## No. II.

## SONG FOR SAINT CECILIA'S DAY, 1687.

THIS ode was composed for the festival of St. Cecilia, November 22, 1687, very shortly after the publication of *The Hind and the Panther*. It would appear from a note in his copy of Spenser's *Faerie Queene* that Dryden had previously had an idea of a song for St. Cecilia's Day, suggested by a stanza of Spenser's poem (Bk. vii. 7. 12):

> "Was never so great joyance since the day
> That all the gods whylome assembled were
> On Haemus hill in their divine array,
> To celebrate the solemn bridall cheare
> Twixt Peleus and Dame Thetis pointed there;
> Where Phoebus selfe, the god of Poets hight,
> They say, did sing the spousall hymne full cleere,
> That all the gods were ravisht with delight
> Of his celestial song, and Musick's wondrous might."

St. Cecilia, the patron saint of music, has been honoured as a martyr ever since the fifth century, and in England the festival held on the day sacred to her was revived in 1683. In 1687 and 1697 Dryden wrote the ode for the occasion: Pope wrote it—a very formal production—in 1708. The story regarding St. Cecilia, as delivered by the Notaries of the Roman Catholic church, and thence transcribed into the Golden Legend (*Legenda Aurea*) and similar books, tells that she was a noble Roman lady, born about 295; that, though a convert to Christianity, her parents married her to a pagan nobleman named Valerianus, whom she informed that she was nightly visited by an angel. Valerianus was permitted to see the angel on condition that he would embrace Christianity. This he did, and was informed by the angel that he would be crowned with martyrdom in a short time. Both he and Cecilia died as martyrs about 320. The legend says little about her musical genius, but there is a tradition that she excelled in music and invented the organ. Hence the perversion of the legend to the effect that her music, and not her purity, drew the angel from heaven. See Longfellow's *Golden Legend*, and Chaucer's *Seconde Nonnes Tale*: the latter is almost literally a translation from the life of St. Cecilia in the *Legenda Aurea* of Jacobus Januensis. The following are extracts from Chaucer's poem:

> "This maiden bright Cecile, as her life saith,
> Was come of Romans and of noble kind,
> And from her cradle foster'd in the faith
> Of Christ, and bare his Gospel in her mind:

She never ceasèd, as I written find,
Of her prayèr, and God to love and dread ...
And while that th' organs maden melody,
To God alone thus in her heart sung she;
O Lord, my soul and eke my body gie
Unwemmèd, lest that I confounded be."

The fact that Milton's *Hymn on the Nativity* and the poem now under consideration are both described as odes raises the question of the nature of an Ode. The one is in regular stanzas, the other is more irregular; the one has a chorus, the other has not. It would seem, therefore, that irregularity of metre and stanza and the presence of a choric strain are not essential to the Ode, and many of the finest odes in the English language are of perfectly regular structure. The Greek ᾠδή meant a song or lyrical composition, and many English odes are framed on the model of the Pindaric odes. Hence the use of irregular metres and arbitrary divisions into stanzas (without regard to the demands of music) supposed to be in the style of Pindar—a practice largely due to the influence and example of the poet Cowley (1618-1667). Dryden's *Song for St. Cecilia's Day* is, in fact, an imitation of Cowley's *Ode on the Resurrection*, and Cowley's *Odes* have been "the forerunners of a whole current of loud-mouthed lyric invocation not yet silent after two centuries." An ode is a species of lyric, but when not intended to be sung or chanted, the classical models are no longer suitable and the broken lines and other irregularities which, after Cowley, were supposed to be specially fitted for the Ode, have little real meaning and tend to artificiality. To find a definition of an ode that will apply to all the best modern specimens is difficult; Mr. Gosse would include "any strain of enthusiastic and exalted lyrical verse, directed to a fixed purpose, and dealing progressively with one dignified theme." In *Great Odes* a recent writer discusses this question and finally says: "There can be little doubt that the term would be almost meaningless if it were allowed to comprise every lyrical form. If the ode be at once 'a high remote chant' and an impassioned apostrophe it must cease to be distinctive, must become as liberal a term as 'lyric' itself. Are we to call the 'Hymn on Christ's Nativity,' and the 'Ode to the West Wind,' or 'To the Skylark,' by one common name? Yet each has been accepted as an ode. It may be suggested that any poem finely wrought, and full of high thinking, which is of the nature of an apostrophe, or of sustained intellectual meditation on a single theme of general purport, should be classed as an ode. This, it seems to me, may fairly be accepted if, further, the distinction between the personal and impersonal lyric be observed, and if it be understood that the form must neither be narrative nor dramatic, nor, again, be of an obtrusively choric nature."

## NOTES.

1. **heavenly harmony**, etc. The idea expressed in the opening lines is that of Pythagoras (B.C. 530), who is said to have been the first to speak of the universe as a *cosmos*, from its orderliness or arrangement (Lat. *mundus*). "The new and startling feature in the Pythagorean philosophy, as opposed to the Ionic systems, was that it found its ἀρχή, its key of the universe, not in any known substance, but in number and proportion. This might naturally have occurred to one who had listened to the teaching of Thales and Anaximander. After all it makes no difference, he might say, what we take as our original matter; it is the law of development, the measure of condensation, which determines the nature of each thing. Number rules the harmonies of music, the proportions of sculpture and architecture, the movements of the heavenly bodies. It is Number which makes the universe into a κόσμος, and is the secret of a virtuous and orderly life" (*Thales to Cicero*, Mayor). According to the Pythagoreans the soul was itself a harmony, dwelling in the body as in a prison (comp. Plato's *Phaedo*, vi. 62B). On the music of the spheres, see note, *Hymn Nat.* 125.

2. **universal frame**, the fabric of the universe, frame which is the universe. This makes the phrase more significant than if we regard 'universal' as merely = total. Comp. Spenser's *Hymn of H. Love*, 22:

> "Before *this world's great frame*, in which all things
> Are now contained, found any being-place,
> Ere flittering Time could wag his eyas wings
> About that mighty bound which doth embrace
> The rolling spheres, and parts their hours by space,
> That High Eternal Power which now doth move
> In all these things, moved in itself by love."

The phrase occurs also in Milton, *Par. Lost*, v. 153, "Almighty, thine this *universal* frame." The word 'frame' conveys the notion of something whose parts are fitted together: comp. 'vocal *frame*,' *Alex. Feast*, 133.

**began**, took its rise: comp. *Alex. Feast*, 25.

3. **Nature ... jarring atoms.** Comp. *Par. Lost*, ii. 894:

> "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 battle bring
> *Their embryon atoms.*"

Comp. also Ovid's *Meta.* i. 5, *Rudis indigestaque moles*, etc. 'Jarring' = discordant, not yet harmonized: what Ovid calls *discordia semina rerum*; comp. also No. LXIII. 'Atoms' (Gk. ἄτομος, indivisible): comp. Holland's *Plutarch's Mor.* 807, "Epicurus saith, That the principles of all things be certain Atomes'"; see also Munro's *Lucretius*, index.

5. **heave her head.** 'Heave' = raise, is frequent in Milton: comp. *Comus*, 885, 'heave thy rosy head'; *L'Alleg.* 145; *Sam. Agon.* 197. The phrase is Miltonic; before Milton's time 'heave' had a less restricted sense, comp. Spenser, *F. Q.* i. 2. 39, "His raging blade he *heft* (heaved)," Chaucer's *Prol.* 550, "*Heve* a dore of harre (off its hinge)"; *Rich. III.* iv. 4, "Painted queen; one *heaved* on high" (*i.e.* exalted, now obsolete). It was Dryden's use of Miltonic phrases, among other things, that led to such fulsome eulogies as that of Lee:

> "To the dead bard your fame a little owes,
> For Milton did the wealthy mine disclose
> And rudely cast what you could well dispose ...
> Till through the heap your mighty genius shined,
> He was the golden ore which you refined!"

6. **The**: used specifically. **Voice**, *i.e.* words; namely, "Arise, ye more than dead."

7. **ye more than dead.** In such phrases of address *ye* continued to be commonly used, even after *ye* and *you* had come to be used with little discrimination. This confusion between *ye* and *you* did not exist in old English: *ye* was always used as a nominative, and *you* as a dative or accusative. In the English Bible the distinction is very carefully observed, but in the dramatists of the Elizabethan period there is a very loose use of the two forms" (Morris): it is the same in Milton. 'More than dead': as 'more' is here adverbial, and no adjective is expressed after it, we may interpret the phrase as = 'worse than if ye were dead'; for a body, though dead, is nevertheless organized, but these atoms were discordant.

8. **cold and hot**, etc. See 'the four champions' alluded to in *Par. Lost*, ii. 898 (quoted above). Comp. Ovid's *Meta.* i. 19:

> "*Frigida* pugnabant *calidis*, *humentia siccis*,
> Mollia cum duris, sine pondere habentia pondus."

The early sages of Greece distinguished four elements,—earth, water, air, and fire; and with these were associated corresponding qualities—hot and cold, dry and moist.

9. **in order** ... **leap**: instantaneously form the Cosmos.

14. **compass**, range. Comp. "You would sound me from my lowest note to the top of my *compass*," *Ham.* iii. 2. The word is here used in its special application to music (see next note):

in M.E. it meant a circle ("As the point in a *compas*," Gower's *Conf. Amant.* iii. 92); but it has also the more general sense of extent or grasp: comp. "*compass* of my wits," *Rom. and Jul.* iv. 1.

15. **diapason ... Man,** Man being the full and completed harmony. The best illustration of the meaning will be found in No. 63, *At a Solemn Music,* 17-28. 'Diapason'; in music a name given by the Greeks to the interval of the octave, and so called because it embraces all the sounds of the perfect system or scale: it is also used in the sense of the compass of any voice or instrument. The word (Gk. *διαπασῶν*) is a contraction of the phrase *διὰ πασῶν χορδῶν συμφωνία*, a symphony extending through all the notes; so that *diapason* = "through-all." Comp. Holyday's *Distich*:

> "All things are wonder since the world began;
> The world's a riddle, and *the meaning's man.*"

**closing**: see note, *Hymn Nat.* 100, and *Comus*, 548, "ere a close." **full**: see note on 'shrill,' *L'Alleg.* 56.

16. **passion,** feeling or emotion: see note, *Il Pens.* 41. On the power of music comp. *Alex. Feast*; Collins' *Ode on the Passions* (No. 178 in *Gold. Treas.*); Congreve's *Mourning Bride*; *M. N. D.* ii. 1. 150, "Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast"; and Herrick's poems on Music (pages 160, 161, Mr. Palgrave's edition), *e.g.*

> "Music, thou queen of heaven, care-charming spell,
> That strik'st a stillness into hell;
> Thou that tam'st tigers and fierce storms that rise,
> With thy soul-melting lullabies."

**raise and quell,** excite and soothe. Quell is M.E. *quellen*, to kill: *quell* and *kill* are probably not cognate.

17. **Jubal**: comp. *Gen.* iv. 21, "He was the father of all such as handle the harp and pipe;" and George Eliot's *Legend of Jubal.* Marvell, in *Music's Empire*, says:

> "Jubal first made the wilder notes agree,
> And Jubal tuned Music's Jubilee;
> He called the echoes from their sullen cell,
> And built the organ's city, where they dwell."

**chorded shell.** The first lyre is said to have been made by stretching strings over the shell of a tortoise. So in Lat. *testudo* and in Gk. *χέλυς*, both meaning a tortoise, were applied to the lyre; comp. Horace's ode to his lyre, i. 32, "Dapibus supremi Grata *testudo* Jovis"; also v. 14, "cava *testudine*." 'Chorded' (Gk. *χορδή*, string of a musical instrument): *chord* and *cord* are radically the same: comp. *Par. Lost,* xi. 561, and Collins' *Ode*, 3.

20. **celestial sound**; comp. Collin's *Ode*, "Music, *sphere-descended* maid."

21. **Less**: object of 'dwell,' and = a less being. Comp. the stories of the behaviour of savage tribes under similar circumstances, the unfamiliar being objects of worship.

25. **trumpet's loud clangor.** 'Clangor' (3 *Hen. VI.* ii. 3. 18, and 'clang' (*Tam. Shrew*, i. 2. 207) are both applied to the sound of the trumpet (Lat. *clangere*, to resound). On the effect of the trumpet comp. Sidney's *Apologie for Poetry*; also *Æn.* ix. 501.

27. **shrill**: comp. *Othello*—

> "Farewell the neighing steed, and *the shrill trump*,
> The spirit-stirring drum, th' ear-piercing fife."

In Collin's *Ode* it is "the war-denouncing trumpet."

28. **mortal alarms**, *i.e.* calls to deadly combat. In this case, as in '*mortal*' wound, 'mortal' retains its active sense: 2 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2, "The *mortal* worm"; *Ant. and Cleop.* v. 2, "thou *mortal* wretch." 'Alarms': originally an exclamation meaning 'To arms!' (Old Fr. *alarme*), as in *Piers Plow.* xxiii. 92, "*Alarme! Alarme!* quath that Lorde"; then used as a general name for a call to arms (as in Hall's *Chron.* 680, "When the *alarme* came to Calice, every man made to horse and harness"); then a warning sound of any kind; then any warning of danger; then anything that excited apprehension. In the seventeenth century, owing to ignorance of its derivation, it was sometimes taken for 'all arm' and so written: comp. C. Butler's *Fem. Mon.* 130, "As if the drum did sound an *all-arm*." The form *alarum*, still in use as the name of an apparatus which sounds a warning, is due to the rolling of the *r*.

29. **double double**, etc. The line imitates the rapid beat of the drum during an alarm: throughout the poem the endeavour to express the character of the various instruments is evident. Comp. Collins' *Ode*, "The *doubling* drum with furious beat.

33. **flute.** Associated with love-songs, "music being the food of love": see *Twelfth Night*, i. 1. 1-4, and *Cant. Tales*, 79-91, where the young Squire, a lover, "singing he was or *floyting* all the day."

34. **discovers**, makes known. This negative use of the prefix *dis-* is common in Milton (*Par. Lost*, iii. 546), and Shakespeare (*M. of V.* ii. 7. 1.) Comp. *dis*-burden (where the Romance prefix is used with an English word), disallow, disarray, (Spenser's *Epith.*), disedge (Tennyson's *Enid*), etc.

36. **dirge**, lament. A word of curious origin, being a contraction of Lat. *dirige*, 'direct thou,' imperative of *dirigere*. *Dirige* was the initial word of an anthem sung in the funeral service or

office for the dead, translated from *Psalm* v. 8, *Dirige, Domine, in conspectu tuo vitam meam,* etc. The word has now become a general name for a funeral hymn or lament; comp. *Piers Plow.* iv. 467, "*placebo* and *dirige,*" and Fuller's *Church History,* where the form *dirige* is used (see Trench, *English Past and Present,* viii.). For a similar use of initial words as general names, compare 'paternoster,' 'ave maria,' and (sometimes) 'Te Deum'; as in 3 *Hen. VI.* ii. 1. 162, "Numbering our Ave-Maries with our beads"; Burton's *Anat. of Mel.* ii. 2. 4, "To say so many *paternosters, avemaries,* creeds." **warbling lute.** On 'warbling,' see note, *Hymn Nat.* 97. The lute is associated with love-melancholy: 1 *Hen. IV.* i. 2, "melancholy as a lover's lute"; *Hen. VIII.* iii. 1. 1, "Take thy lute, wench; my soul grows sad with troubles," etc. (the rest of the passage illustrating line 48 of this poem); "*lute* or violl still *more apt for mournful things,*" Milton, *The Passion,* 27. 'Lute' is from Arabic *al ŭd, al* being def. art. (as in *algebra*) reduced to *l.*

37. **Sharp violins.** On expressiveness of the viol, comp. that by Shelley *To a Lady, with guitar,* 43, *et seq.*: "The artist who this viol wrought To echo all harmonious thought," etc. Comp. Collins' *Ode,* "the brisk awakening viol." There are four varieties of the violin generally used, viz.: the *violin,* the *viola,* the *violoncello,* and the double bass. The names are from Ital. *violo* (a word perhaps cognate with fiddle), of which the diminutive is *violino,* the violin. The form *violoncello* is from the Ital. *violone,* augmentative form of *violo.* Spenser alludes to the violin (*Shep. Cal.*) and Shakespeare to the viol (*Rich. II.* i. 3. 162), and viol-de-gamboys (*Twelfth Night,* i. 3), a violoncello with six strings. On Dryden's application of the word 'sharp' to the violin, Todd says, "It is a judicious remark of Mr. Mason that Dryden with propriety gives this epithet to the instrument; because, in the poet's time, they could not have arrived at that delicacy of tone, even in the best masters, which they now have in those of an inferior kind. See *Essays on English Church Musick,* by the Rev. W. Mason, M.A., Precentor of York, 1795."

39, 40. The trochaic effect of these lines admirably marks the contrast with the preceding stanza.

41. **disdainful,** haughty. *Disdain,* negative of *deign* (to think worthy). In the negative form the *g,* which is radical, is lost; see note, *Il. Pens.* 56.

44. **organ's.** Comp. Pope's *Ode on St. Cecilia's Day*:

> "While in more lengthen'd notes, and slow,
> The deep, majestic, solemn organs blow":

also *Par. Lost,* i. 708, vii. 596; *Il. Pens.* 161 and note; Shakespeare's *Temp.* iii. 3. 98, "the thunder ... that deep and dread-

ful *organ-pipe*." Milton's fondness for the organ is well known: Leigh Hunt, in his essay on *The Pianoforte*, says, "Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton all mention the organ ... Milton was an organ player, and Gay a flute player, (how like the differences of their genius!)." The early history of the instrument is obscure: the name is a translation of the Lat. *organum* which seems to have been used as a general name for musical instruments: *organa dicuntur omnia instrumenta musicorum* (St. Augustin). Later the word was applied only to wind instruments and finally to the complex instrument now so called. "In old books, the instrument of music is commonly called *the organs* or a *pair of organs*; the plur. *orgone* or *orgoon* (answering to Lat. *organa*) occurs in *Piers Plow.* cxxi. 7, Chaucer's *Cant. Tales*, 14857; Chaucer also has the plur. *organs*, *Cant. Tales*, 15603. The use of the plural is due to the fact that the instrument is a combination of pipes.

46. **wing ... ways.** 'Ways' is here a cognate accusative: comp. "your *winged* thoughts," *Hen. V.* v. *prol.* 8; "winged his upward flight" (Dryden).

47. **To mend the choirs above**; to add to the beauty of the music in heaven! Comp. *Il Pens.* 161-166. The line is not in good taste.

48. **Orpheus**: see notes, *Il Pens.* 105, and *L'Alleg.* 145.

49. **unrooted.** This is Dryden's word: most editions read uprooted (first suggested by Broughton).

50. **Sequacious of**, following (Lat. *sequax*), a classicism (Ovid's *Meta.* xi. 2). The word is now almost obsolete, as well as the substantives *sequaciousness* and *sequacity*.

51. **raised ... higher**: outdid Orpheus.

52. **vocal**, endowed with a voice: comp. *Par. Lost*, ix. 530, "impulse of *vocal air*," *ib.* v. 204, "made *vocal* by my song," *Lyc.* 86, *Alex. Feast*, 133.

53. **straight**: comp. *L'Alleg.* 69, and last two lines of *Alex. Feast.*

55. Comp. lines 1-6, and *Hym. Nat.* 125, notes.

57. **sung**: see note, *Hym. Nat.* 119. **Creator's praise.** Comp. Habington's *Nox Nocti*, "the bright firmament ... eloquent In speaking the Creator's name"; also Addison's well-known hymn,

> "The spacious firmament on high ...
> Their great Original proclaim."

59. **So**, answering to *as* in line 55: lines 55-58 form an adv. clause and 59-63 the principal clause. '*As* by the power of Music the Universe arose, *so* by Music it will be dissolved.'

60. **pageant**: comp. note, *L Alleg.* 128. Here, as often, 'page-

antry' indicates want of stability; comp. Pope, "the gaze of fools, and *pageant of a day.*"

61. **trumpet**: comp. 1 *Cor.* xv. 52, and *Hymn Nat.* 156.

62. **the living die.** Comp. 1 *Thess.* iv. 16, "Then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up," etc.

63. **untune the sky.** The verbal contradiction between 'Music' and 'untune' is very striking: the meaning is that the sound of the last trumpet will put an end to that harmony which has hitherto upheld the Universe. Comp. *Arc.* 70.

> "Keep unsteady nature to her law,
> And the low world in measured motion draw,
> *After the heavenly tune.*"

For a figurative use of 'untune' comp. *King Lear,* iv. 7, "Th' *untuned* and jarring senses"; and Wordsworth's *Sonnet* (No. 326 in *Gold. Treas.*), "For this, for everything, we are *out of tune.*" On the force of *un-* in 'untune' see note *Il Pens.* 88. Dr. Johnson's criticism on the conclusion of the ode is that it is "striking, but it includes an image so awful in itself, that it can owe little to poetry; and I could wish the antithesis of music untuning had found some other place." See further in the notes to No. LXVII.

## No. III.

## ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT.

MILTON'S sonnets are of interest not merely from the circumstances of their composition and from the subjects of which they treat, but also from the fact that they are, in metrical structure, closer to the Italian type than those of any other English poet. The sonnet came to us originally from Italy, and hence Milton speaks of it as the Petrarchian stanza. It is a poem of fourteen decasyllabic lines, the first eight forming the octave, and the remaining six the sestet. The octave consists of two quatrains, and has its rhymes arranged thus—*a b b a, a b b a.* In the strict Italian type, a pause or break in the thought occurs at the end of the octave, but this rule is often disregarded by Milton. The rhymes of the sestet are less strictly governed by rule, and the forms usually employed by Milton are all common in the sonnets of Petrarch, Dante, Tasso, and Vittoria Colonna. In the Italian sonnet a final rhyming couplet was not allowed, and Milton uses it only once (*Son.* xvi.): in Spenser and Shakespeare, on the other hand, this rhyming couplet is always present. The sonnet must be

absolutely complete in itself and must be dignified and full of strength. It must be the direct expression of some *real* emotion, of some incident that has stirred the poet's soul. Judged by these requirements Milton's sonnets are seen to be worthy of the form in which they are cast; they are not fanciful expressions of some simulated feeling, but are straightforward, majestic and impassioned. Wordsworth might well say of the Sonnet that, in Milton's hands, "the thing became a trumpet, whence he blew soul-animating strains,—alas! too few!"

This sonnet, written in 1655, refers to a massacre in April of that year of the inhabitants of certain Piedmontese valleys in North Italy. These people (Vaudois or Waldenses) had, in their poverty and seclusion, preserved a simplicity of worship resembling that of the early days of Christianity; but in January, 1655, they were ordered by the Turin government to conform to the Catholic religion. Those who refused were to leave the country within three days under pain of death. Remonstrances were vain, a massacre was ordered, and for many days the Waldenses were exposed to the most frightful atrocities. When the news reached England the indignation reached a white heat, and Cromwell sent letters (written in Latin by Milton) and an ambassador to the offending Duke of Savoy demanding the withdrawal of the cruel edict; a Fast Day was appointed; and the sum of £40,000 was subscribed for the relief of the sufferers. The result was that they were allowed to return in peace to their valleys and to worship in their own way.

3. **Even them who kept thy truth**: see note above. 'Kept so pure' = preserved so free from the ritual that had crept into the Roman Catholic Church. 'Them' is the object of 'forget not.'

4. **worshiped stocks.** Milton considered Roman Catholicism to be idolatrous. 'Worshiped,' also spelt *worshipt*. Now that the participles of such words are almost exclusively formed by *-ed* the final consonant is doubled, thus, *worshipped*; this indicates the nature of the vowel sound; compare the sound of 'hoped' and 'hopped,' 'striped' and 'stripped.'

5. **in thy book**, etc. Here again we have biblical phraseology: comp. *Psalm* xvi. 8, "My tears, are they not in thy book?"

**their groans Who**, *i.e.* the groans of them who: see note, *L'Alleg.* 124.

7. **Slain**, who were slain. **rolled Mother with infant, etc.** Such an incident actually took place. "A mother was hurled down a mighty rock with a little infant in her arms; and three days after was found dead with the child alive, but fast clasped between the arms of the mother, which were cold and stiff, insomuch that those that found them had much ado to get the child out."

9. "The valleys **redoubled** ( = re-echoed) their cries to the hills, and the hills in turn redoubled them to heaven."

10. **martyred blood and ashes sow**, an allusion to Tertullian's saying, "The blood of martyrs is the *seed* of the Church." Milton prays that this massacre may be the means of spreading Protestantism wherever Roman Catholicism prevails.

11. **doth sway**, governs, holds sway. Comp. *Par. Lost*, x. 376, "let him still victor *sway*."

12. **The triple Tyrant**, the Pope, in allusion to the triple crown (*tricoronifer*) or tiara worn by him as head of the Roman Catholic Church. Comp. Fletcher's words in *Locusts*—

> "*Three mitred crowns* the proud impostor wears,
> For he in earth, in hell, in heaven will reign."

**that from these**, etc., in order that from the blood and ashes of the Waldenses the number of Protestants may increase a hundredfold. 'Hundredfold' is here treated as a plural antecedent of 'who.'

13. **thy way**, God's way, the true religion.

14. **fly**, flee from, avoid. For this use of 'fly' comp. *Sams. Agon.* 1541.

**the Babylonian woe**, Papacy: see *Rev.* xvii. and xviii. The Puritans considered the Church of Rome to be the Babylon there mentioned.

## No. IV.

## HORATIAN ODE UPON CROMWELL'S RETURN FROM IRELAND.

THERE are five poems by Andrew Marvell, the friend of Milton, in the *Golden Treasury*,—Nos. 4, 21, 57, 58, and 62 of this book. Apart from its personal and historical interest, which can be realized only after careful study of the period to which it refers and of Marvell's political opinions, the first of these poems compels admiration by the felicity with which the author has employed classical form and expression. On this point Trench says, "In its whole treatment it reminds us of the highest to which the greatest Latin artist in lyrical poetry did, when at his best, attain. To one unacquainted with Horace, this ode, not perhaps so perfect as are the odes of Horace in form, and with occasional obscurities of expression which Horace would not have suffered to remain, will give a truer notion of the kind of greatness which he achieved than, so far as I know, could from

any other poem in the language be obtained." Horace imitated the less elaborate form of the ode favoured by Anacreon and the lesser Æolian poets: "this slighter form of ode is what we generally call the Horatian, because the Greek originals, which are known to us only in fragments, were familiar to Horace, and by him affectionately studied and revived" (Gosse). The student should read the ode along with Marvell's *First Anniversary* and *Poem upon the Death of the Protector*, Dryden's *Heroic Stanzas* on Cromwell, Milton's political and controversial *Sonnets*, and the latter's praise of Cromwell at the close of his second *Defensio Populi Anglicani:* also Waller's *Panegyric* on Cromwell. See further on Marvell in the notes to Nos. 21, 57, 58, and 62; and Palgrave's note:—"Cromwell returned from Ireland in 1650, and Marvell probably wrote his lines soon after, whilst living at Nunappleton in the Fairfax household. It is hence not surprising that (st. 21—24) he should have been deceived by Cromwell's professed submissiveness to the Parliament which, when it declined to register his decrees, he expelled by armed violence: one despotism, by natural law, replacing another. The poet's insight has, however, truly prophesied that result in his last two lines. This ode, beyond doubt one of the finest in our language, and more in Milton's style than has been reached by any other poet, is occasionally obscure from imitation of the condensed Latin syntax."

1. **forward**, ardent, eager: comp. *Two Gent.* ii. 1, "You'll still be too *forward.*" **appear**. For this use of the word see *Coriolanus*, iv. 3. 35, "Your noble Tullus Aufidius will *appear* well in these wars": 'appear' = be distinguished.

3. **Nor** = and not. There is here no alternative, and the use of *nor* is probably due to confusion arising from the negative force of the verb 'forsake.' Comp. Abbott, § 408.

4. **sing ... numbers languishing**, compose love songs. On 'sing' comp. notes *L'Alleg.* 7 and 17: and for this use of 'numbers' comp. Milton's *Lines on Shakespeare*, 10, "Thy easy *numbers* flow." 'Numbers,' like the synonymous word *rime* (*Lycidas*, 11 and note), is here used for verse, as in Pope's lines on himself:

> "As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame,
> I lisped in numbers, for the numbers came."

5. **'Tis time, etc.** Contrast the spirit of Horace's reproach to Iccius (*Odes*, i. 29) who is about to exchange his books for Iberian armour; "Cum tu coëmtos undique nobiles Libros Panaeti, Socraticam et domum Mutare loricis Iberis, Pollicitus meliora, tendis."

6. **armour's rust** = rusty armour (by the figure of speech called

Double Enallage or interchange of parts of speech): comp. *Sams. Agon.* 924, "nursing diligence" = diligent nursing. With 'unused armour' comp. 'the idle spear and shield' of *Hymn Nat.* 55.

8. **corslet**, a piece of body armour: also spelt *corselet* (lit. 'a little body': comp. *corset*). Shakespeare has 'corslet', *Cor.* v. 4. 21, "He is able to pierce a *corslet* with his eye."

9. **cease**, linger: here applied to a person, like Lat. *cesso*, to be inactive, to loiter. Comp. 'cease,' *Hymn Nat.* 45, and note.

10. **inglorious.** Comp. Gray's *Elegy*, 15th stanza, "Some mute *inglorious* Milton here may rest." Cromwell had reached the mature age of 43 (comp. line 30) when in 1642 he left his quiet home and farm to fight in the Civil War. Marvell, in the *First Anniversary*, says of Cromwell:

> "For all delight of life thou then didst lose,
> When to command thou didst thyself depose,
> Resigning up thy privacy so dear,
> To turn the headstrong people's charioteer."

12. **his active star.** 'Star' here signifies genius or natural powers (as shown by the next stanza). The language is that of astrology: see notes on *L'Alleg.* 122, *Il Pens.* 24, and comp. *All's Well*, i. 1. 204, "born under a charitable star"; *Much Ado*, v. 2, "under a rhyming planet"; *Rich. II.* iv. 1, "dishonour my fair stars." 'Active' may be taken as part of the predicate.

13. **like the three-fork'd lightning.** Comp. Horace's praise of Drusus, *Odes*, iv. 4:

> "Qualem ministrum fulminis alitem ...
> Olim juventas, et patrius vigor
> Nido laborum propulit inscium."

The meaning is that Cromwell's natural powers could not lie hidden: as Shakespeare says in *Cym.* iii. 3. 79, "How hard it is to hide the sparks of nature." 'Fork'd': comp. Dryden's *Æn.* vi. 791, "the glittering blaze Of pointed lightnings and their *forky* rays."

14. **clouds.** Comp. Milton's tribute to Cromwell in his 16th sonnet; "Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud," etc.

15. **thorough**, through. The word is really a later form of the preposition *through* (spelt *thoru* in *Havelock*, 631, and *thuruh* in the *Ancren Riwle.* The later form is due to the metathesis of the letter *r*. Comp. *M. N. D.* ii. 1. 2, The Fairy's Song:

> "Over hill, over dale
> *Thorough* bush, *thorough* brier,
> Over park, over pale,
> *Thorough* flood, *thorough* fire."

16. **His, its.** See notes *Il Pens.* 128 and *Hymn Nat.* 106.

17. **'tis all one, etc.** The meaning, as given by Mr. Palgrave, is: "Rivalry and hostility are the same to a lofty spirit, and limitation more hateful than opposition." 'All one' = one and the same, quite the same: comp. *Layamon*, 29080, "Tha weoren has *al an*"; Wyclif's *Wicket*, 5, "It is ... *all one* to deny Christes wordes for heresye and Christe for an heretyke."

19. **such,** *i.e.* such as possess high courage. **enclose:** Lat. *includo*, to obstruct or hinder.

21. **burning.** Cromwell is here identified with his star. The allusion is to his success in quelling opposition in Scotland and Ireland: see line 85. In May, 1650, Cromwell returned from Ireland, having in the short period of nine months reduced that country to comparative obedience after a series of sieges.

23. "And at last, through his military successes, secured the downfall of the monarchy." 'Caesar's head' may be taken abstractly as equivalent to 'Caesarism or monarchy that does not respect popular liberties,' and concretely in allusion to Charles's execution. Comp. Milton's *Sonnet to Cromwell*, 5: "On the *neck of crownèd Fortune* proud Hast reared God's trophies and his work pursued." 'Laurels': frequent in the sense of 'successes,' especially military victories. Cromwell had not yet, however, won the 'laureate wreath' of Dunbar (Sept. 1650), or of Worcester (Sept. 1654), if, as is probable, this ode was composed in the summer of 1650.

26. **face ... flame.** The allusion is explained by line 12, where Cromwell's star is said to burst forth like lightning from the clouds. The line is equivalent to "the flaming face of angry heaven": comp. note, line 6.

29. **from his private gardens.** Comp. Horace, *Odes* I. 12, *To Augustus*:

> "Hunc, et incomtis Curium capillis,
> Utilem bello tulit, et Camillum
> Saeva paupertas, et avitus apto
> Cum lare fundus."

Comp. also Marvell's poem *Upon the Death of Cromwell*:

> "He (whom nature all for peace had made,
> But angry Heaven unto war had swayed,
> And so less useful where he most desired,
> For what he least affected was admired)":

also Lucan. 9, 199: "Praetulit arma togae, sed pacem armatus amavit," etc.; and Wordsworth's *Happy Warrior*.

31. **highest plot,** first care, chief anxiety. The omission of the substantive verb, especially where it would be in the subjunctive, is not uncommon: comp. Abbott, §§ 107, 387, 403.

32. **bergamot**, a kind of pear-tree: Fr. *bergamotte*, Ital. *bergamotta*, from Bergamo, a town in Lombardy.

33. **by industrious valour.** This phrase possibly = by valour and by industry; see note on *Il Pens.* 98.

34. **To ruin ... time.** A striking image: Time is here regarded not as a destroyer (Ovid's *Edax rerum*, *Meta.* xv.), but as builder, political constitutions being a gradual growth, the course of which is interrupted or changed by revolutions. Comp. Marvell on *The First Anniversary* of Cromwell's Protectorship:

> "'Tis he the force of scattered time contracts,
> And in one year the work of ages acts."

35. **cast ... another mould.** Comp. Dryden's Heroic Stanzas on Cromwell: "He fought, secure of fortune as of fame, Till *by new maps* the Islands may be shown Of conquests," etc. The reference may be to Cromwell's desire to amend the constitution. The syntax of lines 28-36 should be carefully observed.

39. **plead**, offer as a plea. The meaning of the stanza is not simply that Might is Right, but that the Heaven-sent man of action, who embodies Fate, has no regard for ancient Rights merely as such: see the next stanza. Comp. Cicero's saying, *Silent enim leges inter arma, Mil.* 4. 10. Lines 39 and 40 are parenthetical.

41. **hateth emptiness.** An allusion to the Aristotelian tenet of the impossibility of the existence of a vacuum, expressed in the maxim, "Nature abhors a vacuum." The doctrine was received by the Schoolmen, who spoke of nature's *fuga vacui.* For this use of 'emptiness,' comp. Dryden's *To my Lord Chancellor*, 41:

> "Nor could another in your room have been,
> Unless an *emptiness* had come between."

42. **penetration.** The doctrine of the impenetrability of matter is here alluded to. "Nature, which abhors a vacuum, still less allows new matter to penetrate where there is already matter." Cromwell made room for himself by destroying other kingdoms.

45. In many of the engagements during the Civil War, Cromwell was in the thick of the fight, *e.g.* at Winceby, in 1643, his horse was killed in the first charge, and fell upon him; as he rose, he was again struck down, but recovered himself.

46. **were**: see Abbott, § 301.

47. **Hampton.** When King Charles was a prisoner at Hampton Court, he was in hopes that in the struggle between the Independents and Presbyterians he might be chosen mediator; but at the same time he lived in alarm for his personal safety, and at last resolved to seek safety in flight.

49. **twining subtle fears with hope.** Comp. *F. Q.* iv. 6. 37, "It's best to hope the best, though of the worst affray'd"; and *Com.* 410, "Where an equal poise of hope and fear Does arbitrate the event." 'Twining' = weaving, and 'subtle' belongs to the predicate, = weaving cunningly. 'Subtle' has therefore something of its original sense = finely woven (Lat. *subtilis*): Shakespeare and Jonson both have the word in the sense of 'smooth': see *Nares' Glossary*.

50. **scope,** reach. Comp. *M. for M.* i. 1, "Your *scope* is as mine own": Spenser, *M. Hubbard's Tale,* "To aim their counsels to the fairest *scope.*"

51. **'That might drive Charles into Carisbrook Castle.'** Charles left Hampton Court privately on 11th November, 1647, and went to Titchfield, where he could not long remain concealed. He therefore made overtures to Hammond, governor of the Isle of Wight (which was not far off), but was imprisoned by that officer in Carisbrook Castle. **case** = prison.

53. **the Royal actor.** 'Actor' may be here employed in its legal sense, *i.e.* the *principal* or complainant: Selden, *Laws of England,* i. 20, "The King may not ... determine causes in which himself is *actor.*" On lines 53-64, Trench says: "Lines which in the noble justice they do to a fallen enemy, and to the courage with which he met the worst extremities of fortune, are worthy to stand side by side with that immortal passage in which Horace celebrates the heroic fashion with which Cleopatra accepted the same," viz. *Odes* i. 37. 21-32: *Quae generosius perire quaerens ... Non humilis mulier triumpho.*

55. **round**: attrib. to 'armed bands.' The allusion is to the indignities Charles suffered at his execution, and to his dignified bearing in the midst of them.

59. **keener eye,** *i.e.* keener than the edge of the axe itself; or it may be used absolutely. The King did not flinch.

62. **his helpless right,** *i.e.* the right of him helpless.

65. **assured the forcéd power**: securely established that power acquired by force of arms. Comp. Dryden's *Œdipus,* "As weak states each other's power *assure.*" Palgrave takes 'forced' in the sense of 'fated.'

68. **The Capitol's first line,** etc. See *Livy,* i. 55, for the allusion. The Capitol or Temple of Jupiter at Rome is said to have been so called because in digging its foundations a human head was found in a fresh condition. This was at once accepted as an omen that Rome should be the *head* of the world (Lat. *caput,* head). Marvell turns this legend to excellent account in lines 67-72.

69. **begun**: see note on 'sung,' *Hymn Nat.* 119.

70. **to run**. *i.e.* 'so that they ran,' or 'into running.'

73. See note, line 21. Comp. Dryden's *Stanzas*, 17; "Her safety rescued Ireland to him owes."

78. **confest**: on the spelling of this word, see note, *Hymn Nat.* 65. Many of Cromwell's bitterest enemies admitted that his conquest of Ireland led to a degree of peace and prosperity without example in that country.

82. **still in the Republic's hand**; still at the service of the country. It was after his return from Ireland that he was nominated captain-general of all the forces of the Commonwealth, for the purpose of acting against the Scotch. Comp. Marvell's *First Anniversary*:

> "Abroad a king he seems, and something more,
> At home a subject on the equal floor."

83. **How fit ... obey**. Comp. Dryden's *Stanzas*, 20:

> "When, past all offerings to Feretrian Jove,
> He Mars deposed and arms to gowns made yield,
> Successful counsels did him soon approve
> As fit for close intrigues as open field."

Contrast the words of York in 2 *Hen. VI.* v. 1. 6, "Let them obey that know not how to rule."

85. **presents a kingdom**. The allusion is to Ireland.

87. **what he may**: 'as far as he can,' (Lat. *quod possit*). **forbears**: declines. Comp. '*Forbear* his presence,' *King Lear*, i. 2; "Angry bulls the combat do *forbear*" (Waller); "All this thing I must as now *forbear*," *Cant. Tales*, 887. As a transitive verb 'forbear' usually governs an infin. or participial clause.

89. **ungirt**. There is a zeugma in 'ungirt' as applied to 'sword' (literally) and to 'spoils' (figuratively). 'Spoils': here used in the sense of 'that obtained by the sword' (Lat. *spolium*, spoil, booty). Comp. 1 *Hen. VI.* ii. 1, "I have *loaden me with many spoils* Using no other weapon but his name." Dryden alludes (see note on line 83 above) to Cromwell's conquests as "offerings to Feretrian Jove," *i.e. spolia opima.*

90. **to lay them at the Public's skirt**. It was in 1653 that Cromwell expelled the Parliament and assumed the reins of power: Marvell's language is applicable only to the circumstances of the year 1650, and the poet is justified in comparing him to the hawk that, having killed its quarry, returns quietly to the lure of the falconer, ready to be flown again when occasion offers: he was unlike the ill-trained hawk that 'carries' or flies off with the quarry and refuses to be lured back.

91. Falconry or hawking has a technical language of its own which Marvell follows closely. 'High' = high-flying or soaring; 'falls heavy' = stoops or descends to strike the prey; 'kill' and 'search,' also used technically; 'perch,' applied to the resting-place of the bird when off the falconer's wrist; 'when he first does lure' = at the first lure, the *lure* being a figure or resemblance of a fowl made of leather and feathers to which, when necessary, a real bird was attached to induce the hawk to return to hand. 'Lure,' like most terms of the chase, is of French origin, (old French, *loerre*): comp. Chaucer's *Cant. Tales*, 5997: "With empty hand men may no hawkës *lure.*"

97. **presume,** expect, venture.

98. **his crest does plume,** *i.e.* adorns his crest, sits like a plume upon his crest. Comp. *Par. Lost*, iv. 988, "His stature reached the sky, and *on his crest Sat horror plumed.* 'Plume' is strictly a feather worn as an ornament, and is sometimes used generally of the crest or ornament of the helmet, even though it may not consist of feathers: comp. Chapman's *Iliad* iii., "caught him by the horse-hair plume *that dangled on his crest*"; 1 *Hen. IV.* v. 5, "His valour shown upon our crests to-day"; *Sams. Agon.* 141, "Soiled their *crested* helmets in the dust." Comp. the figurative use of the words 'crest-fallen' and 'crestless.'

100. **crowns,** dignifies, renders illustrious: comp. *Hen. VIII.* v. 4, "no day without a deed to *crown* it."

101. 'Ere long he will be to France a second Caesar and to Italy a second Hannibal,' *i.e.* a conqueror: an allusion to Caesar's victories in Gaul (B.C. 57-50) and to the Second Punic War. Marvell probably mentions France and Italy because he looked upon Cromwell as the defender of the Protestant faith, and in fact it was afterwards the grand object of Milton's foreign policy to unite the Protestant States, with Britain at their head, in a defensive league against Popery; compare Milton's sonnet, "Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints." Difficulties with France were, however, avoided by an alliance: as Dryden in his *Stanzas* says: "Fame of the asserted sea, through Europe blown, Made France and Spain ambitious of his love." Comp. *The First Anniversary, passim.*

103. **all states not free,** *i.e.* where the subjects did not enjoy civil and religious liberty. Comp. Marvell, *In Effigiem Oliveri Cromwell*:

> "Haec est quae toties inimicos umbra fugavit,
> At sub quâ cives otia lenta terunt."

104. **shall climacteric be,** *i.e.* shall threaten them with overthrow. The allusion is to the ancient belief that certain years in life complete natural periods, and are hence peculiarly exposed to disease and death. According to some these periods were

every seventh year: others admitted only those ages obtained by multiplying 7 by the odd numbers, 3, 5, 7, and 9; the grand climacteric being the 63rd year (and, some held, the 81st also). The word 'climacteric,' often used as a noun, is an adjective from 'climacter' = a critical time of life (Gk. κλιμακτήρ, the step of a ladder; κλîμαξ, a ladder). Comp. Sir T. Browne's *Vulgar Errours*, "sixty-three, commonly esteemed the great *climacterical* of our lives." So Cromwell's day of power was to prove a critical time for oppressive states.

105. **Pict**: here put for the people of Scotland. The later Roman authors allude frequently to the *Scoti* and the *Picti*, though it would appear that 'Picti' or Picts was the generic term, and 'Scoti' or 'Scots' a specific term. Eumenius, who first mentions the Picts, alludes to the *Caledones aliique Picti*. The derivation of the word has been disputed—that from *pictus*, painted, is absurd; some give the Gael *pictich*, plunderers, A.S. *pihtas* or *peohtas*, the Picts. Spenser, in *F. Q.*, speaks of "spoilful Picts and swarming Easterlings."

106. **parti-coloured**, changeable, treacherous. So Milton, *Sonnet on Fairfax*, "the false North displays Her broken league"; and Dryden's *Stanzas*, 17, "Treacherous Scotland, to no interest true," etc., on which passage the Globe *Dryden* comments thus: "Scotland is called *treacherous* on account of the rising of 1648 under the Duke of Hamilton for Charles I., and the war afterwards carried on by the Scots for Charles II., which ended, after the defeat of Charles at Worcester, in the complete subjugation of Scotland. Only eighteen months later, Dryden transferred all his enthusiasm to Charles, and Scotch 'treachery' was then virtue." The truth seems to be that the Scots neither acted insincerely towards the English Parliament nor agreed to surrender the King in return for a payment of money. They afterwards found that in the conduct of the war and the policy pursued towards the King they had themselves been misled. Comp. also Waller's *Panegyric* on Cromwell: "The seat of empire, where the Irish come, And the unwilling Scots, to fetch their doom."

107. **this valour**, *i.e.* the valour of Cromwell. **sad**: this word belongs to the predicate; comp. note on 'shrill,' *L'Alleg.* 56.

108. **plaid.** The pronunciation required here is nearly that of the original Celtic word: it is said to be akin to Lat. *pellis*, a skin. In older writers the word is frequently spelt *plad*.

109. **tufted brake**, broken ground covered with an irregular and tangled growth of bushes: comp. 'tufted trees,' *L'Alleg.* 78. The English conqueror might '**mistake**' or fail to find his Scotch enemies in such a hiding-place, as hounds might fail to find the deer.

114. **indefatigably.** Comp. *The First Anniversary*: "While *indefatigable* Cromwell tries, And cuts his way still nearer to the skies"; also *P. L.* ii. 408.

116. **erect**, ready to strike. In this stanza the verbs are in the imperative.

117. "The sword must be kept ready to strike, not only because the dark spirits of conspiracy and rebellion must be checked, but also because the power that is gained by the sword must be maintained by the sword." There is an anacoluthon, or confusion of grammatical constructions, in lines 117-120. The stanza begins as if 'the sword' were to be the grammatical subject as well as the subject of thought: 'The sword, besides the power it has to fight, etc., alone has the power to keep what it has won.' But in line 119 the idea expressed by the 'sword' is given in the words 'the same arts.'

## No. V.

## LYCIDAS.

This poem was written in November, 1637, and appeared in a volume of memorial verses published at Cambridge in 1638 as a tribute to Mr. Edward King. King, a son of Sir John King, Secretary for Ireland, had been admitted to Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1626, so that he was a fellow-student of Milton's. He was made a Fellow in 1630, and seems to have become extremely popular. He was a young man of 'hopeful parts,' and had shown some skill in poetical composition. In 1633 he took his degree of M.A., and remained at Cambridge to study for the Church. In the vacation of 1637 he sailed from Chester on a visit to his friends in Ireland: the ship was wrecked off the Welsh coast, and King went down with it. His death was much lamented by his college friends and they got together a collection of tributary verses to which Milton contributed *Lycidas*.

*Lycidas* is a pastoral elegy, *i.e.* the poet speaks as a shepherd bewailing the loss of a fellow-shepherd. The subjoined analysis

will guide the student in reading it. We do not look in the poem for the keen sense of personal loss that we find in Tennyson's *In Memoriam* or in Milton's own *Epitaphium Damonis*, nor for the sustained scorn that animates Shelley's *Adonais*; but in its tender regret for a dead friend, in its sweet "touches of idealised rural life," in its glimpses of a suppressed passion that was soon to break forth, and in its mingling of a truly religious spirit with all its classical imagery, it reveals to us the greatness of the poetical genius of Milton. It "marks the point of transition from the early Milton, the Milton of mask, pastoral, and idyll, to the quite other Milton, who, after twenty years of hot party struggle, returned to poetry in another vein, never to the 'woods and pastures' of which he took a final leave in *Lycidas*." (Pattison.)

### Analysis.

I. The pastoral proper (the poet sings as shepherd):

1. Occasion of the poem, - - - - - - 1-14
2. Invocation of the Muses, - - - - - 15-22
3. Poet's personal relations with Lycidas, - - 23-36
4. Strain of sorrow and indignation; the loss great and inexplicable:—
   - (1) Poet's own sense of loss, - - - - 37-49
   - (2) The guardian Nymphs could not prevent it, 50-57
   - (3) The Muse herself could not prevent it, though he was her true son, - - - 58-63

[*First rise to a higher mood;* the true poet and the nature of his reward,] - - - - - - 64-84

   - (4) Neptune was not to blame for the loss, - 85-102
   - (5) Camus, representing Cambridge, bewails his loss, - - - - - - - - 103-107
   - (6) St. Peter, the guardian of the Church, sorely misses Lycidas as a true son, - - 108-112

[*Second rise to a higher mood:* The false sons of the Church and their coming ruin,] - - - - 113-131

(7) All nature may well mourn his loss, - - 132-151

(8) Sorrow loses itself in "false surmise," and Hope arises, - - - - - - 152-164

5. Strain of joy and hope: Lycidas is not dead, 165-185

II. The Epilogue (the poet reviews the shepherd's song), 186-193

## Notes.

**Monody**: an ode in which a single mourner bewails (Greek *monos*, single: *ōdē*, a song or ode). *Lycidas* is a typical example of the Elegy, with much of the intense feeling peculiar to the less sustained Ode proper; but its form is that of the Pastoral, and its varied metrical structure is totally unlike that of the modern elegiac stanza.

**height**: so spelt in both the editions published in Milton's life-time, though his usual spelling is 'highth.'

1. **Yet once more.** These words have reference to the fact that Milton had written no English verse for three years, and that he did not yet consider himself sufficiently matured for the poet's task. The words do not imply that he is once more to write an elegiac poem, as if he were referring back to his poems, *On the death of a Fair Infant* and *Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester*: he is thinking of *Comus* (written in 1634).

**laurels, etc.** Laurels, myrtles and ivy are here addressed because they are, in classical poetry, associated with the Muses, and not because the poet thinks them to be specially suggestive of mourning. The laurel has been associated with poetry since the time of the Greeks, who believed that it communicated the poetic spirit: the Romans regarded it as sacred to Apollo. Comp. *Son.* xvi. 9.

2. **myrtles brown.** 'Brown' is a classical epithet of the myrtle; in one of his Odes Horace contrasts the brown myrtle with the evergreen ivy. It was sacred to Venus, and at Greek banquets each singer held a myrtle bough.

**ivy never sere**, evergreen ivy: it was sacred to Bacchus, and in Virgil we read of the laurel of victory being twined with the ivy. Horace also speaks of ivy as being used to deck the brows of the learned: in Christian art it is the symbol of everlasting life.

'Sere' = dry, withered; the same word as *sear* (A.S. *seárian*, to dry up), and cognate with the verb 'to sear,' *i.e.* to burn up.

3. **I come**, etc. "I come to make a poet's garland for myself," *i.e.* to write a poem.

**harsh and crude**, bitter and unripe, because plucked before their due time! this refers to the poet's own unripeness, not to that of Lycidas. Milton's 'mellowing year' had not yet come; his opinion was that poetry was a "work not to be raised from the heat of youth . . but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge." 'Crude' is literally 'raw'; hence 'unprepared,' as 'crude salt'; and hence 'undeveloped,' *e.g.*—

> "Deep versed in books, and shallow in himself,
> *Crude*, or intoxicate, collecting toys."
> *Par. Reg.* iv.

'Cruel' (Lat. *crudelis*) is from the same root.

4. **forced fingers rude.** On the order of the words compare note on *L'Alleg.* 40. 'Forced' = unwilling, not because the poet was unwilling to mourn his friend's loss, but unwilling yet to turn again to poetry. 'Rude': comp. *Il Pens.* 136.

5. **Shatter your leaves.** 'Shatter' is a doublet of *scatter*, and here (as in *Par. Lost*, x. 1063) the former is used where we should now use the latter. 'Shatter' suggests the employment of force, and therefore agrees with the sense of the preceding line.

**mellowing year**: time of maturity. 'Mellow' has here an active sense, *i.e.* 'making mellow.' The word originally means 'soft' like ripe fruit, and hence its present use: it is cognate with *melt* and *mild.* Warton objects to the phrase here used as inaccurate, because the leaves of the laurel, myrtle, and ivy are not affected by the mellowing year: the poet, however, is influenced by the personal application of the words, and is thinking of the poetical fruit he was himself to produce.

6. **sad occasion dear**: see note on l. 4. The original sense of 'dear' is 'precious' (A.S. *deore*), and hence its present meanings in English, viz. 'costly' and 'beloved.' But it is used by Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton in an entirely different sense: comp. 'my *dearest* foe,' 'hated his father *dearly*,' '*dear* peril,' etc. Some would say that 'dear' is here a corruption of *dire*, but this is a mere assumption, though the sense is similar. Craik suggests "that the notion properly involved in it of love, having first become generalised into that of a strong affection of any kind, had thence passed on to that of such an emotion the very reverse of love." The fact seems to be that 'dear' as 'precious' came to denote close relation, and hence was applied generally to whatever intimately concerned a person.

7. **Compels**: the verb is singular, though there are two nominatives, for both together convey the one idea that, but for the occasion of Lycidas' death, the poet would not have been constrained to write.

**to disturb your season due**: to pluck you before your proper season. On 'due' see *Il Pens.* 155. 'Season' is often used to denote 'the usual or proper time'; *e.g.* we speak of fruit as being 'in season,' when it is fit for use, and the adjective 'seasonable' = occurring in good time: comp. *Son.* ii. 7.

8. **ere his prime**: see note on *L'Alleg.* 107. 'Prime' here denotes 'the best part of life': contrast its meaning in *Son.* ix. 1.

9. **peer**, equal (Lat. *par*): see *Arc.* 75.

10. **Who would not sing**, etc.: a rhetorical question, equivalent to 'No one could refuse to sing,' etc.: comp. '*Neget quis carmina Gallo?*' Virgil, *Ecl.* x. 3. The name *Lycidas* occurs in the pastorals of Theocritus and in Virgil's ninth *Eclogue.*

**knew Himself to sing**, was himself able to sing, *i.e.* was a poet. Comp. Horace's phrase, "*Reddere* qui voces jam *scit* puer."

11. **build the lofty rhyme**: comp. the Lat. phrase "condere carmen," to build up a song (Hor. *Epis.* i. 3). 'Build' has reference to the regular structure of the verse: it may also allude to the fact that King had written several short poetical pieces in Latin. 'Rhyme' is here used for 'verse'; the original spelling was 'rime,' and 'rhyme' does not occur in English before 1550: there is now a tendency to revert to the older and more correct spelling. The A.S. *rim* meant 'number,' and *rimcraft*, arithmetic; then the word was applied in a secondary sense to verse having regularity in the number of its syllables and accents, and finally to verse having final syllables of like sound. The change of *i* to *y*, and the insertion of *h* is due to confusion with the Greek word *rhythmos*, measured motion. Shakespeare has 'rime'; and Milton in his prefatory remarks on the verse of *Par. Lost* uses the spelling 'rime,' and speaks of it as the "jingling sound of like endings."

13. **welter**, roll about: in *Par. Lost*, i. 78, Milton speaks of Satan as *weltering* in Hell, in which case the use of the word more nearly accords with modern usage.

**to**, here seems to have the sense of 'in accordance with': comp. lines 33, 44. The use of the prepositions in Elizabethan writers is extremely varied.

It will be noticed that there is no rhyme to this line; so with lines 1, 15, 22, 39, 51, 82, 91, 92, 161. But though these lines have no rhymes adjacent to them, they do not detract from the music of the verse: there are only about sixty different endings in the whole poem, and if assonantal rhymes be admitted the number is still further reduced. Besides, though line 1 has no

adjacent rhyme, similar final sounds occur in lines 61, 63, 165, 167, 182, 183, just as lines 2, 5, 6, 9, 12, 14 rhyme together. This partly explains the resonance and beauty of the verse.

14. **meed**, recompense: comp. "A rosy garland is the victor's meed." *Tit. Andron.* i. 2.

**melodious tear**, tearful melody, an elegiac poem. Comp. the title of Spenser's *Tears of the Muses;* also *Epitaph on M. of W.* 55.

15. **Sisters of the sacred well**, the nine Muses, daughters of Jove: they are often mentioned in Greek poetry as the nymphs of Helicon, because Mount Helicon in Boeotia was one of their favourite haunts; on this mountain were two fountains sacred to the Muses; hence Milton's allusion to 'the sacred well.' Hesiod, in his *Theogony*, speaks of the Muses of Helicon dancing round "the altar of the mighty son of Kronos," *i.e.* Jupiter: this explains the allusion to "the seat of Jove" (Hales). A simpler explanation is that the sacred well is the Pierian fountain at the foot of Mount Olympus, where the Muses were born, and that the 'seat of Jove' is Mount Olympus.

17. **somewhat loudly**, not too softly.

**sweep the string**, strike the lyre. Elsewhere Milton calls music "stringed noise."

18. **Hence**: see note *L'Alleg.* 1.

**coy excuse.** 'Coy' = hesitating: the word is generally applied only to persons in the sense of 'shy'; it is the same word as 'quiet,' both being from Lat. *quietus*, the former through French. Shakespeare uses it as an intrans. verb, and it also occurs in Elizabethan English in the sense of 'to allure.'

19. **Muse**, poet inspired by the Muse: hence the pronoun 'he' in l. 21: see *Son.* i. 13, note. Lines 19 to 22 form a parenthesis: l. 23 resumes the main theme.

20. **lucky words**, words of good luck, words expressing a good wish: see note, *Epitaph on M. of W.* 31.

**my destined urn.** The sense is: "As *I* now write a poem to the memory of Lycidas, so may some one, when *I* am dead, write kindly words about *me*," or 'so' may be the precative *sic*, as in Hor. *Odes*, i. 3. 'Destined urn' = the death that I am destined to die: 'urn' is the vessel in which the Romans deposited the ashes of their dead, sometimes inscribed with the name and history of the dead: comp. 'storied urn,' Gray's *Elegy*, 41.

21. **as he passes**, in passing: comp. Gray's *Elegy*, 20, 'passing tribute of a sigh.'

'Turn,' *i.e.* may turn, co-ordinate with 'may favour' and (may) 'bid,' optative mood.

22. **bid fair peace,** etc.: 'pray that sweet peace may rest upon me in death.' 'Bid,' in the sense of 'pray,' has probably no radical connection with 'bid' = to command, and is nearly obsolete: 'to bid beads' was originally 'to pray prayers' (A.S, *bed*, a prayer). The word *bead* was then applied to the little balls used for counting the prayers, and is now used of any small ball. 'Be' is infinitive: see note, *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, 76.

**sable shroud**: 'the darkness in which I am shrouded,' previously referred to figuratively as 'my destined urn.' Some interpret the words literally = 'my black coffin.' Etymologically 'shroud' is something cut off, and is allied to 'shred'; hence used of a garment. In *Par. Lost*, x. 1068, Milton uses it in this sense, and in *Comus*, 147, in the general sense of a covering or shelter. Its present uses as a noun are chiefly restricted to 'a dress for the dead' and (in the plural) to part of the rigging of a vessel.

23. **nursed,** etc.: a pastoral way of saying that they had been members of the same college at Cambridge, viz. Christ's.

24. **Fed the same flock,** employed ourselves in the same pursuits.

25. **the high lawns**: comp. *L'Alleg.* 71.

26. **Under the opening eyelids,** etc., *i.e.* at dawn. Morn is here personified: comp. *Job*, iii. 9, "Neither let it behold the eyelids of the morning"; Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, ii. 3, "the grey-eyed morn"; see also *Son.* i. 5. The poet represents himself and Lycidas as spending the whole day together, from dawn to sultry noon, and from noon to dewy eve. As Warton points out, Milton was a very early riser, both in winter and summer, and the sunrise had great charm for him. In this poem, however, he may refer to the fixed hours of college duty.

27. **We drove a-field.** The prefix *a* is a corruption of *on*, the noun and preposition being fused together in one adverb: see *L'Alleg.* 20. 'We' is in agreement with 'both,' l. 27; and the verb 'drove' may be regarded as transitive, its object 'the same flock' being understood.

**heard What time,** etc. There are two possible renderings of this passage: (1) 'heard at what time the grey-fly,' etc., the object of 'heard' being the whole of line 28; or (2) 'heard the grey-fly at what time (she) winds,' etc. The latter, though it makes the object of the principal verb also the subject of the dependent verb, is preferable, for in Latin it frequently happens that words belonging to the principal clause are drawn into the relative clause.

28. **grey-fly,** the trumpet-fly, so called from the sharp humming sound produced by it, generally in the heat of the day; hence the allusion to its "sultry horn."

29. **Battening,** *sc.* 'and afterwards.' Battening = feeding, making fat: here used transitively, though generally intransitive = to grow fat. The same root is seen in *better*. In this line *with* = along with, at the time of.

30. **Oft till the star,** etc. 'Oft' modifies 'battening.' The star here referred to is Hesperus, an appellation of the planet Venus: see note, *Hymn to Diana*, 5. In *Comus*, 93, it is "the star that bids the shepherds fold."

31. **sloped his westering wheel:** similarly in *Comus*, 98, the setting sun is called 'the *slope* sun,' and we read of 'his glowing axle' just as here we read of the star's 'wheel' or course in the heavens. 'Westering' = passing towards the west: now obsolete.

32. **rural ditties:** pastoral language for the early poetic efforts of Milton and King. 'Ditty' (Lat. *dictatum*, something dictated) originally meant the words of a song as distinct from the musical accompaniment; now applied to any little poem intended to be sung: comp. "am'rous ditties," *Par. Lost*, i. 447.

33. **Tempered,** attuned, timed (Lat. *temperare*, to regulate); the word qualifies ditties, and hence the semi-colon at end of l. 33. Masson has a semi-colon at end of l. 32; 'tempered' would then be absolute construction, or it would qualify 'Satyrs.'

**to the oaten flute.** 'To'; see note l. 13. The oaten flute is the flute or pipe made of reeds, and the favourite instrument in pastoral poetry: in Latin it is *avena* (= oats, a straw, and hence a shepherd's pipe): comp. lines 86, 88. 'Oaten'; the termination 'en' denotes 'made of': modern English has a tendency to use the noun as an adjective in such cases, *e.g.* a *gold* ring. Most of the adjectives in 'en' that still survive do not now denote the material, but simply resemblance, *e.g.* 'golden hair' = hair of the colour of gold. Such adjectives as birchen, beechen, firen, glassen, hornen, treen, thornen, etc., are now obsolete.

34. **Satyrs ... Fauns**; pastoral language for the men attending Cambridge at the same time as Milton and King. The Satyrs of Greek mythology were the representatives of the luxuriance of nature, and were always described as engaged in light pleasures, such as dancing, playing on the lute, or syrinx (see *Arc.* 106), etc. The Romans confounded them with their Fauni, represented as half men, half goats (Lat. *semicaper*), with cloven feet and horns; the chief was Faunus, whom the Romans identified with Pan (see *Arc.* 106).

36. **old Damœtas:** this pastoral name occurs in Virgil, Theocritus, and Sidney: it here probably refers to Dr. W. Chappell, the tutor of Christ's College in Milton's time. Masson thinks it may be "Joseph Meade or some other well-remembered Fellow of Christ's."

38. **Now thou**, etc., *i.e.* now that thou art gone = seeing that thou art gone: comp. *Son.* xx. 2, and Wordsworth's *Simon Lee*, 25.

**must return**: 'must' here expresses certainty with regard to the future = thou wilt certainly never return. In ordinary use it implies either compulsion, *e.g.* 'He must obey me,' or permission, *e.g.* 'You must not come in': the latter is the original sense of the A.S. verb *motan* (past tense *moste*).

39. **Thee**: object of 'mourn,' l. 41. Ovid (*Met.* xi.) similarly represents birds, beasts, and trees as lamenting the death of Orpheus.

40. **gadding**, straggling. To *gad* is to wander about idly: Bacon calls Envy a *gadding* passion, and in the Bible we find—"Why *gaddest* thou about so much to change thy way," *Jer.* ii. Cicero uses the word *erraticus* (wandering) in connection with the vine.

41. **their echoes**, *i.e.* of the caves: comp. Song to Echo in *Comus*. In Shelley's *Adonais* the same idea occurs—

> "Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
> And *feeds her grief* with his remembered lay."

42. **hazel copses green**. See note *L'Alleg.* 40. 'Copse,' a wood of small growth, is a corruption of *coppice* (Fr. *couper*, to cut).

44. **Fanning**: moving their leaves in unison with the music: with 'to' in this line, comp. 'to' in lines 13 and 33.

45. Lines 45 to 48 are in apposition to 'such,' line 49: thus 'Thy loss to shepherd's ear was such' = 'Thy loss to shepherd's ear was as killing as,' etc. The word 'such' is redundant, being rendered necessary by the separation of the words 'as killing' from the rest of the principal clause.

**killing**, deadly, terrible.

**canker**: see *Arc.* 53; the more definite form 'canker-worm' is often used, just as 'taint-worm' is used in the next line. Warton notes that Shakespeare is fond of this simile.

46. **taint-worm**, also called the 'taint.' "There is found in summer a spider called a *taint*, of a red colour, and so little that ten of the largest will hardly outweigh a grain." Browne, *Vulgar Errours*. 'Taint' is cognate with *tint*, *tinge*, and *tincture*.

**weanling herds**, young animals that have just been weaned from the mother's milk. *Ling* is the diminutive suffix, as in year*ling*, dar*ling*, found*ling*. 'To wean' (A.S. *wenian*) is strictly 'to accustom to,' but is now used only in the sense of 'to dis-accustom to.' The connection between the two meanings is obvious. 'Weanling' also occurs as 'yeanling' or 'eanling.'

47. **gay wardrobe**, bright and varied colours. By metonymy

'wardrobe,' in which clothes are kept, is applied to its contents: the flowers are here said to clothe themselves in gay colours. 'Wardrobe' = guard-robe (Fr. *garde-robe*): the *usual* law in such compounds is that the first word denotes the purpose for which the thing denoted by the second is used, *e.g.* inkstand, teaspoon, writing-desk.

48. **white-thorn,** hawthorn: the flower is sometimes called "May blossom."

49. **to shepherd's ear,** *sc.* 'when heard by him.' The use of 'killing' is here an instance of syllepsis: as applied to the herds, etc., it means literally 'deadly'; as used in this line it means 'dreadful.'

50. **Where were ye,** etc. This is imitated from the first Idyll of Theocritus, and the tenth Eclogue of Virgil, "but with the substitution of West British haunts of the Muses for their Greek haunts in those classic passages."

**remorseless deep,** unpitying or cruel sea; an instance of the pathetic fallacy which attributes human feelings to inanimate objects.

52. **neither.** This answers to 'nor' in line 55, so that the sense is "You were playing *neither* on the steep ... *nor* on the shaggy top."

**the steep,** 'the mountain where the Druidic bards are buried.' Milton probably refers to a mountain in Carnarvon, called Penmaenmawr, or to Kerig-i-Druidion in Denbigh, where there was a burying-place of the Druids. The Druids were the minstrels, priests, and teachers among the ancient Celts of Britain: in his *History of England* Milton calls them "our philosophers, the Druids." The word 'your' implies that the bards were followers of the Muses.

54. **shaggy top of Mona high:** the high interior of the island of Anglesey (known by the Romans as Mona), once the chief haunt of the Welsh Druids. The island was once thickly wooded: Selden says, "The British Druids took this isle of Anglesey, then well-stored with thick wood and religious groves; in so much that it was called *Inis Dowil*, 'The Dark Isle,' for their chief residence." This explains the allusion in the words 'shaggy top.'

55. **Deva ... wizard stream,** the river Dee, on which stands Chester, the port from which King sailed on his ill-fated voyage. In his poem *At a Vacation Exercise* Milton calls it "ancient hallowed Dee." Spenser also speaks of it as haunted by magicians, and Drayton tells how, being the ancient boundary between England and Wales, it foreboded evil fortune to that country towards which it changed its course and good to the other. The word 'wizard' is therefore very appropriately used

here. In fact these lines (52-55) are interesting for two reasons: (1) their appropriateness to the subject, seeing that King was drowned off the Welsh coast; (2) their evidence that Milton had already been engaged in careful reading of British legendary history with a view to the composition of an epic poem on some British subject—the first hints of which are conveyed in the Latin poems *Mansus* (1638) and *Epitaphium Damonis* (1639). In the former of these we find reference to the Druids, and in the latter to King Arthur.

'Wizard' is one of the few survivals in English of words with the termination *ard* or *art*, *e.g.* sluggard, braggart: the suffix had an intensive, and also a somewhat contemptuous force, though here 'wizard' merely denotes 'magical.'

56. **Ay me!** this exclamatory phrase = ah me! Its form is due to the French *aymi* = 'ah, for me!' and has no connection with 'ay' or 'aye' = yes. Comp. Lat. *me miserum.*

**fondly**, foolishly: comp. *Il Pens.* 6 and *Son.* xix. 8.

57. There is an anacolouthon or break in the construction in the middle of this line. The poet, in addressing the nymphs, is about to say, 'Had you been there, you might have saved Lycidas'; but, recollecting that their presence could have done no good, he adds, 'for what could that have done?'

58. **the Muse herself**: Calliope, the Muse of epic poetry, and mother of Orpheus, who is here called 'her enchanting son' (see *L'Alleg.* 145, note). His grief for the loss of Eurydice led him to treat the Thracian women with contempt, and in revenge they tore him in pieces in the excitement of their Bacchanalian festivals (here called 'the hideous roar'). His head was thrown into the river Hebrus, and, being carried to the sea, was washed across to Lesbos, an island in the Ægean Sea. His lyre was also swept ashore there. Both traditions simply express the fact that Lesbos was the first great seat of the music of the lyre.

60. **universal nature**, all nature, animate and inanimate: see note on line 39.

61. **rout**, a disorderly crowd (as explained above). The word is also used in the sense of 'a defeat'; and is cognate with *route*, *rote*, and *rut*. The explanation is that all come from the Lat. *ruptus*, broken: a 'rout' is the breaking up of an army, or a crowd broken up; a 'route' is a way broken through a forest; a 'rote' is a beaten route or track, hence we say "to learn by *rote*"; and a 'rut' is a track left by a wheel.

62. **visage**; see note on *Il Pens.* 13.

63. **swift Hebrus**: a translation of Virgil's *volucrem Hebrum* (*Æn.* i. 321), supposed to be a corrupt reading, as the river is not swift.

64. **what boots it**, etc. : 'Of what profit is it to be a poet in these days when true poetry is slighted ? Would it not be better, as many do, to give one's self up to trifling.' The passage is of interest, because (1) it illustrates Milton's high aspirations, and (2) it directs our attention to the historical fact that the literary outburst which began in 1580 was over. The poets who were alive in 1637 were such as Wither, Herrick, Shirley, May, Davenant, Suckling, Crashaw, etc. : they could not be compared with Spenser, Shakespeare, Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, and others.

The word 'boot' (A.S. *bót*=profit) is now chiefly preserved in the adjective *bootless* = profitless, and in the phrase *to boot*=in addition (where 'boot' is a noun governed by the preposition 'to,' not the infinitive) : from this noun comes the A.S. verb *bētan*, to amend, to make *better*.

**uncessant**, incessant. The tendency of modern English is to use a prefix belonging to the same language as the body of the word, so that 'cessant,' which is of Latin origin, takes the Lat. negative prefix *in*. This rule was not recognised in older English ; hence in Milton we find such forms as 'unactive,' 'uncessant,' and in other writers, 'unpossible,' 'unglorious,' 'unpatient,' 'unhonest,' etc. On the other hand, there are anomalies in our present English that did not exist in the Elizabethan literature, *e.g.* 'uncertain' (formerly and more regularly 'incertain'), 'unfortunate,' etc. : comp. l. 176.

65. **tend** : the trans. verb (as here) is a short form of 'attend.' 'Tend,' to move in a certain direction, is intransitive.

**homely, slighted**, etc. These adjectives qualify 'trade, not 'shepherd.' 'Trade' here denotes the practice of poetry. In lines 113-120 the shepherd's trade is not poetry, but the work of the Church. The former application of the words is found in all pastoral poetry, the latter in the Scriptures.

In *Com.* 748, Milton gives the derivation of 'homely' ; 'It is for homely features to keep home' ; comp. *Son.* xii a. 20, note. Spenser, in his *Shepherd's Calendar*, speaks of the 'homely shepherd's quill.'

66. **strictly**, rigorously, devotedly.

**meditate the thankless Muse** : apply one's self to the thankless task of writing poetry.

'Meditate' is here used transitively like the Lat. *meditor*, which does not mean merely to ponder or think upon, but to apply one's self with close attention to a subject. The phrase occurs in Virgil (*Ecl.* i. 2 ; vi. 8). As a transitive verb, 'meditate' has now the meaning of 'purpose'; *e.g.* he meditated revenge.

'Thankless,' as applied to the Muse,' is 'ungrateful': comp. Virgil, *Æn.* vii. 425.

67. **Were it not**, etc.: subjunctive mood.

**use**, are accustomed (to do). The present tense of the verb 'to use' is obsolete in this sense: we can say 'he used to do this,' but not 'he uses to do this.' The present tense is found in the following passage: "They *use* to place him that shall be their captain upon a stone always reserved for that purpose."—*Spenser*. Compare such words as *ought, must, durst, wot, wont*, etc., all originally past tenses: see note, *Il. Pens.* 37.

68. **Amaryllis ... Neæra's hair.** These are the names of imaginary shepherdesses from the Greek and Latin pastorals. (See Virgil's first three *Eclogues.*) Milton expresses, in one of his prose works, great fondness for the 'smooth elegiac poets,' but in the last of his Latin Elegies he announces his intention of turning his mind to other subjects—

> . . . "Learning taught me, in his shady bower,
> To quit Love's servile yoke, and spurn his power."
> *Cowper's Translation.*

Warton thinks that the allusion to Amaryllis and Neæra is made with special reference to certain poems by Buchanan in which he addresses females by these names.

69. **tangles**, locks or curls; comp. Peele's *David and Bethsabe*—

> "Now comes my lover tripping like the roe,
> And brings my longings *tangled* in her hair."

70. Fame is the spur that incites the noble mind to high efforts: comp. *Par. Reg.* iii. 25—

> "Glory, the reward
> That sole excites to high attempts the flame
> Of most erected spirits, most tempered pure
> Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,
> All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
> And dignities and powers, all but the highest."

Also Spenser: "Due praise, that is the *spur* of doing well."

**clear**, in the sense of Lat. *clarus*, noble, pure. 'Spirit' is the object of 'doth raise.'

71. This bracketed line is in apposition to 'Fame,' though in reality it is not fame that is meant but the love of fame, which, as Massinger says, is 'the last weakness wise men put off.' The idea is found in *Tacitus*: "Etiam sapientibus cupido gloriae novissima exuitur"; and by the use of the word *that* in line 71, Milton seems to signify that he regarded the expression as a well-known one.

72. This line states the high efforts to which the love of fame

will incite men, viz., "to scorn delights and live laborious days."

73. **guerdon**, reward: grammatically, object of 'find.' The formation of this word is peculiar; the second part is from Lat. *donum*, gift; and the first part from an old High German word meaning 'back,' and corresponding to the Lat. prefix *re* in *re*ward, etc.

74. **blaze**: comp. *Arc.* 74 and *Par. Reg.* iii. 47: "For what is glory but the blaze of fame?" The whole of the passage in *Par. Reg.*, like this part of *Lycidas*, has a certain biographical interest, for we see here Milton's estimate of the worth of popular applause.

75. **blind Fury**; nomin. to verb 'comes.'

The three goddesses of vengeance were called Furies by the Romans, but Milton's reference to 'the abhorred shears' shows that he is thinking of one of the Fates (see *Arc.* 65, note), viz. Atropos. She is here said to be blind because she is no respecter of persons. Milton probably used the word *Fury* in a general sense as signifying the cruelty of Fate, or he may mean to denote Destiny: comp. Shak. *King John*, iv. 2, "Think you I have the shears of Destiny."

76. **thin-spun life**, *i.e.* the thin-spun or fragile thread of life, in allusion to the uncertainty of human life as shown in the case of Edward King. For the form of the adjective comp. *Il Pens.* 66.

**"But not the praise."** Phoebus (*i.e.* Apollo), as the god of song, here checks the poet, reminding him that though Fate may deprive the poet of life it cannot deprive him of his due meed of true praise. The construction is, "Fate slits the thin-spun life, but does not slit the praise": there is therefore a zeugma in 'slits'; it is applied to life in its literal sense 'to cut,' and to praise in the sense of 'to intercept.'

77. **touched my trembling ears**, *i.e.* touched the ears of me trembling: comp. note on *L'Alleg.* 124. Masson's acute note on this is: "A fine poetical appropriation of the popular superstition that the tingling of a person's ears is a sign that people are talking of him. What Milton had been saying about poetic fame might be understood, he saw, as applicable to himself." Comp. Virgil's *Eclog.* vi. 3. The rhymes of lines 70-77 are *a b a b a c a c.*

78. 'Fame is not found in this life, and dwells *neither* in the glittering leaf displayed in the world, *nor* in the wide-spread rumour.'

**mortal soil**, this earth. The epithet *mortal* is transferred from life to the scene of life. 'Mortal' here denotes 'associated

with death'; Milton also uses it in the senses of 'causing death' = fatal, and 'human.'

79. **Nor ... nor**, neither ... nor: common in poetry.

**glistering**; from the same base as *glisten*, *glitter*, *glint*, *gleam*, *glow*.

**foil**, applied to a leaf or thin plate of shining metal placed under a gem to increase its lustre (Lat. *folium*, a leaf): so Fame is not a gem that requires to be set off by the use of some foil; it shines by its own light. 'Set off' qualifies 'Fame,' not 'foil.'

80. **lies**, dwells; as often in Old English. Comp. *L'Alleg.* 79.

81. **by**, by means of, *i.e.* because it is perceived by. Comp. "God is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity."

82. **perfect witness**, searching and infallible discrimination. The old spelling of this word (which is found in Milton) is *perfet*, the French form being *parfait* (Lat. *perfectus*, done thoroughly).

83. **pronounces lastly**, decides finally: see *Son.* xxi. 3, note.

84. **meed**: see line 14, note. This ends the sublime strain of Phoebus, which (as Milton says in line 87) "was of a higher mood" than the ordinary pastoral. He now returns again to his 'oaten pipe' (see *Analysis*).

85. **Arethuse**: see *Arc.* 30. The poet invokes the fountain of Arethusa in the island of Ortygia, off Sicily, because Theocritus was a Sicilian; hence the words "Sicilian Muse," l. 133. He also invokes the Mincius, which falls into the river Po, below Mantua in North Italy, because Virgil was a native of Mantua. Hence the significance of the words 'honoured flood' and 'vocal reeds.'

88. **my oat**, my pastoral muse. The construction is peculiar, 'oat' being apparently nominative to 'proceeds' and 'listens.' We may either take the nominative *I* out of the possessive *my*, or suppose that the Muse listens; but see note on *L'Alleg.* 122, "judge the prize."

89. **the Herald of the Sea**: Triton, represented by the Romans as bearing a 'wreathed horn' or shell, which he blew at the command of Neptune in order to still the waves of the sea. He is here supposed by Milton to appear 'in Neptune's plea,' *i.e.* to defend him from the suspicion of having caused Lycidas' death by a storm, and to discover the real cause of the shipwreck. 'Plea' and 'plead' are cognate words.

91. **felon**, here used attributively. The origin of the word is doubtful; its radical sense is probably 'treacherous' (as in this passage). In the MS. the poet wrote *fellon*, but this is not, as some think, a different word, though it may be cognate with *fell* = fierce.

92. The mark of interrogation at the end of this line and the use of the present perfect tense 'hath doomed,' show that it gives the actual words of Triton's question; otherwise the dependent verb (by sequence of tenses) would have been 'had doomed.'

93. **of rugged wings**, 'rugged-winged,' having rugged wings, *i.e.* tempestuous.

94. **each beakèd promontory**, each pointed cape. Observe the proximity of the words *every* and *each*, where we might have expected *every ... every*, or *each ... each:* comp. *Com.* 19 and 311. 'Every' is radically = ever each (Old English *everoelc*): it denotes each without exception, and can now only be used with reference to *more than two* objects; 'each' may refer to *two or more.*

95. They (*i.e.* the waves and winds) knew nothing of the fate of Lycidas. Observe the double or feminine rhymes,—promon-*tory*, *story*.

96. **sage Hippotadès**; the wise ruler of the winds, Æolus, son of Hippotès: he brings the answer of the winds to the effect "that not a blast was from its dungeon strayed." 'Hippotadés' is a Greek patronymic, formed by the suffix *-des*, seen in Boreades, son of Boreas; Priamides, son of Priam, etc. Comp. Homer's *Odyssey*, x. 2.

97. **was ... strayed**: in modern English we say 'had strayed'; the auxiliary 'have' being now more common than 'be.' See note, *Son.* ii. 6, and comp. 'was dropt,' l. 191.

**his dungeon**: the winds are probably here personified, hence the pronoun 'his' (but see note, *Il Pens.* 128). Milton's language here is evidently suggested by Virgil's picture of the winds (*Æn.* i. 50), where they are represented as confined within a vast cave: Virgil there speaks of Æolia as the 'fatherland' of the winds, thus poetically endowing them with personality. 'Dungeon,' prison, literally 'the chief tower': it is another form of the old French word *donjon*, from Lat. *dominionem*, and therefore cognate with 'dominion,' 'domain,' etc.

98. **level brine**, the placid sea. 'Brine' denotes salt water, and by a figure of speech is applied to the ocean whose waters are salt.

99. **Panopè and her sister**, the daughters of Nereus, hence called Nereids: in classical mythology they were the nymphs who dwelt in the Mediterranean Sea, distinct from the fresh-water nymphs, and the nymphs of the great Ocean. Their names and duties are given in the *Faery Queene*, iv. 11. 49; see also Virgil, *Georg.* i. 437.

100. **fatal and perfidious bark**, the ill-fated and treacherous ship in which King sailed: it went down in perfectly calm weather, and hence the force of Triton's plea on Neptune's behalf. 'Bark,' also spelt 'barque,' is etymologically the same as 'barge'; but the latter is now only used of a kind of boat. 'Fatal' = appointed by fate; 'perfidious' = faithless (Lat. *per*, away; and *fides*, faith).

101. **Built in the eclipse**: this circumstance is imagined by the poet in order to account for the wreck of the ship, eclipses being popularly supposed to bring misfortune upon all undertakings begun or carried on while they lasted. The moon's eclipse was specially unlucky, but in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* we read also of "disasters in the sun," and similarly in *Par. Lost*, i. 597. An eclipse was supposed to be a favourite occasion for the machinations of witches: in *Macbeth*, iv. 1 we read that "slips of yew slivered in the moon's eclipse" formed one of the ingredients in the witches' cauldron.

**rigged with curses dark.** To rig a ship is to fit it with the necessary sails, ropes, etc.; and by a bold figure the poet says that King's vessel was fitted out with curses; at least this is the sense if 'with' be taken to mean 'by means of.' Some prefer to interpret 'with' as 'in the midst of,' the sense being that the ship was cursed by the witches while it was being rigged.

102. **That sunk**: 'that,' relative pronoun, antecedent 'bark.' 'Sunk' = sank; for the explanation compare Morris's *English Accidence*—"The verbs *swim*, *begin*, *run*, *drink*, *shrink*, *sink*, *ring*, *sing*, *spring*, have for their proper past tenses *swam*, *began*, *ran*, etc., preserving the original *a;* but in older writers (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries) and in colloquial English we find forms with *u*, which have come from the passive participles."

**that sacred head of thine.** This is a pleonastic expression: it will be noticed that when the noun denotes the possession of one object only, this form is inadmissible unless preceded by a demonstrative (as here), *e.g.* we can say '*that* body of yours,' because a person has only one body, but we cannot say 'a body of yours,' as this word would imply that one of a number was referred to.

'Sacred': etymologically signifies the same as 'consecrated,' 'set apart,' and hence 'devoted': it may be used here of Lycidas as devoted to death: comp. *Par. Lost*, iii. 208—"To destruction *sacred* and devote."

103. **Camus**: "the genius of the Cam River and of Cambridge University was naturally one of the mourners for Lycidas." 'Reverend sire' is an allusion to the antiquity of the University. *Sire*, *sir*, *senior*, *seignior*, and *signor* all owe their origin to the nomin. or accus. form of the Lat. *senior*, elder.

103. **went footing slow**, passed slowly along, wended his way slowly. As Camus comes forward to bewail Lycidas we should naturally read 'came' in this line instead of 'went,' because in modern English the meanings of 'go' and 'come' are opposed. But it is not so here: *went* is radically the past tense of *wend* (A.S. *wendan*, to turn), but is now used in place of the obsolete past of *go*; so that it has become necessary to make a new form for the past tense of 'wend,' viz. *wended.* For 'go' cf. Shakespeare, 2 *Hen. IV.* ii. l. 191; *M. N. D.* i. l. 115. *Wend* is the causal form of *wind*, and is therefore peculiarly appropriate to the winding Cam. It is now nearly obsolete except in the phrase 'to wend one's way.'

'Foot' as a verb is generally followed by the cognate accusative 'it,' but it then denotes sprightly movement, and is therefore unsuitable here (see *L'Alleg.* 33). 'Slow-footing' occurs in Spenser as a compound adjective.

104. **His mantle hairy**, etc. Here 'mantle' and 'bonnet' are in the absolute case. The 'hairy mantle' is the hairy river-weed that is found floating on the Cam, and the 'bonnet' is the sedge that grows in the river and along its edge. In his first Elegy Milton alludes to the reedy or sedgy Cam (*arundiferum Camum, juncosas Cami paludes*). 'Bonnet,' now generally applied to a head-dress worn by women, here denotes (as it still does in Scotland) a man's cap.

105. **Inwrought with figures dim**, having indistinct markings *worked into* it. 'Inwrought' is a participial adjective (as if from a verb *inwork*, which is not in use), qualifying 'bonnet': to *work in* figures into cloth, etc., is to embroider or adorn. Milton refers to the peculiar natural markings seen on the leaves of sedge, especially when they begin to wither.

The edge of the 'sedge bonnet' of the Cam is said to be like the edge of the hyacinth because it is marked: the hyacinth was fabled by the ancients to have sprung from the blood of the Spartan youth Hyacinthus, and the markings on the petals were said to resemble the words *αἰ αἰ* (alas! alas!) or the letter Υ, the Greek initial of Hyacinthus: hence the significance of the words 'sanguine' and 'inscribed with woe.' The poet Drummond calls the hyacinth "that sweet flower that bears in *sanguine* spots the tenor of our woes." Similarly Milton fancies that the markings on the sedge may signify the grief of Cambridge for the death of Lycidas.

106. **Like to that sanguine flower.** Here the preposition 'to is expressed after 'like': see note on *Il Pens.* 69. 'Sanguine,' bloody, an illustration of Milton's fondness for the primary sense of words (Lat. *sanguis*, blood): its present meaning is 'hopeful,' and the connecting link between the two meanings is found in the old theory of the four humours of the body, an excess of the

bloody humour making persons of a hopeful disposition. In the primary sense we now use 'sanguinary.'

107. **reft**: comp. 'bereft,' *Son.* xxii. 3.

**quoth he**, he said: this verb always precedes its nominative, and is used only in the first and third persons: it is really a past tense (though occasionally used as a present), and the original present is seen only in the compound *be-queath*.

**pledge**, child: comp. Lat. *pignus*, a pledge or security, also applied (generally in the plural) to children or relations.

108. **Last came ... did go**: see note on *Il Pens.* 46.

109. **The Pilot of the Galilean Lake**: St. Peter, here introduced as Head of the Church, because King had been intended for the Church. St. Peter was at first a fisherman on the Sea of Galilee (*Matt.* iv. 18) and became one of the disciples of Christ. It was of him that Christ said: "Upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee *the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*" (*Matt.* xvi. 18. *R. V.*) It was he also whom Christ constituted the Shepherd of the Christian flock by his parting charge: "Feed my lambs." (*John* xxi. 15.) In both of his capacities, as Head and Shepherd of the Christian Church, he mourns the death of one who promised to be a true disciple, unlike the false shepherds who crept into the Church "for their bellies' sake."

110. **Two massy keys**: the keys that St. Peter carried as the symbol of his power are usually spoken of as two in number (though there is no such statement in the Scriptures), because he had power both in heaven and hell, the golden one opening the gates of heaven, and the iron one forcibly closing them: comp. *Com.* 13:

> "that golden key
> That opes the palace of eternity."

**'Massy,'** massive: see note *Il Pens.* 158.

**of metals twain**, made of two different metals: *twain* (cognate with *two*) is, in older English, used (1) predicatively, (2) when it follows the noun (as here), and (3) as a noun.

111. **amain**, with force: *a* is here the usual adverbial prefix (see note l. 27); *main* = strength or force, as in the phrase 'with might and main.' The adjective *main*, = principal, is only indirectly connected with it, being from Lat. *magnus*, great. 'Ope' for 'open' is found in poetry, both as verb and adjective.

112. **mitred locks**, locks crowned with a bishop's head-dress, St. Peter being regarded as the first bishop of the Church.

**stern bespake**, said with indignation. Milton sometimes used the verb *bespeak* as a transitive verb = to address (a person);

in modern English both these senses are obsolete and it now denotes 'to *speak for*,' 'to engage beforehand.'

113. Here for the second time the poem rises far above the ordinary pastoral strain and Milton puts into the mouth of St. Peter his first explicit declaration of his sympathy with the Puritans in their opposition to the attempt of Archbishop Laud to introduce changes in the ritual of the English and Scottish Churches, an attempt which hastened the downfall of Charles I. and Laud himself: see notes on *Son.* xii a., xv., xvi. As early as 1584, Spenser had also written in vehement strain against the corruptions of the Church, and there is a faint echo of Spenser's language here and there throughout Milton's indignant lines. (See *Analysis*).

**spared for thee**, etc., *i.e.* given up, *in return for* you, an ample number of the corrupt clergy.

114. **Enow**: here used as in Early English to denote a number; it is also spelt *anow*, and in Chaucer *ynowe*, and is the plural of *enough*. It still occurs as a provincialism in England.

**such as**: see *L'Alleg.* 29.

**for their bellies' sake**: comp. *Son.* xvi. 14, where the reference is to the Presbyterian clergy; here he means the Episcopalian ministers.

115. The Church is a sheepfold into which the "hireling wolves" (see *Son.* xvi. 14), *i.e.* the corrupt clergy, intrude themselves; their only care being to share the endowments of the Church. One of Milton's pamphlets was entitled *The likeliest Means to remove Hirelings out of the Church.* Comp. *Par. Lost*, iv. 192, and *John*, x. 12.

116. "They make little reckoning of any care other than," etc.

117. **scramble**: this word, and 'shove' in the next line, express the eager and rude striving for those church endowments that are here called 'the shearers' feast.' The 'worthy bidden guest' denotes the conscientious and faithful clergy.

119. **Blind mouths**! a figure of speech into which Milton condenses the greatest contempt. 'Mouths' is put by synecdoche for 'gluttons,' and 'blind' is therefore quite applicable. They are blind guides "whose Gospel is their maw" (*Son.* xvi. 14). By saying that they scarcely know how to hold a sheep-hook or crook (which is the symbol of the shepherd's task) the poet signifies their unfitness for 'the faithful herdman's art,' *i.e.* for pastoral duty.

120. **the least**, may be regarded as an adverbial phrase modifying 'belongs,'=in the least; or it may be attributive to 'aught.'

121. **herdman** : this spelling, which occurs in the Bible, is not now in use, nor is it that of Milton's manuscript; he wrote 'herdsman,' which is current in the restricted sense of 'one who herds *cattle*.' Milton applies it to a shepherd, the word being then used generally.

122. **What recks it them ?**=what does it reck them ?=what do they care ? Here we have an old impersonal use of the verb 'to reck,' which still survives in the adjective *reckless*.

**They are sped**, they have sped=they have gained their object. For the use of the auxiliary 'are' instead of 'have,' see note on l. 97. One of the early meanings of *speed* is 'success,' and *to speed* is to be successful (as in this line) : comp. *Par. Lost*, x. 39. It occurs in older English both of good and ill success, and also in the sense of 'to assist' (Shakespeare has 'God speed the Parliament'), 'to send away quickly,' 'to destroy,' etc.

123. **when they list**, when it pleases them. The verb *list* is, in older English, generally used impersonally, and in Chaucer we find 'if thee lust' or 'if thee list'=if it please thee. It is derived from A.S. *lust*, pleasure, and survives in the adjective *listless*, of which the older form was *lustless*. The noun *lust* has lost the meaning it had in A.S. and still has in German, and now signifies 'longing desire.'

**lean and flashy songs**: pastoral language for 'their teaching, which is without substance or nourishment to their hearers.' 'Flashy'=showy but worthless: comp. Dryden, "*flashy* wit"; and Bacon, "distilled books are ... *flashy* things."

124. **Grate**, etc. : 'sound harshly on their weak and wretched oaten pipes'—a description in pastoral language of the preaching of the careless clergy. 'Grate' and 'scrannel' are here skilfully chosen to express contempt. 'Grate': the nominative of this verb is 'songs,' the sense being intermediate between the active form 'they grate their songs,' and the passive, 'their songs are grated.' Hence some would regard this as a middle voice. In Latin and Greek the passive voice arose from the middle or reflective verb. Comp. *Il. Pens.* 161.

**scrannel**, not found in English dictionaries, being a provincialism='lean': the harsh sound of the word also suits the passage. Comp. Virgil's *Ecl.* iii. 26.

125. **The hungry sheep**, the neglected congregations. Compare Milton's *Epitaph Damon.*—

"Nor please me more my flocks ; they, slighted, turn
Their unavailing looks on me, and mourn."

*Cowper's Translation.*

126. **swoln with wind**, etc., with minds filled with unsound and unwholesome teaching.

**rank**=coarse, foul: 'draw'=inhale, *e.g.* to *draw* breath: comp. *Par. Lost*, viii. 284, "From where I first *drew* air." The Lat. *haurio* has the same sense.

127. **Rot inwardly**, etc., have their hearts corrupted, and disseminate false doctrines.

128. **Besides.** The meaning is: "While all this injury to the Church is taking place, there is another source of loss to which the English clergy seem to be indifferent, viz. the desertions to the Church of Rome that are so frequent."

**the grim wolf**, the Church of Rome: comp. *Matt.* vii. 16, "Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." Also *Acts*, xx. 29, "Grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock." 'Privy' = secret. 'Apace' = rapidly, at a great *pace:* comp. notes on *amain*, *a-field.*

129. **and nothing said.** Milton may here refer to Archbishop Laud's leaning towards Popery. Grammatically, there would seem to be a confusion here between two constructions: (1) 'and nothing (is) said,' and (2) 'nothing (being) said.' The latter would be the absolute construction, and in Shakespeare it sometimes happens that a noun intended to be used absolutely is diverted, by a change of thought, into a subject; the opposite process may have taken place here.

130. **two-handed engine.** The sense is, "But the instrument of retribution is ready and punishment will swiftly fall upon the corrupt Church." 'Engine' = instrument, its literal sense being 'something skilful' (Lat. *ingenium*, skill): it is therefore cognate with *ingenious*, *ingenuity*, and has been corrupted into *gin* = a snare. Comp. *Par. Lost*, i. 749, "Nor did he 'scape by all his *engines*' (*i.e.* schemes).

'Two-handed' is applied to swords, axes, etc., that require to be wielded with both hands. The nature of the instrument that is here called a 'two-handed engine' has been much discussed; the various interpretations are:—

(1) That it denotes the axe by which Laud was afterwards to be beheaded in 1645, Milton's words being thus prophetic. This view may be set aside: it certainly did not occur to any one at the time of the publication of *Lycidas*, when the power of Laud was at its height.

(2) That the axe is that alluded to metaphorically in the Scriptures as the instrument of reformation: see *St. Matt.* iii. 10, "And now the axe is laid to the root of the tree; therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down." In Milton's treatise *Of Reformation in England* he speaks of "the axe of God's reformation hewing at the old and hollow trunk of Papacy." This view is both the most obvious and the most probable.

(3) That there is an allusion to the "two-edged sword" which proceedeth out of the mouth of the Living One (see *Rev.* i. 16).

(4) That the poet refers to the powers of the pure Gospel as contained in the Old and New Testaments.

(5) That the English Parliament with its two Houses is meant, "the agency by which, three or four years afterwards, the doors of the Church of England *were* dashed in."

(6) That it denotes *civil* and *ecclesiastical* power. See note on *Son.* xvii. 12.

132. The poet again descends to the level of the ordinary pastoral, though it should be observed that in lines 113-131 he has skilfully adapted pastoral language to an unusual theme. The "dread voice" is the voice of St. Peter, and it is to this passage that Milton refers in the sub-title to the poem prefixed on its republication in 1645. "In 1638 it had been bold enough to let the passage stand in the poem, as published in the Cambridge memorial volume, without calling attention to it in the title" (Masson).

**Alpheus**: see *Arc.* 30, note.

133. **That shrunk thy streams**, *i.e.* which silenced my pastoral muse. The figure is a Scriptural one: "The waters stood above the mountains; at thy rebuke they fled; at the voice of thy thunder they hasted away," *Psalm*, civ. 7. 'Shrunk' is here used in an active or causal sense = made to shrink, as in the phrase 'to shrink cloth.'

**Sicilian Muse**, the muse of pastoral poetry: see note on l. 85.

134. **hither cast**, *i.e.* come hither and cast. Compare the Lat. idiom, *se in silvas abdiderunt*, "they hid themselves *into* the woods," *i.e.* "they went into the woods and hid there," *Ovid.* See also l. 139.

135. **bells**, bell-shaped blossoms. Plants with bell-shaped flowers are technically called 'campanulate' (Ital. *campana*, a bell).

**flowerets**: 'floweret' is diminutive of 'flower.'

136. **use**, dwell, frequent. The verb is quite obsolete in this sense: comp. note, l. 67. In Spenser we find, "In these strange ways, where never foot did *use*."

137. The construction is, "Where the mild whispers of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks, dwell."

138. **lap**; by a common figure we speak of 'the lap of earth,' 'the earth's bosom,' etc.: comp. Gray's *Elegy*, "Here rests his head upon the *lap* of earth"; also *Rich. II.* v. 2, "the green *lap* of the new-come spring." The word has no connection with 'lap' = wrap (*L'Alleg.* 136).

**the swart star sparely looks,** *i.e.* "where the influence of the burning dog-star is scarcely felt," the flowers being therefore fresh and bright. The swart star is Sirius or Canicula, a star just in the mouth of the constellation Canis, hence called the dog-star (Lat. *canis*, a dog). Hence also the term "dog days." To the Greeks and Romans this star appeared at the hottest time of the year, and was by them regarded as the cause of the great heat. It is therefore here called 'swart,' *i.e.* swart-making, because by exposure to heat the face becomes *swarthy* or brown. Milton frequently transfers an epithet from the object of an action to the agent: comp. "oblivious pool" = pool that makes one oblivious (*Par. Lost*, i. 266), "forgetful lake," etc. There are four forms of the adjective: the earliest is *swart*, then *swarty*, *swarth*, and finally *swarthy*: all four forms occur in Shakespeare.
For the technical sense of 'looks,' comp. *Arc.* 52. It may be noted that in *Epit. Damon.* Milton speaks of the evil influence of the planet Saturn upon the fortunes of shepherds.

139. **quaint enamelled eyes,** *i.e.* blossoms neat and bright. The centre of a blossom is sometimes called an 'eye'; the name is also given to a tender bud or even to a flower (as here). Milton's use of the word 'enamelled' is illustrated in *Arc.* 84, and his use of 'quaint' in *Arc.* 47; see notes. Comp. Peele's *David and Bethsabe*: "May that sweet plain ... be still *enamelled* with discoloured (*i.e.* variegated) flowers."

140. **honeyed showers,** sweet and refreshing rain. 'Honeyed' is here used figuratively; comp. "honeyed words"=flattery. It is sometimes, but less correctly, spelt 'honied': comp. *Il Pens.* 142.

141. **purple,** here used as a verb. The meaning is that the spring flowers are so abundant that they give the green turf a purple tint: comp. *Par. Lost*, vii. 28, "When morn *purples* the east." In Latin *purpureus* is common in the sense of 'dazzling.'

**vernal,** pertaining to Spring (Lat. *ver*).

142. Lines 142-151 form (as Masson says) "the most exquisite flower-and-colour passage in all Milton's poetry. His manuscript shows that he brought it to perfection by additions and after thoughts." "For musical sweetness and dainty richness of floral colour, it beats perhaps anything else in all Milton. It is the call upon all valleys of the landscape, and the banks of all the secret streamlets, to yield up their choicest flowers, and those dearest to shepherds that they may be strewn over the dead body of Lycidas." A similar fancy is found in Shakespeare: "With fairest flowers ... I'll sweeten thy sad grave." *Cymb.* iv. 2.
Those critics who judge the beauty of any poetical reference to nature by its fidelity to actual fact may readily object that

Milton would here bring together flowers that are never found in bloom at the same time of the year. But the season of the year does not enter into Milton's thoughts except in so far as it enables him to characterize some of the flowers. His only concern is to honour the grave of his fellow-shepherd by heaping upon it a rich offering of nature's fairest and sweetest flowers—flowers that, by their purity or their "sad embroidery," are well fitted to "strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies."

In connection with this passage Mr. Ruskin writes:—"In Milton it happens, I think, generally, and in the case before us most certainly, that the imagination is mixed and broken with fancy, and so the strength of the imagery is part of iron and part of clay." Lines 142, 145, and 147 he considers 'imaginative'; lines 144 and 146 'fanciful'; line 143 'nugatory'; and line 148 'mixed.'

**rathe, early**: the root of this word survives in the comparative *rather*: comp. "The *rather* lambs be starved with cold" (*Spenser*), where *rather* is an adjective. Tennyson has: "the men of *rathe* and riper years" (*In Mem.* cx.). *Rather* is now used only as an adverb, except perhaps in the phrase 'I had rather'; in 'I would rather' it is certainly an adverb. The Old English *rath*=early (adj.); *rathe*=soon (adv.).

**that forsaken dies,** *i.e.* 'that dies because it is forsaken by the sun-light,' a reference to the fact that it is often found in shady places. Milton at first wrote 'unwedded,' showing that he had in mind Shakespeare's words, "Pale primroses that die *unmarried*, ere they can behold Bright Phoebus (*i.e.* the sun) in his strength": *Winter's Tale* iv. 4.

143. **tufted crow-toe.** This plant is more commonly called "crow-foot," both names having reference to the shape of the flower: comp. '*bird's foot* trefoil,' belonging to the same order of plants. Another similar plant is the *tufted* vetch, and this epithet correctly describes the appearance of all these plants when in flower.

**pale jessamine.** 'Jessamine' or jasmine, a plant which belongs originally to the East; hence the name, from Persian *yásmín*.

144. **pink,** a flower which has given name to a particular colour; similarly the colour called 'violet' receives its name from the flower, and 'mauve' is the colour of the 'mallow.' The reverse process is seen in 'carnation,' this flower having received its name from its *fleshy* colour (Lat. *caro*, flesh). Some varieties of the pink are white.

**pansy freaked with jet,** a species of violet having generally dark spots in the centre of its blossoms. 'Freaked'= spotted or marked; this word is now little used except in the

diminutive *freckles*=small dark spots (as those on some faces). Shakespeare speaks of the 'freckled cowslip.'

146. **well-attired woodbine,** *i.e.* the honey-suckle with its clusters of flowers. 'Well-attired' does not here mean well-clothed or covered with leaves, but 'having a beautiful *head-dress* of flowers.' 'Tire' (the prefix being dropped) occurs in the same sense. The word is now extended to the whole dress: comp. *On Time,* 21.

147. **hang the pensive head:** 'pensive' is here used proleptically, *i.e.* it denotes the result of the action expressed by the verb 'hang': comp. *Arc.* 87.

148. **sad embroidery;** or, as Milton originally wrote, "sorrow's livery," *i.e.* colours suited to mourning. 'To embroider' is strictly to adorn with needlework, hence used in the sense of 'to ornament,' and finally 'to diversify by different colours.'

149. **amaranthus,** a plant so called because its flowers last long without withering. In *Par. Lost* it occurs as 'amarant,' the adjective being 'amarantine,' which comes directly from the Greek *amarantos,* unfading. The word is cognate with 'ambrosia,' the food of the gods, both having their counterpart in the Sanskrit *amrita,* immortal.

**his beauty shed:** 'his' here stands for 'its': see note on *Il Pens.* 128. 'Shed' is the infinitive after 'bid'; so is 'fill' in the next line.

150. **daffadillies,** more commonly written 'daffodils.' There is also a more colloquial form, *daffadown-dilly,* which occurs in Spenser. Comp. *Par. Lost,* ix. 1040, "Pansies and violets and *asphodel.*" 'Daffodil' and 'asphodel' are the same, both name and thing: the initial *d* is no part of the word, and in earlier English it was written *affodille,* which is from an old French word *asphodile,* which again is from the Greek *asphodelos,* a flower of the lily tribe. The dew-drops resting in the hollow of the lilies are here spoken of as tears shed for Lycidas.

151. **laureate hearse,** the poet's tomb. The word 'laureate' here signifies that Lycidas was a poet and was lamented by poets. Another interpretation is that it refers to the fact that King had obtained an academical degree: see note on *Son.* xvi. 9. 'Hearse' now denotes the carriage in which the dead are carried to the grave, and even the meaning which Milton here gives it is not the primary one. The changes of meaning which this word has shown are: (1) a harrow, *i.e.* a frame of wood fitted with spikes, and used for breaking up the soil; (2) a frame of similar shape in which lighted candles were stuck during church service; (3) a frame for lights at a funeral; (4) a funeral ceremony, a monument, etc.; (5) a frame on which a dead body

is laid; (6) a carriage for a dead body; comp. *Epitaph on M. of W.* 58. 'Lycid'=Lycidas, the suffix being dropped.

152. The sense is: 'Let us thus, in order to comfort ourselves for a little, please our weak fancies by imagining that we actually have the corpse of Lycidas to strew with flowers, even while, alas! his bones are being drifted about by the waves.'

Some editions read a comma after 'for,' and connect 'so' with 'to interpose': it seems better to read 'so' with 'for,' thus making 'to interpose,' etc., a clause of purpose.

154. There is a zeugma in *wash* as applied to 'shores' and 'seas.' Comp. Virgil's *Æn.* vi. 362: "my body is sometimes *tossed* by the waves, and sometimes *thrown* on the shore." The pathetic allusions in *Lycidas* to King's death at sea may be compared throughout with Virgil's language on the death of the pilot Palinurus, especially in the closing lines of Book v.:

> "O nimium caelo et pelago confise sereno,
> Nudus in ignota, Palinure, jacebis harena."

156. **Hebrides**, or Western Isles, a range of about 200 islands, scattered along the western coast of Scotland. King having been wrecked in the Irish Sea, his body may (according to Milton) have been carried far north to the Hebrides or far south to the coast of Cornwall, these two parts being the extremities of Great Britain.

157. **whelming**: the compound 'overwhelming' is more commonly used.

158. **the bottom of the monstrous world**, *i.e.* the bottom of the sea, "there being more room for the marvellous among the creatures of the deep than among the better known inhabitants of the land." 'Monstrous' is therefore here used literally = full of monsters. Comp. *Par. Lost*, ii. 624, "Nature breeds, Perverse, all *monstrous*, all prodigious things"; also Virgil's *Aen.* 729, "Quae marmores fert *monstra* sub aequora pontus."

159. **Or whether.** This would naturally answer to 'whether' in line 156, but there is another anacolouthon, or change of construction; the first 'whether' introduces an adverbial phrase, while the second introduces a complete sentence.

**to our moist vows denied**, *i.e.* your body being denied to our tearful prayers. 'Moist' is properly applicable to the eyes of those praying for the recovery of Lycidas' body. There may be an allusion in 'vows' to those promises of thanksgiving and offerings made to Neptune that he might restore the bodies of those who had been drowned. Comp. *Arc.* 6.

160. **fable of Bellerus old**, *i.e.* the fabled abode of the old Cornish giant Bellerus. Bellerium was the Latin name for Land's End in Cornwall, and Milton 'fables' this name to have

been derived from Bellerus, though no such name occurs in the catalogue of the old Cornish giants. There was, however, a giant named Corineus, said to have come into Britain with Brute, and in his first draft of the poem Milton wrote 'Corineus,' not 'Bellerus' (pron. *Bellérus*).

161. **great Vision of the guarded mount.** The 'guarded mount' is St. Michael's Mount, near Land's End, on which there is a crag called St. Michael's Chair. The tradition is that the 'vision' (or apparition) of the Archangel had been seen seated on this crag. Milton, therefore, speaks of the Mount as 'guarded' by the Archangel.

162. **Looks toward Namancos,** etc. Namancos is in the province of Gallicia, near Cape Finisterre, in Spain (the name being found in old maps). Bayona is also in Gallicia. "It was a boast of the Cornish people that there was a direct line of sea-view from Land's End passing France altogether and hitting no European land till it reached Spain" (see map of Europe).

**hold** = stronghold, castle.

163. **Angel,** *i.e.* St. Michael, who is here asked to cease looking towards Spain and to turn his gaze to the seas around him, where the shipwrecked Lycidas lies. Some would take 'Angel' as addressed to Lycidas, who would then be regarded as a glorified spirit looking down upon his weeping friends: that this is not the meaning is evident from the language of l. 164.

**ruth,** pity: comp. *Son.* ix. 8.

164. **dolphins,** sea-animals; here alluded to because Arion, an ancient Greek bard, when thrown overboard by sailors on a voyage to Corinth, was supported on the backs of dolphins whom he had charmed by his music.

**waft,** a word generally applied to winds, sometimes also to water, is here used of the dolphins to signify their swift passage through the sea.

165. The poem here becomes a strain of joy (see *Analysis*), which may be compared with that which closes Milton's other famous elegy on the death of Charles Diodati two years after *Lycidas* was composed. The following extract from the latter (Cowper's translation) will partly enable the student to compare the two pieces—

"*Cease then my tears to flow!*
Away with grief, on Damon ill bestowed!
Who, pure himself, *has found a pure abode,*
Has passed the showery arch, henceforth *resides*
*With saints and heroes,* and from flowing tides
Quaffs copious *immortality and joy.* . . .
Thy brows encircled with a radiant band,
And the green palm-branch waving in thy hand,

> Thou in *immortal nuptials* shalt rejoice,
> And *join with seraphs thy according voice,*
> *Where rapture reigns,* and the ecstatic lyre
> Guides the blest orgies of the blazing quire."

**woful**, also spelt 'woeful.'

166. **your sorrow**, object of your sorrow; by synecdoche the name of a passion or emotion is often put for the object that inspires it, *e.g.* joy, pride, delight, care, hope, etc.

**is not dead**, *i.e.* he lives in Paradise.

167. **watery floor**, the surface of the sea: comp. "level brine," l. 98, and the Lat. *aequor* (a level surface) applied to the sea. Shakespeare calls the sky the "*floor* of heaven."

168. **day-star**, the sun, which, to one looking seaward, seems to sink, at setting, into the ocean. Comp. *Com.* 95—

> "And the gilded car of day
> His glowing axle doth allay
> In the steep Atlantic stream."

169. **anon**, after a short time, *i.e.* at sunrise. Comp. *L'Alleg.* 131.

**repairs his drooping head**, renews his brightness.

170. **tricks**; here used transitively in the sense of 'to display': see *Il Pens.* 123, note.

**new-spangled ore**, bright golden rays. 'Ore' = metal, the newly-risen sun being like a ball or disc of gold. 'Spangled' = sparkling: a spangle is strictly a small plate of shining metal used as an ornament, and hence in poetry it is common to speak of the stars as spangles, and of the sky as 'spangled with stars.' Comp. Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, iv. 5.: see also *Par. Lost*, xi. 128.

172. **So.** The meaning is, '*As* the sun sinks into the sea in the evening but rises again in the morning with renewed beauty, *so* Lycidas sank low into the sea, but rose again through the saving power of Christ, to take his place in Paradise. 'Sunk' = sank: see l. 102, note.

173. **the dear might of Him**, etc. = the power of that dear Saviour over whom the waves of the sea had no power. Milton thus appropriately illustrates Christ's power by a reference to that one of his miracles which shows his rule over the waters. See *Matt.* xiv. 22.
'Walked': here used transitively; comp. *Il Pens.* 156.

174. **Where**, *i.e.* 'mounted high (to that place) *where*,' etc.

**along**, a preposition governing 'groves' and 'streams.'

175. His locks that were wet with the sea ooze he washes with the pure nectar of heaven.

'Oozy,' slimy; 'ooze' is the soft mud found at the bottom of the sea. 'To ooze' is to flow gently, as ooze would do.

'Nectar,' the drink of the gods: in *Death of a Fair Infant*, Milton speaks of the "nectared head" of a goddess, and in *Par. Lost*, he tells us that there is a "nectarous humour" in the veins of the angels.

176. **unexpressive nuptial song,** *i.e.* inexpressible marriage song: see *Rev.* xix. 9, where all true believers are spoken of as bidden to the marriage feast of the Lamb of God. In the two preceding lines the language of *Lycidas* is that of classical mythology; in this line and the six following, the imagery is Christian; and then the poet reverts to mythology. "We might say that these things are ill-fitted to each other. So they would be, were not the art so fine and the poetry so overmastering; were they not fused together by genius into a whole so that the unfitness itself becomes fascination." (*Brooke.*)

'Unexpressive': both Shakespeare and Milton use adjectives with the termination *-ive* where we now use *-ible* or *-able*. Comp. incomprehensive, plausive, insuppressive, etc., occurring in Shakespeare. For the prefix *-un* see note on l. 64 above. The word 'unexpressive' has therefore, in modern English, become *in-express-ible*. 'Nuptial' is from Lat. *nubere*, to marry; comp. 'connubial.'

177. For the order of the words comp. *L'Alleg.* 40.

**kingdoms meek,** abodes of the meek.

178. 'There all the saints above entertain him.'

179. **sweet societies.** What Milton here calls 'sweet societies' of angels, he calls (in *Par. Lost*, xi. 80) 'fellowships of joy.' Milton believed in a complete angelic system, with a most elaborate division into orders and degrees of rank—a system widely recognised in mediæval Christian tradition. In *Par. Lost* he makes large use of this belief; in this poem it is merely hinted at.

181. The language of this line is taken from the Scriptures: see *Isaiah*, xxv. 8, and *Rev.* vii. 7, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

**for ever,** once and for all.

182. This line is to be compared with line 165.

183. **the Genius of the shore:** see *Arc.* 25, 26; *Il Pens.* 154. It is common in Latin poetry to represent a drowned person as becoming the genius or guardian spirit of the locality where he met his fate, his office being to prevent future voyagers from a like disaster; hence Milton says, "(thou) shalt be good (*i.e.* propitious) to all that wander," etc. The Latin *bonus* occurs in the sense of 'propitious,' Virgil's *Ecl.* v. 64.

184. **In thy large recompense,** *i.e.* as a great recompense *to thee.* "The use of the possessive pronouns and of the inflected possessive case of nouns and pronouns was, until a comparatively recent period, very much more extensive than at present, and they were employed in many cases where the preposition with the objective now takes its place" (*Marsh*).

185. **wander in that perilous flood,** *i.e.* sail over that dangerous sea.

186. The epilogue begins here (see analysis): its separateness from the rest of the poem is indicated by the fact that in it Milton lays aside his "oaten flute" and resumes his own personality, and by the metrical and rhyming structure of the eight lines of which it consists. It is, in fact, a stanza in *Ottava Rima*, the arrangement of rhymes being *abababcc.*

**uncouth**: see note, *L'Alleg.* 5.

187. **with sandals grey,** *i.e.* at the grey dawn. Comp. "grey-hooded even," *Com.* 188. The shepherd had begun to sing at daybreak, but in his eagerness he had continued till evening.

188. **He touched the tender stops of various quills,** *i.e.* throughout his song he had passed through various moods and had sung in various metres. 'Quill' is here used in its primary sense, =a reed, which Milton has already called 'oaten pipe': the application of this word to the feather of a bird is secondary. The 'stops' of a reed or flute are the small holes over which the fingers of the player are placed, also called vent-holes or (as in Shakespeare) 'ventages': comp. *Com.* 345, "pastoral reed with oaten stops." The epithet 'tender' is here transferred from the music itself to the stops, from the effect to the cause.

189. **thought,** care: comp. *Matt.* vi. 25, "Take no *thought* for your life," etc.

**Doric lay,** pastoral song, so called because Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus wrote their pastorals in the Doric dialect of the Greek tongue: see note on *L'Alleg.* 136.

190. 'The sun, being low, had lengthened *the shadows* of the hills.' Comp. Virgil, *Ecl.* i. 83.

191. **was dropt,** had dropt: see note, l. 97, and *Son.* ii. 6.

192. **twitched,** plucked tightly around him.

**his mantle blue.** The colour is that of a shepherd's dress, hence the allusion. It is very improbable that any allegorical sense is intended.

193. **To-morrow,** etc.: comp. the *Purple Island,* by Fletcher—

> "Home, then, my lambs: the falling drops eschew:
> To-morrow shall ye feast in pastures new."

On this poem Mr. Palgrave has the following note:—Strict Pastoral Poetry was first written or perfected by the Dorian Greeks settled in Sicily; but the conventional use of it, exhibited more magnificently in *Lycidas* than in any other pastoral, is apparently of Roman origin. Milton, employing the noble freedom of a great artist, has here united ancient mythology—or what may be called the modern mythology of Camus and Saint Peter—to direct Christian images. Yet the poem, if it gains in metrical interest, suffers in poetry by the harsh intrusion of the writer's narrow and violent theological politics. The metrical structure of this glorious elegy is partly derived from Italian models.

## No. VI.

## ON THE TOMBS IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

THIS poem and the two that follow it should be made to illustrate one another. Perhaps the best commentary on all three is found in Addison's reflections in Westminster Abbey: "When I am in a serious humour I very often walk by myself in Westminster Abbey, where the gloominess of the place, and the use to which it is applied, with the solemnity of the building and the condition of the people who lie in it, are apt to fill the mind with a kind of melancholy, or rather thoughtfulness, that is not disagreeable ... Upon my going into the church, I entertained myself with the digging of a grave; and saw in every shovelful of it that was thrown up, the fragment of a bone or skull, intermixed with a kind of fresh mouldering earth, that some time or other had a place in the composition of a human body. Upon this I began to consider with myself what innumerable multitudes of people lay confused together under the pavement of that ancient cathedral; how men and women, friends and enemies, priests and soldiers, monks and prebendaries, were crumbled amongst one another, and blended together in the same common mass; how beauty, strength and youth, with old age, weakness and deformity, lay undistinguished in the same promiscuous heap of matter." We may compare also Herbert's beautiful poem entitled *Church Monuments*, No. xli. in Palgrave's "Treasury of Sacred Song." The simple majesty of Beaumont's lines is the more remarkable in that the piece consists of ordinary rhyming couplets of four accents; the initial trochaic effect should be noticed.

1. **Mortality**: abstract for concrete. Addison calls Westminster Abbey a "magazine of mortality": comp. also Byron's *Ode to Napoleon*, "Thy scales, Mortality, are just."

3. **royal bones**: comp. *King John*, v. 7. 68, and Richard's famous soliloquy on the uncertainty of the kingly state, *Rich. II.* iii. 2.

5. **had realms.** Here the relative is omitted, and in the next line 'who' may be taken as = 'and they.' The omission of the relative shows the attributive force of the clause, and this use of 'who' is common: see Abbott, §§ 244, 263.

9. **acre.** So Longfellow says of the burial-ground,

"This is the field and Acre of our God,
This is the place where human harvests grow."

Comp. the term 'God's acre,' applied to a burial-ground (Ger. *Gottesacker*).

10. **royallest seed.** For example, the chapel of Henry VII. in Westminster Abbey contains the tombs of that king and of his queen and mother, of Queen Elizabeth, Queen Mary, James I. and his queen, Charles II., William and Mary, Queen Anne, etc.

12. **for,** because of: see Abbott, § 150.

13. **bones of birth**; bones of the great. 'Birth,' = high birth; comp. certain uses of 'family,' 'descent,' etc., and *K. John II.* i. 430, "a match of birth."

15. **sands.** An incorrect reading is 'wands.'

17. **world of pomp,** etc. Comp. 3 *Hen. VI.* v. 2, "Why, what is pomp, rule, reign, but earth and dust? And, live we how we can, yet die we must."

18. **once dead,** dead once for all: see Abbott, § 57. Comp. l. 3 of No. VIII.

## No. VII.

## THE LAST CONQUEROR.

THIS poem on the might of death is from *Cupid and Death*, a masque which appeared in a small volume published in 1653. Nothing is more remarkable in the literature of the early part of the seventeenth century than the delightful songs scattered throughout the plays of that period; take, for example, Nos. VII., VIII., XVIII., etc. in this book. Of Shirley's songs, Mr. Saintsbury says: "Every one knows 'The glories of our blood and state,' but this is by no means his only good song; it worthily closes the list of the kind—a kind which, when brought together and perused separately, exhibits, perhaps, as well as anything else of equal compass, the extraordinary abundance of poetical spirit in the age. For songs like these are not to be hammered out by the most diligent ingenuity, not to be spun by the light of the most assiduously fed lamp. The wind of such inspiration blows where,

and only where, it listeth." It has been said of Shirley (1596-1666) that he brought sweet echoes of the grand Elizabethan music into the playhouse of the time of Charles I.

3. **bind-in**, enclose: comp. *Rich. II.* ii. 1, "bound in with the triumphant sea"; also 2 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2.

5. **As night or day.** Comp. No. LXV., l. 18, "half of the globe is thine."

7. **forgotten ashes**: comp. *Rich. II.* i. 2, "Pale *ashes* of the house of Lancaster"; also *Gen.* xviii. 27.

8. **ye**: here used as object. In the Elizabethan dramatists there is a very loose use of the two forms, *ye* and *you*; see Abbott, § 236, and note, No. II., l. 7.

**common men.** Comp. *Hen. V.* iv. 7, "Sort our nobles from our common men." In the year 1411 we find a *comun man* distinguished from a high official: see also the *New English Dictionary* for illustrations.

12. **Nor ... confined**: 'nor is he confined to these alone'; for death comes to men in many other ways. Comp. B. and F.'s *Custom of Courts*, ii. 2, "Death hath so many doors to let out life."

14. **More quaint**, more fine or delicate. See notes, *Hymn Nat.* 194; *Lycidas*, 139; *L'All.* 5.

15. **will use ... Shall have.** *Will* here denotes choice or purpose (Abbott, § 316): *shall* denotes inevitable result (Abbott, §§ 315, 317). With the whole poem compare the dirge in Ford's *Broken Heart*:

> "Crowns may flourish and decay,
> Beauties shine, but fade away;
> Youth may revel, yet it must
> Lie down in a bed of dust.
> Earthly honours flow and waste,
> Time alone doth change and last," etc.

## No. VIII.

## DEATH THE LEVELLER.

This piece forms the song of Calchas in Shirley's *Contention of Ajax and Ulysses*, iii. (printed, 1659), 'sung before the body of Ajax as going to the Temple.' See Homer's *Odyssey*, xi. This song is said to have been a favourite with Charles II.

1. **blood**, lineage. A common reading is 'birth.' Comp. *Tr. and Cress.* iii. 3, "a prince of *blood*, a son of Priam."

4. **icy hand on kings.** Comp. Ovid, *Am.* iii. 9. 19:

"Scilicet omne sacrum Mors importuna profanat,
Omnibus obscuras injicit illa manus";

also Horace, *Odes*, i. 4. 12, *pallida mors*, etc.

8. **scythe and spade.** Emblems of humble life, as in Swift's lines:

"Here nature never difference made,
Between the *sceptre* and the *spade*."

9. **reap**: comp. *Rev.* xiv. 15; *Par. Lost*, ii. 339.

11. **strong nerves.** Comp. *Macb.* iii. 4, "My firm nerves shall never tremble"; also our use of *to nerve*=to strengthen, *nerveless*=weak, etc. The Greek *neuron*=a sinew; comp. 'sinews of war' (called by Milton in his *Sonnet*, xvii., "*nerves* of war.")

12. **They tame**, etc., 'after all they merely overcome one another': they cannot conquer death.

13. **Early or late**, sooner or later.

17. In this stanza the poet passes with striking effect to the form of direct address.

**garlands**, the victor's wreath. But see Trench's *Select Glossary* on the use of garland in the technical sense of 'royal crown or diadem,' as in 2 *Hen. VI.* iv. 4.

19. **purple altar.** The colour is here associated with regal or military state (as in *Par. Lost*, xi. 240); or it may denote 'blood-stained,' as in Dryden's "Tiber rolling with a *purple* flood": see Marsh's *Lect. on Eng. Lang.* iii.

20. **victor-victim.** The two parts of this beautiful compound word are not cognate. Milton has 'victor' in this attributive sense; comp. *Par. Lost*, vi. 525, 590. Compare "the vanquished victor" of No. LXVII., l. 97.

24. **Smell sweet**, etc. Comp. Habington's *To Castara*,

"Fame will build columns on our tomb,
And *add a perfume to our dust*";

also, from the same poet, "The bad man's death is horror, but the just keeps something of his glory in his dust."

## No. IX.

## WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY.

The title is Milton's own. This sonnet is inspired by his high conception of the poet's task, and of the power that lies in the name of a great poet to avert disaster and to requite those who

honour the Muses. It was written in November, 1642. The battle of Edgehill was fought in October of that year, and the royal army then marched to attack London. This was the 'assault' expected, and Milton, having been an active pamphleteer on the side of the Parliament, might naturally have feared that his house would not escape the Royalists if they succeeded in entering the city. The 'assault' never took place, for the royal army retreated when the parliamentary army, under the Earl of Essex, moved out to meet it.

1. **Colonel** is here a trisyllable, though usually a dissyllable. It is from the Ital. *Colonello*, the leader of the little *column* (*i.e.* at the head of a regiment). It has no connection with Lat. *corona*, a crown. (*Skeat.*)

**Knight in Arms**, a title conferred on persons of high rank as a recognition of military prowess. See Shak. *Rich. II.* i. 3.

2. **Whose chance.** This is a peculiar construction, which may be resolved into 'whose lot it may be to seize.' It implies doubt, not that the house will be seized, but as to the particular officer that may seize it.

**these defenceless doors.** The word 'these' is used because the sonnet was written as if to be affixed to the door of Milton's house; it would thus be a mute appeal to the besiegers.

3. **ever**, at any time, on any occasion.

4. **him within**, etc., 'protect from injury him that is within.'

5. **He can requite thee,** *i.e.* the poet can reward you by rendering you famous "in his immortal verse." Comp. Shakespeare's *Son.* 81—

"Your monument shall be my gentle verse."

'Requite' is literally the same as 'repay,' from *re* and *quit* = freed or discharged.

**charms**, magic verses: comp. *Il Pens.* 83 and note.

6. **call**, 'bring down or bestow fame on such honourable acts as these,' viz., guarding the poet's house and protecting him.

8. **Whatever clime.** These words are in apposition to 'lands and seas.' 'Clime' (comp. *Com.* 977) is radically the same as 'climate,' and here used in its original sense = a region of the earth. 'Climate' has now the secondary sense of 'atmospheric conditions.'

The meaning of the line is, 'Wherever the sun shines.'

9. **the Muses' bower**, poetical language for 'the poet's house'; comp. *Lyc.* 19.

10. **Emathian conqueror**, Alexander the Great (the Sikander of Indian history), king of Macedonia, of which Emathia was a province.