure that he ever continues two pages together of pure poetry: he sullies it by descending to colloquialities.

Milton is never guilty of the wanton and eccentric sports of imagination: he deals in what is consistent with our belief, and the rules of just taste: he never is guilty of extravagance or whim. Minor poets resort to this for the purpose of raising a false surprise. It is easy to invent, where no regard is had to truth or probability.

The songs of this poem are of a singular felicity: they are unbroken streams of exquisite imagery, either imaginative or descriptive, with a dance of numbers, which sounds like aerial music: for instance, the Lady's song to Echo:—

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
 Within thy aery shell,
 By slow Meander's margent green,
 And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
 Where the love-lorn nightingale
 Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well.

The more we study this poem, the more pleasure we shall find in it: it illuminates and refines our fancy; and enables us to discover in rural scenery new delights, and distinguish the features of each object with a clearness which our own sight would not have given us: it presents to us those associations which improve our intellect, and spiritualize the material joys of our senses. The effect of poetical language is to convey a sort of internal lustre, which puts the mind in a blaze: it is like bringing a bright lamp to a dark chamber.

But let it not be understood that I put this Mask upon a par with the epics, or the tragedy: these are of a still sublimer tone: their ingredients are still more extensive and more gigantic. The garden of Eden is vastly richer than woods and forests inhabited by dryads, wood-nymphs, and shepherds, and other sylvan crews, spiritual or embodied. Contemplate the intensity of power, which could delineate the creation of the world, the flight of Satan through Chaos, or our Saviour resisting Satan in the wilderness! To arrive at the highest rank of this divine art, requires a union of all its highest essences: there must be a creation, not only of beauty, but of majesty and profound sensibility, and great intellect and moral wisdom, and grace and grandeur of style, all blended. This the epics, and even the tragedy, have reached: but the Mask does not contain, nor did it require or admit this stupendous combination. It was intended as a sport of mental amusement and refined cheerfulness: no tragedy, nor tale coloured with the darker hues of man's contemplations, was designed. In the gay visions of youthful hope the stronger colours and forms of sublimity and pathos do not come forth: the court at Ludlow was met, not to weep, nor be awfully moved;—but to smile: they cried, with "L'Allegro,"

Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
 Jest, and youthful jollity—
 Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
 Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,
 Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
 And love to live in dimple sleek:—
 Sport, that wrinkled Care derides;
 And Laughter, holding both her sides!

The poet had to accommodate himself to an audience of this character;

yet so as not to shrink from the display of some of his own high gifts: and, oh, with what inimitable brilliance and force he has performed his task! It is true that there is a mixture of grave philosophy in this poem:—but how calm it is!—how dressed with flowers!—how covered with graceful and brilliant imagery! Other feelings of a more sombre kind are awakened by the descriptions of the scenery of nature in the greater poems, except during the period before the serpent's entry into Eden.

There are hours and seasons, when, in the midst of the blackness of our woes, we can dally a little while with our melancholy, our regrets, and our anxieties;—when we are willing to delude ourselves by an escape into Elysian gardens;—to look upon nothing but the joys of the creation: and to see the scenery of forests, mountains, valleys, meadows, and rivers, in all their unshawdowed delightfulness; where echo repeats no sounds but those of joyful music; and gay and untainted beauty walks the woods; and cheerfulness haunts the mountains and the glades; and labour lives in the fresh air in competence and content:—delusions, indeed, not a little excessive, but innocent and soothing delusions. Fallen man cannot so enjoy this breathing globe of inexhaustible riches and splendour; but poets may so present it to him: and the charms they thus supply to our fearful and dangerous existence, are medicines and gifts which deserve our deep gratitude; and will not let the memory of the givers be forgotten by posterity. What gift of this kind has our nation had so full of charms and excellence as “Comus?”—And here I close, when I recollect how many panegyrist of greater weight than my voice, this perfect composition has already had.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

COMUS.

THE PERSONS.

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT, afterwards in the habit of THYRSIS.	FIRST BROTHER.
COMUS, with his Crew.	SECOND BROTHER.
THE LADY.	SABRINA, the Nymph.

The chief Persons, who presented, were

The Lord Brackley.
Mr. Thomas Egerton, his brother.
The Lady Alice Egerton.

The first Scene discovers a wild Wood.

The ATTENDANT SPIRIT descends or enters.

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aerial spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot, 5
Which men call earth; and, with low-thoughted care
Confined, and pester'd in this pinfold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants, 10
Amongst the enthroned Gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be, that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key,
That opes the palace of Eternity:
To such my errand is; and, but for such, 15
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.
But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove 20

3. *Insphered*. In "Il Penseroso" (line 88) the spirit of Plato was to be unsphered,—that is, to be called down from the sphere to which it had been allotted, where it had been insphered.—T. WARTON.

7. *Pinfold* is now provincial, and signifies sometimes a sheepfold, but most commonly a pound.—T. WARTON. *Pester'd*: crowded; Ital. *pesta*, a crowd.

16. *I would not soil, &c.* That is, this Guardian Spirit would not have soiled the purity of his ambrosial robes with the noisome exhalations of this sin-corrupted earth, (*this sin-worn mould*), but to assist those distinguished mortals, who, by a due progress in virtue, aspire to reach the golden key which opens heaven,—*the palace of Eternity*.

Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles,
 That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
 The unadorned bosom of the deep :
 Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
 By course commits to several government, 25
 And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
 And wield their little tridents: but this isle,
 The greatest and the best of all the main,
 He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities ;
 And all this tract that fronts the falling sun 30
 A noble peer of mickle trust and power
 Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
 An old and haughty nation, proud in arms :
 Where his fair offspring, nursed in princely lore,
 Are coming to attend their father's state, 35
 And new-entrusted sceptre: but their way
 Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,
 The nodding horror of whose shady brows
 Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger ;
 And here their tender age might suffer peril, 40
 But that by quick command from sovran Jove
 I was dispatch'd for their defence and guard ;
 And listen why ; for I will tell you now
 What never yet was heard in tale or song,
 From old or modern bard, in hall or bower. 45

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
 Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine,
 After the Tuscan mariners transform'd,
 Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
 On Circe's island fell: (who knows not Circe, 50
 The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup
 Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
 And downward fell into a groveling swine?)
 This nymph, that gazed upon his clustering locks
 With ivy berries wreathed, and his blithe youth, 55
 Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
 Much like his father, but his mother more,
 Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus named :

20. *High and nether*, i. e. the upper and lower dominions of Jove.—27. *This isle* :

"Albion, Prince of all the Isles."—JONSON.

29. *He quarters*, that is, Neptune.

33. *An old and haughty nation*. That is, the Cambro-Britains, who were to be governed by respect mixed with awe. The Earl of Bridgewater, the *noble Peer of mickle trust and power*, was now governor of the Welsh, as lord-president of the principality.—T. WARTON.

44. *What never yet*, &c. The poet here insinuates that the story or fable of his *Mask* was new and unborrowed, although distantly founded on ancient poetical history. The allusion is to the ancient mode of entertaining a splendid assem-

bly, by singing or reciting tales.—T. WARTON.

48. *Tuscan mariners*. This story alludes to the punishments inflicted by Homer (in his Hymn to Bacchus) on the Tyrrhene pirates, by transforming them into various animals.—JOS. WARTON.

50. *Circe*, is the celebrated enchantress, whose story as related by Homer is doubtless intended as an allegorical representation of the brutalizing effects of the intoxicating cup.

58. *Comus*. Newton observes, that Comus is a deity of Milton's own making; but Warton shows that he had before been a dramatic personage in one of Ben Johnson's *Masks*. An immense cup is carried before him, and he is crowned

Who, ripe and frolick of his full-grown age,
 Roving the Celtick and Iberian fields, 66
 At last betakes him to this ominous wood ;
 And, in thick shelter of black shades imbower'd,
 Excels his mother at her mighty art,
 Offering to every weary traveller
 His orient liquor in a crystal glass, 65
 To quench the drouth of Phœbus; which as they taste,
 (For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst,)
 Soon as the potion works, their human countenance,
 The express resemblance of the gods, is changed
 Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear ; 70
 Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
 All other parts remaining as they were ;
 And they, so perfect is their misery,
 Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
 But boast themselves more comely than before ; 75
 And all their friends and native home forget,
 To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
 Therefore, when any, favour'd of high Jove,
 Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
 Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star 80
 I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convoy,
 As now I do: but first I must put off .
 These my sky-ropes spun out of Iris' woof,
 And take the weeds and likeness of a swain
 That to the service of this house belongs, 85
 Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
 Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
 And hush the waving woods; nor of less faith,
 And in this office of his mountain watch
 Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid 90
 Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
 Of hateful steps; I must be viewless now.

with roses and other flowers. His attendants carry javelins wreathed with ivy; and he enters, riding in triumph from a grove of ivy, to the wild music of flutes, tabors, and cymbals. At length the grove of ivy is destroyed,

And the voluptuous Comus, god of cheer,
 Beat from his grove.

But how many would have known any thing of this god of revellings and drunkenness from the neglected and almost forgotten Masks of Johnson, had not the genius of Milton, by drawing such a moral from his story, and clothing it in such exquisite poetry, given him an undying celebrity.

60. *Celtick and Iberian*: France and Spain.

61. *Ominous*: Dangerous, inauspicious.

65. *Orient*: Richly bright, from the radiance of the East.

80. *Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star*. There are few finer comparisons

that lie in so small a compass.—T. WARTON.

83. *Iris' woof*. Milton has frequent allusion to the colours of the rainbow. In the "Ode on the Nativity," (stanza xv.) Truth and Justice are not only *orb'd in a rainbow*, but are apparelled in its colours.

84. *Likeness of a swain*. This refers to Henry Lawes, the musician, who performed the combined characters of the *Spirit* and *Thyrsis*, in this drama. He was the son of Thomas Lawes, a vicar-choral of Salisbury cathedral, and was perhaps, at first, choir-boy of that church. He afterwards rose to great distinction as a composer of music, but his name would have been buried in oblivion had he not, by setting to music the songs of Comus, associated his name for ever with this immortal poem. He was also no mean poet himself, as Milton's commendation of him, in his Sonnet, clearly shows.

Comus enters with a charming rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistening: they come in, making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.

COM. The star, that bids the shepherd fold,
 Now the top of heaven doth hold;
 And the gilded car of day 95
 His glowing axle doth allay
 In the steep Atlantick stream;
 And the slope sun his upward beam
 Shoots against the dusky pole,
 Pacing toward the other goal 100
 Of his chamber in the East.
 Meanwhile welcome joy, and feast,
 Midnight shout, and revelry,
 Topsy dance, and jollity.
 Braid your locks with rosy twine, 105
 Dropping odours, dropping wine.
 Rigour now is gone to bed,
 And Advice with scrupulous head:
 Strict Age, and sour Severity,
 With their grave saws, in slumber lie. 110
 We, that are of purer fire,
 Imitate the starry quire,
 Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,
 Lead in swift round the months and years.
 The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove, 115
 Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;
 And, on the tawny sands and shelves,
 Trip the pert faeries and the dapper elves.
 By dimpled brook and fountain-brim,
 The wood-nymphs, deck'd with daisies trim, 120
 Their merry wakes and pastimes keep:
 What hath night to do with sleep?
 Night hath better sweets to prove;
 Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
 Come, let us our rights begin; 125
 'Tis only day-light that makes sin,
 Which these dun shades will ne'er report.—
 Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,
 Dark-veil'd Cotytto! to whom the secret flame
 Of midnight torches burns; mysterious dame, 130
 That ne'er art call'd but when the dragon woom
 Of Stygian darkness spets her thickest gloom,

108. *Advice*. It was in character for Comus to call Advice *scrupulous*; to depreciate and ridicule it at the expense of truth and propriety.—T. WARTON.

110. *Saws*: Sayings, maxims.

116. *Morrice*. The *Morrice* or Moorish dance was first brought into England in Edward Third's time, when John of Gaunt returned from Spain.—PECK. \

119. *Fountain-brim*: The edge or brink of a fountain.

126. *'Tis only day-light that makes sin*. A sentiment worthy of Comus; meaning, that sin consists not in the act, but in the discovery of it.

129. *Cotytto*: The goddess of Licentiousness, celebrated with great indecency in private at Athens, at *midnight*, and hence called *dark-veil'd*.

132. *Spets*: Used by the old writers for *spits*.

And makes one blot of all the air;
 Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
 Wherein thou rid'st with Hecate, and befriend 135
 Us thy vow'd priests, till utmost end
 Of all thy dues be done, and none left out;
 Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
 The nice morn, on the Indian steep
 From her cabin'd loop-hole peep, 140
 And to the tell-tale sun descry
 Our conceal'd solemnity.—
 Come, knit hands, and beat the ground,
 In a light fantastick round.

THE MEASURE.

Break off, break off; I feel the different pace 145
 Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
 Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees;
 Our number may affright: some virgin sure
 (For so I can distinguish by mine art)
 Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms, 150
 And to my wily trains: I shall ere long
 Be well-stock'd with as fair a herd as grazed
 About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
 My dazzling spells into the spongy air,
 Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion, 155
 And give it false presentments, lest the place
 And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
 And put the damsel to suspicious flight;
 Which must not be, for that's against my course:
 I, under fair pretence of friendly ends, 160
 And well-plac'd words of glozing courtesy
 Baited with reasons not unplausible,
 Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
 And hug him into snares. When once her eye
 Hath met the virtue of this magick dust, 165
 I shall appear some harmless villager,
 Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear,
 But here she comes: I fairly step aside,
 And hearken if I may, her business here.

The LADY enters.

LAD. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true, 170
 My best guide now: methought it was the sound

138. *Blabbing*. So Shakspeare, King Hen. VI. p. 2. Act iv. Scene 1:—

The gaudy, blabbing, and remorseful day.
 Comus is describing the morning contemptuously, as unfriendly to his secret revels.

139. *Nice*. A finely-chosen epithet, expressing at once the *curious* and *squeamish*.—HURD.

145. *Break off*. A dance (here called

"The Measure") has just been begun, which the Magician almost as soon breaks off, on perceiving the approach of *some chaste footing*, from a sagacity appropriate to his character.—T. WARTON.

147. *Shrouds*: Recesses, harbours, hiding-places.

157. *Quaint*: That is, strange habits.

161. *Glozing*: Flattering, deceitful.

168. *Fairly*: That is, softly.

Of riot and ill-managed merriment,
 Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe, •
 Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds,
 When for their teeming flocks and granges full, 175
 In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
 And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth
 To meet the rudeness, and swill'd insolence
 Of such late wassailers; yet, O! where else
 Shall I inform my unacquainted feet 180
 In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
 My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
 With this long way, resolving here to lodge
 Under the spreading favour of these pines,
 Stepp'd, as they said, to the next thicket-side, 185
 To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
 As the kind hospitable woods provide.
 They left me then, when the gray-hooded Even,
 Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
 Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain. 190
 But where they are, and why they came not back,
 Is now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likeliest
 They had engaged their wandering steps too far;
 And envious darkness, ere they could return,
 Had stole them from me: else, O thievish Night, 195
 Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
 In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars,
 That Nature hung in heaven, and fill'd their lamps
 With everlasting oil, to give due light
 To the misled and lonely traveller? 200
 This is the place, as well as I may guess,
 Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
 Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear;
 Yet naught but single darkness do I find.
 What might this be? A thousand fantasies 205
 Begin to throng into my memory,
 Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,

177. *Amiss*. How much is expressed in this one little word!

178. *Swill'd insolence*, &c. In some parts of England it is still customary for a company of mummers to go about, in the evening of the Christmas-holidays, carousing from house to house, who are called *wassailers*. In *Macbeth*, "wine and wassel" mean, in general terms, feasting and drunkenness.—T. WARTON. *Swill'd insolence* is similar to *stown with insolence*. *Par. Lost*, i. 502. To *swill*, is to drink grossly or greedily; and hence *swill'd insolence* is insolence caused by intemperate drinking.

187. *Hospitable woods*. By laying the scene of his *Mask* in a wild forest, Milton secured to himself a perpetual fund of picturesque description, which, resulting from situation, was always at hand. The same happy choice of scene supplied Sophocles in "*Philoctetes*," Shaks-

peare in "*As you Like it*," and Fletcher in the "*Faithful Shepherdess*," with frequent and even unavoidable opportunities of rural delineation, and that of the most romantic kind. But Milton has had additional advantages: his forest is not only the residence of a magician, but is exhibited under the gloom of midnight.—T. WARTON.

195. *Thievish night*. In the present age, would Milton have introduced this passage, where thievish Night is supposed, for some felonious purpose, to shut up the stars in her dark lantern? Certainly not. But in the present age, correct and rational as it is, had "*Comus*" been written, we should not perhaps have had some of the greatest beauties of its wild and romantic imagery.—T. WARTON.

207. *Calling shapes*, &c. The old books of voyages and travels, in which Milton

And aery tongues that syllable men's names
 On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.
 These thoughts may startle well, but not astound 210
 The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
 By a strong-siding champion, Conscience.—
 O, welcome, pure-eyed Faith; white-handed Hope,
 Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings;
 And thou, unblemish'd form of Chastity! 215
 I see ye visibly, and now believe
 That He, the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill
 Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
 Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,
 To keep my life and honour unassail'd. 220
 Was I deceived, or did a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
 I did not err; there does a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
 And casts a gleam over this tufted grove: 225
 I cannot halloo to my brothers, but
 Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest,
 I'll venture; for my new-enliven'd spirits
 Prompt me: and they perhaps are not far off.

SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen 230
 Within thy aery shell,
 By slow Meander's margent green,
 And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
 Where the love-lorn nightingale
 Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well; 235
 Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
 That liketh thy Narcissus are?
 O, if thou have
 Hid them in some flowery cave,
 Tell me but where, 240
 Sweet queen of parly, daughter of the sphere!
 So mayst thou be translated to the skies,
 And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies.

delighted, were filled with superstitious stories.

208. *Syllable*, to pronounce distinctly.

214. *Hovering*. This word is here applied with peculiar propriety to the angel Hope, in sight, on the wing.—T. WARTON.

223. *There does a sable cloud*. The repetition arising from the conviction and confidence of an unaccusing conscience, is inimitably beautiful. When all succour seems lost, Heaven unexpectedly presents the silver lining of a sable cloud to the virtuous.—T. WARTON.

231. *Shell*. Hurd and Warburton observe that *shell* means the horizon, the hollow circumference of the heavens.

233. *Violet-embroider'd*. This is a beau-

tiful compound epithet, and the combination of the two words that compose it, natural and easy.—J. WARTON.

234. *Love-lorn*, deprived of her mate.

241. *Daughter of the sphere*. Milton has given her a much bolder and more poetical original than any of the ancient mythologists. He supposes her to owe her first existence to the reverberation of the music of the spheres; in consequence of which he had just before called the horizon her *aery shell*. And from the gods (like other celestial beings of the classical order) she came down to men.—WARBURTON.

243. *Give, &c.* What an exquisite fancy this of echo in heaven redoubling the divine music!

Enter COMUS.

COM. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment? 245
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence.

How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night, 250
At every fall smoothing the raven down
Of darkness, till it smiled! I have oft heard
My mother Circe with the sirens three,

Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs; 255
Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,

And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:
Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense, 260
And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself;
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,

I never heard till now.—I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen.—Hail, foreign wonder! 265
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan, or Sylvan, by bless'd song

Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood. 270

LAD. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise,
That is address'd to unattending ears:
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my sever'd company,

Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo 275
To give me answer from her mossy couch.

COM. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?

LAD. Dim darkness, and this leafy labyrinth.

COM. Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?

LAD. They left me weary on a grassy turf. 280

COM. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?

254. *Flowery-kirtled*, so called, because they were employed in collecting flowers. Newton remarks here, that *kirtle* is a woman's gown.

256. *Would take the prison'd soul*. The mermaidens of modern tale and story inherit all the powers of the sirens of classic song: they are described as women to the waist, and fair, with bright eyes, and locks which they are continually braiding; and they are represented as having great power to charm every beholder.

267. *Unless the goddess*. Comus' address to the lady is in a very high style of classical gallantry. As Cicero says of Plato's language, that if Jupiter were to speak

Greek, he would speak as Plato has written, so we may say of this language of Milton, that if Jupiter were to speak English, he would express himself in this manner. The passage is exceedingly beautiful in every respect; but all readers of taste will acknowledge that the style of it is much raised by the expression, *unless the goddess*, an elliptical expression, unusual in our language, though common enough in Greek and Latin. But if we were to fill it up, and say, "unless thou beest the goddess," how flat and insipid would it make the composition, compared with what it is.—
LORD MONBODDO.

- LAD. To seek in the valley some cool friendly spring.
 COM. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?
 LAD. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick return.
 COM. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them. 285
 LAD. How easy my misfortune is to hit!
 COM. Imports their loss, beside the present need?
 LAD. No less than if I should my bróthers lose.
 COM. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
 LAD. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips. 290
 COM. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
 In his loose traces from the furrow came,
 And the swink'd hedger at his supper sat;
 I saw them under a green mantling vine,
 That crawls along the side of yon small hill, 295
 Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots:
 Their port was more than human, as they stood:
 I took it for a faery vision
 Of some gay creatures of the element,
 That in the colours of the rainbow live, 300
 And play in the plighted clouds. I was awe-struck,
 And, as I pass'd, I worshipp'd; if those you seek,
 It were a journey like the path to heaven,
 To help you find them.
 LAD. Gentle villager,
 What readiest way would bring me to that place? 305
 COM. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.
 LAD. To find out that, good shepherd, I suppose,
 In such a scant allowance of star-light,
 Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
 Without the sure guess of well-practised feet. 310
 COM. I know each lane, and every alley green,
 Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood,
 And every bosky bourn from side to side,
 My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
 And if your stray attendance be yet lodged, 315
 Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
 Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
 From her thatch'd pallet rouse; if otherwise,
 I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
 But loyal cottage, where you may be safe 320
 Till further quest.
 LAD. Shepherd, I take thy word,
 And trust thy honest offer'd courtesy,
 Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds

291. *What time*, a pure Latinism, *quo tempore*; and this notation of time is in the pastoral manner of Virgil and Horace.

293. *Swink'd*, tired, fatigued.

299. *Element*, used for the sky.

301. *Plighted clouds*. The lustre of Milton's brilliant imagery is half obscured, while *plighted* remains unexplained. We are to understand the

braided or embroidered clouds, in which certain airy elemental beings are most poetically supposed to sport, thus producing a variety of transient and dazzling colours. I may observe that the modern word is "plaited."—T. WARTON.

313. *Bosky bourn*. *Bosky* is, woody or rather bushy, and a *bourn* is a winding, deep, and narrow valley, with a rivulet at the bottom.

With smoky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
 And courts of princes, where it first was named, 325
 And yet is most pretended: in a place
 Less warranted than this, or less secure,
 I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.—
 Eye me, bless'd Providence, and square my trial
 To my proportion'd strength!—Shepherd, lead on. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter the TWO BROTHERS.

EL. BR. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair moon,
 That wont'st to love the traveller's benison, 332
 Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
 And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
 In double night of darkness and of shades; 335
 Or, if your influence be quite damm'd up
 With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
 Though a rush-candle from the wicker hole
 Of some clay habitation, visit us
 With thy long-level'd rule of streaming light; 340
 And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
 Or Tyrian cynosure.

SEC. BR. Or, if our eyes
 Be barr'd that happiness, might we but hear
 The folded flocks penn'd in their wattled cotes, 345
 Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
 Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
 Count the night watches to his feathery dames,
 'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,
 In this close dungeon of innumerable boughs.
 But, O, that hapless virgin, our lost sister! 350
 Where may she wander now, whither betake her
 From the chill dew, among rude burs and thistles?
 Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
 Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
 Leans her unpillow'd head, fraught with sad fears. 355
 What, if in wild amazement and affright;
 Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
 Of savage hunger, or of savage heat?

EL. BR. Peace, brother; be not over-exquisite
 To cast the fashion of uncertain evils: 360
 For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
 What need a man forestall his date of grief,
 And run to meet what he would most avoid?
 Or if they be but false alarms of fear,
 How bitter is such self-delusion! 365

340. *With thy long-level'd rule of streaming light.* What a perfect, as well as picturesque, description of a beam of light!

341. *Our star of Arcady, &c.* Our greater or lesser bear-star. Calisto, the daughter of Lycaon, King of Arcadia, was changed into the greater bear, called also

Helice, and her son Arcas into the lesser, called also Cynosura, by observing which the *Tyrians* and *Sidonians* steer'd their course, as the Grecian mariners did by the other.—NEWTON.

360. *To cast the fashion:* so in astrology "to cast a nativity"—to predict, to prefigure, to compute.—T. WARTON.

I do not think my sister so to seek,
 Or so unprincipled in Virtue's book,
 And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
 As that the single want of light and noise
 (Not being in danger, as I trust she is not) 370
 Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
 And put them into misbecoming plight.
 Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
 By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
 Were in the flat sea sunk; and Wisdom's self 375
 Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude;
 Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,
 She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
 That in the various bustle of resort
 Were all-to ruffled, and sometimes impair'd. 380
 He that has light within his own clear breast,
 May sit in the centre, and enjoy bright day:
 But he, that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
 Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
 Himself is his own dungeon.

SEC. BR. 'Tis most true, 385
 That musing Meditation most affects
 The pensive secrecy of desart cell,
 Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
 And sits as safe as in a senate-house;
 For who would rob a hermit of his weeds, 390
 His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
 Or do his gray hairs any violence?
 But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
 Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
 Of dragon-watch with unenchanted eye, 395
 To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit,
 From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
 You may as well spread out the unsunn'd heaps
 Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,
 And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope 400
 Danger will wink on opportunity,
 And let a single helpless maiden pass
 Uninjured in this wild surrounding waste.
 Of night, or loneliness, it recks me not;
 I fear the dread events that dog them both, 405
 Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
 Of our unowned sister.

EL. BR. I do not, brother
 Infer as if I thought my sister's state
 Secure, without all doubt or controversy;

376. *Seeks to*. This expression is common in our translation of the Bible: see Isa. xi. 10. Deut. xii. 5.

378. *She plumes her feathers*. Warton thinks the true reading is "prunes:" but *plumes* is used in the sense intended

here, namely, to smoothe and pick, and set in order when ruffled.

380. *All-to*, for altogether, entirely.

395. *Unenchanted*: Which cannot be enchanted.

- But rigid looks of chaste austerity, 450
 And noble grace that dash'd brute violence
 With sudden adoration and blank awe?
 So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity,
 That, when a soul is found sincerely so,
 A thousand liveried angels lacky her, 455
 Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt;
 And in clear dream and solemn vision,
 Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;
 Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
 Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape, 460
 The unpolluted temple of the mind,
 And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
 Till all be made immortal: but when lust,
 By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
 But most by lewd and lavish act of sin, 465
 Lets in defilement to the inward parts;
 The soul grows clotted by contagion,
 Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
 The divine property of her first being.
 Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp, 470
 Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres
 Lingerin', and sitting by a new-made grave,
 As loth to leave the body that it loved,
 And link'd itself by carnal sensuality
 To a degenerate and degraded state. 475
- SEC. BR. How charming is divine philosophy!
 Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose;
 But musical as is Apollo's lute,
 And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
 Where no crude surfeit reigns.
- EL. BR. List, list; I hear 480
 Some far off halloo break the silent air.
- SEC. BR. Methought so too; what should it be?
 EL. BR. For certain
 Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
 Or else some neighbour woodman, or at worst,
 Some roving robber calling to his fellows. 485
- SEC. BR. Heaven keep my sister. Again, again, and near!
 Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

450. *Rigid looks* refer to the snaky looks, and *noble grace* to the beautiful face, as the Gorgon is represented on ancient gems.—WARBURTON.

462. *Turns it to the soul's essence.* The same notion, of *the body's working up to spirit*, Milton afterwards introduced into his *Paradise Lost*, (v. 469.) In this place it falls in so well with the poet's design, gives such force and strength to this encomium on Chastity, and carries in it such a dignity of sentiment, that, however repugnant it may be to our philosophical ideas, it cannot miss striking and delighting every virtuous and intelligent reader.—THYER.

476. *How charming, &c.* Much the same sentiment is found in the author's "Tractate of Education:"—"I shall not detain you longer in the demonstration of what we should not do, but straight conduct you to a hill-side, where I will point you out the right path of a virtuous and noble education, laborious indeed at the first ascent, but also so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospect and melodious sounds, that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming."

483. *Night-founder'd.* See note in *Paradise Lost*, i. 204.

EL. BR. I'll halloo:
 If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
 Defence is a good cause, and Heaven be for us.

Enter the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, habited like a Shepherd.

That halloo I should know; what are you? speak; 490
 Come not too near; you fall on iron stakes else.

SPIR. What voice is that? my young lord? speak again.

SEC. BR. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.

EL. BR. Thyrsis? whose artful strains have oft delay'd
 The huddling brook to hear his madrigal, 495
 And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale?

How cam'st thou here, good swain? hath any ram
 Slipp'd from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
 Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?
 How couldst thou find this dark sequester'd nook? 500

SPIR. O my loved master's heir, and his next joy,
 I came not here on such a trivial toy
 As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth
 Of pilfering wolf: not all the fleecy wealth,
 That doth enrich these downs, is worth a thought 505
 To this my errand, and the care it brought.
 But, O my virgin Lady, where is she?
 How chance she is not in your company?

EL. BR. To tell thee sadly, shepherd, without blame,
 Or our neglect, we lost her as we came. 510

SPIR. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.

EL. BR. What fears, good Thyrsis? Pr'ythee briefly
 shew,

SPIR. I'll tell ye; 'tis not vain or fabulous,
 (Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance,)
 What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse, 515
 Storied of old, in high immortal verse,
 Of dire chimeras, and enchanted isles,
 And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to hell;
 For such there be; but unbelief is blind.

Within the navel of this hideous wood, 520
 Immur'd in cypress shades, a sorcerer dwells,
 Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
 Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries;
 And here to every thirsty wanderer
 By sly enticement gives his baneful cup, 525
 With many murmurs mix'd, whose pleasing poison

509. *Sadly*: Soberly, seriously.

517. The *chimeras dire* of ancient verse have passed away from popular belief; not so the *enchanted isles* and the *rifted rocks*, whose entrance leads to perdition: the former are to be found in Scandinavian song; and, not to go further, the volcanic mountains not inaptly support a belief in the existence of the latter.—BRIDGES.

520. *Within the navel*; that is, in the middle. Delphi was called by the Greeks *ομφαλος γῆς*, "the navel of the earth," as they believed it the centre of the world.

526. *Murmurs*: That is, in preparing this enchanted cup, the charm of many barbarous, unintelligible words was intermixed, to quicken and strengthen its operation.—WARBURTON

The visage quite transforms of him that drinks, |
 And the inglorious likeness of a beast
 Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
 Charácter'd in the face: this have I learn'd, 530
 Tending my flocks hard by i' the hilly crofts,
 That brow this bottom-glade; whence night by night
 He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl,
 Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
 Doing abhorred rites to Hecate 535
 In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.
 Yet have they many baits and guileful spells,
 To inveigle and invite the unwary sense
 Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
 This evening late, by then the chewing flocks 540
 Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
 Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
 I sat me down to watch upon a bank
 With ivy canopied, and interwove
 With flaunting honey-suckle; and began, 545
 Wrapp'd in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
 To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
 Till fancy had her fill; but, ere a close,
 The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
 And fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance; 550
 At which I ceased, and listen'd them a while,
 Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
 Gave respite to the drowsy-frighted steeds,
 That draw the litter of close-curtain'd sleep:
 At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound 555
 Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
 And stole upon the air, that even Silence
 Was took ere she was ware, and wish'd she might
 Deny her nature, and be never more,
 Still to be so displaced. I was all ear, 560
 And took in strains that might create a soul
 Under the ribs of death: but, O! ere long,
 Too well I did perceive it was the voice
 Of my most honour'd Lady, your dear sister.
 Amazed I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear, 565
 And, O poor hapless nightingale, thought I,
 How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!
 Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
 Through paths and turnings often trod by day;

542. *Besprent*, besprinkled.—548. *But ere a close*, a musical close on his pipe.

553. *Drowsy-frighted*: that is, the drowsy steeds of Night, who were *af-frighted* on this occasion, at the *barbarous dissonance* of Comus's nocturnal revelry.—T. WARTON.

562. *Under the ribs of Death*. Milton may have taken this idea from one of the Emblems in Herman Hugo's "Pia Desideria," where a soul in the figure of an infant is represented within the ribs

of a skeleton, as its prison, with this motto, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." Quarles has adopted this idea, and for the eighth emblem, Book v., he has a human skeleton, with a youth inside the ribs, pulling and trying to get out, while the author exclaims:—

O wretched Man! thus doom'd to draw thy
 Breath
 Within the loathsome Body of this Death.

Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place, 570
 Where that damn'd wisard, hid in sly disguise,
 (For so by certain signs I knew) had met
 Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
 The aidless innocent Lady, his wish'd prey;
 Who gently ask'd if he had seen such two, 575
 Supposing him some neighbour villager.
 Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess'd
 Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
 Into swift flight, till I had found you here;
 But further know I not.

SEC. BR. O night, and shades! 580
 How are ye join'd with Hell in triple knot
 Against the unarmed weakness of one virgin,
 Alone and helpless! Is this the confidence
 You gave me, brother?

EL. BR. Yes, and keep it still;
 Lean on it safely; not a period 585
 Shall be unsaid for me: against the threats
 Of malice, or of sorcery, or that power
 Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm;—
 Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt;
 Surprised by unjust force, but not enthrall'd; 590
 Yea, even that, which mischief meant most harm,
 Shall in the happy trial prove most glory:
 But evil on itself shall back recoil,
 And mix no more with goodness; when at last,
 Gather'd like scum, and settled to itself, 595
 It shall be in eternal restless change
 Self-fed and self-consumed; if this fail,
 The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,
 And earth's base built on stubble.—But come; let's on.
 Against the opposing will and arm of Heaven 600
 May never this just sword be lifted up!
 But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
 With all the grisly legions that troop
 Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
 Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms 605
 'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
 And force him to return his purchase back,
 Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
 Curs'd as his life.

SPIR. Alas! good venturous youth,
 I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise; 610
 But here thy sword can do thee little stead;

584. *Yes, and keep it still.* This confidence of the Elder Brother in favour of the final efficacy of virtue, holds forth a very high strain of philosophy, delivered in as high strains of eloquence and poetry.—T. WARTON.

597. *Self-fed and self-consumed.* This image is wonderfully fine. It is taken

from the conjectures of astronomers concerning the dark spots which, from time to time, appear on the surface of the sun's body, and after a while disappear again; which they suppose to be the scum of that fiery matter, which first breeds it, and then breaks through and consumes it.—WARBURTON.

Far other arms and other weapons must
 Be those that quell the might of hellish charms:
 He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
 And crumble all thy sinews.

EL. BR. Why, pr'ythee, shepherd, 615
 How durst thou then thyself approach so near,
 As to make this relation?

SPIR. Care, and utmost shifts,
 How to secure the Lady from surprisal,
 Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
 Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd 620

In every virtuous plant, and healing herb,
 That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray:
 He loved me well, and oft would beg me sing;
 Which when I did, he on the tender grass
 Would sit, and hearken ev'n to ecstasy; 625

And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
 And show me simples of a thousand names,
 Telling their strange and vigorous faculties:
 Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
 But of divine effect, he cull'd me out; 630

The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
 But in another country, as he said,
 Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:
 Unknown, and like esteem'd, and the dull swain
 Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon: 635

And yet more med'cinal is it than that moly,
 That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave:
 He call'd it hæmony, and gave it me,
 And bade me keep it as of sovran use
 'Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast, or damp, 640
 Or ghastly furies' apparition.

I pursed it up, but little reckoning made,
 Till now that this extremity compell'd:
 But now I find it true; for by this means
 I knew the foul enchanter though disguised, 645
 Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his spells,

And yet came off: if you have this about you,
 (As I will give you when we go) you may
 Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
 Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood, 650
 And brandish'd blade, rush on him; break his glass,
 And shed the luscious liquour on the ground,

620. *To see to*. An old expression for to behold.

634. *Unknown and like esteemed*, that is, unknown and unesteemed, or unknown and esteemed accordingly.

635. *Clouted*, patched. See Joshua ix. 5. *Shoon*, old plural of shoe. Clouts are thin and narrow plates of iron affixed with hob-nails to the soles of the shoes of rustics.

638. *Hæmony*. It is not agreed whether Milton's *hæmony* is a real or poetical plant.—T. WARTON.

642. *Pursed*, put it in a purse or bag for safe keeping. "It was customary for families to have herbs in store, not only for medicinal and culinary, but also for superstitious purposes. In some houses rue and rosemary were constantly kept for good luck."—T. WARTON.

But seize his wand; though he and his curs'd crew
 Fierce sign of battel make, and menace high,
 Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke, 655
 Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

EL. BR. Thyrsis, lead on apace; I'll follow thee;
 And some good angel bear a shield before us!

The scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft music: tables spread with all dainties. COMUS appears with his rabble, and the LADY set in an enchanted chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.

COM. Nay, Lady, sit, if I but wave this wand,
 Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaster, 660
 And you a statue, or, as Daphne was,
 Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

LAD. Fool, do not boast;
 Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
 With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
 Thou hast immanacled, while Heaven sees good. 665

COM. Why are you vex'd, Lady? Why do you frown?
 Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
 Sorrow flies far: see, here be all the pleasures
 That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
 When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns 670
 Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.

And first, behold this cordial julep here,
 That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
 With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mix'd:
 Not that Nephthes, which the wife of Thone 675
 In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
 Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
 To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.

Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
 And to those dainty limbs, which nature lent 680
 For gentle usage and soft delicacy?

But you invert the covenants of her trust,
 And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
 With that which you received on other terms;
 Scorning the unexempt condition, 685
 By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
 Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
 That have been tir'd all day without repast,
 And timely rest have wanted; but, fair virgin, |
 This will restore all soon.

LAD. 'Twill not, false traitor! 690
 'Twill not restore the truth and honesty,
 That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies.
 Was this the cottage, and the safe abode,
 Thou toldst me of? What grim aspects are these,

675. *Nephthes*, from the Greek *νη not* and *πενθος grief*, a drug or medicine that relieves pain and exhilarates.

These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me! 695
 Hence with thy brew'd enchantments, foul deceiver!
 Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
 With visor'd falsehood and base forgery;
 And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
 With lickerish baits, fit to ensnare a brute? 700
 Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
 I would not taste thy treasonous offer; none,
 But such as are good men, can give good things;
 And that which is not good, is not delicious
 To a well-govern'd and wise appetite. 705

Com. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
 To those budge doctors of the Stoick fur,
 And fetch their precepts from the Cynick tub,
 Praising the lean and sallow abstinence!
 Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth 710
 With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
 Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
 Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
 But all to please and sate the curious taste?
 And set to work millions of spinning worms, 715
 That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk,
 To deck her sons; and, that no corner might
 Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
 She hutch'd the all-worshipp'd ore, and precious gems,
 To store her children with: if all the world 720
 Should in a pet of temperance feed on pulse,
 Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
 The All-giver would be unthank'd, would be unpraised,
 Not half his riches known, and yet despised:
 And we should serve him as a grudging master, 725
 As a penurious niggard of his wealth;
 And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
 Who would be quite surcharged with her own weight,
 And strangled with her waste fertility; 730
 The earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air dark'd with plumes,
 The herds would over-multitude their lords,
 The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought diamonds
 Would so imblaze the forehead of the deep,
 And so bestud with stars, that they below
 Would grow inured to light, and come at last 735
 To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
 List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cosen'd
 With that same vaunted name, virginity.
 Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded,

696. *Brew'd enchantments*, magical potions, brewed or compounded of incantatory herbs and poisonous drugs.

705. *A wise appetite*, that is, an appetite in subjection to the rational part, and which is pleased with nothing but what reason approves of.

707. *Those budge doctors*: those morose and rigid teachers of abstinence and mortification, who wear the gown of the Stoic philosophy. *Budge* is *fur*, anciently an ornament of the scholastic habit.—T. WARTON.

But must be current; and the good thereof 740
 Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
 Unsavoury in the enjoyment of itself:
 If you let slip time, like a neglected rose,
 It withers on the stalk with languish'd head.
 Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown 745
 In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
 Where most may wonder at the workmanship:
 It is for homely features to keep home,
 They had their name thence; coarse complexions,
 And cheeks of sorry grain, will serve to ply 750
 The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
 What need a vermeil-tinctured lip for that,
 Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
 There was another meaning in these gifts;
 Think what, and be advised: you are but young yet. 755

LAD. I had not thought to have unlock'd my lips
 In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler
 Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
 Obtruding false rules prank'd in reason's garb.
 I hate when Vice can bolt her arguments, 760
 And Virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
 Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,
 As if she would her children should be riotous
 With her abundance; she, good cateress,
 Means her provision only to the good, 765
 That live according to her sober laws,
 And holy dictate of spare temperance:
 If every just man, that now pines with want,
 Had but a moderate and beseeming share
 Of that which lewdly-pamper'd luxury 770
 Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
 Nature's full blessings would be well dispensed
 In unsuperfluous even proportion,
 And she no whit encumber'd with her store;
 And then the Giver would be better thank'd, 775
 His praise due paid: for swinish gluttony
 Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
 But with besotted base ingratitude
 Crams, and blasphemes his feeder. Shall I go on,
 Or have I said enough? To him that dares 780
 Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
 Against the sun-clad power of chastity,
 Fain would I something say;—yet to what end?
 Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
 The sublime notion, and high mystery, 785

743. *Neglected rose*, &c. So Shakspeare:
 But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,
 Than that, which, withering on the virgin
 thorn,
 Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.

760. *Can bolt*. In the construction of a

mill, a part of the machine is called the
bolting-mill, which separates the flour
 from the bran. The meaning is, "I am
 offended when Vice pretends to dispute
 and reason, for it always uses sophistry."
Bolt, to sift, to separate.

That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
 And serious doctrine of virginity;
 And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
 More happiness than this thy present lot. 790
 Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetorick,
 That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;
 Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinced:
 Yet, should I try, the uncontrolled worth
 Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
 To such a flame of sacred vehemence, 795
 That dumb things would be moved to sympathize,
 And the brute earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
 Till all thy magick structures, rear'd so high,
 Were shatter'd into heaps o'er thy false head.
 COM. She fables not; I feel that I do fear 800
 Her words, set off by some superiour power;
 And though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
 Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
 Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus,
 To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble, 805
 And try her yet more strongly. Come, no more;
 This is mere moral babble, and direct
 Against the canon-laws of our foundation;
 I must not suffer this; yet 'tis but the lees
 And settlings of a melancholy blood: 810
 But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
 Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
 Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.—

The BROTHERS rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground; his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The ATTENDANT SPIRIT comes in.

SPIR. What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?
 O, ye mistook; ye should have snatch'd his wand, 815
 And bound him fast: without his rod reversed,
 And backward mutters of dissevering power,
 We cannot free the Lady that sits here

797. *And the brute earth*: That is, the unfeeling earth would sympathize and assist.—T. WARTON.

800. "These six lines are aside, but I would point the first thus: *She fables not, I feel that*; that is, I fear she does not fable."—SYMPSON. *To fable* is to feign, to invent.

802. *And though not mortal, &c.* Her words are assisted by somewhat divine; and I, although *immortal*, and above the race of man, am so affected with their force, that a *cold shuddering dew*, &c. Here is the noblest panegyric on the power of virtue, adorned with the sublimest imagery. It is extorted from the mouth of a magician and a preternatural being, who, although actually possessed of his prey, feels all the terrors of human

nature at the bold rebuke of innocence, and shudders with a sudden cold sweat, like a guilty man.—T. WARTON.

809. *Lees*. I like the manuscript reading best:—

This is mere moral stuff, the very lees, &c.

Fel is bad; but very inaccurate.—HURD.

815. *Ye m stook*. The circumstance in the text, of the brothers forgetting to seize and reverse the magician's rod, while by contrast it heightens the superior intelligence of the Attendant Spirit, affords the opportunity of introducing the fiction of raising Sabrina; which, exclusive of its poetical ornaments, is recommended by a local propriety, and was peculiarly interesting to the audience, as the Severn is the famous river of the neighbourhood.—T. WARTON.

In stony fetters fix'd, and motionless:
 Yet stay; be not disturb'd; now I bethink me, 820
 Some other means I have which may be used,
 Which once of Melibœus old I learn'd,
 The soothest shepherd that e'er piped on plains.
 There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
 That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream, 825
 Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure;
 Whilom she was the daughter of Loocrine,
 That had the sceptre from his father Brute.
 She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
 Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen, 830
 Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
 That staid her flight with his cross-flowing course.
 The water nymphs, that in the bottom play'd,
 Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in,
 Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall; 835
 Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
 And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
 In nectar'd lavers, strew'd with asphodel:
 And through the porch and inlet of each sense
 Dropp'd in ambrosial oils, till she revived, 840
 And underwent a quick immortal change,
 Made goddess of the river: still she retains
 Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
 Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
 Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs 845
 That the shrewd meddling elfe delights to make,
 Which she with precious vial'd liquours heals:
 For which the shepherds at their festivals
 Carol her goodness loud in rustick lays,
 And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream 850
 Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils:
 And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
 The clasping charm, and thaw the numming spell,

824. *There is a gentle nymph, &c.* Sabrina's fabulous story may be seen in the "Mirrour for Magistrates," in the sixth song of Drayton's "Polyolbion," and in the tenth canto and second book of Spenser's "Faerie Queene." The part of the fable of Comus, which may be called the Disenchantment, is evidently founded on Fletcher's "Faithful Shepherdess." The moral of both dramas, is the triumph of Chastity. This, in both, is finely brought about by the same sort of machinery. Sabrina, a virgin and a king's daughter, was converted into a river-nymph, that her honour might be preserved inviolate. Still she preserves her maiden gentleness, and every evening visits the cattle among her twilight meadows, to heal the mischiefs inflicted by elfish magick. For this she was praised by the shepherds. She protects virgins in distress. She is now solemnly called, to

deliver a virgin imprisoned in the spell of a detestable sorcerer. She rises at the invocation, and leaving her car on an osiered rushy bank, hastens to help ensnared chastity. She sprinkles on the breast of a captive maid precious drops selected from her pure fountain; she touches thrice the tip of the lady's finger, and thrice her ruby lip, with chaste palms moist and cold, as also the envenomed chair, smeared with tenacious gums. The charm is dissolved, and the Nymph departs to the bower of Amphitrite. 828. *Brute, Brutus.*

845. *Urchin blasts.* The urchin or hedgehog, from its solitariness, the ugliness of its appearance, and from a popular opinion that it suckled or poisoned the udders of the cows, was adopted into the demonologic system; and its shape was sometimes supposed to be assumed by mischievous elves. --T. WARTON.

If she be right invoked in warbled song ;
 For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift 855
 To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
 In hard-besetting need ; this will I try,
 And add the power of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
 Listen where thou art sitting 860
 Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
 In twisted braids of lilies knitting
 The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair :
 Listen for dear honour's sake,
 Goddess of the silver lake ; 865
 Listen, and save !
 Listen, and appear to us,
 In name of great Oceanus ;
 By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
 And Tethys' grave majestick pace ; 870
 By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
 And the Carpathian wisard's hook ;
 By scaly Triton's winding shell,
 And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell ;
 By Leucothea's lovely hands, 875
 And her son that rules the strands ;
 By Thetis' tinsel-slipper'd feet,
 And the songs of sirens sweet ;
 By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
 And fair Ligea's golden comb, 880
 Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
 Sleeking her soft alluring locks ;
 By all the nymphs that nightly dance
 Upon thy streams with wily glance ;
 Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head, 885
 From thy coral-paven bed,
 And bridle in thy headlong wave,
 Till thou our summons answer'd have.
 Listen, and save !

SABRINA rises, attended by Water Nymphs, and sings.

By the rushy-fringed bank, 890
 Where grows the willow, and the osier dank,

863. Sabrina's hair *drops amber*, because, in the poet's idea, her stream was supposed to be transparent ; as the river of bliss, in *Paradise Lost*, (iii. 358,) and as Choaspes has an *amber stream*, *Paradise Regained*, (iii. 288.) But Choaspes was called "golden water." Amber, when applied to water, means a luminous clearness ; when to hair, bright yellow.—T. WARTON.

869. *Earth-shaking* is the epithet Homer gives to Neptune. *Tethys* is the wife of *Oceanus*, and mother of the gods.

Nereus was a sea deity, the father of the Nereids, by Doris, an ocean-nymph. The *Carpathian wisard* is Proteus, who had a cave at Carpathus, an island near Rhodes.

873. *Triton* was Neptune's trumpeter. *Glaucus* was another sea-deity. *Leucothea*, the white sea-goddess.

879. *Parthenope* and *Ligea* were two of the Syrens. The tomb of the former was at Naples, which was therefore called *Parthenope*.

- My sliding chariot stays,
 Thick set with agate, and the azurn sheen
 Of turkis blue, and emerald green
 That in the channel strays: 895
 Whilst from off the waters fleet
 Thus I set my printless feet
 O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
 That bends not as I tread:
 Gentle swain, at thy request, 900
 I am here.
 SPIR. Goddess dear,
 We implore thy powerful hand
 To undo the charmed band
 Of true virgin here distress'd, 905
 Through the force, and through the wile,
 Of unbles'd enchanter vile.
 SAB. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
 To help ensnared chastity:
 Brightest Lady, look on me. 910
 Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
 Drops, that from my fountain pure
 I have kept, of precious cure;
 Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
 Thrice upon thy rubied lip: 915
 Next this marble venom'd seat,
 Smeared with gums of glutinous heat,
 I touch with chaste palms moist and cold:—
 Now the spell hath lost his hold;
 And I must haste, ere morning hour, 920
 To wait in Amphitrite's bower.
- SABRINA descends, and the LADY rises out of her seat.
- SPIR. Virgin, daughter of Loctrine,
 Sprung of old Anchises' line,
 May thy brimmed waves for this
 Their full tribute never miss 925
 From a thousand petty rills,
 That tumble down the snowy hills:
 Summer drouth, or singed air
 Never scorch thy tresses fair,
 Nor wet October's torrent flood 930
 Thy molten crystal fill with mud;
 May thy billows roll ashore
 The beryl and the golden ore;
 May thy lofty head be crown'd
 With many a tower and terrace round, 935

893. *Azurn sheen*. *Sheen* is again used as a substantive for *brightness*, in line 1003 of this poem.

923. *Sprung of old Anchises' line*, for Loctrine was the son of Brutus, Brutus of Silvius, Silvius of Ascanius, Ascanius of Æneas, Æneas of Anchises. See Mil-

ton's History of England, Book i.—NEWTON.

924. *Brimmed waves*, that is, waves that rise to the *brim* or edge of the river's bank; meaning, full waves.

934. The sense of these four lines is, May thy head be crowned round about

And here and there thy banks upon
 With groves of myrrh and cinnamon!
 Come, Lady, while Heaven lends us grace,
 Let us fly this cursed place,
 Lest the sorcerer us entice 940
 With some other new device.
 Not a waste or needless sound,
 Till we come to holier ground;
 I shall be your faithful guide
 Through this gloomy covert wide; 945
 And not many furlongs thence
 Is your father's residence,
 Where this night are met in state
 Many a friend to gratulate
 His wish'd presence; and beside 950
 All the swains, that there abide,
 With jigs and rural dance resort:
 We shall catch them at their sport;
 And our sudden coming there
 Will double all their mirth and chere. 955
 Come, let us haste; the stars grow high;
 But night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

The scene changes, presenting Ludlow town and the President's castle:
 then come in Country Dancers; after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT,
 with the TWO BROTHERS, and the LADY.

SONG.

SPIR. Back, shepherds, back; enough your play,
 Till next sun-shine holiday:
 Here be, without duck or nod, 960
 Other trippings to be trod
 Of lighter toes, and such court guise
 As Mercury did first devise,
 With the mincing Dryades,
 On the lawns, and on the leas. 965

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
 I have brought ye new delight;
 Here behold so goodly grown
 Three fair branches of your own:
 Heaven hath timely tried their youth, 370
 Their faith, their patience, and their truth;
 And sent them here through hard assays
 With a crown of deathless praise,
 To triumph in victorious dance
 O'er sensual folly and intemperance. 975

with towers and terraces, and here and there may thy banks be crowned upon with groves of myrrh and cinnamon.

960. *Duck or nod.* By *ducks and nods* our author alludes to the country people's awkward way of dancing; and, the

Two Brothers and the Lady being now to dance, he describes their elegant way of moving by *trippings, light toes, court guise, &c.* The word *mincing* he uses to express the neatness of their gait.—PECK.

The Dances ended, the SPIRIT epiloguizes.

SPIR. To the ocean now I fly,
 And those happy climes that lie
 Where day never shuts his eye
 Up in the broad fields of the sky:
 There I suck the liquid air 980
 All amidst the gardens fair
 Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
 That sing about the golden tree:
 Along the crisped shades and bowers
 Revels the spruce and jocund Spring; 985
 The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
 Thither all their bounties bring;
 There eternal Summer dwells,
 And west winds, with musky wing,
 About the cedar'n alleys fling 990
 Nard and cassia's balmy smells.
 Iris there with humid bow
 Waters the odorous banks, that blow
 Flowers of more mingled hew
 Than her purpled scarf can shew; 995
 And drenches with Elysian dew
 (List, mortals, if your ears be true)
 Beds of hyacinth and roses,
 Where young Adonis oft reposes,
 Waxing well of his deep wound 1000
 In slumber soft, and on the ground
 Sadly sits the Assyrian queen:
 But far above in spangled sheen
 Celestial Cupid, her famed son, advanced,
 Holds his dear Psyche sweet entranced, 1005
 After her wandering labours long,
 Till free consent the gods among
 Make her his eternal bride,
 And from her fair unspotted side
 Two blissful twins are to be born, 1010
 Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.

976. *To the ocean, &c.* Pindar in his second Olympick, and Homer in his fourth Odyssey, describe a happy island at the extremity of the ocean, or rather earth, where the sun has his abode, the sky is perpetually serene and bright, the west wind always blows, and the flowers are of gold. This luxuriant imagery Milton has dressed anew from the classical gardens of antiquity, and from Ariosto and Spenser: but the Garden of Eden is absolutely his own creation.—T. WARTON.

984. *Crisped shades.* By this metaphorical epithet, I presume the poet had in his eye the *crisped* or curled vines and tendrils that form the *shades and bowers*.

993. *Blow* is used actively, that is, that make the flowers blow.

995. *Purpled*, is fringed or embroidered.

1002. *Assyrian queen.* Venus is called *Assyrian queen* because she was first worshipped by the Assyrians.

1010. Undoubtedly Milton's allusion at large, is here to Spenser's allegorical garden of Adonis, (*Faer. Qu. iii. vi. 46:*) but at the same time his mythology has a reference to Spenser's "Hymne of Love," where Love is feigned to dwell "in a paradise of all delight." with Hebe or Youth, and the rest of the dealings of Venus, who sport with his daughter Pleasure.—T. WARTON.

But now my task is smoothly done,
 I can fly, or I can run,
 Quickly to the green earth's end,
 Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend;
 And from thence can soar as soon
 To the corners of the moon.

1015

Mortals, that would follow me,
 Love Virtue; she alone is free:
 She can teach ye how to climb
 Higher than the sphery chime;
 Or, if Virtue feeble were,
 Heaven itself would stoop to her.

1020

1015. *Bow'd welkin*. A curve which bends, or descends *slowly* from its great sweep.

1021. *Sphery chime*, that is, the music of the spheres.

THE moral of this poem is, indeed, very finely summed up in the six concluding lines; in which, to wind up one of the most elegant productions of his genius, "the poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling," threw up its last glance to Heaven, in rapt contemplation of that stupendous mystery, whereby He, the lofty theme of "Paradise Regained," stooping from above all height, "bowed the heavens, and came down" on earth, to atone as man for the sins of men, to strengthen feeble virtue by the influence of his grace, and to teach her to ascend his throne.—FRANCIS HENRY EGERTON, afterwards Earl of Bridgewater.

In the peculiar disposition of the story, the sweetness of the numbers, the justness of the expression, and the moral it teaches, there is nothing extant in any language like the "Mask of Comus."—TOLAND.

Milton's "Juvenile Poems" are so no otherwise, than as they were written in his younger years; for their dignity and excellence, they are sufficient to have set him among the most celebrated of the poets, even of the ancients themselves: his "Mask" and "Lycidas" are perhaps superior to all in their several kinds.—RICHARDSON.

Milton's "Comus" is, I think, one of the finest productions of modern times; and I do not know whether to admire most the poetry of it, or the philosophy, which is of the noblest kind. The subject of it I like better than that of the "Paradise Lost," which, I think, is not human enough to touch the common feelings of humanity, as poetry ought to do; the divine personages he has introduced are of too high a kind to act any part in poetry, and the scene of the action is, for the greater part, quite out of nature: but the subject of the "Comus" is a fine mythological tale, marvellous enough, as all poetical subjects should be, but at the same time human. He begins his piece in the manner of Euripides; and the descending Spirit that prologuizes, makes the finest and grandest opening of any theatrical piece that I know, ancient or modern. The conduct of the piece is answerable to the beginning, and the versification of it is finely varied by short and long verses, blank and rhyming, and the sweetest songs that ever were composed. As to the style of "Comus,"

it is more elevated, I think, than that of any of his writings, and so much above what is written at present, that I am inclined to make the same distinction in the English language, that Homer made of the Greek in his time; and to say that Milton's language is the language of the gods; whereas we of this age speak and write the language of mere mortal men. If the "Comus" was to be properly represented, with all the decorations which it requires, of machinery, scenery, dress, music, and dancing, it would be the finest exhibition that ever was seen upon any modern stage: but I am afraid, with all these, the principal part would be still wanting; I mean, players that could wield the language of Milton, and pronounce those fine periods of his, by which he has contrived to give his poetry the beauty of the finest prose composition, and without which there can be nothing great or noble in composition of any kind. Or if we could find players who had breath and organs (for these, as well as other things, begin to fail in this generation,) and sense and taste enough, properly to pronounce such periods, I doubt it would not be easy to find an audience that could relish them, or perhaps they would not have attention and comprehension sufficient to connect the sense of them; being accustomed to that trim, spruce, short cut of a style, which Tacitus, and his modern imitators, French and English, have made fashionable.—
LORD MONBODDO.

In poetical and picturesque circumstances, in wildness of fancy and imagery, and in weight of sentiment and moral, how greatly does "Comus" excel the "Aminta" of Tasso, and the "Pastor Fido" of Guarini, which Milton, from his love of Italian poetry, must frequently have read! "Comus," like these two, is a pastoral drama; and I have often wondered it is not mentioned as such.—JOS. WARTON.

We must not read "Comus" with an eye to the stage, or with the expectation of dramatic propriety. Under this restriction, the absurdity of the Spirit speaking to an audience in a solitary forest at midnight, and the want of reciprocation in the dialogue, are overlooked. "Comus" is a suite of speeches, not interesting by discrimination of character; not conveying a variety of incidents, nor gradually exciting curiosity: but perpetually attracting attention by sublime sentiment, by fanciful imagery of the richest vein, by an exuberance of picturesque description, poetical allusion, and ornamental expression. While it widely departs from the grotesque anomalies of the Mask now in fashion, it does not nearly approach to the natural constitution of a regular play. There is a chastity in the application and conduct of the machinery; and Sabrina is introduced with much address, after the Brothers had imprudently suffered the enchantment of Comus to take effect. This is the first time the old English Mask was in some degree reduced to the principles and form of a rational composition: yet still it could not but retain some of its arbitrary peculiarities. The poet had here properly no more to do with the pathos of tragedy, than the character of comedy; nor do I know that he was confined to the usual modes of theatrical interloction. A great critic observes, that the dispute between the Lady and Comus is the most animated and affecting scene of the piece. Perhaps some other scenes, either consisting only of a soliloquy, or of three or four speeches only, have afforded more true pleasure. The same critic thinks, that in all the moral dialogue, although the language is poetical, and the sentiments generous, something is still wanting to "allure attention." But surely, in such passages, sentiments so generous, and language so poetical, are sufficient to rouse all our feelings. For this reason I cannot admit his position, that "Comus" is a drama "tediously instructive;" and if, as he says, to these ethical discussions "the auditor listens us to a lec-

ture, without passion, without anxiety," yet he listens with elevation and delight. The action is said to be improbable; because the Brothers, when their sister sinks with fatigue in a pathless wilderness, wander both away together in search of berries, too far to find their way back; and leave a helpless lady to all the sadness and danger of solitude. But here is no desertion or neglect of the Lady: the Brothers leave their sister under a spreading pine in the forest, fainting for refreshment: they go to procure berries or some other fruit for her immediate relief; and, with great probability, lose their way in going or returning; to say nothing of the poet's art, in making this very natural and simple accident to be productive of the distress, which forms the future business and complication of the fable. It is certainly a fault that the Brothers, although with some indications of anxiety, should enter with so much tranquillity, when their sister is lost, and at leisure pronounce philosophical panegyrics on the mysteries of virginity: but we must not too scrupulously attend to the exigencies of situation, nor suffer ourselves to suppose that we are reading a play, which Milton did not mean to write. These splendid insertions will please, independently of the story, from which however they result; and their elegance and sublimity will overbalance their want of place. In a Greek tragedy, such sentimental harangues, arising from the subject, would have been given to a Chorus. On the whole, whether "Comus" be or be not deficient as a drama, whether it is considered as an epic drama, a series of lines, a mask, or a poem; I am of opinion, that our author is here only inferior to his own "Paradise Lost."—T. WARTON.

disgrace
the

Milton's "Comus" is, in my judgment, the most beautiful and perfect poem of that sublime genius.—WAKEFIELD.

Perhaps the conduct and conversation of the Brothers, which Mr. Warton blames in the preceding note, may not be altogether indefensible. They have lost their way in a forest at night, and are in "the want of light and noise:" it would now be dangerous for them to run about an unknown wilderness; and, if they should separate, in order to seek their sister, they might lose each other: in the uncertainty of what was their best plan, they therefore naturally wait, expecting to hear perhaps the cry of their lost sister, or some noise to which they would have directed their steps. The Younger Brother anxiously expresses his apprehensions for his sister: the Elder, in reply, trusts that she is not in danger; and, instead of giving way to those fears, which the Younger repeats, expatiates on the strength of chastity; by the illustration of which argument he confidently maintains the hope of their sister's safety, while he beguiles the perplexity of their own situation. It has been observed, that "Comus" is not calculated to shine in theatric exhibition for those very reasons which constitute its essential and specific merit. The "Pastor Fido" of Guarini, which also ravishes the reader, and "The Faithful Shepherdess" of Fletcher could not succeed upon the stage. However, it is sufficient, that "Comus" displays the true sources of poetical delight and moral instruction, in its charming imagery, in its original conceptions, in its sublime diction, in its virtuous sentiments. Its few inaccuracies weigh but as dust in the balance against its general merit: and, in short, if I may be allowed respectfully to differ from the high authority of Dr. Johnson, I am of opinion, that this enchanting poem, or pastoral drama, is both gracefully splendid, and delightfully instructive.—TODD.

Dr. Johnson is more inclined to be favourable to "Comus" than to any other poem of Milton: he begins fairly enough, and gives it some of the

praises which justly belong to it; but he gradually returns to his captious ill-humour, and ends with saying that it is "inelegantly splendid and tediously instructive." After this close, what is the value of his praise? If it is truly poetical, it cannot be inelegantly splendid! Milton's decorations are never out of place in this Mask: it contains not a single image or epithet which does not fill the reader of taste with delight: it contains no passion, but he did not intend it. Masks were always designed to play with the fancy; and from beginning to end, without the abatement of a single line, Milton has effected this. Such a series of rural and pastoral picturesqueness was never before brought together. It is worthy of remark with what admirable skill the poet gathered from all his predecessors, Spenser, Shakspeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Drayton, and twenty more, every happy adjective of description and imaginative force, and combined them into the texture of his own fiction. As his power of creation was great, so was his memory both exact and abundant: whatever he borrowed, he made new by the fervent power of amalgamation.

The flowing strains of the whole poem are eloquent and beautiful, enriched with philosophic moral learning, and exalted by pure, generous, and lofty sentiment. Thus:—

Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence!

Again, line 476:—

How charming is divine philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.

This poem is stated to have been the congenial prelude to "Paradise Lost." In that opinion I do not concur: the fable is too gay; the images are too full of delight: all the topics lie too much upon the surface. There is a rich invention, but it has not the depth, or strength, or sublimity of "Paradise Lost." This is playful: that is full of solemnity and awe. More than that, though the combination gives originality to "Comus," yet it has nothing like the degree of originality of the great epic; of which a large portion of the invention has no prototype. Nor do I admit that even the language is of the same structure: it is, for the most part, more fluent and soft: it is, in short, pastoral, while the other is heroic.

The sort of spiritual beings, which is introduced into "Comus," is of a much more humble degree than those of the latter poems. These invisible inhabitants of the earth gratify the gay freaks of our imagination: they do not excite the profounder movements of the soul, and fill us with a sublime terror, like Satan and his crews of fallen angels.

In the long interval between the composition of the Mask, and of "Paradise Lost," the wings of Milton's genius had expanded, and strengthened an hundred-fold: he was no longer a shepherd, of whose enchanting pipe the beautiful echoes resounded through the woods; but a sage, an oracle, and a prophet, with the inspired tongue of a divinity.

I have observed, from the words of several of the critics here cited, that they have an opinion of poetry which I cannot believe to be quite correct. They seem to assume that picturesque imagery, drawn from the surface of natural scenery, combined with a sort of wild fiction of story which goes beyond the bounds of reality, constitutes the primary and most unmixed essence of poetry.—I admit that it does constitute very pure and beautiful poetry; but not the highest. The highest must go

beyond sublunary objects: there must be an invention of character, not only ideal, but sublime: there must be intermingled intellectual and argumentative greatness: there must be a fable, which embodies abstract truths of severe and mighty import: there must be distinct characters, elevated by grand passions, each acting according to his own appropriate impulses, and all going forward in regular progression, according to the rules of probability, to the accomplishment of the end proposed.

This has been effected by Milton's epics; but there certainly is an implication on the part of these critics, that these compositions have not as much unmixed and positive poetry as the "Comus;" and this, because of the greater variety of their ingredients, and the introduction of other matter besides imagery and description. Such a reason shows the narrowness of their conception of this divine art. All the finest passages of poetry are complex, in which the heart and understanding have essential co-operation: the bard must imagine what the heart must colour, or perhaps instigate, and the understanding enlighten. Imagery is material, and will not do alone; there must be the union of spirituality with it. The fault of a great part of Pope is, that there is nothing but reasoning, without either imagination or sentiment.

But, to return to "Comus," let it not be inferred that I mean in the smallest degree to detract from its merits. I only wish to protest against rules and definitions injurious to still greater poems of the same inimitable author! "Comus" is perfect in its kind; but a pastoral Mask cannot be put upon a footing with a grand heroic poem.

Milton, when he wrote these strains, was in the very opening of early youth, not more than twenty-four years old. Then all was,—

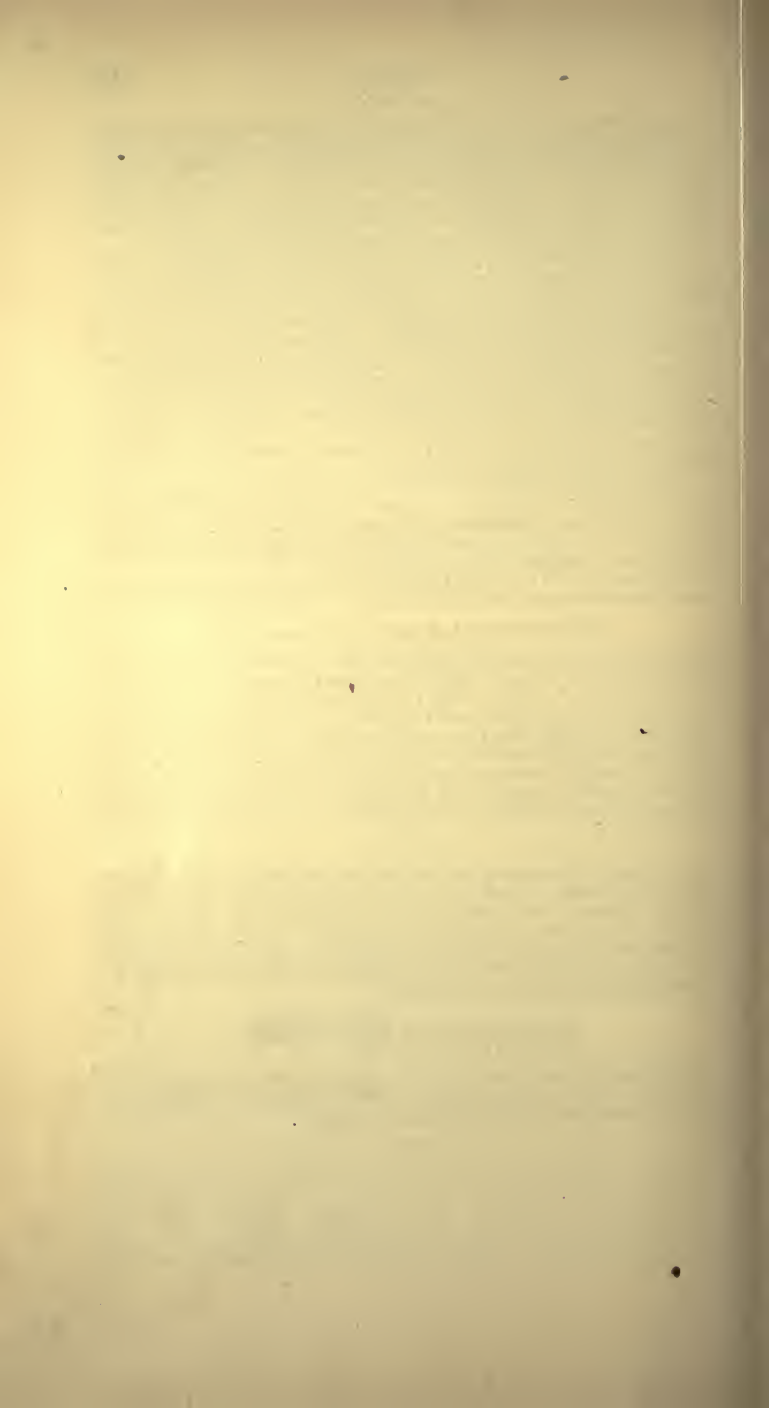
The purple light of love, and bloom of young desires.

The woods and the rivers and all nature then seemed to his eyes to smile with delight; but as years passed along, and he saw the obliquities of mankind and the sorrows of life, his lays took a deeper tone, and his music was more magnificent and soul-moving. The Lady and the two Brothers in "Comus" are all calm philosophy, and tender, hopeful confidence: to them the dawn is joy; the night-fall, peaceful slumbers: the demons of darkness dare not hurt them: the Lady has faith, even when left alone amid the dangers of a haunted forest. O fond imagination! O beamy visionariness of innocent inexperience!—SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

In "Comus," Milton has given us the most perfect and exquisite specimen of a masque, or rather he has given us a kind of ennobled and glorified masque. The refinement, the elegance, the courtly grace and chivalry—all is there; but there is something in "Comus" better, loftier, and grander than all this—something which no other masques, with all their refined, and scholarlike, and airy elegance, have ever approached—a high and philosophic vein of morality:—

Divine philosophy,
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute;—

deep and grand thoughts fetched from the exhaustless fountains of the great minds of old—his beloved Plato and the Stagyrite—thoughts fresh with the immortality of their birthplace.—SHAW.



ARCADES.
LYCIDAS.
L'ALLEGRO.
IL PENSEROSO.

THE
MIDDLE
CLASS
LITERATURE

ARCADES.*

Part of an Entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Derby,† at Harefield, by some noble persons of her family; who appear on the scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of state, with this song:—

I. SONG.

Look, nymphs and shepherds, look,
What sudden blaze of majesty
Is that which we from hence descry,
Too divine to be mistook :
 This, this is she 5
To whom our vows and wishes bend ;
Here our solemn search hath end.
Fame, that, her high worth to raise,
Seem'd erst so lavish and profuse,
We may justly now accuse 10
Of detraction from her praise :
 Less than half we find express'd ;
 Envy bid conceal the rest.
Mark, what radiant state she spreads,
In circle round her shining throne, 15
Shooting her beams like silver threads ;
This, this is she alone,
 Sitting like a goddess bright,
 In the centre of her light.
Might she the wise Latona be, 20
Or the tower'd Cybele

* The same character may be given of the style, sentiments, imagery, and tone of these Fragments, as far as they go, as of *Comus*. Warton observes,—“Unquestionably this *Mask* was a much longer performance. Milton seems only to have written the poetical part, consisting of these three songs, and the recitative soliloquy of the *Genius*: the rest was probably prose and machinery, and the whole was acted by persons of Lady Derby's own family.”

† Milton is not the only great English poet who has celebrated this Countess Dowager of Derby. She was the sixth daughter of Sir John Spenser, with whose family Spenser the poet claimed an alliance. In his “*Colin Clout's come Home again*,” (written about 1595,) he mentions her under the appellation of *Amaryllis*, with her sister *Phyllis* or *Elizabeth*, and *Charillis* or *Anne*: and in the dedication to her, of his “*Tears of the Muses*,” he acknowledges the particular bounties she had conferred upon himself and other poets. Thus the lady who presided at the representation of Milton's *Arcades*, was not only the theme, but the patroness of Spenser.

Mother of a hundred gods?
 Juno dares not give her odds:
 Who had thought this clime had held
 A deity so unparallel'd?

25

As they come forward, the Genius of the wood appears, and, turning
 towards them, speaks:—

GEN. Stay, gentle swains; for, though in this disguise,
 I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes;
 Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
 Of that renowned flood, so often sung,
 Divine Alphéus, who by secret sluice 30
 Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse;
 And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
 Fair silver-buskin'd nymphs, as great and good;
 I know, this quest of yours, and free intent,
 Was all in honour and devotion meant 35
 To the great mistress of yon princely shrine,
 Whom with low reverence I adore as mine;
 And, with all helpful service, will comply
 To further this night's glad solemnity;
 And lead ye, where ye may more near behold 40
 What shallow-searching Fame hath left untold;
 Which I full oft, amidst these shades alone,
 Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon:
 For know, by lot from Jove I am the power
 Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower, 45
 To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
 With ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove
 And all my plants I save from nightly ill
 Of noisome winds, and blasting vapours chill:
 And from the boughs brush off the evil dew, 50
 And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
 Or what the cross dire-looking planet smites,
 Or hurtful worm with canker'd venom bites.
 When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round
 Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground; 55
 And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
 Awakes the slumbering leaves, or tassell'd horn

25. *Give her odds.* This certainly seems no very elegant phrase, but it was a mode of compliment usual in Milton's time.—TODD.

26. *Stay, &c.* That is, though ye (the actors being of Lady Derby's own family) are disguised like rustics, and wear the habit of shepherds, I perceive ye are of honourable birth, your nobility cannot be concealed.

28. *Arcady.* The inhabitants of Arcadia, in the Peloponnesus, were devoted to pastoral life; and hence the scene of many ancient pastoral poems, as well as of Sir Philip Sidney's "Arcadia," is laid there. Hence, of course, the name of

this pastoral fragment of a Mask by our author.

31. *Arethuse.* It was fabled that Arethusa, a nymph, and one of Diana's attendants, being pursued by the river-god Alpheus, was changed into a fountain, and flowed under the earth across the Adriatic, and came up at Ortygia, an island in the bay of Syracuse.

34. *Quest:* Inquiry, search.

44. *By lot:* By allotment.

46. *To curl:* To dress with curls.

57. *Tassell'd horn.* So Spenser, (*Faerie Queene*, i. viii. 3):—

A horn of bugle small,
 Which hung adowne his side in twisted gold
 And tassels gay.

Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
 Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
 With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless : 60
 But else, in deep of night, when drowsiness
 Hath lock'd up mortal sense, then listen I
 To the celestial sirens' harmony,
 That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
 And sing to those that hold the vital shears, 65
 And turn the adamantine spindle round,
 On which the fate of gods and men is wound.
 Such sweet compulsion doth in musick lie,
 To lull the daughters of Necessity,
 And keep unsteady Nature to her law, 70
 And the low world in measured motion draw
 After the heavenly tune, which none can hear
 Of human mould, with gross unpurged ear ;
 And yet such musick worthiest were to blaze
 The peerless highth of her immortal praise, 75
 Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
 If my inferiour hand or voice could hit
 Inimitable sounds : yet, as we go,
 Whate'er the skill of lesser gods can show,
 I will assay, her worth to celebrate, 80
 And so attend ye toward her glittering state ;
 Where ye may all, that are of noble stem,
 Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem.

II. SONG.

O'er the smooth enamell'd green
 Where no print of step hath been, 85
 Follow me, as I sing,
 And touch the warbled string,

62. *Then listen I, &c.* This is Plato's system. Fate, or Necessity, holds a spindle of adamant; and, with her three daughters (Lachesis, Clotho, and Atropos) who handle the vital web wound about the spindle, she conducts or turns the heavenly bodies. Nine Muses, or Syrens, sit on the summit of the spheres, which, in their revolutions, produce the most ravishing musical harmony. To this harmony the three daughters of Necessity perpetually sing in correspondent tones. In the mean time the adamantine spindle, which is placed in the lap or on the knees of Necessity, and on which the *fate of men and gods is wound*, is also revolved. This MUSIC OF THE SPHERES, proceeding from the rapid motion of the heavens, is so loud, various, and sweet, as to exceed all aptitude or proportion of the human ear, and therefore is not heard by men. Moreover, this spherical music consists of eight unisonous melodies; the ninth is a concentration of all the rest, or a diapason of all those eight

melodies; which diapason or *concentus* the nine Syrens sing or address to the Supreme Being. This last circumstance illustrates, or rather explains the sixth, seventh, and eighth lines of the "Ode at a Solemn Music:"—

That undisturbed song of pure concert, &c.

Milton, full of these Platonic ideas, has here a reference to this consummate or *concentual* song of the ninth sphere, which is *undisturbed and pure*, that is unalloyed and perfect. The Platonism is here, however, in some degree Christianized.—T. WARTON.

81. *Glittering state.* The Nymphs and Shepherds are here directed by the Genius to look and advance towards a *glittering state*, or canopy, in the midst of the stage, in which the Countess of Derby was placed as a Rural Queen. It does not appear that the second song, which here immediately follows, was now sung. Some machinery or other matter intervened.—T. WARTON.

Under the shady roof
Of branching elm star-proof.

Follow me;

90

I will bring you where she sits,
Clad in splendour as befits

Her deity.

Such a rural queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

95

III. SONG.

Nymphs and shepherds, dance no more

By sandy Ladon's lilyed banks;

On old Lycæus, or Cyllene hoar,

Trip no more in twilight ranks;

Though Erymanth your loss deplore,

100

A better soil shall give ye thanks.

From the stony Mænalus

Bring your flocks, and live with us;

Here ye shall have greater grace,

To serve the lady of this place.

105

Though Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,

Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.

Such a rural queen

All Arcadia hath not seen.

97. *Ladon*: A river of Arcadia. *Lycæus*, *Cyllene*, *Erymanthus*, and *Mænalus*, all mountains of the same country.

106. *Syrinx* was a nymph of Arcadia and daughter of the river *Ladon*. Pan fell in love with her, and pursued her till she reached the river *Ladon*, when, thinking to embrace the object of his

love, he found his arms filled with reeds. While he stood sighing at his disappointment, the wind began to agitate the reeds, which produced a low musical sound. The god took the hint, cut seven of the reeds, and formed from them his pastoral pipe, which he called *συριγξ*, *syrinx*, after the name of the nymph.

LYCIDAS.*

In this Monody, the author bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish seas, 1637; and by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their highth.

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude;
And, with forced fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year: 5
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew 10
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well, 15
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse:
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn; 20
And, as he passes, turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.

* This poem first appeared in a Cambridge collection of verses on the death of Mr. Edward King, fellow of Christ's college, printed at Cambridge in a thin quarto, 1638. It consists of three Greek, nineteen Latin, and thirteen English poems.

Edward King, the subject of this Monody, was the son of Sir John King, knight, secretary for Ireland, under Queen Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I. He was sailing from Chester to Ireland, on a visit to his friends and relations in that country, when, in calm weather, not far from the English coast, the ship, a very crazy vessel, "a fatal and perfidious bark," struck on a rock, and suddenly sunk to the bottom with all that were on board, not one escaping, August 10, 1637. King was now only twenty-five years old: he was perhaps a native of Ireland, and at Cambridge he was distinguished for his piety, and proficiency in polite literature.

This poem, as appears by the Trinity manuscript, was written in November, 1637, when Milton was not quite twenty-nine years old.—T. WARTON.

1. *Yet once more.* This has reference to his poetical compositions in general, or rather to his last poem, which was "Comus." He would say, "I am again, in the midst of other studies, unexpectedly and unwillingly called back to poetry; again compelled to write verses, in consequence of the recent disastrous loss of my shipwrecked friend," &c. The plants here mentioned are not as some have suspected, appropriated to elegy,

but are symbolical of general poetry.—T. WARTON.

3. *I come to pluck, &c.* This is a beautiful allusion to the unripe age of his friend, in which death *shattered his leaves before the mellowing year.*

11. *And build the lofty rhyme:* a beautiful Latinism, *condere carmen.*

14. *Melodious tear:* the effect for the cause,—the melodious song. *Sisters,* the Muses: *Sacred Well, Helicon.*

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill; 23
 Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
 Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd 25
 Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
 We drove afield; and both together heard
 What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
 Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
 Oft till the star, that rose at evening bright, 30
 Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel, 31
 Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
 Temper'd to the oaten flute;
 Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
 From the glad sound would not be absent long; 35
 And old Damocetas loved to hear our song.

But, O, the heavy change, now thou art gone,
 Now thou art gone, and never must return!
 Thee, shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves,
 With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown, 40
 And all their echoes, mourn:
 The willows, and the hazel copses green,
 Shall now no more be seen
 Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays,
 As killing as the canker to the rose, 45
 Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
 Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
 When first the white-thorn blows;—
 Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep 50
 Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
 For neither were ye playing on the steep,
 Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie;
 Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high;
 Nor yet where Deva spreads her wisard stream. 55
 Ay me! I fondly dream!

27. *We drove afield.* That is, "we drove our flocks afield." I mention this, that Gray's echo of the passage in his *Elegy*, yet with another meaning, may not mislead many careless readers.

How jocund did they drive *their team* afield.

From the regularity of his pursuits, the purity of his pleasures, his temperance, and general simplicity of life, Milton habitually became an early riser. Hence he gained an acquaintance with the beauties of the morning, which he so frequently contemplated with delight, and has therefore so repeatedly described, in all their various appearances.—T. WARTON. See Milton's own account of his morning hours, "Compendium of English Literature," page 268.

28. The *sultry horn* of the *gray-fly*, (called by naturalists the *Trumpet-fly*) is the sharp hum of this insect at noon, or the hottest part of the day.

36. *Damocetas*, a character in Virgil's third *Eclogue*.

40. *Gadding vine.* Dr. Warburton supposes that the *vine* is here called *gadding*, because, being married to the elm, like too many other wives she is fond of gadding abroad, and seeking a new associate.

45. The whole context of words in this and the four following lines is melodious and enchanting.—BRYDGES.

50. *Where were ye.* This burst is as magnificent as it is affecting.—BRYDGES.

52. *On the steep.* In the midst of this wild imagery, the tombs of the Druids, dispersed over the solitary mountains of Denbighshire, the shaggy summits of Mona, and the wizard waters of Deva, (the Dee) Milton was in his favourite track of poetry: all these, too, are in the vicinity of the Irish Sea, where Lycidas was shipwrecked, and thus they have a real connection with the poet's subject—T. WARTON.

Had ye been there—for what could that have done?
 What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
 The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
 Whom universal Nature did lament, 60
 When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
 His gory visage down the stream was sent,
 Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! what boots it with incessant care
 To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade, 65
 And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
 Were it not better done, as others use,
 To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
 Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
 Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise, 70
 (That last infirmity of noble mind)

To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
 But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
 And think to burst out into sudden blaze,

Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears, 75
 And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
 Phœbus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears:
 "Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
 Nor in the glistening foil

Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies; 80
 But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
 And perfect witness of all-judging Jove:

As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
 Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."

O, fountain 'Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood, 85
 Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds!

That strain I heard was of a higher mood;
 But now my oat proceeds,

And listens to the herald of the sea
 That came in Neptune's plea: 90

He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
 What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?

58. *Orpheus*, torn in pieces by the Bacchanalian women, called *the rout*.

67. *As others use*. Warton supposes that Milton here had reference to the Scotch poet Buchanan, who unbecomingly prolonged his amorous descent to graver years. *Amaryllis* and *Neæra* are two of Buchanan's lady-loves, and the golden hair of the latter makes quite a figure in his verses. In his last Elegy he raises the following extravagant fiction on the luxuriant *tangles* of this lady's hair. Cupid is puzzled how to subdue the icy poet. His arrows can do nothing. At length he hits upon the stratagem of cutting a golden lock from Neæra's head, while she is asleep, with which the poet is bound, and thus *entangled* he is delivered a prisoner to Neæra.

70. *Fame is the spur*. No lines have been more often cited and more popular

than these; nor more justly instructive and inspiring. 75. *Fury*, Destiny.

76. *But not the praise*. "But the praise is not intercepted." While the poet, in the character of a shepherd, is moralizing on the uncertainty of human life, Phœbus interposes with a sublime strain, above the tone of pastoral poetry. He then in an abrupt and elliptical apostrophe, at "O fountain Arethuse," hastily recollects himself, and apologizes to his rural Muse, or in other words to Arethusa and Mincius, the celebrated streams of Bucoic song, for having so suddenly departed from pastoral allusions, and the tenor of his subject.—T. WARTON.

85. *Arethuse*: see note to line 31 of "Arcades." *Mincius* is a stream in Cisalpine Gaul, that flows into the Po, near Mantua, and is often mentioned by Virgil 91. *The felon winds*, the cruel winds.

And question'd every gust of rugged wings
 That blows from off each beaked promontory:
 They knew not of his story; 95
 And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
 That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd;
 The air was calm, and on the level brine
 Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.
 It was that fatal and perfidious bark, 100
 Built in the eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
 That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
 Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
 His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge, 105
 Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
 Like to that sanguine flower, inscribed with woe,
 Ah! who hath reft, quoth he, my dearest pledge?
 Last came, and last did go,
 The pilot of the Galilean lake:
 Two massy keys he bore of metals twain; 110
 The golden opes, the iron shuts amain:
 He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake:—
 How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
 Enow of such, as for their bellies' sake
 Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold! 115
 Of other care they little reckoning make,
 Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
 And shove away the worthy bidden guest!
 Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
 A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least 120
 That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
 What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
 And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs

94. *Beaked promontory*, one projecting like the beak of a bird.

96. *Hippotades*, a patronymic noun, applied to Æolus, the god of winds, and son of Hippotas.

99. *Panope*, one of the Nereids.

100. *That fatal bark*. The ship in which "Lycidas" was wrecked.

103. *Camus*, the river Cam, that flowed by Cambridge university, where Lycidas (Mr. King) was educated.

104. *The hairy mantle and sedge bonnet* may refer to the rushy or reedy banks of the Cam; and the *figures dim*, to the indistinct and dusky streaks or sedge leaves or flags, when beginning to wither. Warton remarks that perhaps the poet himself had no very clear or determinate idea; but in obscure and mysterious expressions, leaves something to be supplied or explained by the reader's imagination.

106. *Sanguine flower*. "Commentators," as Coleridge says, "have a notable trick of passing *siccissimis pedibus* ('with the driest feet') over really difficult places," and no one has remarked upon the "flower" here alluded to. I think it is

the *Hyacinth*, said to have sprung from the blood of the youth of that name, killed by Apollo. Ovid, a favourite author with Milton, in describing this event, (*Met. Lib. x. Fab. vi. line 54.*) uses almost the same language:—

"Ipse suos gemitus foliis inscribit: et, ai, ai, Flos habet inscriptum."

That is, "the God himself *inscribes* his own lamentations upon its leaves, and the flower has *ai, ai*, written upon it;" or, as Pliny explains it, its veins and fibres so run as to make the figure *ai*, the Greek interjection of grief.

107. *Dearest pledge*. Children were called by the Romans *pignora*, "pledges."

109. *The pilot*: Peter. *Two massy keys*: Alluding to Matt. xvi. 19.

114. Milton here animadverts on the endowments of the church, at the same time insinuating that they were shared by those only who sought the emoluments of the sacred office, to the exclusion of a learned and conscientious clergy. Thus in *Paradise Lost* (iv. 192:)

So clomb the first grand thief into God's fold;
So, since, into his church lowd biretings climb.

Grate on their scarnnel pipes of wretched straw:
 The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed; 125
 But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,
 Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
 Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
 Daily devours apace, and nothing sed:
 But that two-handed engine at the door 130
 Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.
 Return, Alpheus; the dread voice is past,
 That shrunk thy streams; return Sicilian Muse,
 And call the vales, and bid them hither cast 135
 Their bells, and flowerets of a thousand hues.
 Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
 Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
 On whose fresh lap the swart-star sparely looks;
 Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,
 That on the green turf suck the honied showers, 140
 And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
 Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
 The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
 The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
 The glowing violet, 145
 The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
 With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
 And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
 Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
 And daffadillies fill their cups with tears, 150
 To strew the laureat herse where Lycid lies.
 For, so to interpose a little ease,
 Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise;
 Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas 155
 Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd;
 Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
 Where thou, perhaps, under the whelming tide,
 Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
 Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
 Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old, 160

124. *Scarnnel*, thin, lean, meagre.

129. *Nothing sed*. Here Milton probably alludes to these prelates and clergy of the established church who enjoyed fat salaries without performing any duties; who "sheared the sheep but did not feed them." *Sed*, for *said*.

130 and 131. In these lines our author anticipates the execution of Archbishop Laud, by a *two-handed engine*, that is, the axe; insinuating that his death would remove all grievances in religion, and complete the reformation of the church.—WARTON. The sense is, "But there will soon be an end of all these evils; the axe is at hand to take off the head of him who has been the great abettor of these corruptions of the gospel. This will be done by one stroke."

133. *That shrunk*. In other words, "that silenced my pastoral poetry." The Sicilian muse is now to return, with all her store of rural imagery.—T. WARTON.

136. *Use*, to frequent, to inhabit.

138. *Swart-star*, the dog-star, so called because it turns the complexion *swart*, or brown. So Browne, in his pastorals, "the swart plowman."

154. *Ah me!* Here Mr. Dunster observes, the burst of grief is infinitely beautiful, when properly connected with what precedes it, and to which it refers.

158. *Monstrous world*; that is, the sea, the world of monsters.

159. *Moist vows*, our vows accompanied with tears.

160. *Bellerus* was the name of a Cornish giant. On the south-western shores

Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold;
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more; 165

For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor:
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore. 170

Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walk'd the waves;
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves, 175

And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and, singing, in their glory move, 180

And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more:
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood. 185

Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Dorick lay:
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills, 190
And now was dropt into the western bay:
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

of Cornwall there is a stupendous pile of rock-work called the "giant's chair;" and not far from Land's End is another most romantic projection of rock, called St. Michael's Mount. There was a tradition that the "Vision" of St. Michael, seated on this crag, or St. Michael's chair, appeared to some hermits. The sense of this and the following lines connected with the preceding, is this:—"Let every flower be strewed on the hearse where Lycidas lies, so as to flatter ourselves for a moment with the notion that his corpse is present; and this (ah me!) while the seas are wafting it here and there, whether beyond the Hebrides, or near these shores of Cornwall, &c.

162. *Namancos* is marked in the early editions of Mercator's Atlas as in Gallia, on the north-west coast of Spain, near Cape Finisterre. *Bayona* is the strong castle of the French, in the south-western extremity of France, near the Pyrenees. In that same atlas this castle makes a very conspicuous figure.

163. Here is an apostrophe to the angel Michael, seated on the guarded mount. "Oh angel, look no longer seaward to Namancos and Bayona's hold: rather turn your eyes to another object: look homeward or landward; look towards your own coast now, and view with pity the corpse of the shipwrecked Lycidas, floating thither."—T. WARTON.

165. *Weep no more.* Milton, in this sudden and beautiful transition from the gloomy and mournful strain into that of hope and comfort, imitates Spenser, in his Eleventh Eclogue, where, bewailing the death of some maiden of great blood in terms of the utmost grief and dejection, he breaks out all at once in the same manner.—THYER.

181. *And wipe the tears.* Isa. xxv. 8; Rev. vii. 17.

188. *Stops,* the holes of a flute.

189. This is a *Dorick lay* because Theocritus and Moschus had respectively written a Bucolic on the deaths of Daphnis and Bion.

THE particular beauties of this charming pastoral are too striking to need much descanting upon; but what gives the greatest grace to the whole, is that natural and agreeable wildness and irregularity which run quite through it, than which nothing could be better suited to express the warm affection which Milton had for his friend, and the extreme grief he was in for the loss of him. Grief is eloquent, but not formal.—THYER.

Addison says, that he who desires to know whether he has a true taste for history or not, should consider whether he is pleased with Livy's manner of telling a story; so, perhaps it may be said, that he who wishes to know whether he has a true taste for poetry or not, should consider whether he is highly delighted or not with the perusal of Milton's "Lycidas." If I might venture to place Milton's works, according to their degrees of poetic excellence, it should be perhaps in the following order: Paradise Lost, Comus, Samson Agonistes, Lycidas, L'Allegro, Il Penseroso. The last three are in such an exquisite strain, says Fenton, that though he had left no other monuments of his genius behind him, his name had been immortal.—JOS. WARTON.

In this piece there is perhaps more poetry than sorrow: but let us read it for its poetry. It is true, that passion plucks no berries from the myrtle and ivy, nor calls upon Arethuse and Mincius, nor tells of "rough Satyrs with cloven heel:" but poetry does this; and in the hands of Milton does it with a peculiar and irresistible charm. Subordinate poets exercise no invention, when they tell how a shepherd has lost his companion, and must feed his flocks alone, without any judge of his skill in piping: but Milton dignifies and adorns these common artificial incidents with unexpected touches of picturesque beauty, with the graces of sentiment, and with the novelties of original genius. It is objected "here is no art, for there is nothing new." To say nothing that there may be art without novelty, as well as novelty without art, I must reply that this objection will vanish, if we consider the imagery which Milton has raised from local circumstances. Not to repeat the use he has made of the mountains of Wales, the Isle of Man, and the river Dee, near which Lycidas was shipwrecked; let us recollect the introduction of the romantic superstition of St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, which overlooks the Irish Sea, the fatal scene of his friend's disaster.

But the poetry is not always unconnected with passion. The poet lavishly describes an ancient sepulchral rite, but it is made preparatory to a stroke of tenderness: he calls for a variety of flowers to decorate his friend's hearse, supposing that his body was present, and forgetting for a while that it was floating far off in the ocean. If he was drowned, it was some consolation that he was to receive the decencies of burial. This is a pleasing deception: it is natural and pathetic. But the real catastrophe recurs; and this circumstance again opens a new vein of imagination.

Dr. Johnson censures Milton for his allegorical mode of telling that he and Lycidas studied together, under the fictitious images of rural employments, in which, he says, there can be no tenderness; and prefers Cowley's lamentation of the loss of Harvey, the companion of his labours, and the partner of his discoveries. I know not, if in this similarity of subject Cowley has more tenderness; I am sure he has less poetry: I will allow that he has more wit, and more smart similes. The sense of our author's allegory on this occasion is obvious, and is just as intelligible as if he had used plain terms. It is a fiction, that, when Lycidas died, the woods and caves were deserted, and overgrown with wild thyme and luxuriant vines, and that all their echoes mourned; and that the green copses

no longer waved their joyous leaves to his soft strains: but we cannot here be at a loss for a meaning; a meaning, which is as clearly perceived as it is elegantly represented.—T. WARTON.

The rhymes and numbers, which Dr. Johnson condemns, appear to me as eminent proofs of the poet's judgment; exhibiting, in their varied and arbitrary disposition, an ease and gracefulness, which infinitely exceed the formal couplets or alternate rhymes of modern Elegy. Lamenting also the prejudice which has pronounced "Lycidas" to be vulgar and disgusting, I shall never cease to consider this monody as the sweet effusion of a most poetic and tender mind; entitled, as well by its beautiful melody, as by the frequent grandeur of its sentiments and language, to the utmost enthusiasm of admiration.—TODD.

Whatever stern grandeur Milton's two epics and his drama, written in his latter days, exhibit; by whatever divine invention they are created; "Lycidas" and "Comus" have a fluency, a sweetness, a melody, a youthful freshness, a dewy brightness of description, which those gigantic poems have not. It is true that "Lycidas" has no deep grief; its clouds of sorrow are everywhere pierced by the golden rays of a splendid and joyous imagination: the ingredients are all poetical, even to single words; the epithets are all picturesque and fresh; and the whole are combined into a splendid tissue, as new in their position as they are radiant in their union. The unexpected transitions from one to the other at once surprise and delight: they are like the heavens of an autumnal evening, when they are lighted up by electric flames. The contrasts of sorrow, and hope, and glory, keep us in a state of mingled excitement to the end: the imagery never flags: though it blazes with the most beautiful forms of inanimate nature, and all sorts of pastoral pictures; yet the whole are by some spell or other made intellectual and spiritual: they do not play merely upon the mirror of the fancy.

That prime charm of poetry, the rapidity and the novelty, yet the natural association of beautiful ideas, is preëminently exhibited in "Lycidas," where the sudden transitions to contrasted images and sentiments keep the mind in a state of delightful ferment;

And o'er the cheek of sorrow throw
A melancholy grace.

It strikes me, that there is no poem of Milton, in which the pastoral and rural imagery is so breathing, so brilliant, and so new, as in this: the tone which has most similitude to it, is that of some descriptive passages of Shakspeare, whose simple brightness and modulation of words seem always to have dwelt on Milton's memory and ear.

But though strength was Milton's characteristic, there are many passages, many turns of thought and expression, in this poem, which are not wanting in tenderness, in pathetic recollections, and tearful sighs; in that sort of grief which belongs to true poetry: in grief neither factitious nor gloomy, but genuine, though hopeful; and mingled with rays of light, though melancholy. But I must forbear to say more on this exquisite and inimitable Elegy, lest those remarks should run to an extent disproportioned to its length.—SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

REMARKS

ON

L'ALLEGRO AND IL PENSEROSO.

WHEN Milton's juvenile poems were revived into notice about the middle of the last century, these two short lyrics became, I think, the most popular. They are very beautiful, but in my opinion far from the best of the poet's youthful productions: they have far less invention than "Comus" or "Lycidas," and surely invention is the primary essential; they have more of fancy than invention, as those two words are in modern use distinguished from each other. Besides, it is clear that they were suggested by the poem prefixed to "Burton's Anatomie of Melancholy," and a song in the "Nice Valour" of Beaumont and Fletcher.

There is here no fable, which is absolutely necessary for prime poetry. The rural descriptions are fresh, forcible, picturesque, and most happily selected; but still many of them seem to me much less original than those of "Lycidas" and "Comus;" and though there is a certain degree of contemplative sentiment in them all, it is not of so passionate or sublime a kind as in those other exquisite pieces, in which there is more of moral instruction and mingled intellect, and, in short, vastly more of spirituality.

The scenery of nature, animate and inanimate, derives its most intense interest from its connection with our moral feelings and duties, and our ideal visions. If I am not mistaken, Gray thought this when he spoke of merely descriptive poems. Gray's own stanza, in his "Fragment on Vicissitude," beginning

Yesterday the sullen year
Saw the snowy whirlwind fly,

perhaps the finest stanza in his poems, is a most striking example of this sublime combination.

I say, that these two admired lyrics of Milton have less of this combination than I could wish. They were written in the buoyancy and joyousness of youth, though the joyousness of the latter is pensive. All was yet hope with the poet; none of the evils of life had yet come upon him. It was the joy of mental display and visionary glory, of a mind proudly displaying its own richness, and throwing from its treasures beams of light on all external objects; but it was the rapidity of a ferment too much in motion, to allow it to wait long enough on particular topics: therefore there was in these two productions less intensity than in most of the author's other poetry: he is here generally content to describe the surface of what he notices. His learned allusions abound, though not so much perhaps as in most of his other writings; these, however, are not the proofs of his genius, but only of his memory and industry.

I admit, that the choice of the imagery of these pieces could only have been made by a true poet, of nice discernment and brilliant fancy; of a mind constantly occupied by contemplation, and skilful in making use of all those superstitions in which the visionary delight; and that the whole are woven into one web of congenial associations, which make a beautiful and splendid constellation; still a large portion of the ingredients, taken separately, have been anticipated by other poets.

These remarks will probably draw forth the question, "Whence, then, has arisen the superior popularity of these two compositions?" I may now be forgiven for asserting, that popularity is a doubtful test of merit. One reason may be, that they are more easily understood; that they are less laboured and less deep; that they do not try and fatigue, either the heart or the intellect. The mass of the people like slight amusement, and subjects of easy apprehension; the greater part of Milton's poetry is too solemn and thought-working for their taste or their power.

In the sublime bard's latter poems,—in his epics and his drama, and even in his early monody of "Lycidas,"—his rural images, though not more picturesque, nor perhaps, except in "Lycidas," quite so fresh, yet derive a double force from their position—from the circumstances of the persons on whom they are represented as acting; as, for instance, on Adam, Eve, Satan, our Saviour, Samson, and on the mourners for the death of Lycidas.

When the description of scenery forms part of a fable, and is connected with the development of a story, the mind of the reader is already worked up into a state of sensitiveness and sympathy, which confers upon surrounding objects hues of augmented impression.

When Milton recalls to his mind those images with which he had been familiar in the society of his friend Lycidas, they awaken, from the accident of his death, affections and regrets which they never had done before. When Eve is about to be expelled from Paradise, how she grieves over her lost flowers and garden-delights! How the "air of heaven, fresh-blowing," invigorates and charms Samson, when brought out from a close prison! How affecting is the scene in the wilderness, when, after a night of tremendous tempest, our Saviour is cheered by a balmy morning of extreme brilliance!

These are what make fable necessary to constitute the highest poetry. I do not recollect that this has been sufficiently insisted upon by former critics. The want of it is assuredly experienced in Thomson's beautifully descriptive poem of "The Seasons." SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

L'ALLEGRO.

(THE CHEERFUL MAN.)

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell, 5
Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings:
There, under ebon shades, and low-brow'd rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell. 10
But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In Heaven yclep'd Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus at a birth,
With two sister Graces more, 15
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore:
Or whether, as some sager sing,
The frolick wind, that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying; 20
There on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses wash'd in dew,
Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee 25
Jest, and youthful jollity,
Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek; 30

2. *Of Cerberus.* Erebus, not Cerberus, was the legitimate husband of Night. Milton was too universal a scholar, to be unacquainted with this mythology; but as Melancholy is here the creature of Milton's imagination, he had a right to give her what parentage he pleased, and to marry Night, the natural mother of Melancholy, to any ideal husband that would best serve to heighten the allegory.—T. WARTON.

4. *Unholy:* Abominable, execrable.

6. *Jealous:* Alluding to the watch which

fowl keep when they are sitting.—WARBURTON.

15. *Two sister graces:* Meat and Drink, the two sisters of Mirth. *Some sager sing,* because those who give to Mirth such gross companions as Eating and Drinking, are the less sage mythologists.—WARBURTON.

27. *Quips:* Satirical jokes, smart repartees. *Cranks:* turnings in speech; conceits which consist in the change of the form or meaning of a word.

Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
 And Laughter holding both his sides.
 Come, and trip it, as you go,
 On the light fantastick toe;
 And in thy right hand lead with thee 35
 The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;
 And, if I give thee honour due,
 Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
 To live with her, and live with thee,
 In unreprieved pleasures free; 40
 To hear the lark begin his flight,
 And singing, startle the dull night,
 From his watch-tower in the skies,
 Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
 Then to come, in spite of sorrow, 45
 And at my window bid good morrow,
 Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
 Or the twisted eglantine:
 While the cock, with lively din,
 Scatters the rear of Darkness thin; 50
 And to the stack, or the barn-door,
 Stoutly struts his dames before:
 Oft listening how the hounds and horn
 Cheerily rouse the slumbering morn,
 From the side of some hoar hill, 55
 Through the high wood echoing shrill:
 Some time walking, not unseen,
 By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
 Right against the eastern gate,
 Where the great sun begins his state, 60
 Robed in flames, and amber light,
 The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
 While the plowman, near at hand,
 Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
 And the milkmaid singeth blithe, 65
 And the mower whets his sithe,
 And every shepherd tells his tale
 Under the hawthorn in the dale.

40. *Unreprieved*: Blameless, innocent, not subject to *reproof*. Sandys has "unreprieved kisses."

48. *Twisted eglantine*: The honey-suckle. All these three plants are often seen growing against the side or walls of a house.

57. *Not unseen*. In the *Penseroso*, (line 65,) he walks *unseen*. Happy men love witnesses of their joy: the splenetick love solitude.

67. *His tale*. It was suggested to me by the late ingenious Mr. Headley, that the word *tale* does not here imply stories told by shepherds, but is a technical term for numbering sheep. This interpretation I am inclined to adopt. Let us ana-

lyze the context. The poet is describing a very early period of the morning; and this he describes, by selecting and assembling such picturesque objects as accompany that period, and such as were familiar to an early riser. He is waked by the lark, and goes into the fields; the sun is just emerging, and the clouds are still hovering over the mountains; the cocks are crowing, and with their lively notes scatter the lingering remains of darkness; human labours and employments are renewed with the dawn of the day; the hunter (formerly much earlier at his sport than at present) is beating the covert, and the slumbering morn is roused with the cheerful echo of hounds

Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures, Whilst the landskip round it measures;	70
Russet lawns, and fallows gray, Where the nibbling flocks do stray; Mountains, on whose barren breast The labouring clouds do often rest;	75
Meadows trim with daisies pide, Shallow brooks, and rivers wide: Towers and battlements it sees Bosom'd high in tufted trees, Where perhaps some beauty lies, The Cynosure of neighbouring eyes.	80
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes From betwixt two aged oaks, Where Corydon and Thyrsis, met, Are at their savoury dinner set Of herbs, and other country messes,	85
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses; And then in haste her bower she leaves, With Thestylis to bind the sheaves; Or, if the earlier season lead, To the tann'd haycock in the mead:	90
Sometimes with secure delight The upland hamlets will invite, When the merry bells ring round, And the jocund rebecks sound To many a youth, and many a maid, Dancing in the chequer'd shade;	95
And young and old come forth to play On a sunshine holyday, Till the livelong daylight fail: Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,	100

and horns; the mower is whetting his scythe to begin his work; the milk-maid, whose business is of course at daybreak, comes abroad singing; the shepherd opens his fold, and takes the *tale* of his sheep, to see if any were lost in the night. Now for shepherds to tell tales, or to sing, is a circumstance trite, common, and general, and belonging only to ideal shepherds; nor do I know that such shepherds tell tales or sing more in the morning than at any other part of the day. A shepherd taking the *tale* of his sheep which are just unfolded, is a new image, correspondent and appropriate, beautifully descriptive of a period of time, is founded in fact, and is more pleasing as more natural.—WARTON. *vide* for *pie'd*.

77. *Towers and battlements*. This was the great mansion-house in Milton's early days, before the old-fashioned architecture had given way to modern arts and improvements. Turrets and battlements were conspicuous marks of the numerous new buildings of the reign of King Henry

VIII., and of some rather more ancient many of which yet remained in their original state, unchanged and undecayed. Where only a little is seen, more is left to the imagination. These symptoms of an old palace, especially when thus disposed, have a greater effect than a discovery of larger parts, and even a full display of the whole edifice. The embosomed battlements, and the spreading top of the tall grove, on which they reflect a reciprocal charm, still further interest the fancy, from the novelty of combination; while just enough of the towering structure is shown to make an accompaniment to the tufted expanse of venerable verdure, and to compose a picturesque association. With respect to their rural residence, there was a coyness in our Gothic ancestors: modern seats are seldom so deeply ambushed,—they disclose all their glories at once, and never excite expectation by concealment. They gradually approach, and by interrupted appearances.—T. WARTON.

With stories told of many a feat,
 How faery Mab the junkets eat:
 She was pinch'd and pull'd, she sed;
 And he, by friar's lantern led,
 Tells how the drudging goblin swet, 105
 To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
 When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,
 That ten day-labourers could not end:
 Then lies him down the lubbar fiend, 110
 And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
 And crop-full out of doors he flings,
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.
 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep, 115
 By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.
 Tower'd cities please us then,
 And the busy hum of men,
 Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
 In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold, 120
 With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
 Rain influence, and judge the prize
 Of wit or arms, while both contend.
 To win her grace, whom all commend.
 There let Hymen oft appear 125
 In saffron robe, with taper clear,
 And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
 With mask, and antique pageantry;
 Such sights as youthful poets dream
 On summer eves by haunted stream. 130
 Then to the well-trod stage anon,
 If Jonson's learned sock be on;

102. *Faery Mab*. See Shakspeare, *Rom. and Juliet*, Act I., sc. iv. This bewitching fancy sketch of Queen Mab is quoted in "Compendium of English Literature," p. 139.

103. *He was pinch'd*. He and she are persons of the company assembled to spend the evening after a country wake at a rural junket.—T. WARTON.

104. *Friar's lantern* is the Jack-o'-lantern, which led people in the night into marshes and waters. Milton gives the philosophy of this superstition, "*Paradise Lost*," (ix. 634-642.) In the midst of a solemn and learned enarration, his strong imagination could not resist a romantic tradition consecrated by popular credulity.—T. WARTON.

105. *Drudging goblin*. This goblin is Robin Goodfellow. His cream-bowl was earned, and he paid the punctuality of those by whom it was duly placed for his refection, by the service of threshing with his invisible fairy flail, in one night, and before the dawn of day, a quantity

of corn in the barn, which could not have been threshed in so short a time by ten labourers. He then returns into the house, fatigued with his task; and, overcharged with his reward of the cream-bowl, throws himself before the fire, and, stretched along the whole breadth of the fire-place, basks till the morning.—T. WARTON.

117. *Tower'd cities, &c. Then*, that is, at night. The poet returns from his digression, perhaps disproportionately prolix, concerning the feats of fairies and goblins, which protract the conversation over the spicy bowl of a village-supper, to enumerate other pleasures or amusements of the night or evening. *Then* is, in this line, a repetition of the first "*Then*," line 100. Afterwards, we have another "*Then*," with the same sense and reference, line 131. Here, too, is a transition from mirth in the country to mirth in the city.—T. WARTON.

120. *Triumphs*: Shows, masks, revels.

Or sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.

And ever, against eating cares, 135

Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out, 140

With wanton heed and giddy cunning;
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;

That Orpheus' self may heave his head 145
From golden slumber on a bed

Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains, as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regain'd Eurydice. 150

These delights, if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

142. *The melting voice, &c.* Milton's meaning is not, that the senses are enchained or amazed by music; but that, as the voice of the singer runs through the manifold mazes or intricacies of sound, all the chains are untwisted

which imprison and entangle the hidden soul, the essence or perfection of harmony. In common sense, let music be made to show all, even her most hidden powers.—T. WARTON.

IL PENSEROSO.

(THE THOUGHTFUL, OR PENSIVE MAN.)

HENCE, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain, 5
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams;
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train. 10
But hail, thou Goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view 15
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above 20
The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-hair'd Vesta, long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign, 25
Such mixture was not held a stain:
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove. 30

10. *Fickle*: Transitory, perpetually shifting. *Pensioners*: train, attendants.

18. *Memnon's sister*: that is, an Ethiopian princess, or sable beauty. Memnon, King of Ethiopia, and an auxiliary of the Trojans, was slain by Achilles.

19. *That starr'd Ethiop queen*. Cassiope, as we learn from Apollodorus, was the wife of Cepheus, King of Ethiopia. She boasted herself to be more beautiful than the Nereids, and challenged them to a trial, who, in revenge, persuaded Neptune to send a prodigious whale into Ethiopia. To appease them, she was directed to expose her daughter Andromeda to the monster; but Perseus delivered

Andromeda, of whom he was enamoured, and transported Cassiope into heaven, where she became a constellation. Hence she is called "that starr'd Ethiop queen."
—T. WARTON.

25. *His daughter she*. The meaning of Milton's allegory is, that Melancholy is the daughter of Genius, which is typified by the "bright-hair'd" goddess of the eternal fire. Saturn, the father, is the god of saturnine dispositions, of pensive and gloomy minds.—T. WARTON.

30. Before Saturn was driven from his ancient kingdom by his son Jupiter, nursed on mount Ida.

Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
 Sober, stedfast, and demure,
 All in a robe of darkest grain,
 Flowing with majestick train,
 And sable stole of Cyprus lawn, 35
 Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
 Come, but keep thy wonted state,
 With even step, and musing gait;
 And looks commercing with the skies,
 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes: 40
 There, held in holy passion still,
 Forget thyself to marble, till
 With a sad leaden downward cast
 Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
 And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet, 45
 Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
 And hears the Muses in a ring
 Aye round about Jove's altar sing.
 And add to these retired Leisure,
 That in trim gardens takes his pleasure: 50
 But first and chiefest with thee bring,
 Him that yon soars on golden wing,
 Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
 The Cherub Contemplation;
 And the mute Silence hist along, 55
 'Less Philomel will deign a song,
 In her sweetest, saddest plight,
 Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
 While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
 Gently o'er the accustom'd oak: 60
 Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
 Most musical, most melancholy!
 Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among,
 I woo, to hear thy even-song;
 And, missing thee, I walk unseen 65
 On the dry smooth-shaven green,
 To behold the wandering moon
 Riding near her highest noon,
 Like one that had been led astray
 Through the heaven's wide pathless way; 70

35. *Cyprus lawn*, a veil of a thin, transparent texture.

36. *Decent*: Not exposed, covered.

54. *Cherub Contemplation*. By contemplation, is here meant that stretch of thought, by which the mind ascends to the first good, first perfect, and first fair; and is therefore very properly said to "soar on golden wing, guiding the fiery-wheeled throne;" that is, to take a high and glorious flight, carrying bright ideas of Deity along with it. But the whole imagery alludes to the cherubic forms

that conveyed the fiery-wheeled car in Ezekiel, x. 2. See also Milton himself, "Paradise Lost," (vi. 750:) so that nothing can be greater or juster than this idea of "divine Contemplation."—HURN.

55. *Mute Silence*. I always admired this and the seventeen following lines with excessive delight. There is a spell in it, which goes far beyond mere description: it is the very perfection of ideal and picturesque and contemplative poetry.—BRIDGES.

And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
 Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
 Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
 I hear the far-off curfeu sound,
 Over some wide-water'd shore, 75
 Swinging slow with sullen roar:
 Or, if the air will not permit,
 Some still removed place will fit,
 Where glowing embers through the room
 Teach light to counterfeit a gloom; 80
 Far from all resort of mirth,
 Save the cricket on the hearth,
 Or the bellman's drowsy charm,
 To bless the doors from nightly harm.
 Or let my lamp at midnight hour 85
 Be seen in some high lonely tower,
 Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
 With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
 The spirit of Plato, to unfold
 What worlds or what vast regions hold 90
 The immortal mind, that hath forsook
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook:
 And of those Demons that are found
 In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
 Whose power hath a true consent 95
 With planet, or with element.
 Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
 In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
 Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
 Or the tale of Troy divine; 100
 Or what, though rare, of later age
 Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.
 But, O, sad Virgin, that thy power
 Might raise Musæus from his bower!
 Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing 105
 Such notes, as, warbled to the string,

76. *Over some wide-water'd shore.* Observe that the toll of bells always comes across a spreading water with extraordinary melancholy. Thus I have been long accustomed to listen to it cross the lake of Geneva with deep emotion. This mention of the curfeu is much finer even than the noble line which opens Gray's "Elegy," though that has always been so justly admired.—BRIDGES.

78. *Removed place:* That is, some quiet, remote, or unfrequented place will suit my purpose.

84. *To bless the doors.* Anciently the watchman, who cried the hours, used sundry benedictions.

86. *Be seen, &c.* The extraneous circumstance "be seen," gives poetry to a passage, the simple scene of which is only, "Let me study at midnight by a lamp in a lofty tower." Hence a picture

is created which strikes the imagination.—T. WARTON. This is one of those happy observations so characteristic of Thomas Warton. When the midnight wanderer sees through the dark a distant light in a high tower, it much engages his eye, and moves his imagination, if he has any mind and sensitiveness: and this application of mind to the description of scenery, is what alone gives it the force of a high order of poetry.—BRIDGES.

93. *Demons, &c.* Undoubtedly, these notions are from Plato's "Timæus" and "Phædon," and the reveries of his old commentators; yet with some reference to the Gothic system of demons, which is a mixture of Platonism, school-divinity, and Christian superstition.—T. WARTON.

99. *Thebes.* Æschylus' "Seven before Thebes." *Pelops' line,* the Electra of Sophocles. *Though rare,* Shakspeare.

Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
 And made Hell grant what love did seek!
 Or call up him that left half-told
 The story of Cambuscan bold, 110
 Of Camball and of Algarsife,
 And who had Canace to wife,
 That own'd the virtuous ring and glass,
 And of the wonderous horse of brass,
 On which the Tartar king did ride: 115
 And if aught else great bards beside
 In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
 Of turneys, and of trophies hung;
 Of forests and enchantments drear,
 Where more is meant than meets the ear. 120

Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career
 Till civil-suited Morn appear,
 Not trick'd and frounc'd as she was wont
 With the Attick boy to hunt,
 But kercheft in a comely cloud, 125
 While rocking winds are piping loud,
 Or usher'd with a shower still,
 When the gust hath blown his fill,
 Ending on the russling leaves,
 With minute drops from off the eaves. 130
 And, when the sun begins to fling
 His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
 To arched walks of twilight groves,
 And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
 Of pine, or monumental oak, 135
 Where the rude axe, with heaved stroke,
 Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
 Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.

109. *Or call up him, &c.* Chaucer, who *left half-told* the story of Cambuscan, in his Squier's tale.

116. *Great bards, &c.* From Chaucer, the father of English poetry, and who is here distinguished by a story remarkable for the wildness of its invention, our author seems to make a very pertinent and natural transition to Spenser, whose "Faerie Queene," although it externally professes to treat of tournaments and the trophies of knightly valour, of fictitious forests and terrific enchantments, is yet allegorical, and contains a remote meaning concealed under the veil of a fabulous action, and of a typical narrative which is not immediately perceived.—T. WARTON.

122. *Civil-suited*: Gravely, solemnly dressed. 123. *Frounc'd*: curled.

125. *Kercheft*: Wrapped up as with a handkerchief.

127. *Or usher'd, &c.* Dr. Johnson, from this to the 154th line inclusively, thus abridges our author's ideas:—"When the

morning comes, a morning gloomy with rain and wind, he walks into the dark trackless woods, falls asleep by some murmuring water, and, with melancholy enthusiasm, expects some dream of prognostication, or some music played by aerial performers." Never were fine imagery and fine imagination so marred, mutilated, and impoverished by a cold, unfeeling, and imperfect representation! To say nothing, that he confounds two descriptions.—T. WARTON. Thus it is, that Johnson is commonly vague and full of pompous and empty sounds, when he attempts to describe; yet on such loose descriptions have his fond eulogists given him credit for poetical imagination. Warton saw this with disgust, and here speaks out. How often must the nice and exquisite classical scholarship of this accomplished and genuine critic have been revolted by the rude pedant's coarse and unfeeling pomposity!—BRYDGES.

130. *Minute drops*, such as drop at intervals, indicating that the shower is over.

There in close covert by some brook,
 Where no profaner eye may look, 140
 Hide me from day's garish eye,
 While the bee with honied thigh,
 That at her flowery work doth sing,
 And the waters murmuring,
 With such consort as they keep, 145
 Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;
 And let some strange mysterious Dream
 Wave at his wings in aery stream
 Of lively portraiture display'd,
 Softly on my eyelids laid: 150
 And, as I wake, sweet musick breathe
 Above, about, or underneath,
 Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
 Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
 But let my due feet never fail 155
 To walk the studious cloysters pale,
 And love the high-embowed roof,
 With antick pillars massy proof,
 And storied windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light: 160
 There let the pealing organ blow,
 To the full-voiced quire below,
 In service high, and anthems clear,
 As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into ecstasies, 165
 And bring all heaven before mine eyes.
 And may at last my weary age
 Find out the peaceful hermitage,
 The hairy gown and mossy cell,
 Where I may sit and rightly spell 170
 Of every star that heaven doth shew,
 And every herb that sips the dew;
 Till old experience do attain
 To something like prophetick strain.
 These pleasures, Melancholy, give, 175
 And I with thee will choose to live.

148. *Wave* is here, as Newton says, a verb neuter. The Dream is to wave at the wings of Sleep, in a *display of lively portraiture*.—BRYDGES.

156. *Cloysters pale*. Some would read *cloyster's pale*, that is, the enclosure or boundary of the cloyster. Others understand *pale* as an adjective, meaning *sombre*.

157. *High-embowed*: Highly vaulted or arched.

159. *Storied*: Painted with stories.

160. *Dim religious light*. Many persons' religion seems to consist chiefly in dark, heavy Gothic architecture, and stained window-glass, as things well suited to the melancholy mind.

OF "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," I believe opinion is uniform; every man, that reads them, reads them with pleasure. The author's design is not, what Theobald has remarked, merely to show how objects derive their colours from the mind, by representing the operation of the

same things upon the gay and the melancholy temper, or upon the same man as he is differently disposed; but rather how, among the successive variety of appearances, every disposition of mind takes hold on those by which it may be gratified.

The cheerful man hears the lark in the morning; the pensive man hears the nightingale in the evening. The cheerful man sees the cock strut, and hears the horn and hounds echo in the wood; then walks, "not unseen," to observe the glory of the rising sun, or listen to the singing milk-maid, and view the labours of the plowman and the mower; then casts his eyes about him over scenes of smiling plenty, and looks up to the distant tower, the residence of some fair inhabitant: thus he pursues rural gaiety through a day of labour or of play, and delights himself at night with the fanciful narratives of superstitious ignorance. The pensive man at one time walks, "unseen," to muse at midnight, and, at another, hears the solemn curfew. If the weather drives him home, he sits in a room lighted only by "glowing embers;" or by a lonely lamp out-watches the north star, to discover the habitation of separate souls; and varies the shades of meditation, by contemplating the magnificent or pathetic scenes of tragic and epic poetry. When the morning comes—a morning gloomy with rain and wind—he falls asleep by some murmuring water, and with melancholy enthusiasm expects some dream of prognostication, or some music played by aerial performers.

Both Mirth and Melancholy are solitary, silent inhabitants of the breast, that neither receive nor transmit communication; no mention is therefore made of a philosophical friend, or of a pleasant companion. The seriousness does not arise from any participation of calamity, nor the gaiety from the pleasures of the bottle. The man of cheerfulness, having exhausted the country, tries what "tower'd cities" will afford, and mingles with scenes of splendour, gay assemblies, and nuptial festivities; but he mingles a mere spectator, as, when the learned comedies of Jonson or the wild dramas of Shakspeare are exhibited, he attends the theatre. The pensive man never loses himself in crowds, but walks the cloister, or frequents the cathedral.

Both his characters delight in music; but he seems to think that cheerful notes would have obtained from Pluto a complete dismissal of Eurydice, of whom solemn sounds procured only a conditional release. For the old age of Cheerfulness, he makes no provision; but Melancholy he conducts with great dignity to the close of life: his cheerfulness is without levity, and his pensiveness without asperity. Through these two poems the images are properly selected, and nicely distinguished; but the colours of the diction seem not sufficiently discriminated. I know not whether the characters are kept sufficiently apart: no mirth can, indeed, be found in his melancholy; but I am afraid that I always meet some melancholy in his mirth. They are two noble efforts of imagination.—JOHNSON.

Of these two exquisite little poems, I think it clear that the last is the most taking, which is owing to the subject. The mind delights most in these solemn images, and a genius delights most to paint them.—HURD.

"L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" may be called the two first descriptive poems in the English language. It is perhaps true, that the characters are not sufficiently kept apart; but this circumstance has been productive of greater excellences. It has been remarked, "No mirth, indeed, can be found in his melancholy, but I am afraid I always meet some melancholy in his mirth." Milton's is the dignity of mirth; his cheerfulness is the cheerfulness of gravity; the objects he selects in his "L'Allegro" are so far gay, as they do not naturally excite sadness; laughter and

jollity are named only as personifications, and never exemplified: "Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles," are enumerated only in general terms. There is specifically no mirth in contemplating a fine landscape; and even his landscape, although it has flowery meads and flocks, wears a shade of pensiveness, and contains "russet lawns," "fallows gray," and "barren mountains," overhung with "labouring clouds:" its old turreted mansion, peeping from the trees, awakens only a train of solemn and romantic, perhaps melancholy reflection. Many a pensive man listens with delight to the "milk-maid singing blithe," to the "mower whetting his scythe," and to a distant peal of village-bells. He chose such illustrations as minister matter for new poetry and genuine description. Even his most brilliant imagery is mellowed with the sober hues of philosophic meditation. It was impossible for the author of "Il Penseroso" to be more cheerful, or to paint mirth with levity: that is, otherwise than in the colours of the higher poetry. Both poems are the result of the same feelings, and the same habits of thought.

Dr. Johnson has remarked, that in "L'Allegro" "no part of the gaiety is made to arise from the pleasures of the bottle." The truth is, that Milton means to describe the cheerfulness of the philosopher or the student, the amusements of a contemplative mind; and on this principle he seems unwilling to allow that Mirth is the offspring of Bacchus and Venus, deities who preside over sensual gratifications; but rather adopts the fiction of those more serious and sapient fablers, who suppose that her proper parents are Zephyr and Aurora; intimating, that his cheerful enjoyments are those of the temperate and innocent kind, of early hours and rural pleasures. That critic does not appear to have entered into the spirit, or to have comprehended the meaning, of our author's "L'Allegro."
—J. WARTON.

SONNETS, ODES,
AND
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

REMARKS ON THE SONNETS.

THE brevity of the Sonnet will scarcely admit the greater traits of poetry: there is no space for fable; but for the preservation of a single grand thought it is admirably fitted. Mr. Dyce, in his "Specimens of English Sonnets, from the time of Henry VIII., chronologically arranged," has shown their progress and their fashions. They were favourites with Spenser and Shakspeare, and many less eminent poets of those days; as, Sydney, Constable, B. Barnes, Daniel, and Drayton. It appears to me that the Sonnets both of Spenser and Shakspeare have been commended too much: they are quaint, laboured, and often metaphysical. Of all authors, Wordsworth has most succeeded in this department.

But there are many of Milton's which are very grand in their nakedness: they have little of picturesque imagery. To make use once more of an expression of Johnson—not as applied to them, but to other parts of Milton—their sublimity is argumentative: it is intellectual and spiritual. There is something at times of ruggedness and involution in the words: they rarely flow. They are spoken as by one, who, conscious of the force of the thought, scorns ornament; they have something of the brevity and the dictatorial tone of the oracle, and seem to come from one who feels conscious that he is entitled to authority. Compositions so short can only have weight when they come from established names: every word ought to be pregnant with mind, with thought, sentiment, or imagery. The form will not allow diffuseness and smooth diluted periods: the repetition of the rhymes certainly aggravates the difficulty.

If it can be shown that in any one of these Sonnets of Milton there is not much sterling ore, I will give it up. In all there is some important thought, or opinion, or sentiment developed. The modulation may sometimes appear rough to delicate and sickly ears; and there is not the nice polish of a lady's gem come from a refining jeweller's workshop: it is all massy gold,—not fillagreed away into petty ornaments.

The Sonnet on Cromwell is majestic;—on his blindness, sublime;—on his twenty-second birthday, both pathetic and exalted: others are moral and axiomatic; and others descriptive.

The necessity of compression gives this form of composition a great merit, when the fountain of the writer's mind is abundant. It is true, that in this short space, barrenness itself can find enough to fill up the outline: but in Milton there is no unmeaning sentence or useless word.

If there was one poetical power of Milton more eminent than another, it was his power of description: he gave an idealism to all his material images; and yet they were in the highest degree distinct and picturesque. He knew where to throw a veil, and when to make the features prominent.

The question at present is, not whether the Sonnets are equal to Milton's genius, but whether they are good, or as contemptible as Johnson represents them. I say that they are such as none but Milton could have written: they are full of lofty thought, moral instruction, and virtuous sentiment, expressed in language as strong as it is plain. They are pictures of a manly, resolute, inflexible spirit, and aid us in our knowledge of the poet's individual character; and if any one can read them without both pleasurable excitation and improvement, he has a sort of mind which it would be vain to attempt to cultivate—a barren soil, or one overgrown with weeds and prejudices.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

SONNETS.

I.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

O NIGHTINGALE, that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still;
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly Hours lead on propitious May. 5
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love. O, if Jove's will
Have link'd that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Fortel my hopeless doom in some grove nigh; 10
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why:
Whether the Muse or Love call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

II.

ON HIS BEING ARRIVED TO THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stolen on his wing my three and twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th. 5
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arrived so near;
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even 10
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task Master's eye.

SONNET I.—4. *Lead on propitious May*, because the nightingale is supposed to begin singing in April.

6. *First heard, &c.*, that is, *if first heard, &c.*

SONNET II.—This Sonnet is preëminently interesting as an early development of

his own innate character, vowed to great undertakings, and grieved that his virtues and sublime ambition had yet advanced no step in its own accomplishment. Here the language is simple, chaste, and smooth, and the numbers are not unmelodious.—BRYDGES.

III.

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY.

CAPTAIN, or Colonel, or Knight in arms,
 Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
 If deed of honour did thee ever please,
 Guard them, and him within protect from harms. 5
 He can requite thee; for he knows the charms
 That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
 And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
 Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
 Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower :
 The great Emathian conquerour bid spare 10
 The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
 Went to the ground : and the repeated air
 Of sad Electra's poet had the power
 To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

IV.

TO A VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY.

LADY, that in the prime of earliest youth
 Wisely hast shunn'd the broad way and the green,
 And with those few art eminently seen,
 That labour up the hill of heavenly truth ; 5
 The better part with Mary and with Ruth
 Chosen thou hast ; and they that overween,
 And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,
 No anger find in thee, but pity and ruth.
 Thy care is fix'd, and zealously attends
 To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light, 10
 And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure,
 Thou, when the bridegroom with his feastful friends
 Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,
 Hast gain'd thy entrance, Virgin wise and pure.

SONNET III.—This Sonnet shows that the poet had now conceived that firm opinion of his own genius and worth which never afterwards deserted him. It was written in 1642, when the king's army had arrived at Brentford, and had thrown the whole city into consternation.

11. *Pindarus*. Every reader of ancient history knows that when Alexander of Macedonia assaulted and destroyed Thebes, he ordered the house of Pindarus to stand untouched and entire, though thousands of Thebans were put to death and thousands more sold into slavery. As a poet, Milton had as good a right to expect protection as Pindarus.

13. *Sad Electra's poet*. Plutarch relates that when the Lacedemonian general took Athens, it was proposed in a council of war to rase the city entirely, and convert its site into a desert. But during the debate a certain Phocian sung some fine lines from the "Electra" of Euripides, which so affected the hearers that they declared it an unworthy act to reduce a place, so celebrated for the production of illustrious men, to total ruin. By the epithet *sad*, Milton denominates the pathetic character of Euripides. *Repeated* signifies *recited*.—T. WARTON.

V.

TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY.

DAUGHTER to that good earl, once President
 Of England's council and her treasury,
 Who lived in both, unstain'd with gold or fee,
 And left them both, more in himself content,
 Till the sad breaking of that Parliament 5
 Broke him, as that dishonest victory
 At Chæronea, fatal to liberty,
 Kill'd with report that old man eloquent.
 Though later born than to have known the days 10
 Wherein your father flourish'd, yet by you,
 Madam, methinks I see him living yet;
 So well your words his noble virtues praise,
 That all both judge you to relate them true,
 And to possess them, honour'd Margaret.

VI.

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED UPON
MY WRITING CERTAIN TREATISES.

A BOOK was writ of late call'd "Tetrachordon,"
 And woven close, both matter, form, and style;
 The subject new: it walk'd the town awhile,
 Numbering good intellects; now seldom pored on.
 Cries the stall-reader, Bless us! what a word on 5
 A title-page is this! and some in file
 Stand spelling false, while one might walk to Mile-
 End Green. Why is it harder, sirs, than Gordon,
 Colkitto, or Macdonnel, or Galasp?
 Those rugged names to our like mouths grow sleek, 10
 That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.
 Thy age, like ours, O Soul of Sir John Cheek,
 Hated not learning worse than toad or asp,
 When thou taught'st Cambridge, and king Edward, Greek.

SONNET V.—1. *Daughter*, &c. She was the daughter of Sir James Ley, whose singular learning and abilities raised him through all the great posts of the law, till he came to be made Earl of Marlborough and Lord High Treasurer. The Lady Margaret was married to Captain Hobson of the Isle of Wight.—NEWTON.

8. *Kill'd with report*, &c. When the news of the victory gained by Philip of Macedon over the Athenians, at Chæronea, (338 B. C.) reached Athens, the orator Isocrates, then in a very advanced age, was so affected by it, that he immediately expired.

SONNET VI.—Milton wrote this Sonnet in sport.—TODD.

1 *Tetrachordon*. This was one of Mil-

ton's books published in consequence of his divorce from his first wife. The word signifies, Expositions of the Four chief places in Scripture which mention marriages or nullities in marriage.

9. *Colkitto*, &c. These are Scottish names of an ill sound. *Colkitto* and *Macdonnel* are one and the same person, a brave officer on the royal side who served under Montrose. The *Macdonnells* of that family are styled *Mac Colcittok*, that is, descendants of lame Colin. *Galasp* is a Scottish writer against the Independents.—T. WARTON.

12. *Sir John Cheek*, or *Cheke*, was the first professor of Greek in the University of Cambridge, and was afterwards one of the tutors of Edward VI. See his biography,

VII.

ON THE SAME.

I DID but prompt the age to quit their clogs
 By the known rules of ancient liberty,
 When straight a barbarous noise environs me
 Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes, and dogs:
 As when those hinds that were transform'd to frogs 5
 Rail'd at Latona's twin-born progeny,
 Which after held the sun and moon in fee.
 But this is got by casting pearl to hogs;
 That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood, 10
 And still revolt when truth would set them free.
 License they mean when they cry liberty;
 For who loves that, must first be wise and good;
 But from that mark how far they rove we see,
 For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.

VIII.

TO MR. H. LAWES, ON THE PUBLISHING HIS
AIRS.

HARRY, whose tuneful and well-measured song
 First taught our English musick how to span
 Words with just note and accent, not to scan
 With Midas ears, committing short and long;
 Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng, 5
 With praise enough for Envy to look wan:
 To after age thou shalt be writ the man,
 That with smooth air couldst humour best our tongue.
 Thou honour'st verse, and verse must lend her wing
 To honour thee, the priest of Phœbus' quire, 10
 That tun'st their happiest lines in hymn or story.
 Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher
 Than his Casella, whom he woo'd to sing
 Met in the milder shades of purgatory.

and a specimen of his English style in the "Compendium of English Literature."

SONNET VII.—As the preceding Sonnet is evidently of a ludicrous, so the present is of a more contemptuous cast.

5. *As when those hinds, &c.* The fable of the Lycian clowns changed into frogs is related by Ovid, *Met. vi. Fab. iv.* And the poet in saying "Which after held the sun and moon in fee," intimates the good hopes which he had of himself, and his expectations of making a considerable figure in the world.—NEWTON.

SONNET VIII.—For a notice of Henry Lawes, see page 417, note to line 84.

4. *Committing* is a Latinism, and conveys with it the idea of offending against quantity and harmony.

13. *Than his Casella.* Dante, on his arrival in Purgatory, sees a vessel approaching the shore, freighted with souls under the conduct of an angel, to be cleansed from their sins, and made fit for Paradise: when they are disembarked the poet recognises in the crowd his old friend Casella, the musician. The interview is strikingly imagined, and, in the course of an affectionate dialogue, the poet requests a soothing air; and Casella sings, with the most ravishing sweetness, Dante's second "Canzone." By *milder shades* our author means, shades comparatively much less horrible than those which Dante describes in the "Inferno."—T. WARTON.

IX.

ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY OF MRS. CATHARINE THOMSON,

MY CHRISTIAN FRIEND, DECEASED DEC. 16, 1646.

WHEN Faith and Love, which parted from thee never,
 Had ripen'd thy just soul to dwell with God,
 Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load
 Of death, call'd life; which us from life doth sever.
 Thy works, and alms, and all thy good endeavour, 5
 Stay'd not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
 But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
 Follow'd thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
 Love led them on; and Faith, who knew them best
 Thy handmaids, clad them o'er with purple beams 10
 And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,
 And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
 Before the Judge; who thenceforth bid thee rest,
 And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

X.

TO THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX.

FAIRFAX, whose name in arms through Europe rings,
 Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
 And all her jealous monarchs with amaze
 And rumours loud, that daunt remotest kings;
 Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings 5
 Victory home, though new rebellions raise
 Their hydra heads, and the false North displays
 Her broken league to imp their serpent wings.
 O, yet a nobler task awaits thy hand,
 (For what can war but endless war still breed?) 10
 Till truth and right from violence be freed,
 And publick faith clear'd from the shameful brand
 Of publick fraud. In vain doth Valour bleed,
 While Avarice and Rapine share the land.

SONNET IX.—I find in the accounts of Milton's life, that when he was first made Latin secretary, he lodged at one Thomson's, next door to the Bull-head Tavern at Charing Cross. This Mrs. Thomson was in all probability one of that family.—NEWTON.

6. *Nor in the grave, &c.*; that is, were not forgotten at her death.

7. *Golden rod*: perhaps from the golden reed in the Apocalypse.—J. WARTON.

SONNET X.—This Sonnet is generally and properly admired as powerful, majestic, and historically valuable: it has a loftiness of sentiment and tone becoming the bold and enlightened bard.—BRIDGES.

4. *Daunt remotest kings*; who dreaded the example of England, that their monarchies would be turned into republics.—T. WARTON.

5. *Virtue*, in the sense of the Latin *virtus*, valour.

8. *Her broken league*; because the English Parliament held that the Scotch had broken their Covenant, by Hamilton's march into England.—HURD. In falcony, to *imp* a feather in the hawk's wing, is to add a new piece to a mutilated stump: from the Saxon *impan*, "to ingraft."—T. WARTON.

10. *For what can war, &c.* When will the world learn and act upon this noble and truthful line, that the sword can never

XI.

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud
 Not of war only, but detractions rude,
 Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
 To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plough'd,
 And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud 5
 Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his work pursued;
 While Darwen stream with blood of Scots imbrued,
 And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
 And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains 10
 To conquer still; Peace hath her victories
 No less renown'd than War: new foes arise
 Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.
 Help us to save free conscience from the paw
 Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

XII.

TO SIR HENRY VANE THE YOUNGER.

VANE, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
 Than whom a better senator ne'er held
 The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms, repell'd
 The fierce Epirot and the African bold;
 Whether to settle peace, or to unfold 5
 The drift of hollow states hard to be spell'd;
 Then to advise how War may, best upheld,
 Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
 In all her equipage: besides to know 10
 Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,
 What severs each, thou hast learn'd, which few have done:
 The bounds of either sword to thee we owe:
 Therefore on thy firm hand Religion leans
 In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

establish justice, and that to settle disputes, peaceful arbitration is as much the duty of nations as of individuals?

SONNET XI.—This is the most nervous of all his Sonnets: the images and expressions are for the most part dignified, grand, and poetical.—BRYDGES.

5. *Crowned Fortune*. His malignity to kings aided his imagination in the expression of this sublime sentiment.—HURD.

7. *Darwen*, or *Derwen*, is a small river near Preston, in Lancashire, where Cromwell routed the Scotch army under Duke Hamilton, August, 1648. The battles of *Dunbar* and *Worcester* are too well known to be particularized; both fought on the memorable 3d of September, the one in 1650, and the other in 1651.—NEWTON.

10. *Peace hath her victories, &c.* What an admirable sentiment, and how truth-

fully illustrated in the wonderful discoveries of modern science!

SONNET XII.—Sir Henry Vane the younger was the chief of the Independents, and therefore Milton's friend. He was the contriver of the solemn league and covenant, and was an eccentric character in an age of eccentric characters. He was beheaded in 1662. Milton alludes to the execution of Vane and other regicides, after the Restoration, and in general to the sufferings of his friends, on that event, in a speech of the Chorus on Samson's degradation,—“*Samson Agonistes*,” line 687. This Sonnet seems to have been written in behalf of the Independents, against the Presbyterian hierarchy.—T. WARTON.

6. *Hollow states*. *Peace with the hollow states of Holland*.—WARBURTON.

XIII.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEMONTE.

AVENGE, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
 Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;
 Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
 When all our fathers worshipp'd stocks and stones,
 Forget not: in thy book record their groans 5
 Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
 Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd
 Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
 The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
 To Heaven. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow 10
 O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
 The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
 A hundred fold, who, having learn'd thy way,
 Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

XIV.

ON HIS BLINDNESS.

WHEN I consider how my light is spent
 Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
 And that one talent which is death to hide,
 Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present 5
 My true account, lest He, returning, chide;
 "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
 I fondly ask: but Patience, to prevent
 That murmur, soon replies;—"God doth not need
 Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best 10
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
 Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

SONNET XIII.—In 1655, the Duke of Savoy determined to compel his reformed subjects in the valleys of Piedmont to embrace popery, or quit their country. All who remained and refused to be converted, with their wives and children, suffered a most barbarous massacre. Those who escaped fled into the mountains, from whence they sent agents into England to Cromwell, for relief. He instantly commanded a general fast, and promoted a national contribution, in which near £40,000 were collected. The persecution was suspended, the duke recalled his army, and the surviving inhabitants of the Piedmontese valleys were reinstated in their cottages and the peaceable exercise of their religion. On this business, there are several state-letters in Cromwell's name, written by Mil-

ton. One of them is to the Duke of Savoy. See "Prose Works," ii. 183, seq. 437, 439. Milton's mind, busied with this affecting subject, here broke forth in a strain of poetry, where his feelings were not fettered by ceremony or formality. The Protestants availed themselves of an opportunity of exposing the horrors of popery, by publishing many sets of prints of this unparalleled scene of religious butchery, which operated like Fox's "Book of Martyrs."—T. WARTON.

14. *Babylonian woe*: Antichrist.

SONNET XIV.—The Sonnet "On his Blindness," is to my taste next in interest to that "On arriving at his Twenty-third year." The sentiments and expressions are in all respects Miltonic.

3. *And that one talent, &c.* He here speaks with allusion to the parable of the

XV.

TO MR. LAWRENCE.

LAWRENCE, of virtuous father virtuous son,
 Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
 Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
 Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
 From the hard season gaining? Time will run 5
 On smoother, till Favonius reinspire
 The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
 The lily and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun.
 What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice, 10
 Of Attick taste, with wine, whence we may rise
 To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
 Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?
 He who of those delights can judge, and spare
 To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

XVI.

TO CYRIACK SKINNER.

CYRIACK, whose grandsire, on the royal bench
 Of British Themis, with no mean applause
 Pronounced, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
 Which others at their bar so often wrench;
 To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench 5
 In mirth, that, after, no repenting draws;
 Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
 And what the Swede intends, and what the French.
 To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
 Toward solid good what leads the nearest way; 10
 For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,
 And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
 That with superfluous burden loads the day,
 And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

talents, Matt. xxv. And he speaks with great modesty of himself, as if he had not five, or two, but only one talent.—NEWTON.

14. *Stand and wait.* My own opinion is, that this is the noblest of Milton's Sonnets.—BRYDGES.

SONNET XV.—The "virtuous father," Henry Lawrence, was member for Herefordshire in the Little Parliament which began in 1653, and was active in settling the protectorate of Cromwell. The family appears to have been seated not far from Milton's neighbourhood in Buckinghamshire.—T. WARTON. This Henry Lawrence, the "virtuous son," is the author of a work suited to Milton's taste, on the subject of which I make no doubt

he and the author *by the fire helped to waste many a sullen day.* It is entitled, "Of our Communion and Warre with Angels," &c. I suppose him also the same who printed "A Vindication of the Scriptures and Christian Ordinances."—TODD.

SONNET XVI.—Cyriack Skinner was one of the principal members of Harrington's political club. Wood says, that he was an ingenious young gentleman, and scholar to John Milton.

8. *And what the Swede intends.* Charles Gustavus, King of Sweden, was at this time waging war with Poland; and the French with the Spaniards in the Netherlands.

XVII.

TO THE SAME.

CYRIACK, this three years day these eyes, though clear,
 To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
 Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;
 Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
 Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year, 5
 Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
 Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
 Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
 Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
 The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied 10
 In liberty's defence, my noble task,
 Of which all Europe rings from side to side.
 This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask
 Content though blind, had I no better guide.

XVIII.

ON HIS DECEASED WIFE.

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused saint
 Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,
 Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
 Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint.
 Mine, as whom wash'd from spot of child-bed taint 5
 Purification in the old Law did save,
 And such, as yet once more I trust to have
 Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint;—
 Came, vested all in white, pure as her mind:
 Her face was veil'd; yet to my fancied sight 10
 Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined
 So clear, as in no face with more delight.
 But, O, as to embrace me she inclined,
 I waked; she fled; and day brought back my night.

SONNET XVII.—8. *Of heart or hope.* One of Milton's characteristics was a singular fortitude of mind, arising from a consciousness of superior abilities, and a conviction that his cause was just.—T. WARTON.

10. *To have lost them, &c.* When he was employed to answer Salmasius, one of his eyes was almost gone, and the physicians predicted the loss of both, if he proceeded. But he says, in answer to Du Moulin, "I did not long balance whether my duty should be preferred to my eyes." What a noble sentiment; and how encouraging such lines from the greatest of all men as well as the greatest of all poets, to those who are labouring in the cause of Liberty and Humanity!

SONNET XVIII.—1. *Methought, &c.* Raleigh's elegant Sonnet, called "A Vision

upon the Faerie Queene," (see "Compendium of English Literature," p. 151,) begins thus,—

Methought I saw the grave where Laura lay; and here, perhaps, the idea of a Sonnet in the form of a vision was suggested to Milton. This Sonnet was written about the year 1656, on the death of his second wife, Catharine, the daughter of Captain Woodcock, of Hackney. She died in child-bed of a daughter, within a year after their marriage. Milton had now been long totally blind: so that this might have been one of his day-dreams.—T. WARTON.

2. *Alcestis.* This refers to the Alcestis of Euripides, in which Hercules (*Jove's great son*) brings back to Admetus, from the realms of Pluto, his wife Alcestis, who had resolved to die to save her husband.

REMARKS
ON THE
MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

THERE is no doubt that the *prima stamina* of the bard's divine epics are exhibited in this poem; but it has several peculiarities, which distinguish it from the poet's other compositions: it is more truly lyrical; the stanza is beautifully constructed; and there is a solemnity, a grandeur, and a swell of verse, which is magical. The images are magnificent, and they have this superiority of excellence; that none of them are merely descriptive, but have a mixture of intellectuality and spirituality.

Some one has said that Milton had no ear for the harmony of versification; this Hymn proves that his ear was perfect. Spenser's Alexandrines are fine; Milton's are more like the deepest swell of the organ.

When it is recollected that this piece was produced by the author at the age of twenty-one, all deep thinkers of fancy and sensibility must pore upon it with delighted wonder. The vigour, the grandeur, the imaginativeness of the conception; the force and maturity of language; the bound, the gathering strength, the thundering roll of the metre; the largeness of the views; the extent of the learning; the solemn and awful tones; the enthusiasm, and a certain spell in the epithets, which puts the reader into a state of mysterious excitement, may be better felt than described.

I venture to pronounce this poem far superior to the "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," though the popular taste may not concur with me: it is much deeper; much more original; and of a nobler cast of materials. The two latter poems are mainly descriptive of the inanimate beauties of creation: it is the grand purpose of poetry to embody invisible spirits; to give shape and form to the ideal; to bring out into palpable lines and colours the intellectual world; to associate with that which is material that which is purely spiritual; to travel into air, and open upon the fancy other creations. Fancy is but one faculty of the mind; it is a mirror, of whose impressions the transfer upon paper by the medium of language is a single operation.

Milton, before he could write the Hymn, must have already exercised and enriched all his faculties with vast and successful culture. He had travelled in those dim regions, into which young minds scarcely ever venture; and he had carried a guarded lamp with him, so as to see all around him, before and behind; yet not so peering and reckless as to destroy the religious awe. The due position of the lights and shades was never infringed upon.

SIR EGERTON BRYDGES.

ON THE MORNING
OF
CHRIST'S NATIVITY.*

I.

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King,
Of wedded Maid and Virgin Mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing, *6
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

II.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith he went at Heaven's high council-table 10
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
He laid aside; and here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

III.

Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein 15
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now, while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light, 20
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

IV.

See, how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wisards haste with odours sweet:
O, run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet; 25
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel quire,
From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

* I cannot doubt that this hymn was the congenial prelude of that holy and inspired imagination which produced the "Paradise Lost," nearly forty years afterwards.—BRYDGES. Be it remembered that this sublime Hymn was written in his twenty-first year, probably as a college exercise.

5. *Sages*, the Hebrew prophets.

23. *The star-led wisards*, Matt. ii. 1, 2.

28. *Touch'd with hallowed fire*, 1s. vi.

6, 7.

THE HYMN.

I.

It was the winter wild,
 While the heaven-born child 30
 All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
 Nature, in awe to him,
 Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
 With her great Master so to sympathise:
 It was no season then for her 35
 To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

II.

Only with speeches fair
 She woos the gentle air
 To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
 And on her naked shame, 40
 Pollute with sinful blame,
 The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
 Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
 Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

III.

But he, her fears to cease, 45
 Sent down the meek-eyed Peace:
 She, crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
 Down through the turning sphere,
 His ready harbinger,
 With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing; 50
 And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
 She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

IV.

No war, or battle's sound,
 Was heard the world around:
 The idle spear and shield were high up hung; 55
 The hooked chariot stood
 Unstain'd with hostile blood;
 The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
 And kings sat still with awful eye,
 As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by, 60

V.

But peaceful was the night,
 Wherein the Prince of light
 His reign of peace upon the earth began:

45. *To cease*, used actively.52. *She strikes a peace*. This is a peculiar phraseology, showing the rapidity

with which it was done, as it were with one stroke.

56. *The hooked chariot*, &c. Nothing

The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist, 65
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

VI.

The stars with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze, 70
Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer, that often warn'd them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow, 75
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

VII.

And, though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed;
And hid his head for shame, 80
As his inferiour flame
The new-enlighten'd world no more should need:
He saw a greater sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree could bear.

VIII.

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or e'er the point of dawn, 85
Sat simply chatting in a rustick row;
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below: 90
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep:

IX.

When such musick sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
As never was by mortal finger strook; 95
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close. 100

can be more poetically grand than this stanza. In all Milton's noble poetry there are few passages finer than this.—
BRYDGES.

68. *While birds of calm, &c.* Another

glorious line. The whole stanza breathes the essence of descriptive poetry.

89. *That the mighty Pan, &c.* That is, to live with the shepherds on the lawn. Christ is frequently styled "the Shepherd" in the Scriptures.

X.

Nature, that heard such sound,
 Beneath the hollow round
 Of Cynthia's seat, the aery region thrilling,
 Now was almost won,
 To think her part was done, 105
 And that her reign had here its last fulfilling:
 She knew such harmony alone
 Could hold all heaven and earth in happier union.

XI.

At last surrounds their sight
 A globe of circular light, 110
 That with long beams the shamefaced night array'd;
 The helmed Cherubim,
 And sworded Ceraphim,
 Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
 Harping in loud and solemn quire, 115
 With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born Heir.

XII.

Such musick, as 'tis said,
 Before was never made,
 But when of old the sons of morning sung,
 While the Creator great 120
 His constellations set,
 And the well-balanced world on hinges hung;
 And cast the dark foundations deep,
 And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

XIII.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres, 125
 Once bless our human ears,
 If ye have power to touch our senses so;
 And let your silver chime
 Move in melodious time;
 And let the bass of Heaven's deep organ blow; 130
 And, with your ninefold harmony,
 Make up full consort to the angelic symphony.

XIV.

For, if such holy song
 Enwrap our fancy long,
 Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold; 135
 And speckled Vanity
 Will sicken soon and die,
 And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould;
 And Hell itself will pass away,
 And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day. 140

131. *Ninefold harmony*. See *Arcades*, line 62.

136. *Speckled Vanity*. *Vanity* dressed in a variety of gaudy colours: unless he

means *spots*, the marks of disease and corruption, and the symptoms of approaching death.—T. WARTON.

140. *The peering day* is here the first

XV.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
 Will down return to men,
 Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
 Mercy will sit between,
 Throned in celestial sheen, 145
 With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
 And Heaven, as at some festival,
 Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

XVI.

But wisest Fate says no,
 This must not yet be so; 150
 The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy,
 That on the bitter cross
 Must redeem our loss;
 So both himself and us to glorify:
 Yet first, to those ychain'd in sleep, 155
 The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep;

XVII.

With such a horrid clang
 As on Mount Sinai rang,
 While the red fire and smouldering clouds out brake:
 The aged earth aghast, 160
 With terrour of that blast,
 Shall from the surface to the centre shake;
 When, at the world's last session,
 The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne.

XVIII.

And then at last our bliss 165
 Full and perfect is,
 But now begins; for, from this happy day,
 The old Dragon, under ground
 In straiter limits bound,
 Not half so far casts his usurped sway, 170
 And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
 Swindges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

XIX.

The oracles are dumb;
 No voice or hideous hum

dawn of the Gospel, by the birth of the Redeemer. The Sun of Righteousness fully rose, when he began to exercise his ministry.—DUNSTER.

146. *With radiant feet.* Is. lii. 7.

156. *The wakeful trump, &c.* A line of great energy, elegant and sublime.—T. WARTON.

172. *Swindges the scaly horror, &c.* This strong image is copied from the descriptions of serpents and dragons in the old Romances and in Ariosto. There

is a fine picture by Guido, representing Michael the arch-angel treading on Satan, who has such a tail as is here described.—JOS WARTON. The word *swindge* is now spelt without the *d*.

173. *The oracles, &c.* Attention is irresistibly awakened and engaged, by the air of solemnity and enthusiasm that reigns in this stanza and some that follow. Such is the power of true poetry, that one is almost inclined to believe the superstitions real.—JOS. WARTON.

Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving. 175
 Apollo from his shrine
 Can no more divine,
 With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
 No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
 Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetick cell. 180

XX.

The lonely mountains' o'er,
 And the resounding shore,
 A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
 From haunted spring and dale,
 Edged with poplar pale, 185
 The parting Genius is with sighing sent:
 With flower-inwoven tresses torn,
 The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

XXI.

In consecrated earth,
 And on the holy hearth, 190
 The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint:
 In urns, and altars round,
 A drear and dying sound
 Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
 And the chill marble seems to sweat, 195
 While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

XXII.

Peor and Baälim
 Forsake their temples dim,
 With that twice-batter'd god of Palestine;
 And mooned Ashtaroth, 200
 Heaven's queen and mother both,
 Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine:
 The Libyck Hammon shrinks his horn;
 In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn:

XXIII.

And sullen Moloch, fled, 205
 Hath left in shadows dread
 His burning idol all of blackest hue:
 In vain with cymbals' ring
 They call the grisly king,
 In dismal dance about the furnace blue: 210

183. *A voice of weeping*, &c. Matt. ii. 18.
 191. The *Lars* (or rather *Lares*) and *Lemures* were heathen household gods.
 197. *Peor*. See Paradise Lost, i. 412.
 199. *Twice-batter'd god*, Dagon. See 1 Sam. v. 3, 4.
 200. *Mooned*, taken for the moon. "Mil-
 ton added this word to our language."
 TODD.
 201. *Heaven's queen and mother*. She was called *regina cali* and *mater Deüm*.
 202. *Shine* is used by many of the old writers as a noun.
 205. *Moloch*. See Par. Lost, i. 392. MIL-

The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste:

XXIV.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
Trampling the unshower'd grass with lowings loud: 215
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud:
In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipt ark. 220

XXV.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand;
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn:
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide; 225
Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands controul the damned crew.

XXVI.

So, when the sun in bed,
Curtain'd with cloudy red, 230
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail;
Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave;
And the yellow-skirted Fayes 235
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-lov'd maze.

XXVII.

But see, the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest:
Time is, our tedious song should here have ending:
Heaven's youngest-teemed star 240
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending;
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harness'd Angels sit in order serviceable.

ton, like a true poet, in describing the Syrian superstitions, selects such as were most susceptible of poetical enlargement; and which, from the wildness of their ceremonies, were most interesting to the fancy.—T. WARTON.—215. *Unshower'd*, there being no rain in Egypt.

235 *Fayes*. It is a very poetical mode of expressing the departure of the fairies at the approach of morning, to say that they fly after the steeds of Night.—T. WARTON.—242. *Handmaid lamp*; alluding, perhaps, to the parable of the Ten Virgins in the Gospel.

THE PASSION.*

I.

EREWHILE of musick, and ethereal mirth,
Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,
And joyous news of heavenly Infant's birth,
My Muse with Angels did divide to sing;
But headlong joy is ever on the wing; 5
In wintry solstice, like the shorten'd light,
Soon swallow'd up in dark and long out-living night.

II.

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,
And set my harp to notes of saddest woe,
Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long, 10
Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,
Which he for us did freely undergo:
Most perfect Hero, tried in heaviest plight
Of labours huge and hard, too hard for human wight!

III.

He, sovran Priest, stooping his regal head, 15
That dropt with odorous oil down his fair eyes,
Poor fleshly tabernacle entered,
His starry front low-rooft beneath the skies:
O, what a mask was there, what a disguise!
Yet more; the stroke of death he must abide; 20
Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethren's side.

IV.

These latest scenes confine my roving verse;
To this horizon is my Phœbus bound:
His godlike acts, and his temptations fierce, 25
And former sufferings, other where are found;
Loud o'er the rest Cremona's trump doth sound:

* I cannot agree with Sir Egerton Brydges that this Ode or Elegy is "unaccountably inferior" to the preceding Hymn. True, this is not so highly finished as the other, but there are in it exquisite touches of beauty. A beloved friend and accomplished scholar of Oxford (J. W.) writes me—"That third stanza has often suffused my eyes and quickened my heart's pulsation: what a saddening, melancholy tenderness—a climax of pathos and of dear human sympathy in the last two lines!"

1. *Erewhile*, &c. Hence we may conjecture that this Ode was probably composed soon after that on the "Nativity." And this, perhaps, was a college exercise at Easter, as the last was at Christmas.—T. WARTON.

13. *Most perfect Hero*. See Heb. ii. 10.

28. *Cremona's trump*. Vida's "Christiad," which our author seems to think the finest Latin poem on a religious subject, is here called *Cremona's trump*, because Vida was born at Cremona.

Me softer airs befit, and softer strings
Of lute, or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

V.

Befriend me, Night, best patroness of grief;
Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw, 30
And work my flatter'd fancy to belief,
That heaven and earth are colour'd with my woe;
My sorrows are too dark for day to know:
The leaves should all be black whereon I write; 34
And letters, where my tears have wash'd a wannish white.

VI.

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,
That whirl'd the Prophet up at Chebar flood;
My spirit some transporting Cherub feels,
To bear me where the towers of Salem stood,
Once glorious towers, now sunk in guiltless blood: 40
There doth my soul in holy vision sit,
In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstasick fit.

VII.

Mine eye hath found that sad sepulchral rock
That was the casket of Heaven's richest store;
And here, though grief my feeble hands up lock, 45
Yet on the soften'd quarry would I score
My plaining verse as lively as before;
For sure so well instructed are my tears,
That they would fitly fall in order'd characters.

VIII.

Or should I thence, hurried on viewless wing, 50
Take up a weeping on the mountains wild,
The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring
Would soon unbosom all their echoes mild;
And I (for grief is easily beguiled)
Might think the infection of my sorrows loud 55
Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

This subject the author finding to be above the years he had when he wrote it, and nothing satisfied with what was begun, left it unfinished.

28. *Of lute, or viol*: That is, gentle; not noisy or loud like the trumpet.

34. *The leaves, &c.* Conceits were not confined to words only. Mr. Stevens has a volume of *Elegies*, in which the paper is black and the letters white: that is, in all the title-pages. Every intermediate leaf is also black. What a sudden change, from this childish idea to the noble apostrophe, the sublime rapture and imagination of the next stanza.—T. WARTON.

43. *That sad sepulchral rock*: That is, the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem.

51. *Take up a weeping*. Jer. ix. 10.

52. *The gentle neighbourhood*. A sweetly beautiful couplet, which, with the two preceding lines, opened the stanza so well, that I particularly grieve to find it terminate feebly in a most miserably disgusting *concelto*.—DUNSTER.

ODES.

UPON THE CIRCUMCISION.*

YE flaming Powers, and winged Warriours bright,
That erst with musick, and triumphant song,
First heard by happy watchful shepherds' ear,
So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along
Through the soft silence of the listening night; 5
Now mourn; and, if sad share with us to bear
Your fiery essence can distil no tear,
Burn in your sighs, and borrow
Seas wept from our deep sorrow:
He, who with all Heaven's heraldry whilere 10
Enter'd the world, now bleeds to give us ease:
Alas, how soon our sin
Sore doth begin
His infancy to seize!
O more exceeding love, or law more just? 15
Just law indeed, but more exceeding love!
For we, by rightful doom remediless,
Were lost in death, till he that dwelt above
High throned in secret bliss, for us frail dust
Emptied his glory, ev'n to nakedness; 20
And that great covenant which we still transgress
Entirely satisfied;
And the full wrath beside
Of vengeful justice bore for our excess;
And seals obedience first, with wounding smart, 25
This day; but, O! ere long,
Huge pangs and strong
Will pierce more near his heart.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT, DYING OF A COUGH.†

I.

O FAIREST flower, no sooner blown but blasted.
Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,

* The "Circumcision" is better than the "Passion," and has two or three Miltonic lines.—BRYDGES.

† The "Elegy on the Death of a Fair Infant" is praised by Warton, and well characterized in his last note upon it; but it has more of research and laboured fancy than of feeling, and is not a general favourite.—BRYDGES. It was written at the age of seventeen.

20. *Emptied his glory.* An expression | r. putation,"—but, as it is in the original,
taken from Phil. ii. 7, but not as in our | (*ἐαυτον ἐκενωσε*), "He emptied himself."
translation,—“He made himself of no | —NEWTON.

Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst out-lasted
 Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry;
 For he, being amorous on that lovely dye 5
 That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
 But kill'd, alas! and then bewail'd his fatal bliss.

II.

For since grim Aquilo, his charioteer,
 By boisterous rape the Athenian damsel got,
 He thought it touch'd his deity full near, 10
 If likewise he some fair one wedded not,
 Thereby to wipe away the infamous blot
 Of long uncoupled bed and childless eld,
 Which, 'mongst the wanton gods, a foul reproach was held.

III.

So, mounting up in icy-pearled car, 15
 Through middle empire of the freezing air
 He wander'd long, till thee he spied from far;
 There ended was his quest, there ceased his care.
 Down he descended from his snow-soft chair;
 But, all unwares, with his cold-kind embrace 20
 Unhous'd thy virgin soul from her fair bidding-place.

IV.

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate;
 For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
 Whilom did slay his dearly-loved mate, 25
 Young Hyacinth, born on Eurotas' strand,
 Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land;
 But then transform'd him to a purple flower:
 Alack, that so to change thee Winter had no power!

V.

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
 Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb, 30
 Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
 Hid from the world in a low-delved tomb.
 Could Heaven for pity thee so strictly doom?
 O, no! for something in thy face did shine
 Above mortality, that show'd thou wast divine. 35

8. *Aquilo*, or Boreas, the North wind, enamoured of Orithyia, the daughter of Erechtheus, King of Athens.

12. *Infamous*, the common accent in old English poetry.

23. *For so Apollo*, &c. From these lines one would suspect, although it does not immediately follow, that a boy was the subject of the Ode; but in the last stanza the poet says expressly,—

Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
 Her false-imagined loss cease to lament.

Yet, in the eighth stanza, the person lamented is alternately supposed to have been sent down to earth in the shape of two divinities, one of whom is styled a "just maid," and the other a "sweet-smiling youth." But the child was certainly a niece, a daughter of Milton's sister Philips.

40. *Were*, instead of *are*, for rhyme.—
 47. *Earth's sons*, the giants.—50. *Maid*, Justice.—54. *Youth*, Mercy.

67. *To turn swift-rushing*, &c. Among

VI.

Resolve me then, O soul most surely blest,
 (If so it be that thou these plaints dost hear,)
 Tell me, bright spirit, where'er thou hoverest;
 Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
 Or in the Elysian fields, (if such there were,) 40
 O, say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,
 And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight?

VII.

Wert thou some star, which from the ruin'd roof
 Of shak'd Olympus by mischance didst fall;
 Which careful Jove in Nature's true behoof 45
 Took up, and in fit place did reinstall?
 Or did of late Earth's sons besiege the wall
 Of sheeny Heaven, and thou, some goddess fled,
 Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd head?

VIII

Or wert thou that just Maid, who once before 50
 Forsook the hated earth, O, tell me sooth,
 And cam'st again to visit us once more?
 Or wert thou that sweet-smiling youth?
 Or that crown'd matron sage, white-robed Truth?
 Or any other of that heavenly brood, 55
 Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good?

IX.

Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
 Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
 To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
 And after short abode fly back with speed, 60
 As if to show what creatures heaven doth breed;
 Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
 To scorn the sordid world, and unto heaven aspire?

X.

But, O! why didst thou not stay here below
 To bless us with thy Heaven-loved innocence, 65
 To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
 To turn swift-rushing black Perdition hence,
 Or drive away the slaughtering Pestilence,

the blessings which the *Heaven-loved* innocence of this child might have imparted, by remaining upon earth, the application to present circumstances, the supposition that she might have averted the pestilence now raging in the kingdom, is happily and beautifully conceived. On the whole, from a boy of seventeen, this Ode is an extraordinary effort of fancy, ex-

pression, and versification; even in the conceits, which are many, we perceive strong and peculiar marks of genius. I think Milton has here given a very remarkable specimen of his ability to succeed in the Spenserian stanza. He moves with great ease and address amidst the embarrassment of a frequent return of rhyme.—T. WARTON.

To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart?
But thou canst best perform that office where thou art. 70

XI.

Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
Her false-imagined loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild:
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render him with patience what he lent. 75

This, if thou do, he will an offspring give,
That, till the world's last end, shall make thy name to live.

ON TIME.*

FLY, envious Time, till thou run out thy race;
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain, 5
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain!
For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,
And last of all thy greedy self consumed, 10
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood;
When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine, 15
With Truth, and Peace, and Love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of him, to whose happy-making sight alone
When once our heavenly-guided soul shall climb;
Then, all this earthy grossness quit, 20
Attired with stars, we shall for ever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time.

AT A SOLEMN MUSICK.†

BLEST pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy;
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse;

* In Milton's manuscript, written with his own hand, the title is,—“On Time. To be set on a clock-case.”

† The “Ode at a Solemn Musick” is a short prelude to the strain of genius which produced “Paradise Lost.” Warton says, that perhaps there are no finer lines in Milton than one long passage which he cites, (17-24.) I must say that this is going a little too far. That they are very fine I admit; but the sublime philosophy, to which he alludes as their prototype, must not be put in comparison with the fountains of “Paradise Lost.” So far they are exceedingly curious, that they show how early the poet had constructed in his own mind the language of his divine imagery, and how rich and vigorous his style was, almost in his boyhood.—BRYDGES.

12. *Individual*: Eternal, inseparable.

14. *Sincerely*: Purely, perfectly.

Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd power employ
 Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce ;
 And to our high-raised phantasy present 5
 That undisturbed song of pure conceit,
 Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne
 To him that sits thereon,
 With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee ;
 Where the bright Seraphim, in burning row, 10
 Their loud uplifted angel trumpets blow ;
 And the cherubic host, in thousand quires,
 Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
 With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,
 Hymns devout and holy psalms 15
 Singing everlastingly :
 That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
 May rightly answer that melodious noise ;
 As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
 Jarr'd against Nature's chime, and with harsh din 20
 Broke the fair musick that all creatures made
 To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
 In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
 In first obedience, and their state of good.
 O, may we soon again renew that song, 25
 And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
 To his celestial consort us unite,
 To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light !

AN EPITAPH ON THE MARCHIONESS OF WINCHESTER.*

THIS rich marble doth inter
 The honour'd wife of Winchester,
 A viscount's daughter, an earl's heir,
 Besides what her virtues fair
 Added to her noble birth, 5
 More than she could own from earth.
 Summers three times eight save one
 She had told; alas! too soon,
 After so short time of breath,
 To house with darkness and with death. 10

* In Howell's entertaining Letters, there is one to this lady,—the Lady Jane Savage, Marchioness of Winchester,—dated March 15, 1626. He says, he assisted her in learning Spanish; and that Nature and the Graces exhausted all their treasure and skill in "framing this exact model of female perfection."

6. *The undisturbed song of pure conceit* is the diapason of the music of the spheres, to which, in Plato's system, God himself listens.—T. WARTON. See note on line 62 of "Arcades," p. 451.

17. *That we on earth, &c.* Perhaps there are no finer lines in Milton, less obscured by conceit, less embarrassed by

affected expressions, and less weakened by pompous epithets: and in this perspicuous and simple style are conveyed some of the noblest ideas of a most sublime philosophy, heightened by metaphors and allusions suitable to the subject.—T. WARTON.

Yet had the number of her days
 Been as complete as was her praise,
 Nature and Fate had had no strife
 In giving limit to her life.

Her high birth, and her graces sweet, 15

Quickly found a lover meet;

The virgin quire for her request

The god that sits at marriage feast:

He at their invoking came,

But with a scarce well-lighted flame; 20

And in his garland, as he stood,

Ye might discern a cypress bud.

Once had the early matrons run

To greet her of a lovely son;

And now with second hope she goes, 25

And calls Lucina to her throes:

But, whether by mischance or blame,

Atropos for Lucina came;

And with remorseless cruelty

Spoil'd at once both fruit and tree: 30

The hapless babe, before his birth,

Had burial, yet not laid in earth;

And the languish'd mother's womb

Was not long a living tomb.

So have I seen some tender slip, 35

Sav'd with care from winter's nip,

The pride of her carnation train,

Pluck'd up by some unheedy swain,

Who only thought to crop the flower

New shot up from vernal shower; 40

But the fair blossom hangs the head

Sideways, as on a dying bed;

And those pearls of dew she wears

Prove to be presaging tears,

Which the sad morn had let fall 45

On her hastening funeral.

Gentle lady, may thy grave

Peace and quiet ever have;

After this thy travel sore

Sweet rest seize thee evermore, 50

That, to give the world increase,

Shorten'd hast thy own life's lease.

Here, besides the sorrowing

That thy noble house doth bring,

Here be tears of perfect moan 55

Wept for thee in Helicon;

And some flowers, and some bays,

For thy herse, to strow the ways,

22. *Cypress bud*: An emblem of a funeral, called by Horace *funeribus*, and by Spenser "the cypress funeral." 28. *Atropos*, the fate who presided over death.

Sent thee from the banks of Came,
 Devoted to thy virtuous name; 60
 Whilst thou, bright saint, high sit'st in glory,
 Next her, much like to thee in story,
 That fair Syrian shepherdess,
 Who, after years of barrenness,
 The highly-favour'd Joseph bore 65
 To him that served for her before;
 And at her next birth, much like thee,
 Through pangs fled to felicity,
 Far within the bosom bright
 Of blazing Majesty and Light: 70
 There with thee, new welcome Saint,
 Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
 With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
 No Marchioness, but now a Queen.

SONG ON MAY MORNING.*

Now the bright morning-star, day's harbinger,
 Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
 The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
 The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
 Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire 5
 Mirth, and youth, and warm desire;
 Woods and groves are of thy dressing;
 Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing!
 Thus we salute thee with our early song,
 And welcome thee, and wish thee long. 10

* This beautiful little song presents an eminent proof of Milton's attention to the effect of metre, in that admirable change of numbers with which he describes the appearance of the May Morning, and salutes her after she has appeared; as different as the subject is, and produced by the transition from iambs to trochaics. So in "L'Allegro," he banishes Melancholy in iambs, but invites Euphrosyne and her attendants in trochaics.—TODD.

59. *Banks of Came*: The Camus anglicised. See "Lycidas," 103. "I have been told that there was a Cambridge-collection of verses on her death, among which Milton's elegiack ode first appeared."—T. WARTON.

63. *Syrian shepherdess*: Rachel. Gen. xxx. 22, 23.

68. *Through pangs, &c.* We cannot too much admire the beauty of this line: I wish it had closed the poem, which it would have done with singular effect. What follows serves only to weaken it, and the last verse is an eminent instance of the *bathos*.—DUNSTER.

MISCELLANIES.

ANNO ÆTATIS XIX.

At a VACATION EXERCISE* in the College, part Latin, part English.
The Latin speeches ended, the English thus began:—

HAIL, native Language, that by sinews weak
Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak;
And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,
Half unpronounced, slide through my infant lips;
Driving dumb Silence from the portal door, 5
Where he had mutely sat two years before!
Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask,
That now I use thee in my latter task:
Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee;
I know my tongue but little grace can do thee: 10
Thou need'st not be ambitious to be first;
Believe me, I have thither pack'd the worst:
And, if it happen as I did forecast,
The daintiest dishes shall be served up last.
I pray thee, then, deny me not thy aid 15
For this same small neglect that I have made:
But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,
And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure;
Not those new-fangled toys, and trimming slight,
Which takes our late fantasticks with delight; 20
But cull those richest robes, and gay'st attire,
Which deepest spirits and choicest wits desire.

* Written in 1627. The "Verses at a Vacation Exercise in College," are full of ingenuity and imagery, and have several fine passages; but, though they blame "new-fangled toys" with a noble disdain, they are themselves in many parts too fantastic.—BRYDGES.

19. *Not those new-fangled toys, &c.* Perhaps he here alludes to Lilly's "Euphuus," a book full of affected phraseology, which pretended to reform or refine the English language. The ladies and the courtiers were all instructed in this new style, and it was esteemed a mark of ignorance or unpoliteness not to understand *Euphuism*.

21. *But cull, &c.* From a youth of nineteen these are striking expressions of a consciousness of superior genius, and of an ambition to rise above the level of the fashionable rhymers. At so early an age

Milton began to conceive a contempt for the poetry in vogue; and this he seems to have retained to the last. In the "Tractate on Education," recommending to his pupils the study of good critics, he adds, "This would make them soon perceive what despicable creatures our common rhymers and play-writers be; and show what religious, what glorious, what magnificent use might be made of poetry." Milton's own writings are the most illustrious proof of this.—T. WARTON.

I have some naked thoughts that rove about,
 And loudly knock to have their passage out;
 And, weary of their place, do only stay, 20
 Till thou hast deck'd them in thy best array;
 That so they may, without suspect or fears,
 Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears:
 Yet I had rather, if I were to chuse,
 Thy service in some graver subject use, 20
 Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
 Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound:
 Such where the deep transported mind may soar
 Above the wheeling poles, and at Heaven's door
 Look in, and see each blissful Deity, 35
 How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,
 Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings
 To the touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
 Immortal nectar to her kingly sire:
 Then passing through the spheres of watchful fire, 40
 And misty regions of wide air next under,
 And hills of snow, and lofts of piled thunder,
 May tell at length how green-eyed Neptune raves,
 In Heaven's defiance mustering all his waves;
 Then sing of secret things that came to pass 45
 When beldam Nature in her cradle was;
 And last of kings, and queens, and heroes old,
 Such as the wise Demodocus once told
 In solemn songs at king Alcinous' feast,
 While sad Ulysses' soul, and all the rest, 50
 Are held, with his melodious harmony,
 In willing chains and sweet captivity.
 But fie, my wandering Muse, how thou dost stray!
 Expectance calls thee now another way:
 Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent 55
 To keep in compass of thy predicament:
 Then quick about thy purposed business come,
 That to the next I may resign my room.

Then *ENS* is represented as father of the Predicaments, his two sons, whereof the eldest stood for Substance with his canons, which *ENS*, thus speaking, explains:—

Good luck befriend thee, son; for, at thy birth,
 The faery ladies danced upon the hearth; 60

29. *Yet I had rather, &c.* It appears, by this address of Milton to his native language, that even in these green years he had the ambition to think of writing an epic poem; and it is worth the curious reader's attention to observe how much the "Paradise Lost" corresponds in its circumstances to the prophetic wish he now formed.—*THYER*.

Here are strong indications of a young mind anticipating the subject of the "Paradise Lost," if we substitute Christian for pagan ideas. He was now deep in the Greek poets.—*T. WARTON*.

37. *Unshorn Apollo*, an epithet by which he is distinguished in the Greek and Latin poets.

48. *Demodocus*, the famous bard of the *Odyssey*, who, according to the fashion of the heroic ages, delighted the guests of Alcinous, during their repast, by singing about the feats of the Greeks at the siege of Troy, the wooden horse, &c. See *Od. viii. 44*.

59. *Good luck, &c.* Here the metaphysical or logical *ENS* is introduced as a person, and addressing his eldest son Substance; afterwards the logical Quantity,

Thy drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spie
 Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie;
 And, sweetly singing round about thy bed,
 Strow all thy blessings on thy sleeping head.
 She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still 65
 From eyes of mortals walk invisible:
 Yet there is something that doth force my fear;
 For once it was my dismal hap to hear
 A sibyl old, bow-bent with crooked age,
 That far events full wisely could presage, 70
 And in time's long and dark prospective glass
 Foresaw what future days should bring to pass;
 Your son, said she, nor can you it prevent,
 Shall subject be to many an Accident:
 O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king, 75
 Yet every one shall make him underling;
 And those, that cannot live from him asunder,
 Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under:
 In worth and excellence he shall outgo them;
 Yet, being above them, he shall be below them; 80
 From others he shall stand in need of nothing,
 Yet on his brothers shall depend for clothing:
 To find a foe it shall not be his hap,
 And Peace shall lull him in her flowery lap;
 Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door 85
 Devouring War shall never cease to roar;
 Yea, it shall be his natural property
 To harbour those that are at enmity.
 What power, what force, what mighty spell, if not
 Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot? 90

The next, QUANTITY and QUALITY, spake in prose; then RELATION was called by his name.

Rivers, arise; whether thou be the son
 Of utmost Tweed, or Oose, or gulphy Dun,

Quality, and Relation, are personified, and speak. This affectation will appear more excusable in Milton, if we recollect that every thing, in the masks of this age, appeared in a bodily shape. "Airy Nothing" had not only a "local habitation and a name," but a visible figure.—T. WARTON.

61. *Fuery ladies, &c.* This is the first and last time that the system of the fairies was ever introduced to illustrate the doctrine of Aristotle's ten categories. It may be remarked that they both were in fashion, and both exploded, at the same time.—T. WARTON.

62. *Come tripping, &c.* So barren, unpoetical, and abstracted a subject could not have been adorned with finer touches of fancy.—T. WARTON.

74. *To many an Accident.* A pun on the logical *Accidens*.—T. WARTON.

75. *O'er all his brethren, &c.* The Pre-

dicaments are his brethren; of or to which he is the *Subjectum*, although first in excellence or order.

78. *Ungratefully, &c.* They cannot exist but as inherent in *Substance*.

81. *From others, &c.* He is still substance, with or without *Accident*.

82. *Yet on his brothers; By whom he is clothed, superinduced, modified, &c.* But he is still the same.—T. WARTON.

88. *Those that are at enmity.* His *Accidens*.

91. *Rivers, arise, &c.* Milton is supposed, in the invocation and assemblage of these rivers, to have had an eye on Spenser's Episode of the Nuptials of Thames and Medway, "Faerie Queene," iv. xi. I rather think he consulted Drayton's "Polyolbion." It is hard to say, in what sense, or in what manner, this introduction of the rivers was to be applied to the subject.—T. WARTON.

Or Trent, who, like some Earth-born giant, spreads
 His thirty arms along the indented meads;
 Or sullen Mole, that runneth underneath; 95
 Or Severn swift, guilty of maiden's death;
 Or rocky Avon, or of sedgy Lee,
 Or coaly Tine, or ancient hallow'd Dee;
 Or Humber loud, that keeps the Scythian's name;
 Or Medway smooth, or royal-tower'd Thame. 100

[The rest was prose.]

AN EPITAPH ON THE ADMIRABLE DRAMATICK POET WILLIAM SHAKSPEARE.*

WHAT needs my Shakspeare, for his honour'd bones,
 The labour of an age in piled stones?
 Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
 Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
 Dear Son of Memory, great heir of fame, 5
 What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
 Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
 Hast built thyself a live-long monument.
 For whilst, to the shame of slow-endeavouring art,
 Thy easy numbers flow; and that each heart 10
 Hath, from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
 Those Delphick lines with deep impression took,
 Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
 Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;
 And, so sepulchred, in such pomp dost lie, 15
 That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

* As to the "Epitaph on Shakspeare," Hurd despises it too much. It is true that it is neither equal to the grand east of Milton's poems, nor worthy of the subject; but still it would honour most poets, except the last four lines, which are a poor conceit.—BRYDGES.

These first appeared among other recommendatory verses, prefixed to the folio edition of Shakspeare's plays in 1632; but without Milton's name or initials.

It is therefore the *first* of Milton's pieces that was published. I may here remark that it was with great difficulty and reluctance that Milton first appeared as an author. He could not be prevailed upon to put his name to "Comus," his first performance of any length that was printed, notwithstanding the singular approbation with which it had been previously received in a long and extensive course of private circulation. "Lycidas," in the Cambridge collection, is only subscribed with his initial, while most of the other contributors have left their names at full length.—T. WARTON.

93. *Or Trent.* It is said that there were thirty sorts of fish in this river, and thirty religious houses on its banks. These traditions, on which Milton has raised a noble image, are a *rebus* on the name of Trent.—T. WARTON.

95. *Or sullen Mole, &c.* At Mickleham, near Dorking in Surrey, the river Mole during the summer, except in heavy rains, sinks through its sandy bed into a subterraneous and invisible channel. In winter it constantly keeps its current.—T. WARTON.

96. *Maiden's death.* The maid is Sabrina. See "Comus," 827.

99. *Humber loud.* Humber, a Scythian king, landed in Britain three hundred years before the Roman invasion, and was drowned in this river by Lochrine, after conquering king Albanact.—T. WARTON.

100. *Royal tower'd Thame,* alluding to the royal towers of Windsor Castle upon its banks.

5. *Dear Son of Memory.* He honours his favourite Shakspeare with the same

ON THE UNIVERSITY CARRIER, OLD HOBSON,*

Who sickened in the time of his vacancy, being forbid to go to London
by reason of the plague.

HERE lies old Hobson; Death hath broke his girt,
And here, alas! hath laid him in the dirt;
Or else, the ways being foul, twenty to one,
He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.
'Twas such a shifter, that, if truth were known, 5
Death was half glad when he had got him down:
For he had, any time this ten years full,
Dodged with him betwixt Cambridge and the Bull:
And surely Death could never have prevail'd,
Had not his weekly course of carriage fail'd; 10
But lately finding him so long at home,
And thinking now his journey's end was come,
And that he had ta'en up his latest inn;
In the kind office of a chamberlin
Show'd him his room where he must lodge that night, 15
Pull'd off his boots, and took away the light:
If any ask for him, it shall be sed,
Hobson has supp'd, and 's newly gone to bed.

ANOTHER ON THE SAME.*

HERE lieth one, who did most truly prove
That he could never die while he could move;
So hung his destiny, never to rot
While he might still jog on and keep his trot,
Made of sphere-metal, never to decay 5
Until his revolution was at stay.
Time numbers motion; yet, without a crime
'Gainst old truth, motion number'd out his time;

* The two strange "Epitaphs on Hobson the Carrier," are unworthy of the author.—BRIDGES.

relation as the Muses themselves, who are called by the old poets "the daughters of Memory."—NEWTON.

11. *Unvalued*, invaluable.

8. Hobson's inn at London was the "Bull" in Bishop-gate street, where his figure in fresco, with an inscription, was lately to be seen.—T. WARTON. The following account of the origin of the phrase "Hobson's choice," is to be found in No. 509 of the Spectator:—"I shall conclude this discourse with an explanation of a proverb, which by vulgar error is taken and used when a man is reduced to an extremity, whereas the propriety of the maxim is to use it when you would say there is plenty, but you must make such a choice as not to hurt another who is to come after you.

"Mr. Tobias Hobson, from whom we have the expression, was a very honourable man, for I shall ever call the man so who gets an estate honestly. Mr. Tobias Hobson was a carrier; and, being a man of great abilities and invention, and one that saw where there might good profit arise, though the duller men overlooked it, this ingenious man was the first in this island who let out hackney-horses. He lived in Cambridge: and, observing that the scholars rid hard, his manner was to keep a large stable of horses, with boots, bridles, and whips, to furnish the gentlemen at once, without going from college to college to borrow, as they have done since the death of this worthy man. I say, Mr. Hobson kept a stable of forty good cattle always

And, like an engine moved with wheel and weight,
 His principles being ceased, he ended straight. 10
 Rest, that gives all men life, gave him his death,
 And too much breathing put him out of breath;
 Nor were it contradiction to affirm,
 Too long vacation hasten'd on his term.
 Merely to drive the time away, he sicken'd, 15
 Fainted, and died, nor would with ale be quicken'd;
 Nay, quoth he, on his swooning bed outstretch'd,
 If I may n't carry, sure I'll ne'er be fetch'd;
 But vow, though the cross doctors all stood hearers,
 For one carrier put down to make six bearers. 20
 Ease was his chief disease; and, to judge right,
 He died for heaviness that his cart went light:
 His leisure told him that his time was come,
 And lack of load made his life burdensome,
 That ev'n to his last breath, there be that say't, 25
 As he were press'd to death, he cried, More weight;
 But, had his doings lasted as they were,
 He had been an immortal carrier.
 Obedient to the moon, he spent his date
 In course reciprocal, and had his fate 30
 Link'd to the mutual flowing of the seas;
 Yet, strange to think, his wain was his increase:
 His letters are deliver'd all and gone;
 Only remains this superscription.

ON THE NEW FORCERS OF CONSCIENCE UNDER THE LONG PARLIAMENT.

BECAUSE you have thrown off your Prelate Lord,
 And with stiff vows renounced his Liturgy,
 To seize the widow'd whore Plurality
 From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorr'd;
 Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword 5
 To force our consciences that Christ set free,

ready and fit for travelling; but, when a man came for a horse, he was led into the stable, where there was great choice; but he obliged him to take the horse which stood next to the stable door; so that every customer was alike well served according to his chance, and every horse ridden with the same justice; from whence it became a proverb, when what ought to be your election was forced upon you, to say, "Hobson's choice."

1. *Because, &c.* In railing at establishments, Milton condemned not episcopacy only: he thought even the simple institutions of the new Reformation too rigid and arbitrary for the natural freedom of conscience: he contended for that sort of individual or personal religion, by

which every man is to be his own priest. When these verses were written, which form an irregular sonnet, presbyterianism was triumphant; and the independents and the churchmen joined in one common complaint against a want of toleration. The church of Calvin had now its heretics. Milton's haughty temper brooked no human control: even the parliamentary hierarchy was too coercive for one who acknowledged only King Jesus. His froward and refining philosophy was contented with no species of carnal policy: conformity of all sorts was slavery. He was persuaded that the modern presbyter was as much calculated for persecution and oppression as the ancient bishop.—T. WARTON.

And ride us with a classick hierarchy
 Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rotherford?
 Men, whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent
 Would have been held in high esteem with Paul, 10
 Must now be named and printed Hereticks
 By shallow Edwards and Scotch what d'ye call:
 But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
 Your plots and packing, worse than those of Trent;
 That so the Parliament 15
 May, with their wholesome and preventive shears,
 Clip your phylacteries, though bauk your ears,
 And succour our just fears,
 When they shall read this clearly in your charge;
 New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large. 20

8. *Taught ye by mere A.S.* The independents were now contending for toleration. In 1643 their principal leaders published a pamphlet with this title, "An Apologeticall Narration of some Ministers formerly exiles in the Netherlands, now members of the Assembly of Divines. Humbly submitted to the honourable Houses of Parliament." This piece was answered by one A. S., the person intended by Milton.—T. WARTON.

Rotherford. Samuel Rutherford, or Rotherfoord, was one of the chief commissioners of the Church of Scotland, who sat with the Assembly at Westminster, and who concurred in settling the grand points of presbyterian discipline. He was professor of divinity in the university of St. Andrew's, and has left a great variety of Calvinistic tracts. He was an avowed enemy to the independents, as appears from his "Disputation on pretended Liberty of Conscience, 1649." It is hence easy to see, why Rutherford was an obnoxious character to Milton.—T. WARTON.

12. *And Scotch what d'ye call.* Perhaps Henderson, or George Galaspie, another Scotch minister with a harder name, and one of the ecclesiastical commissioners at Westminster, is here meant.—T. WARTON.

14. *Trent*, the famous Council of Trent.

17. *Clip*, &c. That is, although your ears cry out that they need clipping, yet the mild and gentle parliament will content itself with only clipping away your Jewish and persecuting principles.—WARBURTON.

The meaning of the present context is, "Check your insolence, without proceeding to cruel punishments." To "balk," is to spare.—T. WARTON.

20. *Writ large*, that is, more domineering and tyrannical. Milton, in his early life, was a Presbyterian; but seeing that this sect, when in power, was quite as tyrannical in enforcing conformity to their

views as the prelates before them were to their own, he left them, and joined the Independents or Congregationalists. He held, as all Congregationalists now hold, that every body of believers that meet together for mutual improvement, instruction, and worship, is a complete church in itself, independent, capable of transacting its own business, electing its own pastor, bishop, or ruling elder, administering its own discipline, and determining finally all ecclesiastical matters that may properly come before it. He says—"Every church, however small its numbers, is to be considered as in itself an integral and perfect church, so far as it regards its religious rites; nor has it any superior on earth, whether individual, or assembly, or convention, to whom it can be lawfully required to render submission." Matt. xviii. 17-20, especially ver. 17; Acts xiv. 23.

Milton also maintained that all true and sincere believers not only have an equal right to preach the gospel, but that it is their duty so to do. He says—"Any believer is competent to act as an ordinary minister, according as convenience may require, provided only he be endowed with the necessary gifts; these gifts constituting his mission." * * "If, therefore, it be competent to any believer whatever to preach the gospel, provided he be furnished with the requisite gifts, it is also competent to him to administer the rite of baptism; inasmuch as the latter office is inferior to the former."—*Christ. Doc.* c. xxix. Again: "Heretofore, in the first evangelic times, (and it were happy for Christendom if it were so again,) ministers of the gospel were by nothing else distinguished from other Christians but by their spiritual knowledge and sanctity of life." *Considerations*, &c. In his *Reasons of Church Government*, he also shows that the distinction of clergy and laity is a mere arrogating, papal figment, having no authority in the New Testament.

TRANSLATIONS.

THE FIFTH ODE OF HORACE, LIB. I.

WHAT slender youth, bedew'd with liquid odours,
Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave
 Pyrrha? For whom bind'st thou
 In wreaths thy golden hair,
Plain in thy neatness? O, how oft shall he 5
On faith and changed gods complain, and seas
 Rough with black winds, and storms
 Unwonted shall admire!
Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold,
Who always vacant, always amiable 10
 Hopes thee, of flattering gales
 Unmindful. Hapless they,
To whom thou untried seem'st fair! Me, in my vow'd
Picture, the sacred wall declares to have hung
 My dank and dropping weeds 15
 To the stern God of sea.

FROM GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH.

BRUTUS thus addresses DIANA in the country of Leogecia :

GODDESS of shades, and huntress, who at will
Walk'st on the rowling spheres, and through the deep ;
On thy third reign, the earth, look now, and tell
What land, what seat of rest, thou bidd'st me seek,
What certain seat, where I may worship thee 5
For aye, with temples vow'd and virgin quires.

To whom, sleeping before the altar, DIANA answers in a vision, the
 same night :

Brutus, far to the west, in the ocean wide,
Beyond the realm of Gaul, a land there lies,
Sea-girt it lies, where giants dwelt of old ;
Now void, it fits thy people: thither bend 10
Thy course; there shalt thou find a lasting seat ;
There to thy sons another Troy shall rise,
And kings be born of thee, whose dreadful might
Shall awe the world, and conquer nations bold.

5. *Plain in thy neatness.* This is the best attempted translation of Horace's phrase, *simplex munditiis*, which is entirely untranslatable.

rather; Fricked out to look and

FROM DANTE.—I

AH, Constantine! of how much ill was cause,
Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
That the first wealthy pope received of thee!

FROM DANTE.—II.

FOUNDED in chaste and humble poverty,
'Gainst them that raised thee dost thou lift thy horn,
Impudent whore? where hast thou placed thy hope?
In thy adulterers, or thy ill-got wealth?
Another Constantine comes not in haste.

FROM ARIOSTO.

THEN pass'd he to a flowery mountain green,
Which once smelt sweet, now stinks as odiously:
This was the gift, if you the truth will have,
That Constantine to good Sylvester gave.

FROM HORACE.—I.

WHOM do we count a good man? Whom but he
Who keeps the laws and statutes of the senate,
Who judges in great suits and controversies,
Whose witness and opinion wins the cause?
But his own house, and the whole neighbourhood,
Sees his foul inside through his whited skin.

FROM HORACE.—II.

—— LAUGHING, to teach the truth,
What hinders! As some teachers give to boys
Junkets and knacks, that they may learn apace.

FROM HORACE.—III.

—— JOKING decides great things,
Stronger and better oft than earnest can.

FROM EURIPIDES.

THIS is true liberty, when freeborn men,
Having to advise the publick, may speak free;
Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise:
Who neither can, nor will, may hold his peace:
What can be juster in a state than this?

FROM SOPHOCLES.

'Tis you that say it, not I. You do the deeds,
And your ungodly deeds find me the words.

FROM SENECA.

—— THERE can be slain
No sacrifice to God more acceptable,
Than an unjust and wicked king.

PSALMS.

PSALM I.

Done into verse, 1653.

BLESS'D is the man who hath not walk'd astray
In counsel of the wicked, and in the way
Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
Of scorners hath not sat. But in the great
Jehovah's law is ever his delight, 5
And in his law he studies day and night.
He shall be as a tree, which planted grows
By watery streams, and in his season knows
To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall;
And what he takes in hand shall prosper all. 10
Not so the wicked; but as chaff which fann'd
The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand
In judgment, or abide their trial then,
Nor sinners in the assembly of just men.
For the Lord knows the upright way of the just, 15
And the way of bad men to ruin must.

PSALM II.

Done August 8, 1653.

WHY do the Gentiles tumult, and the nations
Muse a vain thing, the kings of the earth upstand
With power, and princes in their congregations
Lay deep their plots together through each land
Against the Lord and his Messiah dear? 5
Let us break off, say they, by strength of hand
Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,
Their twisted cords: He, who in heaven doth dwell,
Shall laugh; the Lord shall scoff them; then, severe,
Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell 10
And fierce ire trouble them; but I, saith he,
Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
On Zion, my holy hill. A firm decree
I will declare: the Lord to me hath said,
Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee 15
This day: ask of me, and the grant is made;
As thy possession I on thee bestow

The heathen; and, as thy conquest to be sway'd,
 Earth's utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full low
 With iron sceptre bruised, and them disperse 20
 Like to a potter's vessel shiver'd so.
 And now be wise at length, ye kings averse;
 Be taught, ye judges of the earth; with fear
 Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
 With trembling: kiss the Son, lest he appear 25
 In anger, and ye perish in the way,
 If once his wrath take fire, like fuel sere.
 Happy all those who have in him their stay!

PSALM III. August 9, 1653.

When he fled from Absalom.

LORD, how many are my foes!
 How many those,
 That in arms against me rise!
 Many are they,
 That of my life distrustfully thus say; 5
 No help for him in God there lies.
 But thou, Lord, art my shield, my glory,
 Thee, through my story,
 The exalter of my head I count:
 Aloud I cried 10
 Unto Jehovah: He full soon replied,
 And heard me from his holy mount.
 I lay and slept; I waked again;
 For my sustain
 Was the Lord. Of many millions 15
 The populous rout
 I fear not, though, encamping round about,
 They pitch against me their pavilions.
 Rise, Lord; save me, my God; for Thou
 Hast smote ere now 20
 On the cheek-bone all my foes;
 Of men abhorr'd
 Hast broke the teeth. This help was from the Lord;
 Thy blessing on thy people flows.

PSALM IV. August 10, 1653.

ANSWER me when I call,
 God of my righteousness;
 In straits, and in distress,
 Thou didst me disentrall
 And set at large; now spare, 5
 Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer.

Great ones, how long will ye
 My glory have in scorn?
 How long be thus forborn
 Still to love vanity? 10
 To love, to seek, to prize,
 Things false and vain, and nothing else but lies?
 Yet know, the Lord hath chose,
 Chose to himself apart,
 The good and meek of heart; 15
 (For whom to choose He knows,
 Jehovah from on high
 Will hear my voice, what time to him I cry.
 Be awed, and do not sin;
 Speak to your hearts alone, 20
 Upon your beds, each one,
 And be at peace within.
 Offer the offerings just
 Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust.
 Many there be that say, 25
 Who yet will show us good?
 Talking like this world's brood:
 But, Lord, thus let me pray;
 On us lift up the light,
 Lift up the favour of thy countenance bright. 30
 Into my heart more joy
 And gladness thou hast put,
 Than when a year of glut
 Their stores doth overcloy,
 And from their plenteous grounds 35
 With vast increase their corn and wine abounds.
 In peace at once will I
 Both lay me down and sleep;
 For thou alone dost keep
 Me safe where'er I lie; 40
 As in a rocky cell,
 Thou, Lord, alone, in safety mak'st me dwell.

PSALM V. August 12, 1653.

JEHOVAH, to my words give ear,
 My meditation weigh;
 The voice of my complaining hear
 My King and God; for unto thee I pray.
 Jehovah, thou my early voice 5
 Shalt in the morning hear;
 In the morning I to thee with choice
 Will rank my prayers, and watch till thou appear.
 For thou art not a God, that takes
 In wickedness delight; 10
 Evil with thee no bidding makes;
 Fools or mad men stand not within thy sight.

All workers of iniquity
 Thou hat'st; and them unblest
 Thou wilt destroy that speak a lie; 15
 The bloody and guileful man God doth detest.
 But I will, in thy mercies dear,
 Thy numerous mercies, go
 Into thy house; I, in thy fear,
 Will towards thy holy temple worship low. 20
 Lord, lead me in thy righteousness,
 Lead me, because of those
 That do observe if I transgress;
 Set thy ways right before, where my step goes.
 For, in his faltering mouth unstable, 25
 No word is firm or sooth;
 Their inside, troubles miserable;
 An open grave their throat, their tongue they smoothe.
 God, find them guilty; let them fall,
 By their own counsels quell'd; 30
 Push them in their rebellions all
 Still on; for against thee they have rebell'd.
 Then all who trust in thee, shall bring
 Their joy; while thou from blame
 Defend'st them, they shall ever sing 35
 And shall triumph in thee, who love thy name.
 For thou, Jehovah, wilt be found
 To bless the just man still;
 As with a shield, thou wilt surround
 Him with thy lasting favour and good will. 40

PSALM VI. August 13, 1653.

LORD, in thine anger do not reprehend me,
 Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct;
 Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,
 And very weak and faint; heal and amend me:
 For all my bones, that ev'n with anguish ake, 5
 Are troubled; yea, my soul is troubled sore;
 And thou, O Lord, how long? Turn, Lord; restore
 My soul; O, save me for thy goodness sake:
 For in death no remembrance is of thee;
 Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise? 10
 Wearied I am with sighing out my days;
 Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea;
 My bed I water with my tears; mine eye
 Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark
 I' the midst of all mine enemies that mark. 15
 Depart, all ye that work iniquity,
 Depart from me; for the voice of my weeping
 The Lord hath heard; the Lord hath heard my prayer;

My supplication with acceptance fair
 The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping. 20
 Mine enemies shall all be blank and dash'd
 With much confusion; then, grown red with shame,
 They shall return in haste the way they came,
 And in a moment shall be quite abash'd.

PSALM VII. August 14, 1653.

Upon the words of Chush the Benjamite, against him.

LORD, my God, to thee I fly;
 Save me and secure me under
 Thy protection, while I cry;
 Lest, as a lion, and no wonder,
 He haste to tear my soul asunder, 5
 Tearing, and no rescue nigh.

Lord, my God, if I have thought
 Or done this; if wickedness
 Be in my hands; if I have wrought
 Ill to him that meant me peace; 10
 Or to him have render'd less,
 And not freed my foe for nought;

Let the enemy pursue my soul,
 And overtake it; let him tread
 My life down to the earth, and roll 15
 In the dust my glory dead,
 In the dust; and there, outspread,
 Lodge it with dishonour foul.

Rise, Jehovah, in thine ire,
 Rouse thyself, amidst the rage 20
 Of my foes, that urge like fire;
 And wake for me, their fury assuage:
 Judgment here thou didst engage
 And command, which I desire.

So the assemblies of each nation 25
 Will surround thee, seeking right;
 Thence to thy glorious habitation
 Return on high, and in their sight.
 Jehovah judgeth most upright
 All people from the world's foundation. 30

Judge me, Lord; be judge in this
 According to my righteousness,
 And the innocence which is
 Upon me: cause at length to cease 35
 Of evil men the wickedness,
 And their power that do amiss:

But the just establish fast,
 Since thou art the just God that tries
 Hearts and reins. On God is cast
 My defence, and in him lies, 40
 In him, who, both just and wise,
 Saves the upright of heart at last.

God is a just judge and severe,
 And God is every day offended;
 If the unjust will not forbear, 45
 His sword he whets, his bow hath bended
 Already, and for him intended
 The tools of death, that waits him near.

His arrows purposely made he
 For them that persecute. Behold, 50
 He travels big with vanity;
 Trouble he hath conceived of old,
 As in a womb; and from that mould
 Hath at length brought forth a lie.

He digg'd a pit, and delved it deep, 55
 And fell into the pit he made:
 His mischief, that due course doth keep,
 Turns on his head; and his ill trade
 Of violence will, undelay'd,
 Fall on his crown with ruin steep. 60

Then will I Jehovah's praise
 According to his justice raise,
 And sing the name and deity
 Of Jehovah, the Most High.

PSALM VIII. August 14, 1653.

O JEHOVAH, our Lord, how wonderous great
 And glorious is thy name through all the earth!
 So as above the heavens thy praise to set
 Out of the tender mouths of latest birth.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou 5
 Hast founded strength because of all thy foes,
 To stint the enemy, and slack the avenger's brow,
 That bends his rage thy providence to oppose.

When I behold thy heavens, thy fingers' art;
 The moon and stars which thou so bright hast set 10
 In the pure firmament; then saith my heart,
 O, what is man, that thou remember'st yet,

And think'st upon him; or of man begot,
 That him thou visit'st, and of him art found?

Scarce to be less than gods, thou mad'st his lot; 15
 With honour and with state thou hast him crown'd.

O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him lord;
 Thou hast put all under his lordly feet;
 All flocks and herds, by thy commanding word;
 All beasts, that in the field or forest meet; 20

Fowl of the heavens, and fish that through the wet
 Sea-paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth.
 O Jehovah, our Lord, how wonderous great
 And glorious is thy name through all the earth!

April, 1648. J. M.

Nine of the Psalms done into metre, wherein all, but what is in a
 different character, are the very words of the text, translated from
 the original.

PSALM LXXX.

1. THOU, Shepherd, that dost Israel *keep*,
 Give ear *in time of need*;
 Who leadest like a flock of sheep
 Thy loved Joseph's seed;
 That sitt'st between the cherubs *bright*,
 Between their wings outspread;
 Shine forth, *and from thy cloud give light*,
 And on our foes thy dread. 5
2. In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,
 And in Manasses' sight, 10
 Awake thy strength, come, and *be seen*
 To save us by thy might.
3. Turn us again; *thy grace divine*
 To us, O God, vouchsafe;
 Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
 And then we shall be safe. 5
4. Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou,
 How long wilt thou declare
 Thy smoking wrath *and angry brow*
 Against thy people's prayer! 20
5. Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears;
 Their bread with tears they eat;
 And mak'st them largely drink the tears
 Wherewith their cheeks are wet.
6. A strife thou mak'st us *and a prey* 25
 To every neighbour foe;
 Among themselves they laugh, they play,
 And flouts at us they throw.

7. Return us, *and thy grace divine,*
O God of Hosts, *vouchsafe;* 30
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.
8. A vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
Thy free love made it thine;
And drov'st out nations, *proud and haut,* 35
To plant this *lovely* vine.
9. Thou didst prepare for it a place,
And root it deep and fast;
That it *began to grow apace,*
And fill'd the land at last. 40
10. With her *green* shade that cover'd all,
The hills were *overspread;*
Her boughs as *high as cedars tall*
Advanced their lofty head.
11. Her branches *on the western side* 45
Down to the sea she sent,
And *upward* to that river wide
Her other branches *went.*
12. Why hast thou laid her hedges low,
And broken down her fence; 50
That all may pluck her, as they go,
With rudest violence?
13. The *tusked* boar out of the wood
Up turns it by the roots;
Wild beasts there brouze, and make their food 55
Her grapes and tender shoots.
14. Return now, God of Hosts; look down
From heaven, thy seat divine;
Behold us, *but without a frown;*
And visit this *thy* vine. 60
15. Visit this vine, which thy right hand
Hath set, and planted *long;*
And the young branch, that for thyself
Thou hast made firm and strong.
16. But now it is consumed with fire; 65
And cut *with axes* down;
They perish at thy dreadful ire,
At thy rebuke and frown.
17. Upon the man of thy right hand
Let thy *good* hand be *laid;* 70
Upon the son of man, whom thou
Strong for thyself hast made.
18. So shall we not go back from thee
To ways of sin and shame:
Quicken us thou; then *gladly* we 75
Shall call upon thy name.
19. Return us, *and thy grace divine,*
Lord God of Hosts, *vouchsafe;*
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe. 80

PSALM LXXXI.

1. To God our strength sing loud *and clear*,
Sing loud to God, *our King*;
To Jacob's God, *that all may hear*,
Loud acclamations ring. 5
2. Prepare a hymn, prepare a song,
The timbrel hither bring;
The *cheerful* psaltery bring along,
And harp *with pleasant string*. 5
3. Blow, *as is wont*, in the new moon,
With trumpets' *lofty sound*, 10
The appointed time, the day whereon
Our solemn feast *comes round*.
4. This was a statute *given of old*
For Israel *to observe*;
A law of Jacob's God, *to hold*, 15
From whence they *might not swerve*.
5. This he a testimony ordain'd
In Joseph, *not to change*,
When as he pass'd through Egypt land;
The tongue I heard was strange. 20
6. From burden, *and from slavish toil*,
I set his shoulder free:
His hands from pots, *and miry soil*,
Deliver'd were, *by me*.
7. When trouble did thee sore assail,
On me then didst thou call; 25
And I to free thee *did not fail*,
And led thee out of *thrall*.
I answer'd thee in thunder deep,
With clouds encompass'd round: 30
I tried thee at the water *steep*
Of Meriba *renown'd*.
8. Hear, O my people, *hearken well*;
I testify to thee,
Thou *ancient stock of Israel*, 35
If thou wilt list to me:
9. Throughout the land of thy abode
No alien god shall be;
Nor shalt thou to a foreign god
In honour bend thy *knee*. 40
10. I am the Lord thy God, which brought
Thee out of Egypt land;
Ask large enough, and I, *besought*,
Will grant thy full demand.
11. And yet my people would not *hear*, 45
Nor hearken to my voice;
And Israel, *whom I loved so dear*,
Misliked me for his choice.

12. Then did I leave them to their will,
And to their wandering mind ; 50
Their own conceits they follow'd still,
Their own devices blind.
13. O, that my people would *be wise*,
To serve me all their days!
And, O, that Israel would *advise* 55
To walk my righteous ways!
14. Then would I soon bring down their foes,
That now so proudly rise ;
And turn my hand against *all those*,
That are their enemies. 60
15. Who hate the Lord should *then be fain*
To bow to him and bend ;
But *they, his people, should remain ;*
Their time should have no end :
16. And he would feed them *from the shock* 65
With flower of finest wheat,
And satisfy them from the rock
With honey *for their meat.*

PSALM LXXXII.

1. God in the great assembly stands
Of kings and lordly states ;
Among the gods, on both his hands,
He judges and debates.
2. How long will ye pervert the right 5
With judgment false and wrong,
Favouring the wicked *by your might*,
Who thence grow bold and strong?
3. Regard the weak and fatherless ;
Dispatch the poor man's cause ; 10
And raise the man in deep distress
By just and equal laws.
4. Defend the poor and desolate,
And rescue from the hands
Of wicked men the low estate 15
Of him *that help demands.*
5. They know not, nor will understand ;
In darkness they walk on ;
The earth's foundations all are moved,
And out of order gone. 20
6. I said that ye were gods, yea, all
The sons of God Most High ;
7. But ye shall die like men, and fall,
As other princes *die.*
8. Rise, God ; judge thou the earth *in might*, 25
This *wicked* earth redress ;
For Thou art He who shall by right
The nations all possess.

PSALM LXXXIII.

1. BE not thou silent *now at length* ;
 O God! hold not thy peace ;
 Sit thou not still, O God of *strength*,
We cry, and do not cease.
2. For, lo, thy *furious* foes *now* swell,
 And storm outrageously ;
 And they that hate thee, *proud and fell*,
 Exalt their heads full high.
3. Against thy people they contrive
 Their plots and counsels deep ;
 Them to ensnare they chiefly strive,
 Whom thou dost hide and keep.
4. Come, let us cut them off, say they,
 Till they no nation be ;
 That Israel's name for ever may
 Be lost in memory.
5. For they consult with all their might,
 And all, as one in mind,
 Themselves against thee they unite,
 And in firm union bind.
6. The tents of Edom, and the brood
 Of *scornful* Ishmael,
 Moab, with them of Hagar's blood,
That in the desert dwell ;
7. Gebal and Ammon *there conspire*,
 And *hateful* Amalec ;
 The Philistines, and they of Tyre,
Whose bounds the sea doth check.
8. With them *great* Ashur also bands,
And doth confirm the knot :
All these have lent their armed hands
 To aid the sons of Lot.
9. Do to them as to Midian *bold*,
That wasted all the coast ;
 To Sisera ; and, as *is told*,
Thou didst to Jabin's host,
When, at the brook of Kishon old,
They were repulsed and slain,
10. At Endor quite cut off, and roll'd
 As dung upon the plain.
11. As Zeb and Oreb evil sped,
 So let their princes speed ;
 As Zeba and Zalmunna *bled*,
 So let their princes *bleed*.
12. *For they amidst their pride* have said,
 By right now shall we seize
 God's houses, and *will now invade*
 Their stately palaces.

13. My God, O, make them as a wheel;
No quiet let them find; 50
 Giddy and *restless* let them reel,
 Like stubble from the wind.
14. As *when* an aged wood takes fire,
Which on a sudden strays;
 The *greedy* flame runs higher and higher, 55
 Till all the mountains blaze;
15. So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
 And with thy tempest chase;
16. And, till they yield thee honour due,
 Lord, fill with shame their face. 60
17. Ashamed and troubled let them be,
 Troubled and shamed for ever;
 Ever confounded, and so die
 With shame, *and 'scape it never.*
18. Then shall they know, that Thou, whose name 65
 Jehovah is alone,
 Art the Most High, *and Thou the same*
 O'er all the earth *art One.*

PSALM LXXXIV.

1. How lovely are thy dwellings fair!
 O Lord of Hosts, how dear
 The *pleasant* tabernacles are,
Where thou dost dwell so near!
2. My soul doth long, and almost die, 5
 Thy courts, O Lord, to see;
 My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
 O living God, for thee.
3. There ev'n the sparrow, *freed from wrong,*
 Hath found a house of *rest;* 10
 The swallow there, to lay her young,
 Hath built her *brooding* nest:
 Ev'n by thy altars, Lord of Hosts,
They find their safe abode;
And home they fly from round the coasts, 15
Toward thee, my King, my God.
4. Happy, who in thy house reside,
 Where thee they ever praise!
5. Happy, whose strength in thee doth bide,
 And in their hearts thy ways! 20
6. They pass through Baca's *thirsty* vale,
That dry and barren ground;
 As through a fruitful, watery dale,
 Where springs and showers abound.
7. They journey on from strength to strength 25
With joy and gladsome cheer,
Till all before our God at length
 In Sion do appear.

8. Lord God of Hosts, hear *now* my prayer ;
O Jacob's God, give ear ; 30
9. Thou God, our shield, look on the face
Of thy anointed *Dear* :
10. For one day in thy courts *to be*,
Is better, *and more blest*,
Than *in the joys of vanity* 35
A thousand days *at best*.
- I, in the temple of my God,
Had rather keep a door ;
Than dwell in tents, *and rich abode*,
With sin *for evermore*. 40
11. For God the Lord, both sun and shield,
Gives grace and glory *bright* ;
No good from them shall be withheld
Whose ways are just and right.
12. Lord God of Hosts, *that reign'st on high* ; 45
That man is *truly blest*,
Who *only* on thee doth rely,
And in thee only rest.

PSALM LXXXV.

1. THY land to favour graciously
Thou hast not, Lord, been slack ;
Thou hast from *hard* captivity
Returned Jacob back : 5
2. The iniquity thou didst forgive
That wrought thy people woe ;
And all their sin, *that did thee grieve*,
Hast hid *where none shall know*.
3. Thine anger all thou hadst removed,
And *calmly* didst return 10
From thy fierce wrath, which we had proved
Far worse than fire to burn.
4. God of our saving health and peace,
Turn us, and us restore ;
Thine indignation cause to cease 15
Toward us, *and chide no more*.
5. Wilt thou be angry without end,
For ever angry thus ?
Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend
From age to age on us ? 20
6. Wilt thou not turn, and *hear our voice*,
And us again revive ;
That so thy people may rejoice,
By thee preserved alive ?
7. Cause us to see thy goodness, Lord ; 25
To us thy mercy show ;
Thy saving health to us afford,
And life in us renew.

8. *And now what God the Lord will speak,*
 I will go straight and hear; 30
 For to his people he speaks peace,
 And to his saints full dear,
 To his dear saints, he will speak peace;
 But let them never more
 Return to folly, but surcease 35
 To trespass as before.
9. Surely, to such as do him fear,
 Salvation is at hand;
 And glory shall ere long appear
 To dwell within our land. 40
10. Mercy and Truth, that long were miss'd,
 Now joyfully are met;
 Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kiss'd,
 And hand in hand are set.
11. Truth from the earth, like to a flower, 45
 Shall bud and blossom then;
 And Justice, from her heavenly bower,
 Look down on mortal men.
12. The Lord will also then bestow
 Whatever thing is good; 50
 Our land shall forth in plenty throw
 Her fruits to be our food.
13. Before him Righteousness shall go,
 His royal harbinger:
 Then will he come, and not be slow; 55
 His footsteps cannot err.

PSALM LXXXVI.

1. THY gracious ear, O Lord, incline;
 O hear me, I thee pray;
 For I am poor, and almost pine
 With need and sad decay.
2. Preserve my soul; for I have trod 5
 Thy ways, and love the just:
 Save thou thy servant, O my God,
 Who still in thee doth trust.
3. Pity me, Lord, for daily thee
 I call; 4. O, make rejoice 10
 Thy servant's soul; for, Lord, to thee
 I lift my soul and voice:
5. For thou art good; thou, Lord, art prone
 To pardon; thou to all
 Art full of mercy, thou alone 15
 To them that on thee call.
6. Unto my supplication, Lord,
 Give ear, and to the cry
 Of my incessant prayers afford
 Thy hearing graciously. 20

7. I, in the day of my distress,
Will call on thee *for aid*;
For thou wilt *grant me free access*,
And answer *what I pray'd*.
8. Like thee among the gods is none, 25
O Lord; nor any works,
Of all that other gods have done,
Like to thy *glorious works*.
9. The nations all whom thou hast made 30
Shall come, *and all shall frame*
To bow them low before thee, Lord,
And glorify thy name:
10. For great thou art, and wonders great
By thy strong hand are done:
Thou, *in thy everlasting seat*, 35
Remainest God alone.
11. Teach me, O Lord, thy way *most right*;
I in thy truth will bide;
To fear thy name my heart unite;
So shall it never slide. 40
12. Thee will I praise, O Lord my God,
Thee honour and adore
With my whole heart, and blaze abroad
Thy name for evermore.
13. For great thy mercy is toward me, 45
And thou hast freed my soul,
Ev'n from the lowest hell set free,
From deepest darkness foul.
14. O God, the proud against me rise,
And violent men are met 50
To seek my life, and in their eyes
No fear of thee have set.
15. But thou, Lord, art the God most mild,
Readiest thy grace to show,
Slow to be angry, and *art styled* 55
Most merciful, most true.
16. O, turn to me *thy face at length*,
And me have mercy on;
Unto thy servant give thy strength,
And save thy handmaid's son. 60
17. Some sign of good to me afford,
And let my foes *then see*,
And be ashamed; because thou, Lord,
Dost help and comfort me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

1. AMONG the holy mountains *high*
Is his foundation fast;
There seated in his sanctuary;
His temple there is placed.

2. Sion's *fair* gates the Lord loves more 5
 Than all the dwellings *fair*
 Of Jacob's *land*, though there be store,
 And all within his care.
3. City of God, most glorious things 10
 Of thee *abroad* are spoke;
4. I mention Egypt, where proud kings 10
 Did our forefathers yoke.
 I mention Babel to my friends,
 Philistia full of scorn;
- And Tyre, with Ethiop's utmost ends: 15
 Lo, this man there was born:
5. But twice that praise shall in our ear 15
 Be said of Sion last;
 This and this man was born in her;
 High God shall fix her fast. 20
6. The Lord shall write it in a scroll 20
 That ne'er shall be outworn,
 When he the nations doth inroll;
 That this man there was born.
7. Both they who sing, and they who dance, 25
 With sacred songs, are there:
 In thee fresh brooks and soft streams glance,
 And all my fountains clear.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

1. LORD GOD, that dost me save and keep,
 All day to thee I cry;
 And all night long before thee weep
 Before thee prostrate lie.
2. Into thy presence let my prayer 5
 With sighs devout ascend;
 And to my cries, that ceaseless are,
 Thine ear with favour bend.
3. For, cloy'd with woes and trouble store 10
 Surcharged my soul doth lie;
 My life, at Death's uncheerful door,
 Unto the grave draws nigh.
4. Reckon'd I am with them that pass 15
 Down to the dismal pit:
 I am a man; but weak, alas!
 And for that name unfit.
5. From life discharged, and parted quite 20
 Among the dead to sleep;
 And like the slain in bloody fight,
 That in the grave lie deep.
- Whom thou rememberest no more,
 Dost never more regard;

9. *Trouble store.* Some editors read *sore*.

- Them, from thy hand deliver'd o'er,
Death's hideous house hath barr'd.
6. Thou in the lowest pit *profound*, 25
 Hast set me *all forlorn*,
 Where thickest darkness *hovers round*,
 In horrid deeps *to mourn*.
7. Thy wrath, *from which no shelter saves*, 30
 Full sore doth press on me ;
 Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,
 And all thy waves break me.
8. Thou dost my friends from me estrange,
 And mak'st me odious,
 Me to them odious, *for they change*, 35
 And I here pent up thus.
9. Through sorrow and affliction great,
 Mine eye grows dim and dead :
 Lord, all the day I thee entreat,
 My hands to thee I spread. 40
10. Wilt thou do wonders on the dead ?
 Shall the deceased arise,
 And praise thee *from their loathsome bed*
With pale and hollow eyes?
11. Shall they thy loving kindness tell, 45
 On whom the grave *hath hold?*
 Or they, who in perdition *dwell*,
 Thy faithfulness *unfold?*
12. In darkness can thy mighty *hand*
 Or wonderous acts be known? 50
 Thy justice in the *gloomy land*
 Of *dark oblivion?*
13. But I to thee, O Lord, do cry,
Ere yet my life be spent ;
 And up to thee my prayer *doth hie*, 55
 Each morn, and thee prevent.
14. Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake,
 And hide thy face from me,
15. That am already bruised, and shake
 With terrour sent from thee? 60
 Bruised, and afflicted, and *so low*
 As ready to expire ;
 While I thy terrours undergo,
 Astonish'd with thine ire.
16. Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow ; 65
 Thy threatenings cut me through :
17. All day they round about me go ;
 Like waves they me pursue.
18. Lover and friend thou hast removed,
 And sever'd from me far : 70
 They *fly me now* whom I have loved,
 And as in darkness are.

A PARAPHRASE ON PSALM CXIV.*

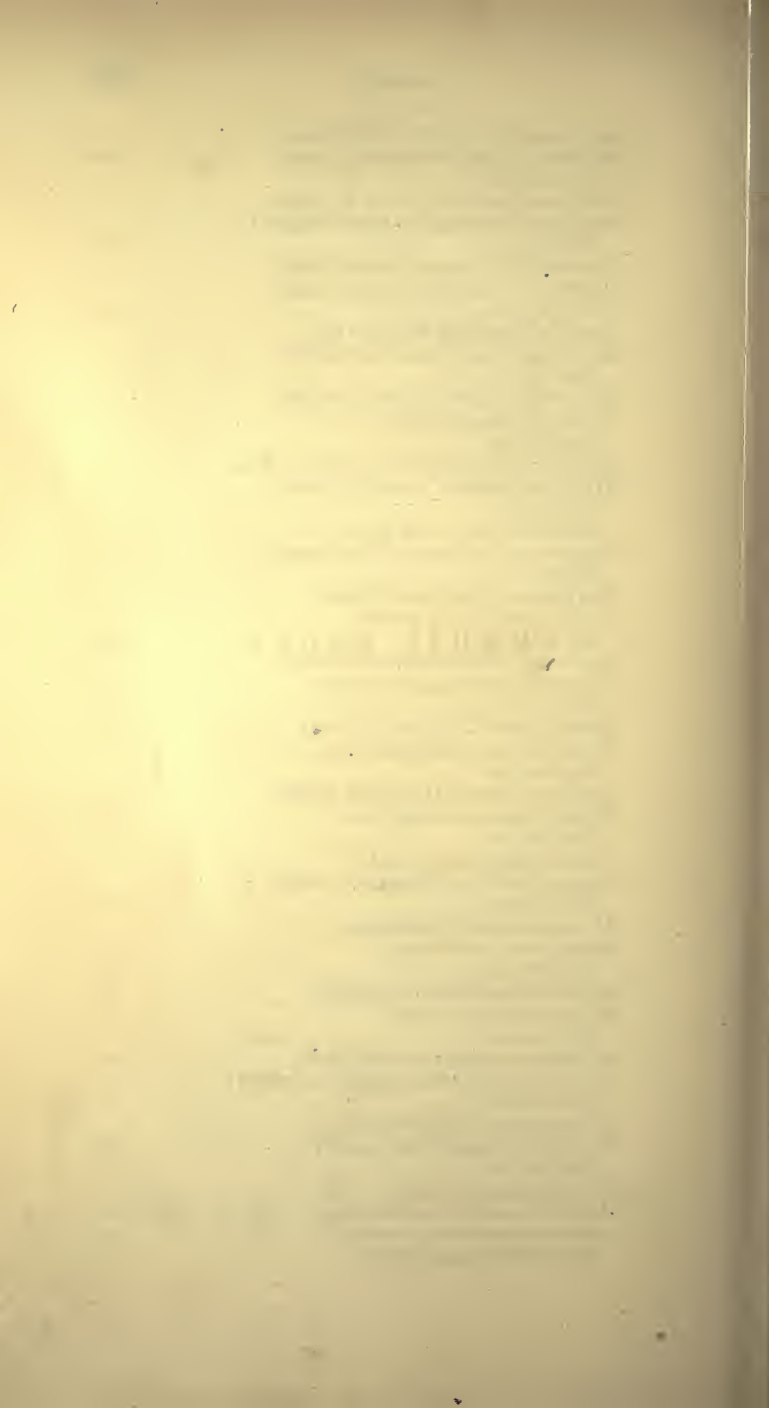
WHEN the blest seed of Terah's faithful son,
 After long toil, their liberty had won ;
 And past from Pharian fields to Canaan land,
 Led by the strength of the Almighty's hand ;
 Jehovah's wonders were in Israel shown, 5
 His praise and glory was in Israel known.
 That saw the troubled sea, and shivering fled,
 And sought to hide his froth-becurled head
 Low in the earth ; Jordan's clear streams recoil,
 As a faint host that hath received the foil. 10
 The high, huge-bellied mountains skip, like rams
 Amongst their ewes ; the little hills, like lambs.
 Why fled the ocean ? And why skipt the mountains ?
 Why turned Jordan toward his crystal fountains ?
 Shake, Earth ; and at the presence be aghast 15
 Of Him that ever was, and aye shall last ;
 That glassy floods from rugged rocks can crush,
 And make soft rills from fiery flint-stones gush !

PSALM CXXXVI.

LET us, with a gladsome mind,
 Praise the Lord, for he is kind :
 For his mercies aye endure,
 Ever faithful, ever sure.
 Let us blaze his name abroad, 5
 For of gods he is the God :
 For his, &c.
 O, let us his praises tell,
 Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell : 10
 For his, &c.
 Who, with his miracles, doth make
 Amazed heaven and earth to shake :
 For his, &c. 15
 Who, by his wisdom, did create
 The painted heavens so full of state :
 For his, &c. 20
 Who did the solid earth ordain
 To rise above the watery plain :
 For his, &c.
 Who by his all-commanding might, 25
 Did fill the new-made world with light :
 For his, &c.

* This and the following Psalm were done by the author at fifteen years old, and were his earliest performances.

And caused the golden-tressed sun All the day long his course to run :	30
For his, &c.	
The horned moon to shine by night, Amongst her spangled sisters bright :	35
For his, &c.	
He, with his thunder-clasping hand, Smote the first-born of Egypt land :	40
For his, &c.	
And, in despite of Pharaoh fell, He brought from thence his Israel :	45
For his, &c.	
The ruddy waves he cleft in twain Of the Erythræan main :	50
For his, &c.	
The floods stood still, like walls of glass, While the Hebrew bands did pass :	55
For his, &c.	
But full soon they did devour The tawny king with all his power :	60
For his, &c.	
His chosen people he did bless In the wasteful wilderness :	65
For his, &c.	
In bloody battle he brought down Kings of prowess and renown :	70
For his, &c.	
He foil'd bold Seon and his host, That ruled the Amorrean coast :	75
For his, &c.	
And large-limb'd Og he did subdue, With all his over-hardy crew :	80
For his, &c.	
And to his servant Israel, He gave their land therein to dwell ;	85
For his, &c.	
He hath, with a piteous eye, Beheld us in our misery :	90
For his, &c.	
And freed us from the slavery Of the invading enemy :	95
For his, &c.	
All living creatures he doth feed, And with full hand supplies their need :	
For his, &c.	
Let us therefore warble forth His mighty majesty and worth :	
For his, &c.	
That his mansion hath on high Above the reach of mortal eye :	
For his mercies aye endure, Ever faithful, ever sure.	



VERBAL INDEX.

ABBREVIATIONS

USED IN THE VERBAL INDEX.

[THE following Index is applicable to any edition of Milton's Poetical Works.* When I say it is an "Index to *all the poems*," I do not mean to say that it is an Index to *all the words* in those poems. There are many words which it would be absurd to notice in an Index: for instance, the *articles*; most of the *pronouns*, such as *thee, whom, his, &c.*; all the *conjunctions*; many *adverbs*; most of the *prepositions*; and such *adjectives* and *adjective-pronouns* as present no striking idea, as *all, both, each, &c.* But every one who wishes to find any passage in Milton, will be able to recall some noun, adjective, verb, or participle of a distinctive character; and ALL SUCH will be found in this Index. Indeed, I can safely say that I believe there is not a line in all the poems which may not be found by some *one* word in it, while a great number of the lines may be found by EVERY WORD in them.—Ed.]

P. L.	signifies	Paradise Lost.
P. R.	"	Paradise Regained.
S. A.	"	Samson Agonistes.
Lyc.	"	Lycidas.
L'Al.	"	L'Allegro.
Il Pens.	"	Il Penseroso.
Arc.	"	Arcades.
Com.	"	Comus.
Son. i., ii., &c.	"	Sonnets.
Od. Nat.	"	Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity.
Od. Pass.	"	Ode on the Passion.
Od. Cir.	"	Ode on the Circumcision.
Od. D. F. I.	"	Ode on the Death of a Fair Infant.
Od. on Time	"	Ode on Time.
Od. Sol. Mus.	"	Ode at a Solemn Musick.
Ep. M. Win.	"	Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester.
Od. May-M.	"	Ode or Song on May-Morning.
Vac. Ex.	"	Verses at a Vacation Exercise.
Ep. W. Sh.	"	Epitaph on W. Shakspeare.
Ep. Hobs. I., II.	"	The two Epitaphs on Hobson.
Forc. of Con.	"	On the new Forcers of Conscience, &c.
Od. Hor.	"	Fifth Ode of Horace translated.
Brut.	"	Brutus, &c. Translated from Geoffry of Monmouth.
Dante I., II.	"	Translations of Dante.
Ariost.	"	Translation of Ariosto.
Hor. I., II., III.	"	Other Translations of Horace.
Eurip.	"	Translation of Euripides.
Soph.	"	Translation of Sophocles.
Sen.	"	Translation of Seneca.
Ps. i., ii., &c.	"	Translation of Psalms.

* In those editions, however, which retain the five Italian Sonnets, five must be added after Sonnet i. For instance, what is here Sonnet v. or xvi., will be x. or xxi. in those editions.

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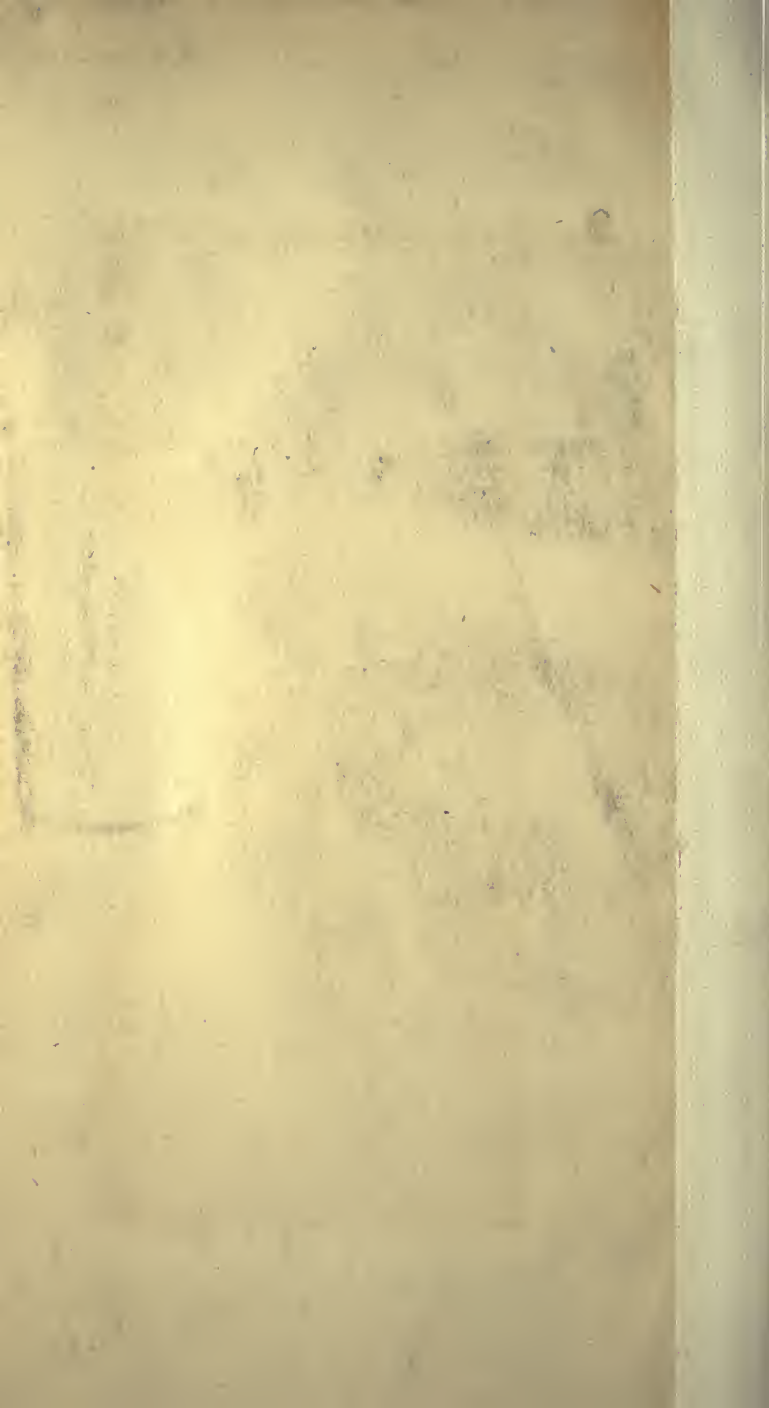
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