"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."—Sir Egerton Bridges.

"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.
PREFACE.

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.”

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 "Al- dine," 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.
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. Five 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.
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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:

\[ \text{If Virtue feele were Heaven it selfe would stoope to her} \]
\[ \text{Caelum non animi mutu du trans mare curro} \]
\[ \text{Joannes Miltonius Anglus.} \]
\[ \text{Junij 10. 1639.} \]

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."

C. D. C.

*Philadelphia, July 1st, 1865.*
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 Hortor 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 amuse-
ment 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 con-
cerning my faith, to declare it without any reserve or fear. I neverthe-
less 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 de-
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, 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 Apen-
nines, 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 Leman 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 con-
trol, 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 superstltion;
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 there-
fore 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 Prelaticall 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 SPECTRUM SAEVA, 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 unwearyed 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

† 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, unvictual 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 preracy, 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 Εἰκών Βασιλικῆς (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 Εἰκονοκλαστής, (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 Salmasius, 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 Corolo 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 Salmasii De\nsionem 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 Colum adversus Parricideæ Anglicæs. 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, 1823, (Iv. 1) written by Sir James Macintosh.

† 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.
Life of Milton.

Libellum anonymum cui Titulus, Regii Sanguinis Clamor ad Cæolum. 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 introduces 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 Linguae Latinae, 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 Hiranelgs 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 titles; 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 destruction."
† 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. Poulet, 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 I showed him 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, 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 humble 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 Logicae 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 at 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 pos- ed in the hands of Cypriack 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; 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 discards 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 evincing in its author a calm and conscientious desire for truth, an humble and reverential feeling for the Book of God, a logical precision of reason, and an amount of learning and a familiarity with the Scriptures not united 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 prognosti- cated a fatal termination; yet such was the buoyancy of his spirits, that even in the paroxysms of the disease, he would, according to Aubrey, "very cheerful, and sing." On Sunday, the 8th of November, 1674, 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 frie..."
LIFE OF MILTON.

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 illustrated 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, enevoience 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 treasures—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 unfailing 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 pictuesque, 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 most sacred prerogatives of God and man, and he was compelled by 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 Encyclopedia Britannica.
‡ Read Life by Ellwood, Toland, Fenton, Newton, Warton, Symmons, Mifford, 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, Pandemonium, 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,

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. The 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 woe.—Callander.

Sing, heavenly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Òreb, 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 height 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 se-
cert 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 after-
wards even to ascend it, upon pain of death.

Mr. of Òreb, 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 Pent-
touch it is called Sinai. These names
are now applied to two opposite summits
of an isolated, oblong, and central moun-
tain in the midst of a confused group
of grand and rugged mountain-heights
at the southern extremity of the penin-
sula, 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 mass,
je was could be approached, if not for-
bidden; and here the mountain-brow,
where alone the lightnings and the thick
cloud would be visible.” At the south-
ern extremity of this central ridge, which
is about three miles long, is Mount Sinai
proper, now called by the monks Jbel
Musa, 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 on of Sinai.”

15. Above the Aonian mount. In Exo-
tis, anciently called Aonian, was Mount
Helicon, so famed in antiquity as the seat
of Apollo and the Muses, and sung
by poets of every age. Milton, there-
fore, 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 rhýmûs,
(Gr. ρυθμός) 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,” speak-
ing of his design of writing a poem
in the English language, he says, “I
was not to be obtained by the invoca-
tion of Dame Memory and her Siren
daugthers, but by devout prayer to
that eternal Spirit who can enrich
with all utterance and knowledge, and send
out his Seraphim with the hallowed fire
of his Altar to touch and purify the lips
of whom he pleases.” See Picken’s edi-
tion, London, 1851, vol. iii, p. 149;
or “Compendium of English Literature,”
p. 265.

24. That to the height of this great argu-
ment. “The height of the argument
is precisely what distinguishes this poem
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.
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
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
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,
If he opposed; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Raised impious war in heaven and belligerent proud,
With vain attempt. 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 adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.
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
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:
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
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes,
That comes to all; but torture without end

Milton from all others. In other of imagination, the difficulty lies
Miss sufficient elevation to the sub-
erce 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
illumines 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. Breyges.
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 unconsumered:
Such place eternal justice had prepared
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!
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns; and welt'ring by his side,
One next himself in power, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd
Beelzebub: 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,
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 enterprise,
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd
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
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
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? all 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 (II. viii. 16) makes the seat of Hell as far beneath the deepest pit of earth, as the heaven is above the earth. Virgil (AEn. vi. 575) makes it twice as far, and Milton thrice as far; as if those 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.
105. 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 terror 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,
Irreconcileable 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 overthow 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 Beel-
ziath 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 ex-
fort from him.
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish’d, or eternal being,
To undergo eternal punishment?
Whereunto 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;
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:
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
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,
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,
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;
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;
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,
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
Leviathan, which God of all his works

199. Briarros and Tiphœus were two famed giants of antiquity. By Leviathan Milton here means the whale, though in 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,
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
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
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
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
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
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,
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,
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 fonder, 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 bro-
thers 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 allu-
sions and Illustrations: the picture is
mightily poetised and sublime."—Bridges.
240. Recovered, resumed, self-raised, self-recovered.
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he,
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,
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.
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;
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 us then our faithful friends,
The associates and copartners of our loss,
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? 1
So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub
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
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,
As we crewwhile, 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,
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.
250. The broad circumference, &c. Here Milton shines in all his majestic splendor; his mighty imagination almost excels itself. There is indescribable magic in this picture.—Brydges.
251. Fesolé. A town near Florence "We are here in Arno’s vale, (Vuldarno;) the full moon shining over Fesolé, which I see from my windows; Milton’s verses every moment in one’s mouth, and Guido leos house twenty yards from one’s door."
—Mrs. Piozzi’s “Journey through Italy.”
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
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 amiral, were but a wand,
He walk'd with to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marble; 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
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
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
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,
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 spoil of battel to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the case you find
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 labour on petty technicalities. The walking over the burning marls 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 continuous 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 im-
With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon
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!
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
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 Egypt's evil day,
Waved round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
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,
'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.
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.
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;
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,
Through God's high suffrance for the trial of man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and the invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform

333. Potent rod. See Ex. x. 13.
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.
Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch
At their great Emperor's call, as next in worth,
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand;
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.
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
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,
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
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
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 hence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of hell.
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.

393. 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 Tophe, 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.

405. 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 Arøer to Nebo, and the wild
Of southmost Abarim: in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Sean's realm, beyond
The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Elealé, to the Asphaltic pool;
Peer 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
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
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baalim and Ashtaroth, those male,
These feminine: for spirits, when they please,
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
And un compounded is their essence pure;
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,
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
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
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 Arön: Abarim a ridge of moun-
tains 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 Moab-
ites taken from them by Sihon king of
the Amorites; Num. xxi. 23. Horonaim,
another city of the Moabites, mentioned
in Isaiah xv. 5, and Jer. xlviii. 3, 5. Sib-
ma, near Heshbon, (Isaiah xvi. 8,) was
famous for its vineyards. Elealé 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,
Her temple on the offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols' soul. 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
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,
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,
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,
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:
A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king;
Ahaz his sottish conqueror, 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
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 Egypt and her priests, to seek
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.
445. "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 feast of Adonis were celebrated by the women,—the women made loud lamentations for him."—Newton. See Ezek. viii. 12-18.
446. "Thammuz was the god of the Philistines, see Judges xvi. 23; 1 Sam. v. 4. Grunsel, or groundel edge,—the edge of the foot-post of his temple gate.
447. 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,
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox;
Jehovah, who in one night, when he pass'd
From Egypt marching, equal'd with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd
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
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
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.
   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 boastèd parents. Titan, heaven's first-born,
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
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,
And o'er the Celtic roan'd the utmost isles.
   All these and more came flocking, but with looks
Downeast 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
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.


528. Recollecting, that is, re-collect-ing.
Their fainted courage, and dispell'd their fears:
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
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:
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
With orient colours waving: with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thro'ing helms
Appeard,' and serried shields in thick array
Of depth immeasurable: anon they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised
To height 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;
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,
Moved on in silence 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 warriours old with order'd spear and shield,
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;
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
Could merit more than that small infancy
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,
Begirt with British and Armorick knights;
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco, or Morocco, or Trebisond,
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
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
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs: darken’d so, yet shone—
Above them all the Archangel: but his face
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
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
For his revolt; yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither’d. As when heaven’s fire
Hath seath’d the forest oaks or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare, 640
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
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
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
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?
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,
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
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
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
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
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;
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, outflew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubim; the sudden blaze
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
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 hands
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
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,
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
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,
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,
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
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

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. Founded, that is melted.
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;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
Equal'd in all their glories, to inshrine
Belus or Scarpis, their gods; or seat
Their kings, when Ægypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
Stood fix'd her stately height: and straight the doors,
Opening their brazen folds, discover wide
Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth
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
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
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
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,
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
With his industrious crew to build in hell.
Meanwhile the winged heralds, by command
Of sovrain power, with awful ceremony
And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be held

711. This sudden rising of Pandemonium is supposed to be taken from some of the moving stage-scence in the time of Charles the First.
728. Cressets, beacon lights, which had a cross on their top, and hence called crosettes.
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
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
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
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, expatiating, and confer
Their state affairs: so thick the aery crowd
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
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
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,
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;
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."—Bruges.
774. Expaitate, 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. 787. 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 condensation 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 touched 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.

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-wove 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 inferior 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 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:— 5 Powers and Dominions, Deities of heaven, For since no deep within her gulf can hold Immortal vigor, though oppress'd and fallen, I give not heaven for lost: from this descent Celestial virtues rising, will appear 10 More glorious and more dread than from no fall, And trust themselves to bear 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, 15 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. 41
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In heaven, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior; 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
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
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,
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:
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.

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,
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,
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
Infernal thunder; and for lightning see
Black fire and horror 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
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
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
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
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
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,
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
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.
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 humane;
A fairer person lost not heaven; he seem'd
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;
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, Ô Peers,
As not behind in hate, if what was urged,

80. Exercise, in the sense of the Latin exerço. "to vex," "to trouble."
82. 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 Monsonne. 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  
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 —  
Impregnable: oft on the bordering deep  
Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing  
Scour 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  
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  
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,  
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,  
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,  
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,  
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  
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 sul-
phur and strange fire."—Newton.
156. Impotence, weakness of mind.
What, if the breath, that kindled those grim fires,
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
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
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,
Unresipted, unpitied, unreprieved,
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
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
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
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
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 Supreme Foe in time may much remit
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
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. 180. Supreme. Accent on the first and
191. Derides. Ps. ii. 4. 195. liable.
This horrore will grow mild, this darkness light:
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.

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 disinherit the King of Heaven
We war, if war be best; or to regain
Our own right lost. Him to uninherit 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
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
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,
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
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
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,
We can create; and in what place soe'er
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,
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.
223. Judge the strife. That is, between the King of Heaven and Us. The former.
225. How oft, &c. Ps. xviii. 11, 13, and xvii. 2.
Mustering their rage, and heaven resembles hell
As he our darkness, cannot we his light
Imitate when we please? this desert soil
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
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
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
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence hull
Sea-faring men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance,
Or pinnace anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: such applause was heard
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
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 Beelzebub perceived, than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspèct 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,
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,
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. 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
In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,
Under the inevitable curb, reserved
His captive multitude: for he, be sure,
In hight or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
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
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,
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?
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,
(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
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,
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,
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
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
BOOK II.

PARADISE LOST.

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
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,
Faded so soon. Advise, if this be worth
Attempting; or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires.—Thus Beëlzebub
Pleadèd his devilish counsel, first devised
By Satan, and in part proposed. For whence,
But from the author 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
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleaded highly those infernal States, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renewes:

Well have ye judged, well ended long debate,
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
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,
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,
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 puine or pwny, from the French paï 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 puine, posthumous antiquity hath been a refuge for falsehood.”

406. The palpable obscure. An adjective 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 dress, i. 704. Milton often enriches his language in this manner.—NEWTON.

409. Ere he arrive. Shakespeare in two or three places uses the verb arrive without the preposition at, following; as,
But ere we could arrive the point proposed.

The happy isle? what strength, what art can then
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,
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,
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
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,
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
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
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,
And this imperial sovran ty, 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
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

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."—MONT-BODDO.
High honour'd sits? Go, therefore, mighty powers,  
Terrour 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  
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain  
Of this ill mansion. Intermitt no watch  
Against a wakeful Foe; while I abroad  
Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek  
Deliverance for us all: this enterprize  
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;  
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:  
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,  
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.  
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  
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.  
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 at-  
tention:" intend and attend had ancienly  
the same meaning, that is, "to turn  
one's notice to."—Brydges.  
477. Their rising, &c. "The rising of  
this great assembly is described in a very  
sublime and poetical manner."—Addi-  
son.  
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. "Per-  
haps this delightful passage is one of the  
finest instances of picturesque poetry  
which can be produced."—Tows.
Of heavenly grace; and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
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.

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
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:
Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim
Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy,
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 acclamation.
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
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:
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
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 Typhoean rage more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind: hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
As when Alcides, from Echalia 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 hastae.

536 To couch the spear, is to fix it in its rest; from the French coucher, "to place;"

542. Alcides: Hercules, the grandson of Alceus. Echalia: a city of Thessaly. Lichas was the bearer of the poison robe sent to Hercules by his wife, in a fit of jealousy. See Knightley'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 Eta threw
Into the Euboeic 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
Free virtue should inthral 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,
(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:
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:
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,
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 disgorged
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
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,
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 
Of ancient pile: all else deep snow and ice;
A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog 
Betwixt Damasata and mount Casius old, 
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air 
Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire. 
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
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,
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
Medusa with Gorgonian terror 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,
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,
—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 bills 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."—Burke. Read Herodotus, book iii. 5; and Lucan’s Pharsalia, viii. 539.

595. Burns frore. Frore, 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 xliii. 20, 21.

599. To starve, to kill with cold.

601. The names of the three fabulous sisters, the Gorgons, were Steno, 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,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feign’d, or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and hydras, and chimeras dire.

Meanwhile, the adversary of God and man,
Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,
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.
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
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,
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,
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
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 abhor’d than these
Vex’d Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts
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
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 1. 15: “Then, when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin; and Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth Death.”

666. The other shape, &c. “One of those masterly touches of horrible magnificence which the hand of Milton only could delineate.”—Tomo.
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,
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,
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:

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;
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
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?
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;
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 terror; and in shape,
So speaking, and so threatening, grew tenfold
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
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."

703. Ophiuchus, or Septentarius, was a northern constellation of about forty degrees in length.
With heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
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;
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,
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?
For him who sits above, and laughs the while
At thee, ordain'd his drudge, to execute
What'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
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,
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.

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
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,
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 recoil'd afraid
At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a sign

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. 758. 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
Becamest enamour'd: and such joy thou took'st
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
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
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.
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,
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,
Inflamed with lust than rage; and, swifter far,
Me overttook, 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
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
Afresh with conscious terrours 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
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
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
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
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
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
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,
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
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
His famine should be fill’d, and bless’d his maw
Destined to that good hour: no less rejoiced
His mother bad, and thus bespeak her sire:—
The key of this infernal pit by due,
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.
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,
Here, in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors 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
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.

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
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
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,
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-
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
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 embryo atoms; they around the flag
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
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.
885. For hot, &c. "The reader may compare this whole description of Chaos with Ovian'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,  
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  
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  
With noises loud and ruinous, (to compare  
Great things with small) than when Bellona storms,  
With all her battering engines bent to raise  
Some capital city; or less than if this frame  
Of heaven were falling, and these elements  
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  
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  
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,  
Treading the crude consistency, 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 Arimaspian, who by stealth  
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,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or mes.
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
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
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,
And Tumult and Confusion all embroil'd;
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
To whom Satan turning boldly, thus:
Yg powers,
And spirits of this nethermost abyss,
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy,
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
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;
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
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;
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 fritted deep,
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded; and heaven gates
Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands

964. Orcus. Orcus for Pluto. Ades for any dark place, or the world of the dead.
965. The very name of Demogorgon the ancients 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'err 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.
He ceased; and Satan stay'd not to reply;
But, glad 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 Bosporus 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

terrible effects, which they there
dreaded to pronounce. He is men-
tioned as of great power in incantations."
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;
That Satan, with less toil, and now with ease,
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light;
And, like a weather-beaten vessel, holds
Gladdly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
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;
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,
Accursed, and in a cursed hour, he hies.

.difficult and dangerous than that of the
Argonauts through narrow seas betwixt
just two rocks.
1042. This pendent world. "By this is
meant not the Earth, but the new crea-
ted 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 univer-
se, when beheld far off; appeared, in
comparison with the empyreal heaven
no bigger than a star of smallest mag-
itude when close by the moon, whose
superior light causes a star so near to be
scarcely visible."—NEWTON.
REMARKS ON BOOK III.

I cannot admit this book to be inferior in poetical merit to those which precede it: the argumentative parts give a pleasing variety. The unsparing 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 is more of spirit than of matter. Matter is only good so far as it is united with spirit, or causes spiritual exaltation. Among the immense 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 allusions may be too deep for the common reader; and so the poet is above the reach of the multitude: but even then they create a train of reflection;—names indistinctly heard as dimly seen; constant recognitions of Scriptural passages, and names, awfully impressed on the memory from childhood, in the sensitive understanding with sacred and mysterious motives.

Do not read Milton in the same light mood as we read any other author: his is the imagination of a sublime instructor; we give our faith in duty, as well as will. If our fancy flags, we strain it, that we may apprehend: we know that there is something which our conscience ought to reach. There is not an idle word in any of the delineations which the bard exhibits; nor is any picture merely addressed to names. Every thing therefore is invention:—arising from novelty of conception, and complexity of combination: nothing is a mere reflection from the use of the fancy.

Milton early broke loose from the narrow bounds of observation; and covered 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, 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 mistake to say that "Paradise Lost" contains little applicable to human events. The human learning and wisdom contained in every page is inexhaustible.

To this account no other poet requires so many explanatory notes; or from all the most extensive stores of erudition. In classical literature, and of the Italian poets, Milton was a perfect master: he often replenished his images and forms of expression from Virgil and Virgil, and yet never was a servile borrower. There is the same pleasure to what is in itself beautiful, from the happiness of the conceptions.

I am not doubt that what he wrote was from a conjunction of genius, 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: clear his Chỉicle and wisdom from all imputation, having created man free and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, but of Satan, 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 posterity 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 him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in heaven and earth; commands all the angels to adore him; they, therefore, stand, 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 there to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel, the regent of that order; first changes himself into the shape of a meager angel; and, possessing 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 plaint, with which Milton opens the third book, deserves all the praises which have been given it.—ADDISON.

Or hear'st thou rather, &c. Or dost thou rather hear this address—does not delight rather to be called pure ethereal stream?—8. Whose fountain. Job xxxviii. 8.
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 Orphean 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 equall'd with me in fate,
So were I equall'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris and blind Meonides,
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,
From the pure empyrean where he sits
High throned above all bignoth, 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 fell
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 receive?
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,
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
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 impulse or shadow of fate,
Or aught 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
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
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
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
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;
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,
Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join’d
With his own folly? that be from thee far.
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right.
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
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
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,
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
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
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
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.
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,
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,
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;

165. O Son, "The Son is here addressed
by several titles and appellations, bor-
rowed from the following texts of Scrip-
ture: Matt. iii. 17; John i. 18; Rev. xix
13; and 1 Cor. i. 24."—NEWTON.
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,
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
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?
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
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,
His dearest intercession 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
Comes unprevent’d, 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.
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
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
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:

<table>
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<th>Passage</th>
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<tr>
<td>219</td>
<td>Intercessor none. Isa. lx. 16.</td>
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<td>231</td>
<td>Unprevent: This word is here used in its primitive Latin sense, as derived from prævenire, “to go before”;</td>
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But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
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
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 carcase glut the grave:
Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd,
Shall enter heaven long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assured
And reconcilement: wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.

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
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,
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.
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
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
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;
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;

274 The only peace. Eph. ii. 14. | 287. As in him, &c. 1 Cor. xv. 22.
So dearly to redeem what hellish hate
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
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,
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
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, princedoms, powers, dominions, I reduce:
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 skyappear, and from thee send
The summoning archangels to proclaim
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
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,
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;
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,
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
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
With solemn adoration down they cast
Their crowns invove with amaranth and gold;
Immortal amaranth, a flower which once
In Paradise fast by the tree of life
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
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
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,
Harp's 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
Melodious part: such concord is in heaven.
Thee, Father, first they sung, Omnipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King; thee, Author of all being,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'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,
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
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
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.
350. With these, that is, these flowers.
349. But; the same as except.
348. Dark with excessive bright. Gray, in the "Hard," has beautifully imitated this in his allusion to Milton's blind-
ness—who, Blasted with excess of light,
Closed his eyes in endless night.
352. Isa. vi. 2.
353. 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
Thou drovest 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,
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 purposed not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,
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,
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.
Thus they in heaven, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Meanwhile upon the firm opacious globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs, inclosed
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
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.
As when a vulture on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids
On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
But in his way fights 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
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 aërial vapours flew
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;
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,
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,
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:
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,
Empedocles; and he who, to enjoy

438. Sericana. Sericana, Serica, or the country of the Serae, 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, Cashmuire, Little Thibet, and perhaps a small portion of Little Bokhara.

450. Neighbouring moon. Pope has this idea in his "Rape of the Lock," speaking of the whereabouts of Lady Arabella Fornour'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. Ilj-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. Cleomortus, 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.
BOOK III. PARADISE LOST.

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.

Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
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;
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
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
cowls, hoods, and habits with their wearers toss'd
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
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
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,
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
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."
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 Ptole- 
maic 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

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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 arrived,
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:
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,
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,
To Beersaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Egypt 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,
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
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 glistering spires and pinnacles adorn’d,
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
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
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 shine

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  
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,  
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  
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,  
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.  
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;  
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  
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.  
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,  
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 ex-  
pectations: a simile well suited 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,
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
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 tier
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
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:
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 fign’d;
Under a coronet his flowing hair
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,
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
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,
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest heaven to bring,
BOOK III. PARADISE LOST.

Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honour to obtain, and as his eye
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,
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;
That I may find him, and, with secret gaze
Or open admiration, him behold,
On whom the great Creator hath bestowed'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;
That both in him and all things, as is meet,
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.
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:
And off, 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
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
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,
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
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 bid 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  
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;  
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;  
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,  
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  
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.  
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,  
Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel,  
Nor stay'd, till on Niphates' top he lights.

716. This ethereal, &c. Our author bor-
rowed this notion from Aristotle and  
others of the ancient philosophers, who  
supposed that besides the four elements,  
there was likewise an ethereal quintes-
ence or fifth essence, out of which the  
stars and heavens were formed, and that  
its motion was orbicular.—Newbox.
742. Niphates. This is a range of moun-
tains 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 amphi-
thatre 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 shone on every side of him, and  
the particular description of the sun,  
are set forth in all the wantonness of a  
xuriant 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.

Zephon'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 upon 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,
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,
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,

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,
Now rolling, boils in his tumultuous breast,
And like a devilish engine back recoils
Upon himself: horroir and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
The hell within him; for within him hell
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
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:
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,
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,
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.
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
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
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharged: what burden then?
O, had his powerful destiny ordain'd
Me some inferior angel, I had stood
Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised

32 O thou, &c. One of those magnificent speeches to which no other name can be given, than that it is supremently 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.—BEVYNE.
50. I 'sdein'd, for disdained.
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.

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:
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
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?
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdains 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
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,
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
What feign'd submission swore! Ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
For never can true reconcilement grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep;
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse;
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
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

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;
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,
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
The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigured, more than couldbefall
Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
He mark’d and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.
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
With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
Access denied; and overhead up grew
Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene; and, as the ranks ascend
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.

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,
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
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 evening 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
Mozambique, off at sea north-east winds blow
Sable odours from the spicy shore
Of Arab 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:
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
From Media post to Egypt, 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
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,
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
In hurdles 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,
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,
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
Of immortality. So little knows

168. Asmodæus was the evil Spirit, enamour'd 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 l. 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,
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
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:
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,
Our death, the Tree of Knowledge, grow 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
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
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;
But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
How from that sapphire font the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With many error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
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
Imbrowned 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,
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;
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
Another side, unbragious 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
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
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
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
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,
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 unpolluted, led an eternal Spring."—Homa.

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 Syrtes 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 Abyssinia kept their children continually confined; and when a king dies, he that is to succeed him is brought thence, and set upon the throne.—Massy.
From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend
Saw, un delighted, 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;
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
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 declared
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 unadorned golden tresses wore
Disshevell'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,
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
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:
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
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.
314. Honour dishonourable. He alludes to 1 Cor. xii. 24. "But that honour is really a dishonour; a token of our fall and an indication of our guilt. Innocent nature made no such distinction."—Newton.
315. Pr. Should we not read you? For what is he speaking to but to.
323. Adam the goodliest. This idiom, though strictly incorrect, is supported by high authority in the ancient poets. The meaning is clear enough,—that Adam was goodlier than any of his sons, &c.
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
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,
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
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, pard's,
Gamboll'd before them; the unwieldy elephant,
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
Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing sat,
Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,
Declined, was hasting now with prone career
To the ocean isles, and in the ascending scale
Of heaven the stars that usher evening rose:
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,
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!
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
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,
And mutual amity, so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth: my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
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,
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,
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
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,
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
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,
Gripped 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:
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;
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
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;
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
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:
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
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
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
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,
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
A shape within the watery gleam appear'd,
Bending to look on me: I started back,
It started back; but pleased I soon return'd,
Pleased it return'd as soon with answering looks
Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd
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
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,
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:
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
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  
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.  
So spake our general mother; and, with eyes  
Of conjugal attraction unimproved  
And meek surrender, half-embracing lean'd  
On our first father; half her swelling breast  
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 impregnus the clouds  
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,  
Imparadised 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,  
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?  
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord  
Envoy 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.—Thyer.

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?  
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  
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  
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.  
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  
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  
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;  
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  
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:—  
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  
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  
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.

To whom the winged warriour 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
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’est it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.
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
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 volatil earth,
By shorter flight to the east, had left him there,
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,
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.

6.2. 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 Thebes Regained, and in T. Penseroso, and has also devoted to it one of his exquisitely 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 gloowed the firmament
With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led
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
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 slumberous weight, inclines
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;
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
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,
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
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.
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
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

608. **Apparent**, used in the Latin sense of **apparere**, 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,
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,
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
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
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,
That heaven would want spectators, God want praise:
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:
Both these with ceaseless praise his works behold
Both day and night. How often from the steep
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,
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
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
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,

693. Inwoven shade of laurel; so (698) Iris of all hues.
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broader'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
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;
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
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,
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,
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
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.
This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure,
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
Handed they went; and, ceased the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear
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 austerely talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence,
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 re-
venge for which Jupiter sent him Pan-
dora, (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 Epime-
theus, the unwiser son. He was enticed by his foolish curiosity to open the box which she brought, in which were con-
tained 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
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,
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,
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
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.
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!
Now had night measured with her shadowy cope
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;
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.
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,
Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.

750. **Mysterious law.** Eph. v. 32.
768. *Mix'd dance, &c.* An apparent sarcasm on the deliberate court of Charles II.
777. *Half way up hill,* that is, half way towards midnight, or about nine o'clock.*
790. *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:
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,
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
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
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
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,
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,
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 Zephon, answering scorn with scorn—
Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same,
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 resembllest now
Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul.

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
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
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
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
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:—

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
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,
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
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:

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 would'st thyself, no doubt,
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,
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;
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;
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
However, and to 'scape his punishment.
So judge thou still, presumptuous; till the wrath,
Which thou incurrest by flying, meet thy flight
Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, That no pain
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!
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,
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,
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
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;

896. And wilt thou object.
904. To judge of what is wise.
925. 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."
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.
   To whom the warriour 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,
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
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
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,
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,
   Proud limitary 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
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
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,
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

771. Proud limitary. That is, set to guard the bounds or limits.—974. Ride on thy wings. Ezek. i. 6 to 10; and xi. 22.
What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds
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
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
In counterpoise; now ponders all events,
Battles, 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:
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,
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.
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 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, 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 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 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.
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
(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
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
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?
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 my walk;
And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways
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
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?
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
At suchbold words vouch'd with a deed so bold:
But he thus, overjoy'd: 0 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;
And why not gods of men, since good, the more
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,
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
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 hadpluck'd: the pleasant savoury smell
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought,
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
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 Eve her night
Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad:
  Best image of myself, and dearer half,
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
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
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
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,
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,
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
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
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.

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,
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
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,
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!
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,
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.
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 holl-
ness of that resolution with which it concludes.
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.
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,
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
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
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's great Author rise;
Whether to deck with clouds the uncolour'd sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,
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,
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
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
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.
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
To wed her elm; she, spous'd, 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 Shakspeare, 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
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,
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
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,
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
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
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,
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
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
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.
241. Ardours. By the word Ardours Milton here means only Seraphim, which signifies just the same in Hebrew (being derived from Zerophi, "to burn") as Adours in English.—Tu. 255. No cloud or star being interposed. Not unconform: that is, not unlike.
BOOK V. PARADISE LOST. 115

Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades
Delos or Samos first appearing, kens
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
Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems
A phoenix, gazed by all as that sole bird,
When, to enshrine his relics in the Sun's
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise
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
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,
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.
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
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
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
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.
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.
Paradise Lost

Comes this way moving; seems another morn
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
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.
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:
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.
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
Taste after taste uphold with kindliest 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
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
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 unfumed.
Meanwhile our primitive great sire, to meet
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
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,
As to a superiour nature bowing low,
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
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.

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
O’ershades; 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
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
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
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;
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
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
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.
407. There being mention made of an-
Intelligential substances require,  
As doth your rational; and both contain  
Within them every lower faculty  
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  
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.  
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 alimental recompense  
In humid exhalations, and at even  
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  
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  
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  
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. Ø innocence  
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.  
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. lxviii. 25, is foundation enough for a poet to build upon, and to advance these notions of the angels eating—*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 circumstances relating to our bodies."—*Richardson.*
Of things above his world, and of their being
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:

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,
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,
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,
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
More aery; last the bright consummate flower
Spirits odorous 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,
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.

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:
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;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,

455. Divine effulgence, in apposition to radiant forms.
458. 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.
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,
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,
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;
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
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
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
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:
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,
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
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,
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.
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
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
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
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
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
Forthwith, from all the ends of heaven, appear'd
Under their hierarchies in orders bright:
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,
Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
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,
Orb within orb, the Father infinite,

583. Heav'n's great year. Milton seems to have had Plato's great year—the revolu-
tion 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,
Thrones, dominations, prisedoms, 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
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,
For ever happy: him who disobedys,
Me disobedys, 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.
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
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
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,) 610
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn
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.
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
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

600. Hear, &c. How much of this language ascribed to the Almighty is taken from the Scriptures may be seen by comparing it with Ps. ii. 6, 7; Gen. xxii. 16; Phil. ii. 10, 11; Heb. i. 5; Isa. xiv. 23.

633. Nectar of the colour of rubies.
In darker veil,) and roseat dews 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,
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,
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,
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.
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,
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
Of heaven's Almighty? Thou to me thy thoughts
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart:
Both waking we were one; bow then can now
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;
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
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,
The great Messiah, and his new commands;
Who speedily through all the hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.

662. Living streams. Rev. vii. 17. Milton preserve the character given of
him in Scripture! John viii. 44.—New
663. His next. Beelzebub. TON.
664. Tell them, that by command. He
begins his revolt with a lie: so well does
So spake the false archangel, and infused
Bad influence into the unwary breast
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,
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
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.
Meanwhile the Eternal eye, whose sight
discerns fistrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
Or taint integrity: but all obey'd
The wonted signal and superiour voice
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.
Meanwhile the Eternal eye, whose sight
discerns fistrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread
Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high decree;
And, smiling, to his only Son thus said:—
Son, in whom my glory I behold
In full resplendence, heir of all my might,
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
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
In our defence; lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.

To whom the Son, with calm aspēct and clear,
Lightening divine, ineffable, serene,
Made answer:—Mighty Father, thou thy foes
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. Beelzebub tells the cause that Sa
tan 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.
718. And, smiling. Ps. ii. 4.
Given me to quell their pride, and in event
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
(Imnumerable as the stars of night,
Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
Imparls 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
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
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
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,
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
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears:
    Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, powers;
If these magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular, since by decree
Another now hath to himself engross'd
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,
Receive him coming to receive from us
Kneé-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
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
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
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
Of those imperial titles, which assert
Our being ordain’d to govern, not to serve?
Thus far his bold discourse without control
Had audience; when among the seraphim,
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored
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
Expected, least of all from thee, ingratitude,
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
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,
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?
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
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,
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.

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, princedoms, virtues, powers,  
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,  
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,  
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!  
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  
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  
Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold  
Whether by supplication we intend  
Address, and to begirt the almighty throne  
Beseecching or besieging. This report,  
These tidings carry to the anointed King;  
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,  
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  
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:  

848. While pardon, &c. Isa. lv. 6.  
849. When fatal course. No compli-  
850. ment to fatalism, to put it into the mouth  
851. of the Devil.—NEWTON.  

861. As the sound, &c. Rev. xix. 6.  
862. Our own puissance. Ps. xii. 4.  
863. No compli-
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  
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.  

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:  
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;  
And, with retorted scorn, his back he turn'd  
On those proud towers to swift destruction doom'd.

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 advocates 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
Hurled headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine 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 looming 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 battle 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 horror 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, 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 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, 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 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.
2. 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
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
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,
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
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,
Gabriel, lead forth to battle 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
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.
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:
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
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 straining vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground

29. \textit{Abdiel} signifies servant of God in the Hebrew.
53. \textit{Reluctant flames}. The word \textit{reluctant} is here used in the sense of its original Latin, \textit{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
Their names of thee; so over many a tract
Of heaven they march'd, and many a province wide,
Tenfold the length of this terrestrial. At last,
Far in the horizon to the north appear'd
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd
In battailous aspect, 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
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
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,
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,
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
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,
Abdiel towering, arm'd in adamant and gold.
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 reality
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.—Bryges.
93. Hosting, encounter, from hostis, "an enemy."
101. Idol, that is, representative.
I mean to try, whose reason I have tried
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 contest and foul,
When reason hath to deal with force: yet so
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 he defied:

Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd
The hight of thy aspiring unopposed;
The throne of God unguarded, and his side
Abandon'd, at the terror of thy power
Or potent tongue: fool! not to think how vain
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,
Unaided, could have finish'd thee, and whelm'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
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
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
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
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
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,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.
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,
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,
Thyself not free, but to thyself enthralled;
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:
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
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
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,
Presage of victory, and fierce desire
Of battel: whereat Miæhël 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
The adverse legions, nor less hideous join'd
The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
And glamour such as heard in heaven till now
Was never; arms on armour clashing Bray'd
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels
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
Both battels main, with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage. All heaven

197. A MOUNTAIN FROM HIS SEAT. A more magnificent simile can hardly be con-ceived.—Brydges.
Resounded; and had earth been then, all earth
Had to her centre shook. What wonder? when
Millions of fierce encountering angels fought
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,
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
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 battle, open when, and when to close
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
Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread
That war and various; sometimes on firm ground
A standing fight; then, soaring on main wing,
Torment’d all the air: all air seem’d then
Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale
The battle 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
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,
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
And visage all inflamed, first thus began:
Author 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 sin-
gle warrior was in strength a legion; and, though led in fight, was as expert
as a commander-in-chief.—Newton.

230. Moment, in the sense of the Latin
momentum, “the weight that turns the
balance.”
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself
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
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,
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.
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
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
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.
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 hight
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
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
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.
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
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,
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 gridding sword with discontinuous wound
Pass’d through him: but the ethereal substance closed,
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
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,
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
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,
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,
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,
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,
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
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
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:
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.

    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,
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
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;
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, unboultinious to be pain'd
By wound, though from their place by violence moved.

    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 Asmodæus, 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.
407. Inducing. In the sense of the Latin inducere.

Jam non inducere terris Umbrae.
Victor and vanquish'd. On the foughten field
Michael 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,
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,
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
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,
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,
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;
Or equal what between us made the odds,
In nature none: if other hidden cause
Left them superior, while we can preserve
Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,
Due search and consultation will disclose.
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:
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
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,
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
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
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;
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
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
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
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.
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
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
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 appropriately 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
The originals of nature in their crude
Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam
They found, they mingled, and, with subtle art,
Concocted and adjusted they reduced
To blackest grain, and into store convey'd.
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.
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
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 desory the distant foe,
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,
Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cried:
Arm, warriours, 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
Sad resolution, and secure. Let each
His adamantine coat gird well, and each
Fit well his helm, grip fast his orb'd shield,
Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower;
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!
Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
Approaching gross and huge; in hollow cube
Training his devilish enginery, impaled

514. Adjusted, dried by heat.
528. Dawning hills.
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
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
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,
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:
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)
Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths
With hideous orifice gaping on us wide,
Portending hollow truce: at each behind
A scrap flesh stood, and in his hand a reed
Stood waving tipp'd with fire; while we, suspense,
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,
From those deep-throated engines belch'd, whose roar
Embowel'd with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore, disgorging soul
Their devilish glut, chain'd thunderbolts and hail
Of iron globes; which, on the victor host
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
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.—Barnes.
570. 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
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
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,
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
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:
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;
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
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
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
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
Uplifting, bore them in their hands. Amaze,
Be sure, and terour, 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
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.
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,
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
The rest, in imitation, to like arms
Betook them, and the neighbouring hills up tore:
So hills amid the air encounter'd hills,
Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire,
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,
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,
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;
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,
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,
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,
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
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:
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 desired right.
Go then, thou Mightiest, in thy Father's might:
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
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
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,
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
Fulfil'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume;
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,
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,
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.

714. Gird on, &c. Ps. xlv. 3, 4, 5. 732. I Cor. xv. 24, 28; John xvii. 21, 23.
725. See John xvii. 1, and Matt. xvii. 5. 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,
Itsself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd
By four cherubique 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
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 imbody'd all in one.
Before him Power Divine his way prepared;
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 hight,
Stood re-embattel'd fierce, by force or fraud
Weening to prosper, and at length prevail
Against God and Messiah, or to fall
In universal ruin last; and now
To final battel drew, disdaining flight,
Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
To all his host on either hand thus spake:

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,
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
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,
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
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 terour changed
His countenance, too severe to be beheld,
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.
He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels
The steadfast empyræan shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arrived; in his right hand
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
Of thrones and mighty seraphim prostrate;
That wish'd the mountains now might be again

797. Last. At last. Newton and Bent-
1w suggest last as the true reading.
981. Ex. xlv. 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. 1. 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,
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 withered all their strength,
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:
The overthrown he raised; and as a herd
Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd
Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursued
With terours and with furies to the bounds
And crystal wall of heaven; which, opening wide,
Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclosed
Into the wasteful deep: the monstrous sight
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urged them behind: headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of heaven: eternal wrath
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.
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;
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.
Solo victor, from the expulsion of his foes,
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
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
On high; who into glory him received,
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

845. Heaven ruining. Falling down
850. And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd,
855. Exhalted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen.
860. Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
865. With terours and with furies to the bounds
870. The overthrown he raised; and as a herd
875. Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
880. Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
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
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,
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,
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
Of disobedience: firm they might have stood,
Yet fell: remember, and fear to transgress.
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 reascent into heaven.

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 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, Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play In presence of the Almighty Father, pleased 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, 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. 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,

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,
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
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,
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
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,
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,
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
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
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:

...
Great things and full of wonder in our ears,
Far differing from this world, thou hast reveal'd,
Divine interpreter! by favour sent
Down from the empyrean, to forewarn
Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach;
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
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;
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
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,
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;
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
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:
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
To glorify the Maker, and infer
Thee 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 exqui-
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
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:
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.

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
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
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,
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
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
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,
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."—I Cor. viii. 1.
139. At least. Mr. Thyer suggests at last.
100. 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  
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,  
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.  
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,  
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 fire  
Had driven out the ungodly from his sight  
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  
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  
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  
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  
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  
They view'd the vast immeasurable abyss  
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
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.

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;
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 wheels, prepared
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;
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,
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
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
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
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,
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.
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
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
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.

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,
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Satiate 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
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
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
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:
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With serpent errour 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
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.
293. 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,
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
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
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
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
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,
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
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.
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
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,
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
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,
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,
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,
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,
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,
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.
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,
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
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.
PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VII.

Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and through groves Of coral stray; or, sporting with quick glance, 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, 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

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 They sum'm'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, 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 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 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 eary feet; yet off they quit The dank, and, rising on stiff pennons, tower The mid aereal 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

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. 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. Sum'm'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.

422. Intelligent of seasons. Jer. viii. 7. 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,
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,
Limb'd and full grown: out of the ground up rose,
As from his hair, the wild beast, where he won's
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:
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upspring'd.
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,
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,
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,
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,
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
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
Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
With honey stored: the rest are numberless,

457. Wons: Frequentes, or dwells.
451. Those, the wild beasts: these, the tame, the cattle.
463. Cattle: Brought forth. He supposes the beasts to arise out of the earth, in perfect forms.
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,
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
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
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
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
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
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
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,
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
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
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:
Death is the penalty imposed; beware,
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:
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
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
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;
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,
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
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
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
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,
Author 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,
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.
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
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,
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
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
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,
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
Holy and just: thrice happy, if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright!
So sung they, and the empyræan rung
With halleluiahs: thus was sabbath kept.—
And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd
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.

507. 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.
508. Temper'd, &c.: Produced soft sounds.
509. 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 transparence of the whole style;—fill a sensitive reader with an unequaled 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, natively 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
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
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,
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
Their distance argues, and their swift return
Diurnal), merely to officiate light
Round this opacious earth, this punctual spot,
One day and night; in all their vast survey
Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire,
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

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So many nobler bodies to create,
Greater so manifold, to this one use,
For aught appears, and on their orbs impose
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,
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
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,
Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
And, touch'd by her fair tendance, gladliier grew.
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her ear
Of what was high: such pleasure she reserved,
Adam relating, she sole auditress:
Her husband the relater she preferr'd
Before the angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; he, she know, would intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
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,
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:
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,
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
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
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,
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
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,
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
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
Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.
The swiftness of those circles attribute,
Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
That to corporeal substances could add
Speed almost spiritual: me thou think'st not slow,
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
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,
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?
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?
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
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,
Sent from her through the wide transpicuous 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
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 desery,
Communicating male and female light;
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
Each orb a glimpse of light, convey'd so far
Down to this habitable, which returns

128. In sic: 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,
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,
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
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
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
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,
And not molest us; unless we ourselves
Seek them with wandering thoughts, and notions vain.
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Unchecked, and of her roving is no end;
Till warn’d, or by experience taught, she learn,
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;
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
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:
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;
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.

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
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
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,
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,
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
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
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
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
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 xiv. 2.
225. So the angel in Rev. xxi. 9.
229. That day: The sixth day of creation.
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavou'ring, and upright
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;
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,
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,
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;
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,
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
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,
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,
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
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 iaiwet, 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
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
Submiss: he rear'd me, and, Whom thou sought'st I am,
Said mildly; Author 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:
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,
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,
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
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,
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
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
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.
854. From the short account given by
I found not what methought I wanted still;
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, Author of this universe,
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,
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
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.
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.
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
Given and received: but, in disparity,
The one intense, the other still remiss,
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tédious alike: of fellowship I speak,
Such as I seek, fit to participate
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
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 displeased:
A nice and subtle happiness, I see,
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice
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
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
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
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;
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
Collateral love, and dearest amity.
Thou in thy secrery, although alone,
Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
Social communication; yet, so pleased,
Canst raise thy creature to what highth thou wilt
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
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,
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;

421. And through all numbers absolute. Milton's mind was so thoroughly imbued with the classes, 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 particular number." 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,
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 bighth
In that celestial colloquy sublime,
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,
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
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,
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,
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:
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,
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:

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
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,
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,
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turn'd:
I followed her; she what was honour knew,
And with obsequious majesty approved
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower
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
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.
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,
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,
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;
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
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
O'er other creatures: yet, when I approach

546. Let the fair reader, who may feel some degree of resentment against our
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:  
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  
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;  
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  
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;  
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:  
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  
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.  
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  
In reason, and is judicious; is the scale

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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. —DUNSTAN.  
555. That skill: Skill in self-esteem  
556. Adorn: For adorned.
BOOK VIII.  PARADISE LOST.  181

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:
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,)  595
So much delights me, as those graceful acts,
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
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
Various representing; yet, still free,
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
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
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:
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,
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
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
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,
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
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.

\textit{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 Aeneid, 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.
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
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,
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
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
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
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,
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,
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
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
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
'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
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.
25. Impresses quaint: emblems and devices on the shield, alluding to the name or the fortune of the wearer.
35. Bases: the mantle which hung down from the middle to about the knees or lower, worn by knights on horseback: from the French bas; a 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 assessor, to sit down,) marched in before the meats, and arranged them on the table; the seneshal was the household steward.—Tomp.
41. Of these, for in these, Latinë.
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
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
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.
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
Where to lie hid: sea he had search'd, and land
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool
Maotis, up beyond the river Ob;
Downward as far antarctic; and in length,
West from Orontes to the ocean barr'd
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
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
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
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

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. Oh, 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;
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
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
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
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:
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,
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
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
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
More angels to create, if they at least
Are his created; or, to spite us more,

13. 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 doubt ing 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,
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,
And flaming ministers to watch and tend
Their earthly 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
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,
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the hight 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,
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
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
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,
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 intelligent; but his sleep
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 charac-
ter 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 under-
take, 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
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;
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
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,
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
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
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?
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
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
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;
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
As we need walk; till younger hands are 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.
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,
Envying our happiness, and of his own
Despairoing, seeks to work us woe and shame
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:
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
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,
 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 rain, both by thee inform'd I learn,
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
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
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 Pasiphae 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.
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,
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.
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
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
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,
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;
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
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?
Alone, without exterious 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;
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
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:
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
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
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
Thou sever not: trial will come unsought.

Wouldest 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
Us both secure 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.

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,
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.
Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand 
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, 
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, 
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 
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! 
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 
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 
The whole included race, his purposed prey. 
In bowery 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 
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.
Ajlalf 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
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 travers'd
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;
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 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,
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,
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
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
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,
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
Fierce hate he recollects: and all his thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites:
Thoughts, whither have ye led me? with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported, to forget
What hither brought us? hate, not love; nor hope
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
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;
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 terour be in love
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, innate bad! and toward Eve
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;
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
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 hight of Rome. With tract oblique
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:
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 that, 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, Esculapius who was worshipped in Epidaurus. Nor to which, &c.: Nor were those serpents lovelier to which, &c. Jupiter Ammon, and Jupiter Capitolinus.
To such disport before her through the field,
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,
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,
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,
Displeased that I approach thee thus, and gaze
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
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,
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 glozed the tempter, and his proem tuned:
Into the heart of Eve his words made way,
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
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
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?
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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:
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
And gaze, and worship thee, of right declared
Soveran 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 respect 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
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,
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:
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.
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
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
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;
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!
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:
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;
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
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,  
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  
Of prefaced 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  
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;  
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.  
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,  
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:  
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  
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,  
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.
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,
Worm'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
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
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
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
So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,
Inclined 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,
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,
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:
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
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,
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
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?
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
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 wo,
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty serpent, and well might; for Eve,
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.
Greedily she ingorged without restraint,
And know not eating death: satiate at length,
And highten'd as with wine, jocund and boon,
Thus to herself she pleasingly began:
O sovrn, virtuous, precious of all trees
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,
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:
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.
And I perhaps am secret: Heaven is high,

811. _And I perhaps_, &c. She questions 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. xlv. 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 Forbidden, safe with all his spies
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
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
Superiour; for, inferiour, who is free?
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, Extinct;
A death to think! Confirm'd then I resolve,
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
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
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,
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
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:
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 intermittant 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,
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
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 threatened, but thenceforth
Endued with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration;
And hath been tasted such: the serpent,
Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
Not dead, as we are threatened, but thenceforth
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Endued with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration;
And hath been tasted such: the serpent,
Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
Not dead, as we are threatened, but thenceforth
Endued with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration;
And hath been tasted such: the serpent,
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
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:
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.
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
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
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,
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
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?—
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
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 just a picture does Milton here give us of the natural imbecility of the human mind, and its aptness to be warped into false judgments and reasonings by passion 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:
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,
   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,
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
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
Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly, assured
Remarkably so late of thy so true,
So faithful, love unequall'd: but I feel
Far otherwise the event; not death, but life
Augmented, open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys,
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.
   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
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
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
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,
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:
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
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstained
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,
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
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
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,
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.
   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
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;
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
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,
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
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,
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
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
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!
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,
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
The fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd;
But such as at this day, to Indians known,

1068. 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
About the mother-tree, a pillar'd shade
High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between:
There oft the Indian herdsmen, shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loop-holes cut through thickest shade: those leaves
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
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,
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
And full of peace, now tossed 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
Superior 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
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
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
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;
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,
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,
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,
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?
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
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
That errour 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,
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.
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 boldér 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 censure 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 awaken an indescribable ascent 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 cast 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.

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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 Pandemonium; 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 foretells 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 condolence 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
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
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 ante- | man in our image, and let them have, cedent of they. "God said, Let us make | &c. Gen. I. 26.
Whoever tempted: which they not obeying, 
Incurre'd (what could they less?) the penalty;  
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 
Entrance unseen. Soon as the unwelcome news 
From earth arrived at heaven-gate, displeased 
All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare 
That time celestial visages, yet, mix'd 
With pity, violated not their bliss.  
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, 
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, 
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 
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 
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, 
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 scornd. 
But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee, 
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 
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. lxxyv. 10.
So spake the Father; and, unfolding bright
Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
Blazed forth unclouded deity: he full
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,
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
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
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
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
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,
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
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,
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:

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 beauti-
ful 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:
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
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
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
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
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;
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
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
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
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

157. In few: That is, in few words.
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  
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,)  
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  
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:  
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,  
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;  
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  
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;  
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,  
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;
And the instant stroke of death, denounced that day,
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,
As father of his family, he clad
Their nakedness with skins of Least's, 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
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,
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 sin'd and judged on earth,
Within the gates of hell sat Sin and Death,
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
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
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,
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;
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
Adventurous work, yet to thy power and mine
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,
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,
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
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.
So saying, with delight he sniff'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,
Where armies lie encamp'd, come flying, lured
With scent of living carcases 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;
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
Solid or slany, 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
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
As Delos, floating once; the rest his look

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255. 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.

259. As when Sin and Death, flying into different parts of Chaos, and driving all the matter they met 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.

260. 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 asphalthic slime, broad as the gate,
Deep to the roots of hell the gather’d beach
They fasten’d, and the mole immense wrought on,
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.
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,
And scoured 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
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
The confines met of empyræan 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,
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
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 unwitting, seconded
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 Memnonias by Herodotus.
313. Pontifical: “Bridge-making,” from pons, a bridge; and facio, 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
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
And tidings fraught, to hell he now return'd:
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhoped
Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight
Of that stupendous bridge his joy increased.
Long he admiring stood; till Sin, his fair
Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke:
parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
Thy trophies! which thou view'st as not thine own:
Thou art their authour, and prime architect:
For I no sooner in my heart divined,
(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
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,
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,
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,
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,
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
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. xxii. 16.
Amphly have merited of me, of all
The infernal empire, that so near heaven's door
Triumphal with triumphal act have met,
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
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,
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
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
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
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,
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 Pandemonium, city and proud seat
Of Lucifer; so by allusion call'd
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.
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.
425-6. Astracan: A city at the mouth of the Volga. Sapfi, a title of the king of Persia, called Bactrian, from one of his richest provinces, Turkish crescent, or Turkish standard or power. Aladule, the Greater Armenia, so called from its last king, Aladula. Cusbeen, 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
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
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
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
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;
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, prince doms, virtues, powers;
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,
And dungeon of our tyrant: now possess,
As lords, a spacious world, to our native heaven
Little inferior, by my adventure hard
With peril great achieved. Long were to tell
What I have done, what suffer'd; with what pain
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
The untractable abyss, plunged in the womb
Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild;

west of Teheran, where the Persian mo-

457. Divan. The Devils are frequently
described by metaphors taken from the
Turks. Satan is called the sultan (i. 345)

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
The new-created world, which fame in heaven
Long had foretold, a fabric wondrous
Of absolute perfection! therein man
Placed in a Paradise, by our exile
Made happy: him by fraud I have seduced
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,
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 serpant, in whose shape
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,
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,
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:
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
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
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 amphisbaena dire,

480. Protesting fate supreme: Calling
upon fate as a witness against my pro-
ceedings.
513. Supplanted: From the Latin sup-
planto, "to trip up one's heels, to over-
throw,"—a term of the gymnasium; so
reductant, "struggling against."
524. Amphisbaena, &c. See Webster's
Dict. Ophiuia, (from the Greek ωphis, ophis, "a serpent") a small island in the
Cerastes horn'd, hydrus, and elops drear,
And dipsas, (not so thick swarm'd once the soil
Bedight with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
Ophiussa;) but still greatest he the midst,
Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
Ingender'd in the Pythian vale on slime,
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;
Sublime with expectation when to see
In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief.
They saw, but other sight instead! a crowd
Of ugly serpents; horrour on them fell,
And horrid sympathy; for, what they saw,
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
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
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;
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 Megaira. Greedily they pluck'd
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
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
Into the same illusion, not as man

525. Elops, a serpent spoken of by Pliny. 560. Megaira: One of the Furies, whose hair was serpents, like Medusa's.
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
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
Ophion, with Eurynome, the wide-
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
Of high Olympus; thence by Saturn driven
And Ops, ere yet Dictean Jove was born.
Meanwhile in Paradise the hellish pair
Too soon arrived; Sin, there in power before,
Once actual; now in body, and to dwell
Habitus habitans; behind her Death,
Close following, pace for pace, not mounted yet
On his pale horse; to whom Sin thus began:
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?
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, with most what ravine I may meet:
Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems
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
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,
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-enroaching, as extending her rule and dominion further than she should: wanting to be superior to her husband, to be a goddess, &c.—Newton.
580. Dictean: From Dicte, a mountain in Crete, where Jupiter was educated.
588. 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 believably, 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:
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
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,
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 drafT and filth
Which man's polluted 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,
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 pronounced on both precedes.
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,
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,
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
Scarcely 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
abul-}

630. Heaven and earth is the Jewish
phrase to express our world.

640. Precedes: That is, the curse pro-
nounced 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. xxii. 2.
Decrepit winter; from the south to bring
Solstitial summer's heat. To the blanch moon
Her office they prescribed: to the other five
Their planetary motions, and aspects,
In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite,
Of noxious efficacy, and when to join
In synod unbienign; 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
Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll
With terroir through the dark aerial 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
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
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
Beyond the polar circles; to them day
Had unbenighted shone; while the low sun,
To recom pense his distance, in their sight
Had rounded still the horizon, and not known
Or east or west; which had forbid the snow
From cold Estotiland, and south as far
Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit,

665. Aspects: Their appearance each
from the other. When a planet is dis
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°, triune; 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.

666. 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 sea
sons 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 Geographi
cal Dictionary of Edmund Bohun, of
1095, 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 hitter by a Tempest
almost two hundred years before Co
lumbus.

687. Magellan: The straits so called
from the distinguished Portuguese naviga
tor 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 said to have
done when Atreus served up to his bro
ther Thyestes his own children, for a
feast. See Thyestes and Atreus, in
Smith's or Attham'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,
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
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,
Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice,
And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and law,
Boreas, and Cæcias, and Argestes loud,
And Thracias, rend the woods, and seas upturn;
With adverse blast upturns them from the south
Notus, and Afer black with thunderous clouds
From Serraliona: thwart of these, as fierce,
Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,
Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,
Sirocco and Libeccio. 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,
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
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
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 hight
Of happiness! Yet well, if here would end
The misery; I deserved it, and would bear
My own deserves; 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;
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." Samed, the Sambols, a people in the north of Russia.
699. Boreas, the north wind; Cæcias, north-west; Argestes, north-east; Thra-
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!
For this we may thank Adam! but his thanks
Shall be the execration: so, besides
Mine own that hide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me rebound;
On me, as on their natural centre, light
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
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
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
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
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.
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:
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
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, weighted 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 xliv. 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
To me and to my offspring would torment me
With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;
Lost that pure breath of life, the spirit of man
Which God inspired, cannot together perish
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
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,
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
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,
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
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
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!
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.

785. Beyond dust. That is, for God to punish him after death, would be to extend the sentence beyond dust.

805. 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,
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
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;
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 futuré:
 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,
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 terreur; on the ground
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
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!
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;
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

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,
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,
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,
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
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,
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;
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
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,
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
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 before;" that is, placed before to cover Latin sense, (pretendere,) “held, or placed or conceal hellish falsehood.
Thy counsel, in this uttermost distress,
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
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
Against God only, I against God and thee;
And to the place of judgment will return,
There with my cries importune Heaven, that all
The sentence, from thy head removed, may light
On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe;
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
Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress;
Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,
His counsel, whom she had displeased, his aid:
As one disarmed, his anger all he lost;
And thus with peaceful words upraised her soon:
Unwarly, 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
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;
Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,
To me committed, and by me exposed.
But rise; let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other, blamed enough elsewhere; but strive
In offices of love, how we may lighten
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.
To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied:
Adam, by sad experiment I know

920. This picture of Eve's distress, her submissive, tender address to her husband, and his generous reconcilement to her, are extremely beautiful, I had almost said beyond any thing in the whole poem.—Twyer.
How little weight my words with thee can find,
Found so erroneous; thence by just event
Found so unfortunate: nevertheless,
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,
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
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
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
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,
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,—
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,
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,
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 re-
marks, breathes the language of despair;
Adam’s, the sentiments of a mind en-
lighted and encouraged by the word
of God.—Tod.
And excellent, than what thy mind contemns;
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
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
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
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
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.
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
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
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:
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
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
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
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,
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,
He will instruct us praying, and of grace
Beseeming 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.
What better can we do, than, to the place
Repairing where he judged 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
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,
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 judged them, prostrate fell
Before him reverent; and both confess’d
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, or 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 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 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 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 Presenting, thus to intercede began:

See, Father, what first-fruits on earth are sprung From thy implanted grace in man; these signs

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.
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.—Newtop.
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;
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
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
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
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:
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
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
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;
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,
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;
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
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
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
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,
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
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;
Thy choice of flaming warriours, 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;
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
Bewailing their excess,) all terror 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
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
Wide-waving; all approach far off to fright,
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. 
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 
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, 
Leucothaea waked, and with fresh dews embalm'd 
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: 
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, 
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, 
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; 
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 
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 
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. Leucothea: 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,
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;
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.

So spake, so wish'd, much-humbled Eve;
but fate
Subscribed not: nature first gave signs,
Impressed on bird, beast, air;
After short blush of morn: nigh in her sight
The bird of Jove, stoop'd from his aery tour,
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.
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
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?
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
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;
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;
Nor that, which on the flaming mount appear'd

214-217. See Gen xxxii. 1, 2, and 2 Kings vi. 18.
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
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:
   Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
Of us will soon determine, or impose
New laws to be observed: for I desery,
From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
One of the heavenly host; and, by his gait,
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;
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
A military vest of purple flow'd,
Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain
Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old
In time of truce; Iris had dipt the woof:
His starry helm unbuckled shew'd him prime
In manhood where youth ended: by his side,
    As in a glistering 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:
   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,
   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,
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,
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,
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
At even, which I bred up with tender hand
From the first opening bud, and gave ye names!
Who now shall fear ye to the sun, or rank
Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount?
Thee lastly, nuptial bower! by me adorn'd
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?
Whom thus the angel interrupted mild:
Lament not, Eve; but patientely 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
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:
   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
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
In hospitable 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:
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,
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
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
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
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;
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
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
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
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
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
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

21°
Safest thy life, and best prepared endure. 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: 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, 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 ampest reach of prospect lay. 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 City of old or modern fame, the seat Of mightiest empire, from the destined walls Of Cambalu, seat of Cathanian Can, And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne, To Paquin of Sinaeans kings; and thence 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, Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken The empire of Negus to his utmost port Erecoo, and the less maritim kings, Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind, And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm 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 Sima. The Golden Chersonese: the peninsula of Malaca. Bizance: Byzantium, now Constantinople. Turchestan-born: as the Turks came from Turchestan, a province of Tartary. Negus: King of upper Ethiopia. Erecoo: Erquico, on the Red Sea. Mombaza, &c.: all near the Equator. Atabola: 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 
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 
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;
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;
But him the gentle angel by the hand
Soon raised, and his attention thus recall'd:
Adam, now open thine eyes; and first behold
The effects, which thy original crime hath wrought
In some to spring from thee; who never touch'd
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 till'd, whereon were sheaves
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,
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:
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
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

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,
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:
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 terour, foul and ugly to behold,
To which our sire: 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?
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept,
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
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
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
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
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,
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.
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
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
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,
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
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.—Thyer.
Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge;
Which I must keep till my appointed day
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.

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
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
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
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,
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
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
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
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invoked:
With feast and music all the tents resound.
Such happy interview, and fair event

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.
570. After these; as being the descendents 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, 595
And charming symphonies, attach’d the heart
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:
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
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;
Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledged none.
Yet they a beauteous offspring shall begot;
For that fair female troop thou saw’st, that seem’d
Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
Yet empty of all good, wherein consists
Woman’s domestic honour and chief praise;
Bred and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,
To dress, and roll the tongue, and roll the eye;—
To these that sober race of men, whose lives
Religious titled 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,
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
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
By wisdom, and superior 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,
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:
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,
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray:
With cruel tournament the squadrons join;
Where cattle pastured late, now scatter'd lies
With carcases and arms the ensanguined field,
Deserted: others to a city strong
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
To council, in the city-gates; anon
Gray-headed men and grave, with warriours mix'd,
Assemble, and harangues are heard, but soon
In factious opposition; till at last
Of middle age one rising, eminent
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,
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,
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?
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
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:
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

655. Of middle age. Enoch is said to be of middle age, as he was, when translated, 365 years old,—a middle age then.
665. For glory done of triumph: That is, shall be hold the highest pitch of triumph for that glory done, (meaning,
Of triumph, to be styled great conquerours,
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
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,
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;
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;
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,
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;
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 hight;
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
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
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,

ke.—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
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,
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,
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
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
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
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,
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,
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,
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;
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
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'd
In sharp contest of battel found no aid
Against invaders; therefore, cool'd in zeal,
Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
Worldly or dissolve, on what their lords
Shall leave them to enjoy; for the earth shall bear
More than enough, that temperance may be tried:
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 allurement, custom, and a world
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
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
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
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
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;

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 Poem 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.

820. 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. Ores, 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,
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
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,
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;
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:
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
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
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.
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?
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 peculiar 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:
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:
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,
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,
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
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 no 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)
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;
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
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
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,
Comes down to see their city, ere the tower
Obstruct heaven-towers; and in derision sets
Upon their tongues a various spirit, to faze
Quite out their native language; and, instead,
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown:
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,
And hear the din: thus was the building left
Ridiculous, and the work Confusion named.

Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeased:
O execrable son! so to aspire
Above his brethren; to himself assuming
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

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.

35. Great laughter, &c. See Ps. II. 4.

40. 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.

Proud Nimrod first the bloody chase began,
A mighty hunter—and his prey was man.
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  
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 abhor'r'st  
That son, who on the quiet state of men  
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 individual being:  
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  
Within himself unworthy powers to reign  
Over free reason, God, in judgment just,  
Subjects him from without to violent lords;  
Who oft as undeservedly enthral  
His outward freedom: tyranny must be;  
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;  
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,  
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;  
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  
(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  

85. Twin'd: That is, right reason (or virtue, line 98) and liberty, are twin sisters.
PARADISE LOST. BOOK XII.

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
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 Chaldea, passing now the ford
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
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)
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,
Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons
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
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
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—
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
To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:
Till by two brethren (these two brethren call Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim
His people from enthralment, 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;

To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd;
Frogs, lice, and flies must all his palace fill
With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;
His cattle must of rot and murren die;
Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss,
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,
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;
Last, with one midnight-stroke, all the first-born
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
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,
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:
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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
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,
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,
Enlightener of my darkness, gracious things
Thou hast reveal'd; those chiefly, which concern
 BOOK XII. PARADISE LOST. 265

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
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,
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
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,
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
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
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
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,
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,
Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins

27. 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. 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
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
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.
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
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,
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,
Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn
To David, 'establish'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-ediify; and for a while
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
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,
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:
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
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
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
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?

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
Satan, whose fall from heaven, a deadlier bruise,
Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound;
Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall re cure,

Not by destroying Satan, but his works
In thee, and in thy seed: nor can this be,
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:

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
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.

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,
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
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
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,
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.
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
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.
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.
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;
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;
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.
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,
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
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
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
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
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,
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
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,
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
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,
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,
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
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:
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
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,
And vengeance to the wicked, at return
Of him so lately promised to thy aid,
The woman's seed; obscurely then foretold,
Now ampler known thy Saviour and thy Lord:
Last, in the clouds, from heaven to be reveal'd
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;
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,
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.
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. 30.

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
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;
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
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,
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
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,
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,
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
(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.

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;
For God is also in sleep; and dreams advise,
Which he hath sent propitious, some great good

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588. This top of speculation; from this word speculation being used in the sense of prophecy and prediction: 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,
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
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
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,
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,
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.
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:
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 behold
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 Iliad 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 despectare, 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 panegyrical 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 Pandemonium, 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 monotonous and technical mellifluence: 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 imperative 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 admired 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 Ern- ton Baynes.

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 Shakespear'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 depre- sive, 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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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 subllime sentiments; for a naked grandeur of imagery; for an absence of all the rhetorical flourishishes of literary composition; for the dictates of a lofty and divine virtue; for a bold and gigantic display 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 arranging 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 imitable 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 Regained?' 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 heroic,

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 more 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 Brydges.
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 foretells 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 re Joins 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
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
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 sumn'd, to tell of deeds
Above heroick, though in secret done,
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
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
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
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
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,
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.—Duxter.
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.
26. Divinely warned. 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,
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,
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
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
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:
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
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
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
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.
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.—TAYLER.
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.—J. WHARTON.
89. Attending, that is, waiting, expecting.
87. Obtains in the sense of the Latin obtineo, to hold, retain, or govern.
His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,
When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep.
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,
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
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.

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:
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
From hell's deep-vauled 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,
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:
But, contrary, unweaving 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,
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,
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,
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
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,
Of female seed, far able 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 surprised. But first I mean
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:
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
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,

137. Told' st; this is, thou told' st.
146. Apostasy, for apostates, the ab-
stract for the concrete: this alludes to
his boasting of his having "ruined
Adam," line 102.
162. O'ercome all the world, John xvi. 33.
163. All Heaven admiring stood. We
cannot but notice the great art of the
poet, in setting forth the dignity and im-
portance of his subject. He represents
all beings as interested one way or other
in the event. A council of devils is sum-
moved: 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 surprised with deep dismay; all
Heaven stands a while in admiration.
The fiends are silent through fear and
grief; the Angels burst forth into sing-
ing with joy and the assured hopes of
success. And their attention is thus en-
gaged, the better to engage the atten-
don 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!
The Father knows the Son; therefore secure
Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,
Against what’er may tempt, what’er seduce,
Allure, or terrify, or undermine.
Be frustrate, all ye stratagems of hell;
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,
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
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:
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!
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,
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
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

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.
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.—TIYER.
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:
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
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
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;
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,
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,
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,
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
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 revolted
The law and prophets, searching what was writ
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. vestments of the Jewish priest were en
32, 33. joined and particularly described by God
himself. Ex. xxviii. 43.
267. The vested priest. The epithet vested is singularly proper, because the
Through many a hard assay, ev'n to the death,
Ere I the promised kingdom can attain,
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,
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
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 living stream,
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, pronouncing me his,
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone
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
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
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
 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
Or cedar to defend him from the dew,

266. "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 appear that they ever afterwards conversed together.—NEWTON.
271. "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,
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,
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:
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.
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
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,
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,
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.
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

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.—Turza.
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,
Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?
Whom thus answer'd the arch-fiend, now undisguised:—
'Tis true, I am that spirit unfortunate,
Who, leagued with millions more in rash revolt,
Kept not my happy station, but was driven
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,
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;
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
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,
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 attest
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
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,
Whereby they may direct their future life.
Envy they say excites me, thus to gain

356. Knowing who I am. See line 385.
268. '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,
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.

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,
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,
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.
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
With all infictions? 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
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,
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 artful: 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.

To fly or follow what concern'd him most,  
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  
To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,  
But from him, or his angels president  
In every province, who themselves disdaining  
To approach thy temples, give thee in command  
What, to the smallest tittle, thou shalt say  
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  
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  
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,  
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  
Easily canst thou find one miserable,  
And not enforced oft-times to part from truth,  
If it may stand him more in steady to lie,  
Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?  
But thou art placed above me, thou art Lord;  
From thee I can, and must, submit, 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:  
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)

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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.  
465. 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. War- ton.
And talk at least, though I despair to attain.
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
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
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
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. 1. 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 anything 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 apple 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.

312
The tempter was not yet to be foiled; he now makes an offer of riches, and descents 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 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 visionaryness. 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 Bellal 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 hungering 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,
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)
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;
And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels
Rode up to heaven, yet once again to come.

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 315
Therefore, as those young prophets then with care
Sought lost Elijah; so in each place these
Nigh to Bethabara, in Jericho
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 Perea; but return'd in vain.
Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,
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 plaints out breathed:
Alas, from what high hope to what relapse
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;
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
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
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,
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,
Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence;
Soon we shall see our Hope, our Joy, return.
Thus they, out of their plaints, new hope resume
To find whom at the first they found unsought:
But, to his mother Mary, when she saw

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 Perea, 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 in sighs thus clad:

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
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
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
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,
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
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
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
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
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,

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,
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:
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
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 frequence was impower'd,
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 allurement fell,
However to this man inferior far,
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
Of my success with Eve in Paradise
Decease 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
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 dissolutespirit that fell,
The sensuallest; and, after Asmodai,
The fleshliest Incubus; and thus advised:
Set women in his eye, and in his walk,

181. Tasted, experienced, made trial of.
Ps. xxxiv. 8. "Oh taste and see that the
Lord is good."

186. 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.

181. 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
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;
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, smooth the rugged'st brow,
Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,
Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
At will the manliest, resolustest breast,
As the magnetick hardest iron draws.
Women, when nothing else, beguil'd the heart
Of wisest Solomon, and made him build,
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,
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,
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
Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,
Daphne, or Semele, Antiope,
Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more
Too long; then lay'st thy scapes on names ador'd,
Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan,
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 deprecate 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. 493.) 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 Antiope 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!
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.
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
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
Of fond desire? Or should she, confident,
As sitting queen adored on beauty's throne,
Descending with all her winning charms begirt
To enamour, as the zone of Venus once
Wrought that effect on Jove, so fables tell;
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
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
His constancy; with such as have more show
Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise;
Rocks, whereon greatest men have oftest wreck'd;
Or that which only seems to satisfy
Lawful desires of nature, not beyond:
And now I know he hunger's, 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,
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
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
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
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
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:

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, 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,
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
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.
260. Him thought, an ancient phraseology of the same construction as me
261. Cherith: see 1 Kings xvii. 5, 6 and xix. 4.
Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting waked.  
Up to a hill anon his steps he rear’d,  
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:
Thither he bent his way, determined there  
To rest at noon; and entered 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)  
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;  
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,  
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  
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,  
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,  
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  
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  
Would scruple that, with want oppress’d? Behold,
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.  

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,  
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,  
Freshest or purling brook, of shell or fin,  
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,  
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  
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,  
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.  
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 vianda pure:  
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 Osborn's Memoirs of James I. vol. ii. 157, we read  
"a whole pye, reckoned to my lord at ten pounds, being composed of amber-grece,  
magisterial of pearl, musk." All fish.  
Milton had here in his mind the exces-  
sive luxury of the Romans in the article of  
fish. Freshest, fresh running stream.  
349. Diverter, 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 Mil-  
ton 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.  
363. Logres. Sir Lancelot, Pelleas, and  
Pellenore are personages in old romance.  
In the "Life and Death of King Arthur"  
Sir Lancelot is there called of Logris, (an  
old name for England,) and Sir Tristan  
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 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?
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

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.

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.
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,
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 importune tempter still remain'd,
And with these words his temptation pursued:
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,
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;
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,
Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?
Money brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms:

401. Far-fet, for far-fetched.
What raised Antipater the Edomite,
And his son Herod placed on Judah's throne,
(Thy throne) but gold, that got him puissant friends?

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;
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.
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
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
Quintius, Fabriicius, 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
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,
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,
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.
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.—Three.
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,
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,
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.
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,
To gain a sceptre, oftest 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 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 fulfill 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 luggag 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 inappassable 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 vanities 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 billow 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 superficial 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 BRYDEES.
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,
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
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
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.
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
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?
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
The Pontick king, and in triumph 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
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.
BOOK III. PARADISE REGAINED.

To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied:—
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?
And what the people but a herd confused,
A miscellaneous rabble, who extol
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,
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,
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,
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.
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
Peaceable nations, neighbouring or remote,
Made captive, yet deserving freedom more
Than those their conquerors, who leave behind
Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,
And all the flourishing works of peace destroy;
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,
Rolling in bruitish 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!—TAYLER.
62. Divulges, publishes, makes known.
69. False glory. True glory, says Cl-
But if there be in glory aught of good,
It may by means far different be attain'd,
Without ambition, war, or violence;
By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
By patience, temperance: I mention still
Him, whom thy wrongs, with salutly patience borne,
Made famous in a land and times obscure:
Who names not now with honour patient Job?
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 conquerors.
Yet if for fame and glory aught be done,
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,
Oft not deserved? I seek not mine, but his
Who sent me; and thereby witness whence I am.
To whom the tempter murmurine thus replied:—
Think not so slight of glory; therein least
Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory,
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;
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.
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
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

101. The younger Scipio Africanus, who transferred the seat of the second
Punic war, from Italy to Africa, and con-
quered 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
insidious deceiver. The poet, by introduc-
ing this, has furnished himself with an
opportunity of explaining the great ques-
tion 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.—Thyer.
Contempt instead, dishonour, obloqui?  
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,  
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?  
Who, for so many benefits received,  
Turn’d recreant to God, ingratitude and false,  
And so of all true good himself despoil’d:  
Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take  
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  
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;  
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  
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  
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  
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.  
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  
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?

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
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,
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
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?
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?
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:
The end I would attain, my final good.
My error was my error, 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
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)
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,
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,
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 mountains 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.
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,
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;
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,
The great Seleucia, Nisibis, and there
Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon,
Turning with easy eye, thou mayst behold.
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.
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
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,
Of equal dread in flight or in pursuit;
All horsemen, in which fight they most excel:
See how in warlike musters they appear,
In rhombs, and wedges, and half-moons, and wings.
He look'd, and saw what numbers numberless
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,
Prancing their riders bore, the flower and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound;
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 Susam of Daniel (viii. 2.)
The Choaspes, the same as the Eulaeus, 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.
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. Basorah same as Basrah, 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
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:
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
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,
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
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,
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
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;
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,
Between two such encircling enemies,

329. Indorsed, from the Latin in and dorsum, on the back.
330. Agrican. What Milton here alludes to is related in Boiardo'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 prenez, 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
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 dispouse;
Choose which thou wilt, by conquest or by league:
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,
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.
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 Caesar not need fear.

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
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 unpredictable, and fail me of the throne.

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 politic maxims, or that cumbersome
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 Ruben, Simeon, Zebulen, 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
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
Of three score 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
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
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;
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, unform'd,
Headlong would follow; and to their gods perhaps
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,
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.
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.
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 superior,
(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 368, an outburst of tremendous force, beginning,

Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,

and continuing for twenty-five lines.

340
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 outcast 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 highest 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 might be, 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 height 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 compères, 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 rhetorick
That sleek'd his tongue, and won so much on Eve,
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
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,
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;
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
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,
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,
Porches, and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
Statues, and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
Gardens, and groves, presented to his eyes,
Above the hight of mountains interposed:
(By what strange parallax, or optick skill
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 78 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,
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,
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
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.
Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
What conflux issuing forth, or entering in;
Prefators, proconsuls to their provinces
Hasting, or on return, in robes of state,
Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
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,
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,
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;
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 Brundusium, whence travellers embarked for Greece. The Emilian 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 Gastulia, 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.
And long renown, thou justly mayst prefer
Before the Parthian. These two thrones except,
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,
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
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,
Now made a sty; 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;
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
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,
(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
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
Of the emperour, 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;
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,
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;
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?
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;
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
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,
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,
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:
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 Ro-
man empire, contained in this and the
following ten lines, is at once comically
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—
Batcher'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,
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 accused? now more accrued
For this attempt, bolder than that on Eve,
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,
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?
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:
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,
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:
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
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,
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,
As morning shows the day: be famous then

185. King of kings. 1 Tim. vi. 15; Rom. ix. 6.
203. The devil, in Scripture, is termed the God of this world: 2 Cor. iv. 4.
215. 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.
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;
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?
Errour by his own arms is best evinced.
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
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
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
There flowery hill Ilymettus, with the sound
Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites
To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
His whispering stream: within the walls then view
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
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 Pan-dion, 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 Stoics. The building was adorned with various paintings, and hence the appropriate epithet, painted, by our poets, whose epithets are always not only exceedingly beautiful, but critically correct.

257. Æolian charms, referring to the poets Aæus and Sappho, who were both
And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
Blind Melesigenes, thence Homer call'd,
Whose poem Phoebus challenged for his own:
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,
High actions and high passions best describing:
Thence to the famous orators repair,
Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce democracy,
Shook the arsenal, and fulminated over Greece
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
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.
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:
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. Doric: the odes of Pindar.
253. Melesigenes. Milton here follows
the opinion of some, that Homer was
born near the Meles, a river of Asia Mi-
nor, near Smyrna.
261. Tragedy was termed lofty by the
ancients, from its style, but at the same
time not without a reference to the ele-
vated buskin which the actors wore.
262. Chorus or iambick. The two con-
stituent 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 tra-
gedy, 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 fulminated
over Greece to Artaxerxes' throne, against
the Persian king, so Demosthenes was
the orator particularly who fulminated over
Greece to Macedonia, against Philip; espe-
cially when he was besieging Olynthus,
a tributary city of Athens. Hence some
of his orations are called "Philippines"
and others "Olynthiaca."
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, Arcesilas 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, unaft
fected 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.—TUYER.
Light from above, from the fountain of light,  
No other doctrine needs, though granted true;  
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;  
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,  
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,  
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,  
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;  
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,  
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?)  
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.  
Or, if I would delight my private hours  
With musick or with poem; where, so soon  
As in our native language, can I find

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293. The first: Socrates. The next: Plato, whom our author, in one of his Latin poems, terms "fabulator maximus."


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,
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;
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.
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,) Thou to our Saviour with stern brow replied:
Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,
Kingdom nor empire pleases thee, nor aught
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
To wish thou never hadst rejected, thus
Nicely or cautiously, my offer'd aid,

341. Personating: To celebrate loudly; from the Latin persona.
345. 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 panegyrick 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,
When prophhecies 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;
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;
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
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.
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
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,
From many a horrid rift, abortive pour'd
Fierce rain with lightning mix'd, water with fire
In ruin reconcile'd: nor slept the winds
Within their stony caves, but rush'd abroad
From the four hinges of the world, and fell
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
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!
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
To tempt the Son of God with terours 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,
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,
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
And mad despite to be so oft repell'd.
Him walking on a sunny hill he found,
Back'd on the northli and west by a thick wood.
Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape,
And in a careless mood thus to him said:
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,
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
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;
Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject
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. 361—
 Thy kingdom though foretold
By prophet or by angel, unless thou Endeavour, 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
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,
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;
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:
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
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;
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,
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,
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
Flock'd to the Baptist, I among the rest,
(Though not to be baptized,) by voice from heaven
Heard thee pronounced the Son of God beloved.
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn
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
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:
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:
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,
Not more; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,
Have been before contempl’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.

So saying, he caught him up, and, without wing
Of hippogriff, 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,
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:

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:
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,

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, ac-
tording to the quotation from the Psalmist.
To this our Saviour answers, as he an-
swers 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 Sa-
tan. His standing is considered as the
display of his divinity, and the imme-
diate 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,
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,
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:
So, struck with dread and anguish, fell the fiend;
And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
(Joyless triumphs of his hoped success)
Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,
Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God.
So Satan fell;—and straight a fiery globe
Of angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
Who on their plume vans received him soft
From his uneasy station, and upbore,
As on a floating couch, through the blithe air:
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,
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:
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 Iræus, a beautiful country of Libya, not far from Cyrene.
572. *Theban monster* : The Sphinx, whose riddle Ædipus 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.
586. *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 terour, 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,
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
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
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,
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
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
Thy bold attempt. Hereafter learn with awe
To dread the Son of God: he, all unarm'd,
Shall chase thee, with the terour 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,
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.
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 poet's senescence, 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 business of the temptation being thus resumed, the tempter takes our Lord to the western side of the mountain, and shows 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

\[
\text{Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces}
\text{Hasting, or on return, in robes of state,}
\text{Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,}
\text{Legions and cohorts, &c.}
\]

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.
P ARADISE REGAINED.

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dalge on heathen literature. The next speech of the tempter, (line 368,) is one of those masterpiece 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 “swoln with rage” at the repented 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 further 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 Quaries; 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 sublime 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-t 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 fed
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.
Sanskrit Writings
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
Annulld, 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 mirror 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, hyena! 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 reconcilement 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:

31*
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. \( \Rightarrow \) Harapha, of Gath.
Manoah, the father of Samson. \( \Rightarrow \) Publick Officer.
Dalila, his wife. \( \Rightarrow \) 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 Αγονιστὴς; (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.—Bryges. The words of this opening are very poetical, beautiful, and affecting.—Bryges.
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,
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
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,
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
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
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
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
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,
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,
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.—BRIDGES.
21. But rush upon me thronging. The whole of this passage is pathetic, moral, and full of force.—BRIDGES.
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.
25. 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
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
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
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,
And all her various objects of delight
Annul'd, which might in part my grief have eased,
Inferior to the vilest now become
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me:
They creep, yet see; I, dark in light, exposed
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
Within doors or without, still as a fool,
In power of others, never in my own;
Scarcely half I seem to live, dead more than half.
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
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?
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,
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 infidelity, 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 Shakespeare. A servant declares in evidence, that her deceased master, a little before his last marriage, had lamented to her the ingratitude 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.—BAXDROE. 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?
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,
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;
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
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;
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,
And by himself given over;
In slavish habit, ill-titted weeds
O'erworn and soil'd;
Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
That heroick, that renown'd,
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,
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.

133. Chalybean. The Chalybes were a people of Pontus, famous for their iron works.
Adamantéan proof?  
But safest he who stood aloof,  
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 warriours turn'd  
Their plated backs under his heel;  
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.  
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.  
Which shall I first bewail,  
Thy bondage or lost sight.  
Prison within prison  
Inseparably dark?  
Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)  
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  
To incorporate with gloomy night;  
For inward light, alas!  
Puts forth no visual beam.  
O mirror 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.  
For him I reckon not in high estate,  
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.  
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,
We come, thy friends and neighbours not unknown,
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,
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
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,
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,
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?
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
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
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 uncerring 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
Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed
The daughter of an infidel: they knew not
That what I motion’d was of God; I knew
From intimate impul’se, and therefore urged
The marriage on; that by occasion hence
I might begin Israel’s deliverance,
The work to which I was divinely call’d.
She proving false, the next I took to wife
(0, that I never had! fond wish too late!)
Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,
That specious monster, my accomplish’d snare.
I thought it lawful from my former act,
And the same end; still watching to oppress
Israel’s oppressors: of what now I suffer
She was not the prime cause, but I myself,
Who, vanquish’d with a peal of words, (0, weakness!)
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.

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,
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
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:
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,
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 treaties, which the husband for some time resisted. And I
think it clear, that Milton’s own experi-
ence in the course of this marriage, fur-
nished the substance of the sentiments
in another speech of Samson, lines 750–
763. Phillips says that Milton was in-
clined to pardon his repudiated bride

"partly from his own generous nature,
more inclined to reconciliation than to
perseverance in anger and revenge."—
T. Warton.

250. Accomplish’d snare: "Ironical.
247. Ambition, in the sense of the Latin
ambitio, "a going around to gain favour"
Their choicest youth; they only lived who fled.
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,
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
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
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,
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;
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:
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,
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,
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

278. Succoth. See Judges viii. 4-9.
299. And no man, &c. There is something 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,
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,
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.
   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, awaked
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
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.
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,
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
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?
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?
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
Ensared, assaulted, overcome, led bound,
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
Subject him to so foul indignities,
Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.

Sams. Appoint not heavenly disposition, father:
Nothing of all these evils hath befallen me
But justly; I myself have brought them on,
Sole author h 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.
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 hight
Of nuptial love profess'd, carrying it straight
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
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
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
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,
And 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
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
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,
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
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
Tact, was in thy power: true; and thou bear'st
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
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,
Besides whom is no god, compared with idols,
Disglorified, blasphem'd, 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,
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

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.

414. This day, &c. See Judges xvi. 23.

415. 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
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
'Twixt God and Dagon; Dagon hath presumed,
Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
His deity comparing and preferring
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,
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
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,
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
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,
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,
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
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;
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,
(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-displeased
For self-offence, more than for God offended.
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?

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,
Full of divine instinct, after some proof
Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond
The sons of Anak, famous now and blazed;
Fearless of danger, like a petty god
I walk'd about, admired of all, and dreaded
On hostile ground, none daring my affront;
Then swollen with pride, into the snare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,
Soft'en'd with pleasure and voluptuous life;
At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge
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.

Cho. Desire of wine, and all delicious drinks,
Which many a famous warriour 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,
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 hero-gods 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
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
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,
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,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
A burdensome 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
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 draf' of servile food,
Consume me, and oft-invocated death
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,
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;
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,

553. O, madness, &c. Milton exemplified, in his life, the truth of these noble lines,—being a singular example of temperance and abstemiousness.

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 Loah: this word signifying both a jaw and a place so called.—Newton.
That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light, 695
Nor th'other light of life continue long, 625
But yield to double darkness nigh at hand: 610
So much I feel my genial spirits droop, 615
My hopes all flat, Nature within me seems weary of herself; 595
My race of glory run, and race of shame; 600
And I shall shortly be with them that rest. 605

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. 610

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
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,
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
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
Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
Or medicinal liquor can asswage,
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:
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. Medicinal, for medicinal, as Milton spells it also in his prose works.

628. Alp, from the Greek ἄλπος, "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:
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:
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
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,
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,
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
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,
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,
Not evenly, as thou rulest
The angelick orders, and inferiour creatures mute,
Irregular and brute.
Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That, wandering loose about,
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,
And people’s safety, which in part they effect:
Yet toward these thus dignified, thou oft

658. Sought: Collected studiously or with pains.
Amidst their highth of noon,
Changest thy countenance, and thy hand, with no regard
Of highest favours past
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,
Too grievous for the trespass or omission;
Of 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,
And condemnation of the ingrateful multitude.
If these they scape, perhaps in poverty
With sickness and disease thou bow' st them down,
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv' d;
In crude old age;
Though not disorderate, 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,
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?
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
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 composing 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.
Courted by all the winds that hold them play,  
An amber scent of odorous perfume
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.

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:  
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  
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,  
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,  
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,  
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,  
And reconcilement 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 off 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.
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,
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
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?
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 parole,
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,
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
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
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,
Wailing thy absence in my widow'd bed:
Here I should still enjoy thee, day and night,
Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines;
Whole to myself, unhaazarded abroad,
Fearless at home of partners in my love.
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
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!
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,
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
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.
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?
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,
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
And princes of my country came in person,
Solicited, commanded, threaten'd, urged,
Adjudged by all the bonds of civil duty
And of religion, press'd how just it was,
How honourable, how glorious, to entrap

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
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,
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,
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
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
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
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;
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, apostolists 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. 888. 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.
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 pretexts 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 misdone,
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
Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee 920
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 accused, 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,

936. Adder's wisdom, alluding to Ps. lviii. 4, 5.
And last neglected! How wouldst thou insult,
When I must live uxorious to thy will
In perfect thraldom; 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.
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
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
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 humbly thus myself, and, suing
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.
Fame, if not double-faced, is double-mouth'd,
And with contrary 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
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,
In Ecron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath,
I shall be named among the famouuest
Of women, sung at solemn festivals,
Living and dead recorded, who, to save
Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose
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.

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.
959. 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,
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
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
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,
Strength, comeliness of shape, or ampler 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;
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
Thy paranymph, 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.
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 oft to affect the wrong?
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
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. Paranymph, 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  
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,  
Implark'd with such a steers-mate at the helm?  
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,  
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,  
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.  
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  
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  
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.  
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

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 Sion, 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. Fracht, for freight.  
1080. Og. See Deut. iii. 11, and iii. 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 displeased,
That I was never present on the place
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.

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!
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 Phillistine
From the unforeskinn'd race, of whom thou bear'st
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.

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
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.
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,
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,
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.
1125. Vant-brass, (avan-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, 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, 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 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, 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 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.

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 Into the common prison, there to grind Among the slaves and asses, thy comrades, As good for nothing else; no better service With those thy boisterous locks, no worthy match For valour to assail, nor by the sword Of noble warriour, 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 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, 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!
SAMSON AGONISTES.

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
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,
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,
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.

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;
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.
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,
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 appellant,
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?
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

SAMS. Cam'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,
To descend 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.

HAR. O Baal-zebub! can my ears unused
Hear these dishonours, and not render death?
SAMSON AGONISTES.

SAMS. No man withholds thee, nothing from thy hand
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van:
My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free.

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
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.

CHO. His giantship is gone somewhat crest-fallen,
Stalking with less unconscionable strides,
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.

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;
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
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
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
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
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;
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,
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
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
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,
   For I descry this way
Some other tending; in his hand
A sceptre or quaint staff he bears,
Comes amain, speed in his look.
By his habit I discern him now
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:
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:
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
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,
   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,
Or make a game of my calamities?
Return the way thou cam'st; I will not come.

1309. Remark: Make him a mark, distinguish. 1324. Gymnick, i. e. Gymnastic.
Off. Regard thyself; this will offend them highly.

SAMS. Myself? my conscience, and internal peace.

Can they think me so broken, so debased

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,

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.

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 hight, whether to hold or break:

He's gone, and who knows how he may report

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

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!

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

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,

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

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 1206-7.) 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
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose
To something extraordinary my thoughts.
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour
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.
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;
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.
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;
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:
By this compliance thou wilt win the lords
To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.
SAMS. Brethren, farewell; your company among
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them
To see me girt with friends; and how the sight
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;
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,
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.
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;
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
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.
But wherefore comes old Manoah 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,
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,
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
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.
Some much averse I found and wondrous harsh,
Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;
That part most reverenced Dagon and his priests:
Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
Private reward, for which both God and state
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,
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.

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,
And view him sitting in the house ennobled
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
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
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
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.
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 ennobled with so many famous exploits, is vastly expressive of the deating 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.
1500. 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.
SAMSON AGONISTES.

MAN. Of ruin indeed methought I heard the noise:
Ol 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?
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:
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?
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.
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.

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,
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 horror,
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
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
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
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
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
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.
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.
1560. 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 re-
trench one article without making it de-
fective, 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 him-
self 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 circum-
stances 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
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
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;
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,
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.
At sight of him, the people with a shout
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,
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
(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, unsuspicuous, led him; which when Samson
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
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.
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,
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 'scape who stood without.

Cno. 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
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,
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
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,
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
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

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.
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,
That no second knows nor third,
And lay crewhile a holocaust,
From out her ashy womb now teem'd,
Revives, refLOURishes, then vigorous most
When most unactive deem'd;
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
A life heroic; 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
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.
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
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,)
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
With all his trophies hung, and acts inroll'd
In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
And from his memory inflame their breasts
To matchless valour, and adventures high:
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.

Cuno. All is best, though we oft doubt
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,
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
Of true experience, from this great event,
With peace and consolation hath dismiss'd,
And calm of mind, all passion spent.

"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 committee 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.
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.
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 Shakespeare'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. ii. 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 airiness of Milton. Add to this the magic inventiveness of the spiritual beings, by which all this landscape is
REMARKS ON COMUS.

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-embroder'd vale,
Where the love-born 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 sublimier 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'Allegrò,"

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 skates!

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 panegyrists 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.
Comus, with his Crew.
The Lady.

First Brother.
Second Brother.
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.

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,
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,
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,
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

3. Insphered. In "Il Penseroso" (line 88) the spirit of Plato was to be un-sphered—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,
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
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,
And new-entrusted sceptre: but their way
Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horribur of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
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.

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,
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a groveling swine?)
This nymph, that gaz'd upon his clustering locks
With ivy berries wreathed, and his blithe youth,
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 assemblage, 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.
55. 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,
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,
To quench the drouth of Phæbos; 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;
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;
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
I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convoy,
As now I do: but first I must put off
These my sky-robes spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain
That to the service of this house belongs,
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
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 grave.
But how many would have known any thing of this god of revels and drunk-eness from the neglected and almost forgotten Marks 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.
60. Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star. There are few finer comparisons that lie in so small a compass.—E. War-rox.
83. Iris' woof. Milton has frequent allusion to the colours of the rainbow. In the "Ode on the Nativity," (stanza xiv.,) Truth and Justice are not only orbed 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
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
Of his chamber in the East.
Meanwhile welcome joy, and feast,
Midnight shout, and revelry,
Tipsy dance, and jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,
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.
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,
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,
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;
’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,
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. 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.
125. ’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
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,
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
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,
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 spungy air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the damsels to suspicious flight;
Which must not be, for that’s against my course:
I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well-plac’d words of glozing courtesy
Baited with reasons not unpleasable,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magick dust,
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,
My best guide now: methought it was the sound

"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.
140. 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.
141. Shrouds: Recesses, harbours, hiding-places.
142. Quaint: That is, strange habits.
143. Glozing: Flattering, deceitful.
144. 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 minds,  
When for their teeming flocks and granges full,  
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  
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,  
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.  
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,  
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?  
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  
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 wassell" mean, in general terms, feasting and drunkenness.—T. Warton.  
179. Swill'd insolence is similar to drunk 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.  
180. 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," Shakspeare 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 desart wildernesses. 210
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
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!
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.
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:
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
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;
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
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.
Enter Comus.

Com. 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.
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
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;
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,
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!
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.

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
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.
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 be-
holder.
257. Unless the goddess. Comus' address
to the lady is in a very high style of clas-
sical gallantry. As Cicero says of Plato's
language, that if Jupiter were to speak
Greek, he would speak as Plato has writ-
ten, 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 read-
ers of taste will acknowledge that the
style of it is much raised by the expres-
sion, 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.
LAD. How easy my misfortune is to hit!
Com. Imports their loss, beside the present need?
LAD. No less than if I should my brothers lose.
Com. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
LAD. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.
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 your small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots:
Their port was more than human, as they stood:
I took it for a faëry vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live,
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?
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.
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,
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
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 Hoover.
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'stiry halls
And courts of princes, where it first was named,
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 won'tst to love the traveller's benison,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;
Or, if your influence be quite damn'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-levell'd rule of streaming light;
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,
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 innumerous boughs.
But, O, that hapless virgin, our lost sister!
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.
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:
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!

340. With thy long-levell'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. Callisto, the daughter of Lycaon, King of Arcadia, was changed into the greater bear, called also Hélêce, 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)
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
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.
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.

'Tis most true,

That musing Meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert 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,
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,
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
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,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unowned sister.

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 smooth and pick, and set in order when ruffled.
380. All-to, for altogether, entirely.
395. Unenchanted: Which cannot be enchanted.
Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear
Does arbitrate the event, my nature is
That I incline to hope, rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspicion.
My sister is not so defenceless left
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength,
Which you remember not.

Sec. Br. What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of Heaven, if you mean that?
El. Br. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,
Which, if Heaven gave it, may be term'd her own:
'Tis Chastity, my brother, Chastity:
She, that has that, is clad in complete steol;
And, like a quiver'd Nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharbour'd heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds;
Where, through the sacred rays of Chastity,
No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer,
Will dare to soil her virgin purity:
Yea, there, where very desolation dwells,
By grots and caverns shagg'd with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblench'd majesty,
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
Some say, no evil thing that walks by night
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn un laid ghost
That breaks his magick chains at curfew time,
No goblin, or swart faery of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true Virginity.
Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of Chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tamed the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain-pard, but set at naught
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' the woods.
What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield,
That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,
Wherewith she freeze'd her foes to congeal'd stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
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,
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,
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,
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,
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres
Lingering, 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.

Sec. Br. How charming is divine philosophy!
Not harsh and crabb’d, 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. 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.

Sec. Br. Heaven keep my sister. Again, again, and near!
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

450. Rigid looks refer to the snaky locks, 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. 460. 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 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;  
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. Thyris? whose artful strains have oft delay'd  
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,  
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?  
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  
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.  
Spir. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.  
El. Br. What fears, good Thyris? Pr'ythee briefly  
slew,  
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,  
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,  
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|  
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 Scandian navian song; and, not to go further, the  
volcanic mountains not inaptly support a belief in the existence of the latter.—  
Brydges.  
520. Within the navel; that is, in the  
middle. Delphi was called by the Greeks ῥυφάλος 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 inter  
mixed, 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  
Character'd in the face: this have I learn'd,  
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  
In their obscure haunts of inmost bowers.  
Yet have they many baits and guileful spells,  
To inveigle and invite the unwary sense  
Of them that pass unweating by the way.  
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks  
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,  
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;  
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  
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,  
And took in straies 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,  
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;
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,
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 enthral'd;
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,
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
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
'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;
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.
585. 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.
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
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;
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;
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:
And yet more medicinal is it than that moly,
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave:
He call'd it hemony, and gave it me,
And bade me keep it as of sovran use
'Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast, or damp,
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,
Enter'd the very time-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,
And brandish'd blade, rush on him; break his glass,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground,

620. To see to. An old expression for
to behold.
634. Unknown and like esteemed, that
is, unknown and unesteemed, or un-
known 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. Hemony. It is not agreed whe-
ther Milton's hemony is a real or poeti-
cal plant.—T. Warton.
642. Purse, 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,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.
El. Br. Thyris, 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,
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.

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
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 Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
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
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,
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!
'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. Nepenthes, from the Greek νηπός and πεψωσ grief, a drug or medicine that relieves pain and exhilarates.
These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
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?
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.

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
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,
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
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,
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;
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
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
List, Lady; be not coy, and be not coin'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.
697. A wise appetite; that is, an appetite in subjection to the rational part, and which is pleased with nothing but what reason approves of.
706. 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
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
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
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.

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,
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,
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
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,
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
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,

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.”
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.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
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,
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
Her words, set off by some superior 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,
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:
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,
And bound him fast: without his rod reversed,
And backward mutters of disoonering 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."—Simpson. To fable is to feign, to invent.
802. And though not mortal, &c. Her words are asserted 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 terrours of human nature at the bold rebuke of innocence, and shudders with a sudden cold sweat, like a guilty man.—T. Warton.
804. Less. I like the manuscript reading best:—
This is mere moral stuff, the very lees, &c.
Yet is bad; but very inaccurate.—Hurd.
815. Ye m'ook. 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,
Some other means I have which may be used,
Which once of Meliboeus 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,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure;
Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the sceptre from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen,
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 pearl'd wrists, and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall;
Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectar'd layers, strew'd with asphodel:
And through the porch and inlet of each sense
Dropp'd in ambrosial oils, till she revived,
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
That the shrewd meddling elfe delights to make,
Which she with precious viall'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
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils:
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,

824. There is a gentle nymph, &c. Sabrina's fabulous story may be seen in the "Mirror 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 magic. 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 ordered 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. 825. Brutus, Brutus.

845. Urchin blasts. The urchin or hedgehog, from its soleariness, the ugliness of its appearance, and from a popular opinion that it sucked 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
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
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;
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;
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,
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,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
By all the nymths that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance;
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head,
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,
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.365,) and as Choaspe has an amber stream, Paradise Regained, (iii.283.) But Choaspe 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.

673. 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:
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,
I am here.

SPIR. Goddess dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charmed band
Of true virgin here distress'd,
Through the force, and through the wile,
Of unbles'sd enchanter vile.

SAB. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help ensnared chastity:
Brightest Lady, look on me.
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:
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,
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

SABRINA descends, and the LADY rises out of her seat.

SPIR. Virgin, daughter of Locrine,
Sprung of old Anchises' line,
May thy brimmed waves for this
Their full tribute never miss
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
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,

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 Locrine 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.—NEW- TON.
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
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;
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
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.
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,
Other trippings to be tred
Of lighter toes, and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise,
With the mincing Dryades,
On the lawns, and on the leas.

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,
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.

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 epilogues.

Spr. 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
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;
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
Nard and cæssia’s balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purfled scarf can shew;
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
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,
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,
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 clas-
sical gardens of antiquity, and from
Aristo and Spenser: but the Garden of
Eden is absolutely his own creation.—T.
Warton.

984. Crisped shades. By this metapho-
rical epithet, I presume the poet had in
his eye the crisped or curled vines and
tendrils that form the shades and bowers.

983. Blow is used actively, that is, that
make the flowers blow.

985. Purfled, is fringed or embroidered.

1002. Assyrian queen. Venus is called
Assyrian queen because she was first
worshipped by the Assyrians.

1006. 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 “Hymn 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.
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.

1015. Bow'd welkin. A curve which
bends, or descends slowly from its great
sweep.

1020. 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 produc-
tions 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
extent in any language like the "Mask of Comus."—Toland.

Milton's "Juvenile Poems" are so no otherwise, than as they were writ-
ten in his younger years; for their dignity and excellence, they are suffi-
cient to have set him among the most celebrated of the poets, even of the
ancestors 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 prologizes, 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 interlocution. 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 as 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.

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 beguilés the perplexity of their own situation. It has been observed, that "Comus" is not calculated to shine in theatrical 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. Masques 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, Shakespeare, 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 Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no coarse 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
COMUS. 445

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 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 Bridges.

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 PENSEROSE.
**ARCADES.*

Part of an Entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Derby,† at Haresfield, by some noble persons of her family; who appear on the scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of state, with this song:—

**1. SONG.**

Look, nymphs and shepherds, look,
What sudden blaze of majesty
Is that which we from hence desery,
Too divine to be mistook:
This, this is she
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
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,
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,
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 Spencer, with whose family Spenser the poet claimed an alliance. In his “Colin Clout’s come Home again,” (written about 1596,) 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.
ARCADES.

Mother of a hundred gods?
Juno dares not give her odds;
Who had thought this clime had held
A deity so unparallel’d?

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 Alpheü, who by secret sluice 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 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 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, 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, 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; And early, ere the odorous breath of morn Awakes the slumbering leaves, or tassell’d horn

23. Give her odds. This certainly seems no very elegant phrase, but it was a mode of compliment usual in Milton’s time.—Toml.
24. 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 Are- dina, 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. Arethusa. It was fabled that Are- thusa, 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. Tassel’d horn. So Spenser, (Faerie Queene, i. viii. 3)—

A horn of bangle small,
Which hung adowne his side in twisted gold
And tassell’d gay.
ARCADES.

Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless:
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,
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,
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,
Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
If my inferior 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,
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,
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 spheric 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 concent, &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 interved.—T. Warton.
Under the shady roof
Of branching elm star-proof.
Follow me;
I will bring you where she sits,
Clad in splendour as befits
    Her deity.
Such a rural queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

III. SONG.

Nymphs and shepherds, dance no more
By sandy Ladon's lillied banks;
On old Lyceus, or Cyllene hoar,
Trip no more in twilight ranks;
Though Erymanth your loss deplore,
    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.
Though Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,
Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.
Such a rural queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.


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 *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
Yea 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:
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
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,
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;
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.
LYCIDAS.

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill; Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove afield; and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battering our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star, that rose at evening bright,
Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel,
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;
And old Damoetas 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,
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,
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
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;
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. Damoetas, 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,
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,
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 Neêra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise,
(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,
And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
Phæbus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears:
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies;
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 need."
O, fountain 'Arthuse, and thou honour'd flood,
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:
He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?

55. 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 unbecom-
ingly prolonged his amorous descent to
graver years. Amaryllis and Neêra 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 fic-
tion on the luxuriant tangles of this lady's
hair. Cupid is puzzled how to subdue
the icy post. His arrows can do no-
thing. At length he hits upon the stra-
gagem of cutting a golden lock from
Neêra's head, while she is asleep, with
which the poet is bound, and thus entan-
gled he is delivered a prisoner to Neêra.
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 moraliz-
ing on the uncertainty of human life,
Phæbus interposes with a sublime strain,
above the tone of pastoral poetry. He
then in an abrupt and elliptical apos-
trophe, at "O fountain Arthuse, has
basi-
tly recollects himself, and apologizes to
his rural Muse, or in other words to Ar-
thus, and Mincius, the celebrated streams
of Bucoile song, for having so suddenly
departed from pastoral allusions, and the
tenor of his subject.—T. Warton.
85. Arthuse: see note to line 31 of
"Arethusa." Mincius is a stream in Cas-
alone 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;
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,
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,
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;
The golden open, 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!
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearer's feast,
And shove away the worthy hidden guest!
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!
What reeks 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 Yolius, 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 dusty streaks or sedge leaves or flags, when beginning to wither. 
106. Sanguine flower. "Commentators," as Coleridge says, "have a notable trick of passing saucinantis 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:—

"I nase suos genus fullis inscribit: et, si, si, Flos habet inscriptionem."

That is, "the God himself inscribes his own lamentations upon its leaves, and the flower has at, at written upon it;" or, as Pliny explains it, its veins and fibres so run as to make the figure at, the Greek interjection of grief.
107. Dearest pledge: Children were called by the Romans: pigmora, "pledges."
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 endowments of the sacred office, to the exclusion of a learned and conscientious clergy. Thus in Paradise Lost (iv. 192)
Grate on their scannel pipes of wretched straw:
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed;
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
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
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 sparsely looks;
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
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,
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,
To strew the laureate horse where Lycoid lies.
For, so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts daily with false surmise;
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
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,
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;
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.

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,
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,
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.

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,
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.

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165. 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.

166. Weep no more. Milton, in this sudden and beautiful transition from the gloomy and mournful strain into that of hope and comfort, imitates Spencer, in his Eleventh Eclogue, where, bewailing the death of one maiden of great blood in terms of the utmost grief and dejection, he breaks out all at once in the same manner.—T. Warton.

161. And wipe the tears. Isa. xxv. 8; Rev. vii. 17.

188. Steps, the holes of a flute.

189. This is a Dorick lay because Thoeris and Moschus had respectively written a Buoncie on the deaths of Daphnis and Bion.
LYCIDAS.

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, II Pense rosso. 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 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 preeminently 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 Anatomic 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 brilliancy!

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."
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,
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,
But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In Heaven yclep'd Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-aasing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus at a birth,
With two sister Graces more,
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;
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
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.

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.


6. Jealous: Alluding to the watch which swl 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 
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 unreproved pleasures free; 
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, 
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; 
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, 
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, 
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, 
And the mower whets his sithe, 
And every shepherd tells his tale 
Under the hawthorn in the dale.

40. Unreproved: Blameless, innocent, not subject to reproof. Sandys has "unreproved kisses.
43. 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 splenetic 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 analyze 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;
Russet lawns, and fallsow gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
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.

Hard by, a cottage chimney smoaks
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrss, met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes,
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:
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;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holyday,
Till the livelong daylight fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
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,
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,
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,
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,
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
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.
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 narration, 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 reception, 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, fatigue 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 181. 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,
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,
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
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.
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 en-
chained 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 har-
mony. In common sense, let music be made to show all, even her most hidden
powers.—T. Warton.
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,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams;
Or likesthovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
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
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might be seem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
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,
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.
Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestick train,
And sable stole of Cyprus lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait;
And looks commencing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
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,
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;
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,
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:
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
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;

35. Cyprus lawn, a veil of a thin, transparent texture.
36. Decent: Not exposed, covered.
37. 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. 730;) so that nothing can be greater or juster than this idea of "divine Contemplation."—Harl.
38. 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.—Burges.
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 curfew sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore,
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;
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
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
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
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;
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
Such notes, as, warbled to the string,
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,
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:
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.
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,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or usher'd with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rusling leaves,
With minute drops from off the coves.
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,
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. Chancer, who
left half-told the story of Cambuscan, in
his Squier's tale.
116. Great bards, &c. From Chancer,
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 ficti-
tious forests and terrific enchantments,
is yet allegorical, and contains a remote
meaning concealed under the veil of a
fabulous action, and of a typical narra-
tive which is not immediately perceived.
—T. Warton.
122. Civil-suited: Gravely, solemnly
dressed. 123. Frounc'd. curied.
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 pro-
gnostication, 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 school of this
accomplished and genuine critic have
been revolted by the rude pedestrian's coarse
and unfeeling pomposity!—Bridges.
130. Minute drops, such as drop at inter-
vals, indicating that the shower is over.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
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,
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:
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
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:
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,
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
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,
And I with thee will choose to live.
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 Shakespeare 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 dismission 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 pensive ness 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," "fallow gray," and "barren mountains," overhung with "labouring clouds:" its old turretted 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 filagree'd 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.

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;
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.

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.

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
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 preeminently 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.
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.
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 conqueror bid spare
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;
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,
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.—The 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 Macedon assaulted and destroyed Thebes, he ordered the house of Pindar 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 Pindar.

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.
SONNETS.

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
Broke him, as that dishonest victory
At Chaeronea, fatal to liberty,
Kill'd with report that old man eloquent.

Though later born than to have known the days
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
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,
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 taughest 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 Chaeronea, (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 Milton'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 Macdonnels 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 environ me
Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes, and dogs:
As when those hinds that were transform'd to frogs
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,
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,
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 Phoebus' quire,
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 Lycean 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.
SONNETS.

IX.

ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY OF MRS. CATHERINE 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,
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
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.

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
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?)
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, ma-
estic, and historically valuable: it has a loftiness of sentiment and tone becom-
ing the bold and enlightened bard.—Bridges.

4. Daunt remotest kings; who dreaded the example of England, that their mo-
archies 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.—Humph. In
falcony, to imp a feather in the hawk's wing, is to add a new piece to a muti-
lated stump: from the Saxon impin, "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
Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his work pursued;
While Darwen stream with blood of Scots imbru'd,
And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains
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
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
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?

Sonnets XI.-This is the most nervous of all his Sonnets: the images and expressions are for the most part dignified, grand, and poetical.—Dryden.

5. Crowned Fortune. His malignity to kings added his imagination in the expression of this sublime sentiment.—Hurd.

7. Darwen, or Darwen, 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 truthfully illustrated in the wonderful discoveries of modern science!

Sonnets 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.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEMONT.

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 worships'd stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
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
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.

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
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
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 Milton. One of them is to the Duke of Savoy. See "Prose Works," ii. 153, seq. 437, 459. 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.

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
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire
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,
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
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;
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.—BRYGES.
SONNET XV.—The "virtuous father,"
Henry Lawrence, was member for Here-
fordshire in the Little Parliament which
began in 1653, and was active in settling
the protectorate of Cromwell. The fa-
mily appears to have been seated not far
from Milton's neighbourhood in Buck-
inghamshire.—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 Harr-
ington'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 Nether-
lands.
SONNETS.

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,
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
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
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
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.—6. 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 stamna 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, 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 wont at Heaven's high council-table 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 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, 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; 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, Is. vi. 6, 7.
HYMN ON CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

THE HYMN.

I.

It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born child
   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
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

II.

Only with speeches fair
She wooes the gentle air
   To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
And on her naked shame,
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,
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;
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;
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,

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,
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,
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,
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,
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,
Sat simply chatting in a rustick row;
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below:
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;
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.

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.
HYMN ON CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

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,
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,
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,
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
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,
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;
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;
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.

131. Ninefold harmony. See Arcades, line 62.
137. 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
HYMN ON CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

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,
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;
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,
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,
With terroour 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
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,
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swindges the scaly horrour of his folded tail.

XIX.
The oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum

145. With radiant feet. Is. lii. 7.
150. The wakeful trump, &c. A line of great energy, elegant and sublime.—T. Warton.
155. The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep.
160. With terroour of that blast.
165. And then at last our bliss.
170. And, wroth to see his kingdom fail.
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.

Jos. Warton.
HYMN ON CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving,
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.

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,
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,
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,
While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

XXII.
Peor and Baalim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-batter'd god of Palestine;
And mooned Ashtaroth,
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,
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:

191. The Lars (or rather Lars) and Lemures were heathen household gods.
197. Peer. 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
202. Shone is used by many of the old
writers as a noun.
205. Moloch. See Par. Lost, i. 392.
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:
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.

**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;
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,
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
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
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;
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,
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,
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;
Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethren’s side.

IV.
These latest scenes confine my roving verse;
To this horizon is my Phoebus bound:
His godlike acts, and his temptations fierce,
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.

20. Cremona’s trump. Vide the “Christian,” 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,
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;
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:
There doth my soul in holy vision sit,
In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatick 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,
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,
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
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.

23. Of lute, or viol: That is, gentle; not noisy or loud like the trumpet.
24. 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 conceit.—Dunsen.
ODES.

UPON THE CIRCUMCISION.*

Ye flaming Powers, and winged Warriors 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;
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
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?
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;
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,
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.†

1.

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.—Bridges.
† 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.—Bridges. It was written at the age of seventeen.

20. Emptied his glory. An expression taken from Phil. ii. 7, but not as in our translation,—"He made himself of no reputation,"—but, as it is in the original, (εξηνεκελευθη,) "He emptied himself,"—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
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,
If likewise he some fair one wedded not,
Thereby to wipe away the infamous blot
Of long uncoupled bed and childless old,
Which, 'mongst the wanton gods, a foul reproach was held.

III.
So, mounting up in icy-pearled car,
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
Unhous'd thy virgin soul from her fair biding-place.

IV.
Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate;
For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
Whilom did slay his dearly-loved mate,
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,
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.

8. Aquilo, or Boreas, the North wind.
9. enamoured of Orithyia, the daughter of Erechtheus, King of Athens.
10. 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,
ODES.

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,)  
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  
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  
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,  
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,  
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,  
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, expression, 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.

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.

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,
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,
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,
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,
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.

Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd power employ
Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce;
And to our high-raised phantasy present
That undisturbed song of pure concet,
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,
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
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
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,
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,
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.

* 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 concet 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,
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;
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,
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:
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,
Sav'd with care from winter's nip,
The pride of her carination train,
Pluck'd up by some unheedly swain,
Who only thought to crop the flower
New shot up from vernal shower;
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
On her hastening funeral.
Gentle lady, may thy grave
Peace and quiet ever have;
After this thy travel sore
Sweet rest seize thee evermore,
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
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 funebris, 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;
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
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:
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
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.

* 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 iambics to trochaics. So in "L'Allegro," he banishes Melancholy in iambics, but invites Euphrosyne and her attendants in trochaics.—T. Warton.

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 elegiac ode first appeared."—T. Warton.
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,
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:
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
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;
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.—BRIDGES.

19. Not those new-fangled toys, &c. Perhaps he here alludes to Lilly's "Euphuist," a book full of affected phrasology, 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 unpolliteness not to understand Euphuism.

21. But evils, &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,
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,
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,
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,
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
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,
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
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;

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.

50. *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
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,
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,
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;
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
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?

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 gulphry 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. Fiery 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 Accidents.—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.

83. Those that are at enmity. His Accidents.

91. Rivers, arise, &c. Milton is supposed, in the invocation and assemblage of these rivers, to have had an eye on Spenser's Epilogue of the Nuptials of Thames and Medway, "Faerie Queene," iv. xi. I rather think he consulted Dryton'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.
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Or Trent, who, like some Earth-born giant, spreads
His thirty arms along the indented meads;
Or sullen Mole, that runneth underneath;
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.

[The rest was prose.]

AN EPITAPH ON THE ADMIRABLE DRAMATIC 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,
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
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,
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 cast 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.—BRIDGES.

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.


99. Humber loud. Humber, a Scythian king, landed in Britain three hundred years before the Roman invasion, and was drowned in this river by Locrine, 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,
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;
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,
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
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.—BRYDES.

relation as the Muses themselves, who are called by the old poets "the daughters of Memory."—Newrisk.
11. Unvalued, invaluable.
8. Hob/on'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. 569 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 dullest men over-looked 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.
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,
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.
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,
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
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
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 like 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 establish-
ments, Milton condemned not episcopacy
only: he thought even the simple insti-
tutions 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, presbyterian-
ism was triumphant; and the independ-
ents and the churchmen joined in one
common complaint against a want of
tolerance. The church of Calvin had
now its heretics. Milton’s haughty tem-
per brooked no human control: even the
parliamentary hierarchy was too coercive
for one who acknowledged only King
Jesus. His froward and refining philo-
sophy was contented with no species of
carnal policy: conformity of all sorts
was slavery. He was persuaded that the
modern presbytery was as much calcul-
ated for persecution and oppression as
the ancient bishop.—T Warton.
And ride us with a classic 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,
Must now be named and printed Heretics
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
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.

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 Apologetical 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 Rotherford, 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 independent sect, as appears from his "Disputation on pretended Liberty of Conscience, 1649." It is hence easy to see, why Rotherford was an obnoxious character to Milton.—T. Warton.

12. And Scotch what d'ye call. Perhaps Henderson, or George Galaspe, 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. 21. Chip, &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.—T. Warton.

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 dominerous 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."—Chriat. 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 signment, 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 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 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 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 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 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 phrase, simplex munditiis, which is best attempted translation of Horace’s tirelessly untranslatable.
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 gav'e.

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 SENEC.A.

—— 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,
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.
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,
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?
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
And fierce ire trouble them; but I, saith he,
Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
On Sion, my holy hill. A firm decree
I will declare: the Lord to me hath said,
Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee
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  
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  
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;  
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  
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  
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  
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 disenthral  
And set at large; now spare,  
Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer.

14. My sustain. The verb used as a noun.
Great ones, how long will ye
My glory have in scorn?
How long be thus forborn
Still to love vanity?
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;
(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,
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,
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.
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
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;
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
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;
Evil with thee no biding 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;
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.
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,
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;
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
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.

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,
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?
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.
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.  
Mine enemies shall all be blank and dash'd  
With much confusion; then, grown red with shame,  
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,  
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;  
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  
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  
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  
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.

Judge me, Lord; be judge in this  
According to my righteousness,  
And the innocence which is  
Upon me: cause at length to cease  
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,  
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,  
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,  
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,  
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.

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  
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  
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?
Scarcely to be less than gods, thou mad'st his lot;  
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;  

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.  

2. In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,  
And in Manasses' sight,  
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.  

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!  

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  
To every neighbour foe;  
Among themselves they laugh, they play,  
And flouts at us they throw.

28. Flout at: Sneers, insults.
PSALMS.

7. Return us, and thy grace divine,
O God of Hosts, vouchsafe;
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,
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.

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
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;
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
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.

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;
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;
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
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.
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.
2. Prepare a hymn, prepare a song,
   The timbrel hither bring;
The cheerful psaltery bring along,
   And harp with pleasant string.
3. Blow, as is wont, in the new moon,
   With trumpets' lofty sound,
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,
   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.
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;
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:
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,
   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.
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,
   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;
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
    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.
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
    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
   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;
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
   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.
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.
   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 Amalee; 
   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,

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;  
   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,  
   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.  
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  
   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,  
   Thy courts, Lord, to see;  
   My heart and flesh aloud do cry,  
   Living God, for thee.  
3. There ev'n the sparrow, freed from wrong,  
   Hath found a house of rest;  
   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,  
   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!  
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  
   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;  
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  
    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.  
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;  
    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:  
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  
   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  
   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?  
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;  
    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;  
   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  
   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.  
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,  
    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;  
    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;  
    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  
   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  
   Thy servant's soul; for, Lord, to thee  
   I lift my soul and voice:  
4. For thou art good; thou, Lord, art prone  
   To pardon; thou to all  
   Art full of mercy, thou alone  
   To them that on thee call.  
5. Unto my supplication, Lord,  
   Give ear, and to the cry  
   Of my incessant prayers afford  
   Thy hearing graciously.
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, 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 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, 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.
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, 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 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 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.
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
   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
Of thee abroad are spoke;
4. I mention Egypt, where proud kings
   Did our forefathers yoke.
I mention Babel to my friends,
   Philistia full of scorn;
And Tyre, with Ethiop's utmost ends:
   Lo, this man there was born:
5. But twice that praise shall in our ear
   Be said of Sion last;
This and this man was born in her;
   High God shall fix her fast.
6. The Lord shall write it in a scroll
   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,
   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
   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
   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
   Down to the dismal pit:
I am a man; but weak, alas!
   And for that name unfit.
5. From life discharged, and parted quite
   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.
6. Thou in the lowest pit profound,
Hast set me all forlorn,
Where thickest darkness hovers round,
In horrid deeps to mourn.

7. Thy wrath, from which no shelter saves,
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,
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.

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,
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?
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,
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 terour sent from thee?
Bruised, and afflicted, and so low
As ready to expire;
While I thy terours undergo,
Astonish'd with thine ire.

16. Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow;
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:
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,
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.
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
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,
For of gods he is the God:
For his, &c.
O, let us his praises tell,
Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell:
For his, &c.
Who, with his miracles, doth make
Amazed heaven and earth to shake:
For his, &c.
Who, by his wisdom, did create
The painted heavens so full of state:
For his, &c.
Who did the solid earth ordain
To rise above the watery plain:
For his, &c.
Who by his all-commanding might,
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:
   For his, &c.
The horned moon to shine by night,
Amongst her spangled sisters bright:
   For his, &c.
He, with his thunder-clasping hand,
Smote the first-born of Egypt land:
   For his, &c.
And, in despite of Pharaoh fell,
He brought from thence his Israel:
   For his, &c.
The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
Of the Erythraean main:
   For his, &c.
The floods stood still, like walls of glass,
While the Hebrew bands did pass:
   For his, &c.
But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power:
   For his, &c.
His chosen people he did bless
In the wasteful wilderness:
   For his, &c.
In bloody battle he brought down
Kings of prowess and renown:
   For his, &c.
He foil'd bold Seon and his host,
That ruled the Amorcean coast:
   For his, &c.
And large-limb'd Og he did subdue,
With all his over-hardy crew:
   For his, &c.
And to his servant Israel,
He gave their land therein to dwell;
   For his, &c.
He hath, with a piteous eye,
Beheld us in our misery:
   For his, &c.
And freed us from the slavery
Of the invading enemy:
   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.]

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* 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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