

the rougher cadence of lines 1-10. The separateness of these lines is further marked (both in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*) by the peculiar arrangement of the rhymes: the formula is *abba c d d e e c*.

11. **fair and free**: both adjectives are frequently found together in English poetry to denote beauty and gracefulness in woman. We find in Chaucer's *Knichtes Tale*: "Of *fayre* young Venus, fresh and *free*"; and the words occur in the same sense even before Chaucer's time. Tennyson applies them to a man: comp. "Lord of Burleigh, fair and free."

12. **yclept, named**: past participle of the verb 'to clepe,' from A.S. *clipian*, to call. In English the past participle of all verbs of the strong conjugation was originally formed by the suffix *en* and the prefix *ge*. The suffix *en* has now disappeared in many cases and the prefix *ge* in all. The *y* in 'yclept' is a corruption of *ge*, as in *yfallen*, *yfounde*, *ygo*, *ywent*, *yshape*, *ywritten*, all of which are found in Chaucer. The *y* also took the form *i* in Early English, as *imaked*, *ispoken*, *iknowen*, etc. Shakespeare has *yclept*, *yclad*, etc. Milton in one case prefixes *y* to a present participle. See note on *On Shakespeare*, 4.

Euphrosyne (the light-hearted one), one of the three Graces of classical mythology, the others being *Aglaia* (the bright one) and *Thalia* (the blooming one). They were represented as daughters of Zeus, and as the goddesses who purified and enhanced all the innocent pleasures of life. Milton desires to signify their service to man more clearly by giving them another genealogy; he suggests two alternatives, and himself prefers the latter:—(1) That they are the offspring of Venus (love) and Bacchus (good cheer), or (2) of Zephyr (the 'frolic wind') and Aurora (the goddess of the morning). From these parents Euphrosyne is begotten in the month of May, *i.e.* "it is the early freshness of the summer morning that best produces Cheerfulness" (Masson).

13. **heart-easing Mirth**: Burton, in *Anat. of Mel.*, prescribes "Mirth and merry company" to ease the heart of the melancholy. With 'heart-easing' (compounded of a participle preceded by its object) compare such adjectives as heart-rending, tale-bearing, soul-stirring, etc.

14. **at a birth, at one birth**: the words 'a,' 'an,' and 'one' are all derived from the same Anglo-Saxon word: comp. the phrase 'one at a time.'

16. **ivy-crownèd**: the ivy was sacred to Bacchus, the god of wine.

17. There is a change in the construction here, there being no preceding 'whether' answering to 'whether' in this line: the

meaning is, 'Whether lovely Venus bore thee, or whether the frolic wind,' etc.

some sager sing, *i.e.* some poets have more wisely written. Poets are often called 'singers,' but it is not known to what poets Milton can be referring: probably he merely chose this way of modestly recommending his own view.

18. **frolic wind**, *i.e.* frolicsome wind. The word 'frolic' is now used only as a noun and a verb, never as an adjective. Yet its original use in English is adjectival, and its form is that of an adjective: it is radically the same as the German *fröhlich*, so that *lic* in *frolic* corresponds exactly to the suffix *ly* in *cleanly*, *ghastly*, etc. By the end of the seventeenth century it came to be used as a noun, and its attributive sense being forgotten, a new adjective was formed—frolicsome, from which again came a new noun—frolicsomeness. In *Comus* 59 it is used as an adjective: "ripe and frolic."

breathes the spring: this transitive use of the verb is frequent in Milton, with such objects as 'odours,' 'flowers,' 'smell,' etc.

19. **Zephyr**, the personification of the pleasant West wind: in *Par. Lost*, v. 16, he is represented as wooing Flora—

"With voice
Mild as when *Zephyrus* on *Flora* breathes."

20. 'As' here introduces a clause of time. 'Once' does not here denote 'on a single occasion' as opposed to the adverb 'often,' but 'at a former time,' as in the phrase 'once upon a time' (Lat. *olim*).

a-Maying, enjoying the sports suitable to May. Comp. the song of Aurora, Zephyr and Flora in *The Penates* of Jonson—

"See, see, O see who here is come a-maying!" etc.

To which May answers:

"All this and more than I have gift of saying
May vows, so you will oft come here a-maying."

Also see *Song on May Morning*, 5.

Even in ancient times there were May sports, when the Roman youth engaged in dancing and singing in honour of Flora, the goddess of fruits and flowers. Formerly throughout England the sports and customs connected with May-day were observed with the greatest zest.

'A-Maying' = on Maying: in O.E. writers after the Norman Conquest the verbal noun with the preposition 'on' was used after verbs of motion, *e.g.* 'he wente on hunting'; afterwards *on* was corrupted into *a*. 'Maying' is, therefore, not a participle used as a noun, but the verbal noun or gerund. The participle originally ended in *ende* or *inde* and the noun in *ung*; but both now end in *ing*, and hence they are often confused.

21. **There**, *i.e.* where Zephyr met Aurora: an adverb modifying 'filled.' The nom. to 'filled' is 'wind,' line 18.

22. **fresh-blown** is compounded of a participle and a simple adverb, 'fresh' being equal to 'freshly': the common adverbial suffix in Anglo-Saxon was *e*, the omission of which has reduced many adverbs to the same form as the adjectives from which they were derived. See note, *Il Pens.* 66.

roses washed in dew: a similar phrase occurs in Shakespeare—

"I'll say she looks as clear
As morning roses newly washed in dew."
Taming of the Shrew, ii. 1. 173.

Comp. also—

"Her lips like roses overwasht with dew."—Greene, *Arcadia*.

24. **buxom**, lively. The spelling of this word disguises its origin; it is *buck-some*, which arose out of the A.S. *bocsum* or *buhsum* = 'easily bowed,' 'flexible' (A.S. *bugan*, to bow, and the suffix *sum*, 'like,' as in 'darksome,' etc.). So that the word first meant 'pliable,' then 'obedient,' then 'good-humoured' or 'lively,' and finally 'handsome.' It is now used ordinarily of the handsomeness of stout persons. In its primary sense it was applied to unresisting substances, *e.g.* "the buxom air" (*Par. Lost*, II. 842), and the transition to the sense of 'obedient' is a natural one: comp. Spenser's *F. Q.* iii. 4—

"For great compassion of their sorrow, bid
His mighty waters to them *buxome* be."

In Shakespeare's *Per.* i. 1 we find—

"A female heir
So *buxom*, blithe, and full of face";

and Milton seems to have recollected this passage.

debonair, elegant, courteous: this word, when broken up, is seen to be a French phrase—*de bon aire*, literally 'of a good mien or manner'; *de* = of, *bon* is from Lat. *bonus*, good, and *aire* = manner. Comp. the use of 'air' in the phrase 'to give one's self *airs*,' *i.e.* to be vain. 'Debonair' has thus been formed out of three words by mere juxtaposition. See note, *Il Pens.* 32.

25. **Haste thee**. In such phrases the pronoun may be said to be used reflectively: comp. 'sit thee down,' 'fare thee well.' In Early English, however, the pronoun was in the *dative*, marking that the agent was affected by the action, but not that he was the *direct object* of it: such a dative is called the *ethic dative*. In Elizabethan writers the use of *thee* after verbs in the imperative is so common that in many cases its original sense seems to have been lost sight of, and the pronoun consequently seems to be a mere corruption of the nominative *thou*.

25. **Nymph**, maiden: the word denotes literally 'a bride.' In Greek mythology the goddesses haunting mountains, woods, and streams were called nymphs; see line 36.

bring here governs the following words:—Jest, Jollity, quips, cranks, wiles, nods, becks, smiles, Sport, and Laughter, all of which are the names of Mirth's companions. They are personifications of the attributes of happy youth.

26. **Jollity**, from the adjective 'jolly,' light-hearted: its original sense is 'festivity.' It is not etymologically connected with 'joviality' (from Jove, the joyful planet), though its meaning is similar. See note, *Son.* i. 3.

27. **Quips**, sharp sayings, witty jests. Compare "This was a good *quip* that he gave unto the Jewes" (*Latimer*). The word is radically connected with *whip*, 'that which is moved smartly,' and a diminutive from it is *quibble*.

cranks, *i.e.* turns of wit. 'Crank' is literally a crook or bend; hence the word is applied to an iron rod bent into a right angle as in machinery, and to a form of speech in which words are twisted away from their ordinary meaning. Shakespeare uses 'crank' in the sense of a winding passage, *Cor.* i. l. 141, and (as a verb) = to wind about, *i. Hen. IV.* i. 98; and Milton has, "To show us the ways of the Lord, straight and faithful as they are, not full of *cranks* and contradictions." Whenever language is distorted or used equivocally we have a *crank* in the sense of the above passage.

wanton wiles, playful tricks. 'Wile' is really the same word as 'guile,' which in Earlier English was written 'gile.' Compare ward and guard, wise and guise, warden and guardian; the forms in 'gu' were introduced into English by the Normans.

28. **Nods and becks**, signs made with the head and the finger. The word 'beck' is generally applied to signs made in either of these ways, though Milton here distinguishes them; it is a mere contraction of 'beckon,' to make a sign to, cognate with 'beacon.'

wreathèd smiles, so called because, in the act of smiling or laughing, the features are wreathed or puckered. A wreath is literally that which is 'writhed' or twisted. Compare 'wrinkled care,' l. 31.

29. This line and the next are attributive to 'smiles.' 'Such' qualifies 'smiles,' and the clause introduced by 'as' is relative. *As* after *such* is generally regarded as a relative pronoun. Milton is fond of this construction; see lines 129, 138, 148.

Hebe's cheek: Hebé, in classical mythology, was the goddess of youth, who waited upon the gods and filled their cups with nectar. Later traditions represent her as a divinity who had power to restore youth to the aged. Compare *Comus* 290: "As smooth as Hebe's their unrazored lips."

30. 'And are wont to be found in sleek dimples.' 'Dimple' is literally a little 'dip' or depression: compare *dingle*, *dapple*, etc. For 'sleek' = soft or smooth, see *Lyc.* 99.

31. We speak of Sport deriding or laughing away dull care: compare *Proverbs*, xvii. 22, "A merry heart is a good medicine, but a broken spirit drieth up the bones." See Burton's *Anat. of Mel.*, where Care is said to be 'lean, withered, hollow-eyed, wrinkled,' etc.

32. **Laughter**, here said to be holding his sides, just as, in popular language, excessive laughter is said to be 'side-splitting.' 'Sport' and 'Laughter' are objects of the verb 'bring,' l. 25.

33. **trip it**: 'to trip' is to move with short, light steps as in dancing; 'it' is a cognate accusative, as if we said 'to trip a tripping,' and adds nothing to the meaning of the verb. This use of 'it' is extremely common in Elizabethan writers; Shakespeare has to fight it, speak it, revel it, dance it, etc., where (as Abbott suggests) the pronoun seems to indicate some pre-existing object in the mind of the person spoken of. In other cases, such as queen it, foot it, saint it, sinner it, etc., the pronoun seems to be added to show that the words have the force of verbs.

34. **light fantastic toe**: the toe (or foot) is called 'fantastic' because in dancing its movements are unrestrained or 'full of fancy.' 'Fantastic' is now used only in the sense of 'grotesque' or 'capricious,' but in the time of Shakespeare and Milton *fancy* and *fantasy* (which are radically the same word) had not been desynonymised. This explains why an event that had merely been imagined or 'fancied' is described by Shakespeare as 'fantastic.' 'To trip the light fantastic toe' is a phrase now ordinarily used as = 'to dance.' Compare *Comus*, 144, 962: "light fantastic round."

36. Liberty is here naturally associated with Mirth: in Burton's *Anat. of Mel.* there is a chapter on "Loss of liberty as a cause of Melancholy." She is here called a *mountain-nymph*, because mountain fastnesses have always given to their possessors a certain amount of security against invasion and oppression, and because nowhere is the love of liberty more keen. Comp. Cowper's lines—

" 'Tis liberty alone that gives the flower
Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume; "

And Wordsworth—

" Two voices are there—one is of the sea,
One of the *mountains*—each a mighty voice;
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, *Liberty*, " etc.

37. **due**: see note on *Il Pens.* 155.

38. **crew**, formerly spelt *crue*, is common as a sea-term (being applied to the company of sailors on a ship); and, like many other sea-terms in English, is of Scandinavian origin. Its original sense is 'a company' and it is used here by Milton in this unrestricted sense. The word is common in his poems, but in every other case he uses it in a bad sense, applying it to evil spirits or hateful things. 'To admit of' is 'to make a member of.'

39. **her**, *i.e.* Liberty.

40. **unreproved pleasures free**, free and innocent pleasures. This is a favourite arrangement of words in Milton—a noun between two adjectives: it generally implies that the final adjective qualifies the idea conveyed by the first adjective and noun together; comp. "hazel copses green," *Lyc.* 42; also "native wood-notes wild," l. 134. Unreproved=unreprovable; comp. 'unvalued' for 'invaluable' in Milton's *Lines On Shakespeare*, 11. In Shakespeare we find 'unavoided' for 'unavoidable,' 'imagined' for 'imaginable,' 'unnumbered' for 'innumerable,' etc. (see Abbott's *Shak. Grammar*, § 375). The passive participle is often used to signify, not that which *was* and *is*, but that which *was* and therefore *can be hereafter*.) In much the same way we still speak of 'an untamed steed,' 'an unconquered army,' 'a dreaded sound.' See also note, *Lyc.* 176.

41. **To hear**, like 'to live' in l. 38, is an infinitive of purpose dependent upon the verb 'admit.'

42. **startle** is an infin. dependent, along with 'begin,' upon 'to hear.' Warton notes that there is a peculiar propriety in 'startle;' the lark's is a sudden shrill burst of song, which is often heard just before sunrise and may therefore be said to scare away the darkness. Comp. *Par. Reg.* ii. 279.

43. **watch-tower**: the lark sings high up in the air, so high that, though it may be filling one's ears with its melody, it is often impossible to see the songster. Hence Shakespeare speaks of it as singing "at heaven's gate," and Shelley likens it to a "high-born maiden in a palace tower."

44. **dappled**, *i.e.* having the sky covered with small grey clouds: literally, it means 'marked with small *dips*' or hollows; it has no connection with *dab*. See note on l. 30. 'Till' here introduces a clause in the indicative; in line 99 the verb is in the subjunctive mood: see note on *Il Pens.* 44.

45. **Then to come**, etc.: dependent, like 'startle,' upon the verb 'to hear' in l. 41. It refers to the lark which is, at day-break, to appear at L'Allegro's window to bid him good morning. This is a fancy frequent in poetry—that the morning song of birds is a friendly greeting to those who hear them. The only difficulties connected with this interpretation are (1) that in making the lark alight at the window of a human dwelling Milton seems

to be forgetful of a lark's habits; the ordinary poetical conceit does not apply to this bird, which does not seek man's company, and is a "bird of the wilderness": (2) that the verb 'hear' is usually followed by an infinitive without 'to,' whereas in this case 'to come' is used. These difficulties disappear if we remember that Milton's references to nature are not always strictly accurate (see notes *passim*); and that 'to come' follows at some distance from 'hear,' thus rendering the introduction of 'to' necessary as a sign of the infinitive.

Prof. Masson, however, rejects this view as nonsense: he says: "The words '*Then to come*' in line 45 refer back to, and depend upon, the previous words '*Mirth, admit me*' of line 38." On this view, it is not the lark, but *L'Allegro* himself, that comes to his own window and bids his friends good morning. This avoids the two difficulties above noticed, but raises others. The question is referred to here merely because, in order to appreciate the arguments, the student must thoroughly master the syntax of lines 37-48.

45. **in spite of sorrow**, *i.e.* in order to *spite* or defy sorrow. 'Spite' is a contracted form of 'despite,' and is cognate with 'despise.' This is a peculiar use of the phrase 'in spite of'; ordinarily, when a person is said to do something in spite of sorrow, it is implied that he did it *although he was sorrowful*. This is obviously not the meaning in this passage, for there is no sorrow in the heart of the lark (or of *L'Allegro* himself).

46. **bid**: see note on *Lyc.* 22.

47. **sweet-briar** (also spelt brier), a prickly and fragrant shrub, the wild-rose or eglantine.

48. **twisted eglantine**. Etymologically 'eglantine' denotes something prickly (Fr. *aiguille*, a needle), but since Milton has just named the sweet-briar, which is commonly identified with the eglantine, and calls the eglantine 'twisted' (which it is not), it is probable that he meant the honeysuckle. 'Twisted' may properly be applied to creeping or climbing plants.

49. **cock**. The crowing of the cock is universally associated with the dawn; hence Milton speaks of this bird as scattering the last remnants of darkness by his crowing. So in Shakespeare we have a reference to the superstition that spirits vanished at cock-crow. In classical times the cock was sacred to Apollo, the god of the sun, because it announced sunrise. Comp. the Eastern proverb, used to a person to intimate that the speaker can dispense with his services—"Do you think there will be no dawn if there is no cock?"

The adjective 'thin' may be taken as qualifying 'rear': so we speak of the thin or straggling rear of an army as distinct from its close and serried van.

52. **Stoutly struts his dames before**, walks with conscious pride in front of the hens. In Latin we find the cock described as the *gallus rixosus*, pugnacious fowl. Cowper speaks of the 'wonted strut' of the cock. 'Before,' in this line, is a preposition governing 'dames': 'dame' is from Lat. *domina*, a lady.

The bold step of the cock is well expressed by the rhythm of this line in contrast with that of the preceding one.

53. **listening**: this word refers to *L'Allegro* himself: it introduces another of his 'unreproved pleasures' of the morning. The word 'oft' shows that the poet is not recounting the pleasures of one particular morning, but morning pleasures in general.

54. 'The sounds made by the barking hounds and the huntsman's horn joyfully awaken the morning.' Similarly in Gray's *Elegy* the cock-crow and the "echoing horn" are both referred to as morning sounds. Gray was (as Lowell notes) greatly influenced by a study of Milton's poetry.

cheerly, cheerily or cheerfully: in the phrase 'be of good cheer,' we see the primary sense of the word 'cheer,' which is from a French word meaning 'the face.' A bright face is the index of a cheerful spirit.

55. **hoar**. This may imply that the hill appears gray through the haze of distance, or, more literally, that it is white with frost or rime, the hunters being astir before the rising sun has melted the frozen dew (*hoar-frost*). In *Arc.* 98 Milton applies 'hoar' to a mountain in the more usual sense of 'old': comp. 'hoary-headed.'

56. **high wood**, because on the side of a hill. 'Echoing' here qualifies 'hounds and horn.'

shrill. In modern English the use of adjectival forms as adverbs is common; in many cases they represent the old adverb ending in *-e* (see note on l. 22). It must not be supposed, however, that wherever an adjective is used with a verb its force is that of an adverb: e.g. "through the high wood echoing *shrill*," or "Hope springs *eternal* in the human breast." Here it is not correct to say that 'shrill' merely means 'shrilly,' and 'eternal' means 'eternally'; the adjectives have a distinct use in pointing to a quality of the agent rather than of the act.

57. **Sometime**, *i.e.* 'for some time,' or 'at one time or other.' The genitive form 'sometimes' has a different meaning = occasionally.

not unseen: see *Analysis* and note *Il Pens.* 65; "Happy men love witnesses of their joy; the splenetic love solitude." Burton, in *Anat. of Mel.*, says of the melancholy: "They delight in floods and waters, desert places, to walk alone in orchards, gardens, private walks," etc.

58. **elms.** Warton notes that the elm seems to have been Milton's favourite tree, judging from its frequent mention both in his Latin and English poems. The scenery in the neighbourhood of Horton may account for this, though it must not be supposed that Milton is in this poem describing any actual scene. Masson says: "A visit to Horton any summer's day ... to stroll among the meadows and pollards by the banks of the sluggish Colne, where Milton must have so often walked and mused, may be recommended to lovers of Literature and of English History."

59. This line is dependent on 'walking': 'right' is an adverb modifying the preposition 'against.' Comp. 'He cut *right* through the enemy,' 'I have got *half* through my work,' etc. 'Against' implies that L'Allegro is walking with his face turned directly to the rising sun.

the eastern gate, a favourite image in poetry for that part of the sky from which the sun seems to issue. In classical mythology the god of the sun was represented as riding in a chariot through the heavens from East to West, and in one of his Latin poems (*Eleg.* iii.) Milton represents the sun as the 'light-bringing' king, whose home is on the shores of the Ganges (*i.e.* in the far East). Comp. "Hark, hark! the lark at Heaven's gate sings," *Cymbeline* II. iii.

60. **begins his state**, begins his stately march towards his 'other goal' in the west. Comp. *Arc.* 81, note.

61. **amber light**, amber-coloured light: noun used as adjective.

62. 'The clouds (being) arrayed in numerous colours.' Grammatically, 'clouds' is here used absolutely. In Latin a noun or pronoun in the ablative along with a participle was often used as a substitute for a subordinate clause, and Milton is fond of this construction. Here, line 62 is an adverbial clause modifying 'begins.' In English, the noun is generally said to be the nominative absolute, but in the case of pronouns, the form shows whether the nom. or obj. is used. Milton uses both; comp. "*Him* destroyed, for whom all this was made," and "Adam shall live with her, *I* extinct." Modern writers prefer the nom. case both for nouns and pronouns. In Anglo-Saxon the dative was used.

liveries here refers to dress, as when we speak of a servant's livery. Its primary sense was more general—anything *delivered* or served out, whether clothes, food, or money: a peer was even said to have *livery* of his feudal holdings from the king. As the livery of a servant is generally of some distinctive colour, Milton applies the word to the many-hued clouds. It may also imply that the clouds, as servants, attend their master, the Sun, in his stately march.

62. **dight**, a nearly obsolete word = arrayed: comp. *Il Pens.* 159. It is a short form of *dighted*, from the verb 'to dight' (A.S. *dihtan*, to set in order), which, as Masson remarks, still survives in the Scottish word *dicht*, to wipe or clean.

65. **blithe**: see note on l. 56.

67 **tells his tale** = counts his sheep, in order to find if any have gone amissing during the night. 'Tale' is thus used in the sense of 'that which is *told* or counted,' which was one of its meanings in Early Eng.: A.S. *talū*, a number. In the Bible 'tell' and 'tale' are frequently used in this sense, *Gen.* xv. 5, *Psalms* xxii. 17, *Exod.* v. 18; and in the works of writers nearly contemporary with Milton the words are used of the counting of sheep.

'To tell a tale' may also mean 'to relate a story,' and the shepherds may be supposed to sit and amuse themselves with simple narratives. But, as Milton in the previous lines refers to such rural occupations as are suited to the early morning, and represents each person as engaged in some ordinary duty, it seems likely that in this line also some piece of business is meant, and not a pastime. The morning hours are not usually those devoted to story-telling.

69. **Straight, straightway, immediately.** "There is, in my opinion, great beauty in this abrupt and rapturous start of the poet's imagination, as it is extremely well adapted to the subject, and carries a very pretty allusion to those sudden gleams of vernal delight which break in upon the mind at the sight of a fine prospect" (Thyer). See note, *Univ. Carrier*, ii. 10.

70. Whilst it (*i.e.* the eye) measures the landscape round; sweeps over the surrounding scene. Landscape, spelt by Milton *landskip*, which resembles the A.S. form, *landscipe* = 'land-shape,' the aspect or general appearance of the country. The word is borrowed from the Dutch painters, who applied it to what we now call the *background* of a picture. 'Scape' is radically the same as the suffix *-ship*, seen in ladyship, worship, friendship, etc., where it serves to form abstract nouns. 'Round' is an adverb modifying 'measures,' = around.

71. **Russet lawns, and fallows grey**: 'lawn' is always used by Milton to denote an open stretch of grassy ground, whereas in modern usage it is applied to a smooth piece of grass-grown land in front of a house. The origin of the word is disputed, but it seems radically to denote 'a clear space'; it is said to be cognate with *llan* used as a prefix in the names of certain Welsh towns, *e.g.* Llandaff, Llangollen. Comp. *Lyc.* 25. 'Fallow' literally denotes 'pale-coloured,' *e.g.* tawny or yellow: hence applied to land ploughed but not bearing a crop, as it is generally of a tawny colour; and finally to all land that has been

long left unsown and is therefore grass-grown. It is in this last sense that Milton uses it, and as the word has lost all significance of colour (when applied to land) he adds the adjective 'grey' to distinguish it from those fields that are 'russet' or reddish-brown: the former are more distant, the latter nearer at hand. See note l. 55.

72. **stray**: comp. Lat. *errare*, to wander.

73. **Mountains**, along with 'lawns,' 'fallows,' 'meadows,' 'brooks,' and 'rivers,' is in apposition to 'new pleasures,' l. 69.

74. **labouring clouds**, so called because they bring forth rain and storms. The image of clouds resting on the mountain-top is well expressed by Shelley:—

" I sift the snow on the mountains below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the blast."

The Cloud.

75. **trim**: comp. 'trim gardens,' *Il Pens.* 50, 'daisies trim,' *Com.* 120. The student should note the prevailing position of the adjectives in lines 71, 75, 76, 126, etc. Where contrast is intended, as in line 76, the two nouns are placed together and the adjectives apart; so in Latin frequently.

pie, variegated. The word literally means 'variegated like a magpie'; it is a common epithet in poetry and is applied by Shakespeare to daisies (*L. L. L.* v. ii.). It is therefore probable that in this passage also 'pie' qualifies 'daisies'; otherwise it might be taken as an attribute of 'meadows.' Comp. *piebald*, applied to animals.

77. **Towers and battlements it (i.e. the eye) sees**. This thought may have been suggested to Milton by the fact that his eye, in taking in the landscape around Horton, would often light on the towers of Windsor Castle in the distance: comp. *Com.* 935.

78. **Bosomed**, embosomed.

79. Where perhaps some beautiful lady dwells, a centre of attraction. Lines 79 and 80 form an attributive adjunct to 'towers and battlements.'

beauty: see note on *Lyc.* 166.

lies=dwells; comp. *Lyc.* 53, and Shakespeare, 'When the court lay at Windsor' (*M. W. of W.* ii. 2).

80. **cynosure**, now applied generally to an object of great interest: so called because the Cynosura, the stars composing the tail of the constellation of the Lesser Bear, was the mark by which the Phoenician sailors steered their course at sea. 'Cynosure' is from the Greek *kynos oura*, a dog's tail: comp. *Com.* 342: "Tyrian Cynosure." A star by which sailors steer is also

called a 'lode-star,' a word which is used metaphorically in the same way as 'cynosure'; comp. "Your eyes are *lode-stars*," *M. N. D.* i. 1.

neighbouring: 'neighbour' is radically 'near-dweller' (A.S. *neah-búr*).

81. **Hard by**, near at hand: 'by' = alongside, an adverb modifying 'smokes'; 'hard' is an adverb of degree modifying 'by.' Comp. the sense of 'by' in the phrases *close by*, *fast by*, *to put a thing by* (i.e. aside).

82. **From**: a preposition may, as here, govern an adverbial phrase.

83. **Where**, in which cottage. Corydon, Thyrsis, Thestylis occur frequently in pastoral poetry as the names of shepherds, and Phyllis as the name of a female. See Virgil's *Bucolics*, Theocritus, Spenser, etc.

met: 'having met together, they are seated at their savoury dinner of herbs and other country dishes.'

85. **messes**, dishes of food. 'Mess' originally meant something *placed* on a table (Lat. *missum*): the word here has no connection with 'mess,' a disordered mixture, which is a variant of *mash*.

86. **neat-handed**: 'neat' is a kind of transferred epithet, referring not to the woman's hands but to the appearance of the food prepared by her. So a skilful carpenter may be called 'neat-handed,' a good needlewoman 'neat-fingered,' etc.

97. **bower**, here refers to the cottage. A 'bower' is strictly something *built*, a dwelling-place: it came to be applied to the inner chamber occupied by a lady.

With Thestylis: 'with' here means 'in company with,' a woman being generally employed at harvest-time to assist in binding the corn into sheaves.

89. **Or**. The construction is: '*Either* she leaves her bower to bind the sheaves, *or* (she goes) to the tanned haycock.' This is evidently the meaning; 'she goes' being implied in the previous verb 'leaves.' This construction, by which two nouns or phrases are connected with one verb which really suits only one of them, is common in Milton, and is called *zeugma*.

earlier season, because the hay-harvest is earlier than the grain-harvest.

90. **tanned haycock**, a pile of dried hay. The word 'cock' (by itself) means a 'small pile of hay': it is radically distinct from the word 'cock' in any other sense.

mead, meadow. The form in *-ow* (comp. arrow, sparrow, marrow, sorrow) is due to an A.S. suffix *-we*.

91. **secure**, free from care, not fearing harm. This is the primary sense of the word [Lat. *se* (for *sine*) = free from, *cura* = care]: it therefore corresponds exactly to the English word 'care-less.' It is used in this sense in the Bible and in such passages as—

“Man may *securely* sin, but *safely* never.”

In Latin *securus* is sometimes applied to that which frees from care. In modern English 'secure' means 'safe,' *actually* free from danger.

92. “Milton again notes a paragraph in the poem, changing the scene. It is now past mid-day and into the afternoon; and we are invited to a rustic holiday among the 'upland hamlets' or little villages among the slopes” (Masson).

upland hamlets: as the poet here introduces us to the primitive amusements and superstitions of village life we may take 'upland' to mean 'far removed from large cities.' The word 'uplandish' was formerly used in the sense of 'rude' or 'unrefined,' because, in the uplands, the refinements of town-life were unknown. Comp. note on l. 5. 'Hamlet' = ham-let, a little *home* (A.S. *ham*): comp. the affix in the names of certain towns—Nottingham, Birmingham, etc.

invite: the object of this verb is not expressed.

94. **jocund**, merry: from the Lat. *jucundus*, pleasant. (It has no radical connection with the words *joke*, *jocular*, as is sometimes stated.)

rebecks. The rebeck was a three-stringed fiddle, played with a bow. The name is the same as the Persian *rabáb*, applied to a two-stringed instrument said to have been introduced into Europe by the Moors. The modern violin has four strings.

95. **many a youth**. 'Youth' = young-th, the state of being young; it is now used both in its abstract and concrete senses: in the latter it applies properly, as here, to a young man.

'Many a' is a peculiar idiom, which has been explained variously. One theory is that 'many' is a corruption of the French *mesnie*, a train or company, and 'a' a corruption of the preposition 'of,' the singular noun being then substituted for the plural through confusion of the preposition with the article. A more correct view seems to be that 'many' is the A.S. *manig*, which was in old English used with a singular noun and without the article, e.g. *manig mann* = many men. In the thirteenth century the indefinite article began to be inserted, thus *mony enne thing* = 'many a thing,' just as we say 'what a thing,' 'such a thing.' This would imply that 'a' is not a corruption of 'of,' and that there is no connection with the French word *mesnie*.

96. **chequered shade.** The meaning may be illustrated by a passage from Shakespeare—

“The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind,
And make a chequered shadow on the ground.”
Titus Andron. ii. 4.

Comp. “a shadow-chequer'd lawn,” Tennyson's *Recoll. of Arabian Nights*.

The radical meaning of ‘chequered’ or ‘checkered’ is ‘marked with squares’ (like a chess-board); hence it is here applied to the ground marked in dark and light. The game of draughts which is played on a chess-board is sometimes called ‘checkers.’ The word ‘check’ is derived, through the French, from the Persian *sháh*, a king, the name given to the principal piece on the chess-board: ‘chess’ is merely a corruption of the plural ‘checks.’

97. ‘And (to) young and old (who have) come forth to play.’ ‘Come’ is the past participle agreeing with ‘young and old.’

to play: infinitive of purpose after a verb of motion; in early English the *gerund* was used, preceded by the preposition *to*.

98. **sunshine holiday**: comp. *Com.* 959. ‘Sunshine’ is a noun used as an adjective. Milton wrote ‘holyday,’ which shows the origin of the word. The accent in such compounds (comp. blue-bell, blackbird, etc.) falls on the adjective; it is only in this way that the ear can tell whether the compounds (*e.g.* *hóliday*) or the separate words (*e.g.* *hóly dáy*) are being used.

99. **livelong, longlasting**: see *On Shakespeare*, 8, note. For ‘fail,’ the subjunctive after ‘till,’ compare l. 44.

100. We have here to supply a verb of motion before ‘to,’ *e.g.* ‘they proceed’: comp. lines 90 and 131.

spicy nut-brown ale, a drink composed of hot ale, nutmeg, sugar, toast, and roasted crabs or apples. It was called *Lamb's wool* from its frothy appearance, and Shakespeare refers to it as “gossip's bowl,” while another Elizabethan writer calls it “the spiced wassel bowl.”

101. **feat**, exploit, wonderful deed. ‘Feat,’ like ‘fact,’ is radically ‘something done’ (Lat. *factum*). For ‘many a,’ see l. 95.

102. **Faery Mab**. Mab was the fairy who sent dreams, and hence a person subject to dreams is said to be ‘favoured with the visits of queen Mab.’ See an account of her powers in this respect in *Romeo and Juliet*, I. iv. Ben Jonson alludes to the liking of the fairies for cream:—

“ When about the *cream-bowls* sweet
 You and all your elves do meet.
 This is *Mab*, the mistress-fairy,
 That doth nightly rob the dairy.
 She that *pinches* country wenches,
 If they scrub not clean their benches.’

Milton's spelling 'faery' comes nearer to the early English word 'faerie,' which meant 'enchantment.'

junkets, also spelt *juncates*. The original sense is 'a kind of cream-cheese served up on rushes' (Ital. *giunco*, a rush): it was then applied to various kinds of delicacies made of cream, then to any delicacy, and finally to a 'merrymaking.' Hence the verb 'to junket,' *i.e.* to revel. Milton here means 'dainties.'

eat: here past tense = ate.

103. **She ... he**, etc. One of the girls tells how she was pinched in her sleep by the fairies (the popular superstition being that only lazy servants were treated in this way), and then a young man tells his experience: at one time he was led astray by the *ignis fatuus*, and at another time he had suffered from the tricks of Robin Goodfellow.

104. The construction is awkward: we may read either (1) 'And he (was) led by Friar's lantern; (he) tells how' etc., or (2) 'And he, (having been) led by Friar's lantern, tells how' etc. The former reading is preferable as it separates the two stories regarding the 'Friar's lantern' and the 'drudging goblin,' but it leaves the verb 'tells' without a subject. This, however, occasionally happens in Milton. The other reading is grammatically easy, but confuses the two stories. A third suggestion is to read *Tales* for *Tells* in line 105, putting a colon at *led*.

Friar's lantern. This refers to the flickering light often seen above marshy ground and liable to be mistaken by the belated traveller for the light of a lamp. It is popularly called Jack o' lantern or Will o' the Wisp. This explains Milton's use of the word 'lantern,' but it does not explain why he should call it 'Friar's' lantern. He may refer to a spirit popularly called Friar Rush, who, however, neither haunted fields nor carried a lantern, but played pranks in houses during the night; he is therefore distinct from Jack o' lantern. 'Friar' is a member of a religious order (Lat. *frater*, Fr. *frère*, a brother).

105. **drudging goblin**: sometimes called Robin Goodfellow or Hobgoblin (or Puck as in Shakespeare). Comp. *Anat of Mel.* I. ii.: 'A bigger kind there is of them (*i.e.* terrestrial demons) called with us *hobgoblins* and Robin Goodfellows, that would in those superstitious times grind corn *for a mess of milk*, cut wood, or do any manner of *drudgery* work, . . . to draw water, dress meat,

or any such thing.' It is to be noted that the individuality of these familiar spirits is often not very clear. Milton confuses Jack o' lantern and Friar Rush, while keeping Robin Goodfellow distinct; Shakespeare does not distinguish Robin Goodfellow, Jack o' lantern, and Puck (see *Midsummer Night's Dream*, ii. 1); while Burton makes Robin Goodfellow a house spirit and speaks of men being "led round about a heath with a Puck in the night." Scott makes the same mistake as Milton, and Ben Jonson in *The Sad Shepherd* introduces 'Puck-hairy' or 'Robin Goodfellow,' a hind. See note on *Il Pens.* 93.

'To drudge' is to perform hard and humble work. 'Goblin,' a supernatural being, generally represented as of small size but great strength; sometimes mischievous, sometimes kindly disposed. In the form *hob-goblin* 'hob' is a corruption of Robin; hence Robin Goodfellow and Hobgoblin are the same.

105. **sweat**; here past tense of a strong verb (O.E. *swat* or *swot*); it is now treated as a weak verb, and the past tense is *sweated*. Comp. such weak verbs as creep, leap, quake, swell, wash, weep, of which the old preterites were crop, leep, quoke, swal, wesh, wep.

106. **To earn**: infin. of purpose.

duly set, *i.e.* placed as the goblin's *due*: 'set' qualifies 'cream-bowl.'

107. **ere**: comp. l. 114 and *Lyc.* 25. 'Ere' = before, now used only as a conjunction or preposition: in A.S. *aer* was an adverb as well, and not a comparative but a positive form = soon.

108. **shadowy flail**; being wielded by a spirit, the flail is here called 'shadowy' = invisible. 'Flail' is from Lat. *flagellum*, a scourge.

hath: Milton always used this older inflexion, and never the form *has*.

109. **end**. The goblin performed in one night a task that ten labourers working a whole day could not have *completed*; end = complete. Notice that 'end' and 'fiend' (pron. *fend*) here rhyme together.

110. Then the lubber fiend lies (him) down. Comp. 'haste thee,' l. 25 and note; 'him' is here reflective.

lubber fiend: 'lubber' is generally applied to a big clumsy fellow, whereas Robin Goodfellow was a small and active fairy, who could scarcely be "stretched out all the chimney's length." Milton may have referred to 'Lob-lie-by-the-fire, the giant son of a witch mentioned in Fletcher's *Knight of the Burning Pestle*. Shakespeare calls Puck a 'lob of spirits.'

111. **chimney's length**, *i.e.* the width of the fireplace or hearth. 'Chimney' in the sense of fireplace is obsolete except in

compounds, *e.g.* *chimney-piece*, *chimney-corner*. It now means 'flue' or passage for smoke; as such passages did not exist in Roman houses, the Lat. *caminus* (from which *chimney* is derived) meant a furnace, brazier, or fireplace.

112. **Basks ... strength.** 'To bask' is to 'lie exposed to a pleasant warmth.' The word is here used transitively, its object being 'strength,' and its meaning 'to expose to warmth.'

hairy: an epithet transferred from the person to an attendant circumstance; comp. 'dimpled mirth,' 'wrinkled care,' 'pale fear,' 'gaunt hunger.' Ben Jonson speaks of Puck as being hairy, and strength is often associated with abundant growth of hair: see *Samson Agonistes*, *passim*.

113. **crop-full**, with well-filled stomach. The 'crop' is the first stomach of fowls.

flings, *i.e.* flings himself, darts. This verb is one of a number that may be used reflectively without having the reflexive pronoun expressed: comp. 'he *pushed* into the room,' 'he has *changed* very much,' etc.

114. **first cock**; because one cock sets the others a-crowing.

matin, morning call (Fr. *matin*, morning); comp. *Par. Lost*, v. 7, "The shrill matin-song of birds on every bough." In *Par. Lost*, vi. 526, it occurs as an adjective, and in *Hamlet* Shakespeare uses it as a noun=morning: "The glow-worm shows the *matin* to be near." The word *matins* is now used for morning prayers.

115. **Thus done the tales.** Absolute construction (as in l. 62) =The tales (being) thus done, they (*i.e.* the villagers) creep to bed.

116. **lulled**=being lulled, attributive to 'they.'

117. **Towered cities ... then.** 'Then' does not here denote 'afterwards' as it does in line 100; it marks a transition from mirth in the country to mirth in the city, and the poet now recounts the entertainments of city life, as L'Allegro might read of them in romances and tales of chivalry. This explains the allusions to 'throng of knights,' contests of 'wit or arms,' 'antique pageantry,' etc. These are not the events of one day except in the sense that L'Allegro might, on his return from the village rejoicings, retire to his own room to read about them.

'Towered,' having towers (Lat. *turrita*, an epithet which Milton himself applied to London in one of his Latin Elegies). Comp. *Arc.* 21. There is no doubt that the poet, during his stay at Horton, paid occasional visits to London, and Warton infers from expressions in the first Elegy that he had in his youth enjoyed the theatre.

118. **hum**, nominative, along with 'cities,' to 'please.'

119. **knights and barons**: it is interesting to note the original meaning of these and other words that are now titles of rank. 'Knight'=A.S. *cniht*, a youth; 'baron' meant at first no more than 'man' or 'husband'; 'duke'=Lat. *dux*, a 'leader'; 'count' is really Lat. *comes*, a companion; and 'earl' is Old Saxon *erl*, a man.

120. **weeds**, garments. Comp. the use of the word by Shakespeare—

"I have a woman's longing
To see great Hector in his *weeds of peace*."
Tr. and Cres. iii. 3.

'Weeds of peace' denotes the ordinary dress as opposed to 'weeds of war,' *i.e.* armour, etc. The use of the word is now generally confined to the phrase 'a widow's weeds,' *i.e.* a widow's mourning dress. Comp. *Comus*, 16, 189, 390.

high triumphs, grand public entertainments, such as masques, pageants, processions, tournaments, etc. Comp. *Sams. Agon.* 1312 and Bacon's *Essay Of Masques and Triumphs*. Such exhibitions were extremely popular from the time of Henry VIII. to Charles I. See *Arcades*, introductory note.

121. **store of ladies**, many ladies. The word 'store' is found in this sense in Sidney, Spenser, and others. It is now applied only to inanimate objects to denote abundance.

122. **Rain**, pour forth. 'To rain' in the sense of 'to pour forth in abundance' is a common expression: comp. 'to stream,' 'to shower,' 'to overflow.'

influence. This word is now chiefly used in the sense of 'power' or 'authority,' but a trace of its original meaning still remains in such phrases as 'magnetic influence,' 'the influence (*i.e.* inspiration) of the Spirit.' Its literal meaning is *a flowing in* (Lat. *in*, and *fluere*, to flow), and in this sense it was used in astrology to denote "a flowing in, an *influent* course of the planets, their virtue being infused into, or their course working on, inferior creatures." This was originally the only meaning of the word, and in this sense Milton and Shakespeare employ it: in this passage it implies that the bright eyes of the ladies were like the stars in 'working on' those upon whom their glances fell.

Burton, in *Anat. of Mel.*, says: 'Primary causes are the heavens, planets, stars, etc., by their *influence* (as our astrologers hold) producing this and such like effects.' It is well to remember how strong a hold the belief in astrology had (and still has) on the human mind; up to the end of the eighteenth century the almanacs in common use in England were full of astrological rules and theories, and even an astronomer like

Kepler was not entirely free from belief in such matters. It is not surprising, therefore, that the science of astrology has left its traces on the language in such words as 'influence,' 'disastrous,' 'ill-starred,' 'ascendency,' etc. Comp. notes on *Arc.* 52, *Il Pens.* 24.

judge the prize, adjudge or award the prize. We may take 'eyes' as nominative to both of the verbs 'rain' and 'judge,' the ladies showing by their eyes whom they regard as the victor. But Milton occasionally connects two verbs rather loosely with one noun, just as he, on the other hand, makes one verb refer by zeugma to two nouns in different senses. We may therefore read, 'who judge,' the relative being implied in 'whose,' l. 121. Comp. *Il Pens.* 155, *Lyc.* 89.

123. **Of wit or arms**: comp. 'gowns, not arms,' *Son.* xvii. The contests of *wit* in which ladies were the judges may be those 'Courts of Love' which were so popular in France until the end of the fourteenth century and had so great an influence on the poetical literature both of France and England. The contests of *arms* may refer to those tournaments in which mounted knights fought to show their skill in arms, the victor generally receiving his prize at the hands of some fair lady. Comp. *Il Pens.* 118.

124. **her grace whom**, *i.e.* the grace of her whom. The relative pronoun here relates, not to the noun preceding it, but to the substantive implied in the possessive pronoun. His, her, etc. being genitives = of him, of her, etc., they have here their full force as pronouns, and are not pronominal adjectives (as they are sometimes called). The same idiom is found in Latin, *e.g.* *mea scripta timentis*, 'my writings who (I) fear' = the writings of me who am in fear. Comp. *Arc.* 75, *Son.* xviii. 6. *Grace* = favour.

125. **Hymen ... in saffron robe**. Hymen, being the god of marriage, Milton here refers to elaborate marriage festivities which often included masques and other spectacles: comp. Ben Jonson's *Hymenaei*, where Hymen enters upon the stage 'in a saffron-coloured robe, his under vestures white, his socks yellow, a yellow veil of silk on his left arm, his head crowned with roses and marjoram, in his right hand a torch of pine-tree.' Comp. Milton's fifth *Elegy*, 105:

Exulting youths the Hymeneal sing,
With Hymen's name, roofs, rocks, and valleys ring;
He, new attired, and by the season drest
Proceeds, all fragrant, in his saffron vest.

(*Cowper's translation*).

In works of art, Hymen is represented as a youth bearing a torch. Milton uses 'taper,' now restricted to a small wax-

candle ; from this use we get the adjectives 'taper' = taper-like, long and slender, and 'tapering.' The radical sense of 'taper' is 'that which glows or shines.'

125. **appear** : after the verb *let* the simple infinitive without *to* is used : let Hymen (to) appear.'

127. **pomp and feast and revelry** : these words depend upon the verb 'let.' Milton here used the word 'pomp' in its classical sense (Greek *pompé*) = an imposing procession. Comp. *Sams. Agon.* 1312, and note on l. 120.

128. **mask** : see introduction to *Comus* in this series.

antique pageantry, representations or emblematic spectacles in which mythological characters were largely introduced. 'Pageantry' is an interesting word. The suffix *-ry* has a collective or comprehensive force (which has gained in some cases an abstract sense) as in cavalry, infantry, poetry, etc. *Pageant* meant (1) a moveable platform ; then (2) a platform on which plays were exhibited ; hence (3) the play itself ; and (as the plays first exhibited in this way made large use of spectacular effect) (4) a spectacle or show.

'Antique,' belonging to earlier times (Lat. *antiquus*, also spelt *anticus*). This word has gone through changes of meaning similar to those of the word 'uncouth' (see l. 5), viz. (1) old, (2) old-fashioned or out of date, and hence (3) fantastic : there is, however, this difference—that while 'uncouth' has had all three senses, 'antique' has had only the two first, the third being taken by the form 'antic.'

129. **Such sights, etc.** These words stand in apposition to 'pomp,' 'feast,' etc. Some suppose that Milton here refers to the early works of Ben Jonson, who was a prolific writer of masques. But surely they have a deeper significance ; they imply that the imagery of the poem is not that of mere recollection, but the product of a youthful nature, full of joyous emotion, and affected by circumstances of time and place. A youthful poet, a haunted stream, and a summer evening form a combination that does not lead to mere description.

131. **Then to the well-trod stage, sc. 'let me go'** : this means that L'Allegro turns from the stories of chivalry to the comedies of Shakespeare and Jonson : comp. note l. 117. By calling the stage 'well-trod' Milton may hint at the abundance of dramatic literature.

anon, soon after (A.S. *on án*, in one moment) : an adverb modifying the verb of motion understood.

132. **Jonson's learnèd sock.** Ben Jonson (1574-1637) was alive when Milton paid him this compliment. There is no doubt that Milton must have admired Jonson for his classical learning and for his lofty sense of the poet's task. He calls him 'learned' on

account of the profuse display of classical knowledge and dramatic art in his comedies and masques. On this point he is often contrasted with Shakespeare. Hazlitt says: "Shakespeare gives fair play to nature and his own genius, while the other trusts almost entirely to imitation and custom. Shakespeare takes his groundwork in individual character and the manners of his age, and raises from them a fantastical and delightful superstructure of his own; the other takes the same groundwork in matter-of-fact, but hardly ever rises above it." Fuller compares Jonson to a Spanish galleon and Shakespeare to an English man-of-war: "Master Jonson, like the former, was built far higher in learning; solid but slow in his performances. Shakespeare, like the latter, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention."

sock: here used as emblematic of comedy in general, as 'buskin' is used of tragedy (comp. *Il Pens.* 102). The sock (Lat. *soccus*) was a kind of low slipper worn by actors in the comedies of ancient Rome. 'Sock' here cleverly refers to Jonson's liking for the classical drama: it was, less fittingly, used by Jonson himself of Shakespeare.

133. Or (if) sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child, etc. Milton speaks of Shakespeare with reference only to his comedies and to that aspect of them that would appeal most readily to the cheerful man. A comedy like *Measure for Measure* could hardly be adequately characterised as 'native wood-notes wild,' but such a comedy would no more accord with the mood of L'Allegro than the tragedy of *Hamlet*. Milton's language here is sufficiently accounted for by the fact that he is contrasting Shakespeare as master of the romantic drama with Jonson as master of the classical drama, that he is paying a tribute to his striking natural genius ('native wood-notes'), and that he regards him as indeed a poet, being 'of imagination all compact' ('Fancy's child'). L'Allegro cannot be expected to use the language of the lines *On Shakespeare*: he represents a special mood of the human spirit, a mood with which Milton is not so fully in sympathy as that of *Il Penseroso*. 'Fancy' (Phantasy) is here used in a less restricted sense than now: we would now use 'Imagination.' The student should note the pleasing rhythm and alliteration of lines 133, 134.

135. against eating cares, to ward off gnawing anxiety. It is a common figure to speak of care or sorrow eating into the heart as rust corrodes iron. Comp. Lat. *curas edaces*, Horace, *Odes*, ii. 11; *mordaces sollicitudines*, *Odes*, i. 18. The preposition 'against, from the notion of counteraction implied in it, has a variety of uses: comp. 'he fought against (in opposition to) the enemy'; 'he toiled against (in provision for) my return.'

136. Milton now refers to the delights of music, and it is well to notice how he 'marries' the sound to the sense by the recurrence of the *liquid* or smooth-flowing consonants (l, m, n, r) in lines 136-144.

Lap me, let me be wrapped or folded: 'lap' is a mere corruption of 'wrap.' Comp. *Comus*, 257: "lap it in Elysium."

Lydian airs, soft and sweet music. "Of the three chief musical modes or measures among the ancients, the Dorian, Phrygian, and Lydian, the first was majestic (*Par. Lost*, i. 550), the second sprightly, the third amorous or tender." Comp. *Lyc.* 189.

137. **Married to**, associated with. Comp. Wordsworth—

"Wisdom *married* to immortal verse."—*Excurs.* viii.

Shakespeare (*Sonnet cxvi.*) speaks of 'the *marriage* of true minds.' By a similar metaphor we say that a person is *wedded* to a habit or a theory.

"Immortal verse" is poetry which, like that of Milton himself, "the world should not willingly let die"; see *Comus*, 516.

138. 'Such as may penetrate the soul that meets it or sympathises with it.' Comp. Cowper—

"There is in souls a sympathy with sounds,
And as the mind is pitched, the ear is pleased
With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave."

In this line 'pierce' rhymes with 'verse.'

139. **bout**, a turn or bend, referring here to the melody. 'Bout' is another form of 'bight,' and is cognate with 'bow.'

140. **long drawn out**: the scansion of this line will show its appropriateness to the sense. 'Long,' an adverb modifying 'drawn out.'

141. **wanton heed and giddy cunning**: the music, in order to be expressive, must be free or unrestrained, yet correctly and skilfully rendered. 'Wanton heed' and 'giddy cunning' are examples of oxymoron. 'Cunning' = skill (A.S. *cunnan*, to know, be able), now used in the restricted sense of 'wiliness.' Comp. the similar degradation of meaning in *craft*, originally 'strength'; *artful*; *designing*; etc.

142. **voice**, here absolute case along with the participle 'running': comp. l. 62, note. For the sense of 'melting' comp. *Il Pens.* 165.

mazes, the intricate or difficult parts of the music.

143. **Untwisting all**, etc.: comp. note on *Arc.* 72. The harmony that is in the human soul is generally deadened or imprisoned, and it is only by sweet music or some other stimulus that touches a chord within us that the hidden harmony of the soul reveals itself. See Shakespeare, *Mer. of Venice*, v. 1. 61.

145. **That, so that:** the use of 'that' instead of 'so that' to introduce a clause of consequence, is common in Elizabethan writers and in Milton himself.

Orpheus' self: 'Orpheus himself' we should now say. 'Self' was originally an adjective = 'same,' in which sense it is still used with pronouns of the third person (as *himself, herself*). Then it came to be regarded as a substantive, and was preceded by the possessive pronouns or by a noun in the possessive case (as *myself, ourselves, Orpheus' self*). In the latter sense it is not used with pronouns of the third person: we cannot say *his-self*, but *him-self*.

Orpheus, "in the Greek mythology, was the unparalleled singer and musician, the power of whose harp or lyre drew wild beasts, and even rocks and trees, to follow him. His wife Eurydice having died, he descended into Hades to recover her if possible. His music, charming even the damned, prevailed with Pluto (the god of the lower world), who granted his prayer on condition that he should not look on Eurydice till he had led her completely out of Hades and into the upper world. Unfortunately, on their way upwards, he turned to see if she was following him; and she was caught back" (Masson). *Comp. Il Pens. 105, Lyc. 58.*

heave, raise, lift up: *comp. Comus, 885:* "heave thy rosy head."

146. **golden slumber.** 'Golden' may here mean simply 'happy,' or it may be used because Orpheus is amongst the gods. Homer often applies 'golden' to that which belongs to the gods. *Comp. aurea quies, in Milton's Eleg. iii.*

147. **Elysian flowers:** Elysium was the abode of the spirits of the blessed, where they wandered amidst flowers and beauties of every kind. *Comp. Com. 257, 996.*

148. 'Such music as would have moved Pluto to set Eurydice completely free.' In *Quint. Nov. 23*, Milton calls Pluto *summanus*, chief of the dead.

149. **to have quite set free:** 'to have set' is here infinitive of result, and the perfect tense denotes something that had not been accomplished and is no longer possible: *comp. the meanings of 'he hoped to be present' and 'he hoped to have been present.'* *Quite* = unconditionally or completely.

150. **Eurydice:** see note on l. 145 above; also *Il Pens. 105.*

151. These delights, etc.: the last two lines of the poem recall the closing lines of Marlowe's *Passionate Shepherd*—

"If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love."

Milton here accepts the mood of Mirth, but only on the condition that its pleasures are such as he has enumerated.

No. LXI.—IL PENSEROSO.

1. **Hence** : comp. note on *L'Allegro* 1. The opening lines recall certain lines by Sylvester—

“Hence, hence, false pleasures, momentary joyes,
Mocke us no more with your illuding toyes!”

vain deluding Joys : ‘vain’ is the Lat. *vanus*, empty, which is always opposed to *vera*, true. In *L'Allegro* the poet has described true mirth; and now ‘to commendation of the true, he joins condemnation of the false.’ ‘Deluding’ is deceitful, not what it appears to be.

2. These ‘Joys’ are said to be the brood (*i.e.* breed or offspring) of Folly by no father, in order to imply that they are the product of pure or absolute foolishness; they are by nature essentially and altogether foolish. So the goddess Night, one of the first of created beings, is said by Greek poets to have given birth without a husband to Death, Dreams, Sleep, etc.

Notice the use of the cognate words ‘brood’ and ‘bred’ in the same line.

3. **How little you bested**; of how little avail you are. ‘Bested’ is the present indicative, but the past participle is the only part of the verb now in common use, as in the phrase ‘to be hard bestead,’ *i.e.* to be in sore need of help. ‘To stead’ occurs frequently in Shakespeare in a transitive sense = to profit, to assist, but the word ‘stead’ now occurs only in phrases, *e.g.* ‘to stand in good stead,’ and in compounds, *e.g.* *steadfast*, *steady*, *homestead*, *bedstead*, *instead*, etc.: comp. names of places, *e.g.* *Hampstead*, *Kronstadt*, etc. Its root is the verb ‘stand,’ and its literal sense is ‘place.’

4. **fill the fixèd mind**: satisfy the thoughtful or sober mind; comp. Spenser’s *F. Q.* iv. 7.

toys, trifles. In the *Anat. of Mel.* we read of persons who “complain of *toys*, and fear without a cause.”

5. **idle brain**, foolish mind. The Old Eng. *idel* means ‘empty or vain’; in this sense we speak of ‘an *idle* dream.’ ‘Brain’ may be used here for mind, but it may be noted that, just as melancholy was supposed to be due to a certain humour of the body, so ‘a cold and moist brain’ was believed to be an inseparable companion of folly.

6. **fancies fond**, foolish imaginations. ‘Fond’ has here its primary sense of ‘foolish,’ *fanned* being the past participle of an old verb *fonnen*, to be foolish. It is now used to express great liking or affection, the idea of folly having been almost lost, except in certain uses of the word in the north of England and in Scotland. Chaucer uses *fonne* = a fool, and *fondling* is still

used either as a term of endearment or to denote a fool. It may be noted that in a similar way the word *dote* originally meant 'to be silly' and now 'to love excessively.' Comp. *Lyc.* 56, *Son.* xix. 8, *Sams. Agon.* 1686.

6. **possess**, occupy, fill: 'occupy the imaginations of the foolish with gaudy shapes or appearances.' In the English Bible we read of "a man *possessed* of a devil," i.e. occupied by an evil spirit.

For 'shapes,' comp. *L'Alleg.* 4.

7. **thick**, abundant, close together, here qualifying 'shapes': comp. "thick-coming fancies," *Macbeth*, v. 3. The different senses of the word are seen in 'thick as hail,' 'thick fluid,' 'thickly populated,' 'thick-head,' 'thick-skinned,' 'a thick fog,' 'a thick stick,' etc.

8. **motes**, particles of dust: here called 'gay' because dancing in the sunbeam. See *Matt.* vii. 3.

people the sun-beams. The specks of dust are said to people or occupy the sunbeams because it is chiefly in the direct rays of the sun that they become visible. By using the verb 'to people' Milton strengthens the comparison between them and the shapes or images that occupy the idle imagination.

9. **likest**, adj. superlative degree, qualifying 'shapes.' 'Like' is now an exception to the rule for the formation of the comparative and superlative forms of monosyllabic adjectives: we say 'more like,' 'most like.' But, in Milton's time, there was greater grammatical freedom, and in *Comus*, 57 he uses "more like." He also has such forms as *resolutest*, *exquisitest*, *elegantest*, *moralest*, etc., which according to present usage are inadmissible. In such phrases as 'like his father,' 'like' has come to have the force of a preposition, but in the phrase 'likest hovering dreams,' the noun is governed by 'to' understood, as in Latin it would be in the dative case.

10. **fickle pensioners ... train**, inconstant attendants of sleep. Morpheus, the son of Sleep and the god of Dreams: the name means literally 'the shaper,' he who creates those shapes or images seen in dreams. Morpheus was generally represented with a cup in one hand and in the other a bunch of poppies, from which opium is prepared: hence the word 'morphia.'

'Pensioners,' followers. Queen Elizabeth had a bodyguard of handsome young men of noble birth, whom she styled her *Pensioners*. A 'pensioner' is strictly one who receives a pension, and hence a dependent. 'Train,' something *drawn* along (Lat. *traho*, to draw); hence train of a dress (line 34), of carriages, of followers.

See note on *L'Allegro*, 10, regarding the imagery and metre of the first ten lines of this poem.

11. **hail!** an old form of salutation, meaning 'may you be in *health*': the word is cognate with hale, heal, etc.

12. **divinest.** The superlative degree of adjectives is often used in Latin to mark a high degree of a quality, when the thing spoken of is not compared with the rest of a class. This is the *absolute* use of the superlative, as here.

13. **visage, face, mien** (Lat. *visum*, 'that which is seen'). The word is now mostly used to express contempt.

14. **To hit the sense, etc.:** to be distinguishable by human eyes. It is a fact that light may be of such intensity that the sense of sight loses all discriminative power. So we speak of a 'blinding' flash of light. For the use of the verb 'hit' compare *Arcades*, 77; in *Antony and Cleop.* ii. 2 Shakespeare speaks of a perfume *hitting* the sense of smell. The expression is obsolete.

15. **weaker view, feeble power of vision.** 'Weaker' is used absolutely: comp. 'divinest,' l. 12, and 'profaner,' l. 140. This is also a Latin usage.

16. **O'erlaid, overlaid, covered,** in order to reduce the intensity of the brightness of Melancholy's face. Milton thus skilfully converts the association of blackness and melancholy, which in *L'Allegro* makes her repulsive, into an expression of praise, and at the same time connects Melancholy with Wisdom—one of the purposes of the poem. In the *Anat. of Mel.* there is a reference to the disputed question whether 'all learned men, famous philosophers, and lawgivers have been melancholy.'

Comp. *Exodus*, xxxiv. 29, where Moses is said, after having been in God's presence, to have covered his face with a veil in order that the children of Israel might be able to look upon him.

staid, steady, sober, grave: the root is 'stay.'

17. **Black, but etc.** There is an ellipsis here, the construction being: (It is true that she is) black, but (it is) such black as might become a beautiful princess like Prince Memnon's sister.

such as: see note on *L'Alleg.* 29: comp. lines 106, 145.

in esteem, in our estimation. 'Esteem' as a verb is now used only to express high regard for a person; but the noun, though chiefly used in the same sense, may be used along with adjectives which convey a contrary meaning, e.g. poor esteem, low esteem, etc. 'Esteem,' 'aim,' and 'estimate' are cognate (Lat. *aestimo*).

18. **Prince Memnon's sister:** Memnon, the son of Tithonus and Eos (Aurora), was king of the Ethiopians, and fought in aid of Priam in the Trojan war; he was killed by Achilles. Though dark-skinned, he was famous for his beauty, and his sister (Hemera) would presumably be even more beautiful. The

*Hearty
saw this
statement*

morning dew-drops were said by the ancient Greeks to be the tears of Aurora for her dead son, Memnon.

18. **beseem**, suit, become. This is the original sense of the simple verb *seem*; compare the adjective *seemly* = becoming, decent. 'Beseem' here governs 'sister' and 'queen.'

19. **starred Ethiop queen**: Cassiopea, wife of Cepheus, king of Ethiopia. According to one version of her story, she boasted that the beauty of her daughter Andromeda exceeded that of the Nereids; according to another version (adopted by Milton) it was her own beauty of which she boasted. For her presumption Ethiopia was ravaged by a sea-monster, from whose jaws Andromeda was saved by her lover Perseus. After death both mother and daughter were *starred*, *i.e.* changed into stars or constellations. This is probably why Milton calls the former 'starred': it might, however, mean 'placed amongst the stars,' or even 'adorned with stars,' as she was so represented in old charts of the heavens.

20. 1. **above the Sea-Nymphs**: this is an instance of elliptical comparison (*comparatio compendiaria*), the full construction being, 'to set her beauty's praise above (that of) the Sea-Nymphs.'

21. 'And (by so doing) offended their powers.' 'Powers' = divinities (Lat. *numina*).

22. **higher far descended**, far more highly descended. 'Higher' is an adverb modifying 'descended.' 'To be of high descent' = 'to be of noble birth.'

23. **Thee** is the object and **Vesta** the nom. of 'bore.'

bright-haired: with this compound adjective compare neat-handed, smooth-shaven, civil-suited, dewy-feathered, wide-watered, fresh-blown, high-embowed, etc., all of which occur in these poems. They consist of an adjective and a participle, the adjective representing an adverb.

Vesta. As in the case of Mirth, Milton gives Melancholy that genealogy which he thinks best suited to his purpose. Vesta, among the Romans, was the goddess of the domestic hearth; every dwelling was, therefore, in a sense a temple of Vesta. Her symbol was a fire kept burning on her altar by the Vestals, her virgin priestesses; and by making her the mother of Melancholy, Milton signifies that the melancholy of *Il Penseroso* is not the gloominess of the misanthrope nor the unhappiness of the man of impure heart, but the contemplative disposition of a pure and sympathetic soul.

long of yore, long years ago. 'Of yore' is an adverbial phrase like 'of old' and is modified by 'long.' The original sense of 'yore' is 'of years,' *i.e.* in years past.

24. **solitary Saturn.** The Romans attributed the introduction of the habits of civilized life to Saturn, the son of Uranus and Terra, and it seems to be for this reason that Milton makes Vesta, the pure goddess of the hearth, his daughter. He is called 'solitary' either because he devoured his own offspring or because he was dethroned by his sons; in either case it is clear that Milton signifies that Melancholy comes from Solitude or Retirement. In astrology the planet Saturn was supposed, by its influence, to cause melancholy, and persons of a gloomy temperament are said to be *Saturnine*; in the old science of palmistry also, there was a line on the palm of the hand called the Saturnine line, which was believed to indicate melancholy.

25. **His daughter she**; she was his daughter. Some editors read 'she (being) his daughter,' making the construction absolute. But it must be remembered that in Latin the noun or pronoun in the absolute clause cannot be the subject or object of the principal clause, as it would be here; and, further, the punctuation favours the view that 'his daughter she' is to be taken as an independent clause.

26. **was not held a stain**, was not considered to be a reproach. Mythological genealogies are apparently governed by no law. 'Held' is here a verb of incomplete predication.

27. **Oft**, original form of 'often,' which was at first used only before vowels or the letter *h*: comp. *L'Allegro*, 53.

glimmering ... glades. 'Glimmer' is a frequentative of 'gleam,' *i.e.* gleaming at intervals. 'Glade' is an open space in a wood.

29. **woody Ida.** This probably refers to Mt. Ida in the island of Crete; Zeus or Jupiter was said to have been brought up in a cave in that mountain, though some traditions connect his name with Mt. Ida in Asia Minor. Here Saturn met Vesta before Jove (*i.e.* Jupiter) was born. Saturn's reign was called the Golden Age of Italy.

30. **yet**, as yet, up to that time. In modern English we cannot omit 'as' before 'yet' when 'yet' precedes the verb; if we do, the meaning of 'yet' would be changed to 'nevertheless.' In Shakespeare this omission of 'as' before 'yet' is common in negative clauses.

fear of Jove. Saturn was dethroned by his sons, and his realm distributed by lot between Jupiter, Neptune, and Pluto. See *Comus* 20, and Keats' *Hyperion*.

31. **pensive**, thoughtful: comp. *Lyc.* 147. It is from Lat. *pendo*, to weigh: so we speak of a person *weighing* his words.

Nun, a woman who devotes herself to celibacy and seclu-

sion; hence the word is well applied to the daughter of pure Vesta and solitary Saturn: comp. l. 103.

31. **devout**; radically the same word as 'devoted'; the former is used in the general sense of 'pious,' applied to those given up or *vowed* to religious exercises; while the latter is used of strong attachment of any kind,—to God, to any sacred purpose, to friends, etc.

32. **steadfast, constant, resolute**: comp. 'staid,' line 16; and 'bested,' line 3. The suffix *-fast* means 'firm,' as in the phrases 'fast bound,' 'fast asleep,' 'fast colour,' and in the words 'fasten' and 'fastness.'

demure, modest. Trench points out that this is the primary meaning of the word, though it now implies that the modesty is assumed. It is from the French *de (bons) meurs, i.e.* of good manners. The Latin word *mores* (manners) was used in the sense of 'character'; hence our word *moral*. For the form of the word, comp. 'debonair,' *L'Alleg.* 24.

33. **All**: this may be taken as an adverb modifying the phrase 'in a robe of darkest grain.' Comp. 'all in white' (*Son.* xxiii.); all=from head to foot.

grain, purple colour. It is interesting to trace the various uses of this word to its primary sense 'a small seed.' It came to be applied to any small seed-like object, then to any minute particle (*e.g.* *grains* of sand); it was thus used of the small cochineal insects, whose bodies yield a variety of red dyes, and finally to the dyes so obtained. Hence 'grain,' as used here, denotes a dark purple, sometimes called Tyrian purple. But, as these dyes were very durable, 'to dye *in grain*' came to mean 'to dye deeply' or 'to dye in fast colours'; and, more generally still, we speak of a habit or a vice being 'ingrained' in a person's character. Comp. *Com.* 750, *Par. Lost*, v. 285, xi. 242, and Chaucer's *Squire's Tale*—

"So deep *in grain* he dyed his colours."

(The word 'grain,' from its sense of 'particle,' is applied also to the arrangement of particles or the texture of wood or stone, and even of cloth.)

35. **And (in) sable stole of cypress lawn**, in a black scarf of fine linen crape.

'Sable,' here used in the sense of 'black,' this being the colour of the best sable fur. The stole (*Lat. stola*) worn by Roman ladies was a long flounced robe, reaching to the feet, short-sleeved, and girded round the waist. Milton, however, means a hood or veil, which was first passed round the neck and then over the face: such a stole was worn to denote mourning. The word is now used only of a long narrow scarf, fringed at both ends, and worn by ecclesiastics.

'Cypress' (often spelt *cyprus*) by itself denotes 'crape,' a word which is probably from the same root (Lat. *crispus*, curled); when combined with 'lawn,' it denotes crape of the finest kind. The spelling gave rise to the theory that 'cypress' was so called because first made in the island of Cyprus (which has given a name to *copper*), but this is doubtful.

'Lawn' is really a sort of fine linen: a bishop's surplice is made of it. Comp. Pope's line—

"A saint in *crape* is twice a saint in *lawn*."

36. **decent shoulders.** The Latin *decens* meant either 'graceful' or 'becoming.' Milton uses the word in the former sense elsewhere, and may also do so here. If it is used in the latter sense it is proleptic, the stole being drawn over the shoulders so as to be becoming.

37. **wonted state,** usual stately manner. Here 'state' refers to the dignified approach of the goddess: in *Arc.* 81 it has its older and more restricted sense = seat of honour. 'To keep state' was to occupy the seat of honour.

'Wonted' = accustomed. This is apparently the past participle of a verb *to wont* (see *Com.* 332); but the old verb *wonen*, to dwell or to be accustomed, had *woned* or *wont* for its participle. The fact that 'wont' was a participle was forgotten, and a new form was introduced—'wonted' (= won-ed-ed). The two forms have now distinct uses: 'wont' is used as a noun = custom, or as a participial adjective with the verb 'to be' (see line 123); 'wonted' is used only as an adjective, never predicatively.

38. **musung gait,** contemplative manner of walking. 'Gait' is cognate with 'gate' = a way, perhaps the same word: it is a mistake to connect either of these words radically with the verb 'go.'

39. **And (with) looks commercing,** etc. Milton may mean not only that the looks of the goddess were turned to heaven, but also that she was communing with heaven: this would give additional significance to l. 40. The use of the word 'commerce' has been restricted in two ways—(1) by being applied only to trade, whereas Shakespeare, Milton, and others use it of any kind of intercourse, and (2) by being used only as a noun, whereas Milton used it as verb and noun. He also accents it here on the second syllable. The Latin *commercium* was of general application: comp. Ovid's *Tristia*, v. 10, "Exercent illi sociæ commercia linguæ."

40. **rapt,** enraptured: to be rapt in thought is to be so occupied with one's thoughts as to become oblivious to what is around, as if the mind or soul had been *carried away* (Lat. *raptus*, seized): comp. 'ecstasies,' l. 165 and note, and *Com.* 794. Milton also used the word of the actual snatching away of a person: 'What

accident hath *rapt* him from us,' *Par. Lost*, ii. 40. (The student should note that there is a participle 'rapt' from the English verb 'rap,' to seize quickly; from this root comes 'rape,' while 'rapine,' 'rapid,' 'rapacious,' etc., are from the Latin root.)

40. *soul*, nominative absolute. On the expressiveness of the eye, comp. Tennyson's line—

"Her eyes are homes of silent prayer."

41. *There*, in that position.

held in holy passion still, held motionless through holy emotion. 'Passion' (Lat. *patior*) is here used in its primary sense of 'feeling or emotion': it is used in this sense in the Bible (*Acts*, xiv. 15, *Jas.* v. 17). It was then applied to pain or suffering, as in the phrase 'Passion week.' The word is now used chiefly of anger or eager desire. There are two cognate adjectives, *patient* and *passive*.

Forget thyself to marble, become as insensible as a marble statue to all around. Comp. *On Shakespeare*, 14. The same idea occurs in the phrase 'to be *petrified* with astonishment.'

43. *With a sad leaden*, etc.: with the eyes cast down towards the earth as if in sadness or deep thought. "Leaden-coloured eye-sockets betoken melancholy, or excess of thoughtfulness" (Masson). The poet Gray has the same idea: "With *leaden* eye that loves the ground."

44. *fix*, subjunctive after 'till,' because referring to the future. The subjunctive mood after 'till' and 'when' is now generally superseded by the indicative: comp. lines 44, 122, 173.

as fast, as steadfastly (as they were before fixed on the skies): see note on l. 38.

46. *Spare Fast*. Frugality of life is here personified and represented as lean. Milton, in his writings, frequently associates plain living with high thinking, and in his own habits he was extremely frugal and abstemious. In his sixth *Ellegy* he declares that, though the elegiac poets may be inspired by good cheer, the poet who wishes to sing of noble and elevated themes (to 'diet with the gods') must follow the frugal precepts of Pythagoras: 'the poet is sacred; he is the priest of heaven, and his bosom conceives, and his mouth utters, the hidden god.' This is the idea conveyed in lines 47, 48. See *Comus* 764 for the praises of temperance, and also *Son.* xx.

doth diet And *hears*. There is here a change of grammatical construction due to change of thought: we should say either 'doth diet and (doth) hear' or 'diets and hears.'

47. *Muses*: the goddesses who presided over the different kinds of poetry and the arts and sciences were daughters of Jupiter, and lived on Mount Olympus.

48. **Aye**, ever, always. 'Sing,' 'infinitive after 'hears.'

50. **trim**, well-kept, and pleasing to the eye: comp. *L'Alleg.*

75. In Milton's time the style of gardening was extremely artificial. Shakespeare and Milton both have the word 'trim' in the sense of 'adornment.'

his, is not here used for *its*, Leisure being personified.

51. **first and chiefest**, above all. According to modern usage the form 'chiefest' would be a double superlative, but, as Milton avoids double comparatives and superlatives, it is probable that 'chief' is not to be taken in its strict sense, but merely as denoting a high degree of importance; it would therefore admit of comparison. Shakespeare, on the contrary, often used a double comparative or superlative merely for emphasis.

52. **yon**, yonder, an adverb; in Milton it is generally an adjective: comp. *Arc.* 36. It is now used only as an adjective, and 'yonder' as an adjective or adverb.

soars on golden wing, etc. "A daring use of the great vision, in *Ezekiel*, chap. x., of the sapphire throne, the wheels of which were four cherubs, each wheel or cherub full of eyes all over, while in the midst of them, and underneath the throne, was a burning fire. Milton, whether on any hint from previous Biblical commentators I know not, ventures to *name* one of these cherubs who guide the fiery wheelings of the visionary throne. He is the Cherub Contemplation. It was by the serene faculty named Contemplation that one attained the clearest notion of divine things,—mounted, as it were, into the very blaze of the Eternal" (Masson). In *Com.* 307 Milton makes Contemplation the nurse of Wisdom.

'Cherub' and 'Contemplation' are in apposition to 'him,' l. 52. 'Contemplation' is to be pronounced here as a word of five syllables.

55. **hist along**: imperative of the verb 'to hist' = to bring silently along, or to call to in a whisper. The word is here very expressive; Silence is summoned by the word which is used to command silence. There is no doubt that 'hist,' 'hush,' and 'whist' are imitative sounds all used originally as interjections; they were afterwards used as verbs, their past participles being *hist*, *hushed*, and *whist*. Hence Skeat thinks that 'hist' in the above line is a past participle = *hushed*, *i.e.* "bring along with thee the mute, *hushed* Silence." This is an improbable rendering. 'Hist' is now used only as an interjection, and 'whist' only as an interjection and the name of a game at cards.

It may be noted that as Silence is here personified, there is no tautology in describing her as 'mute.'

56. 'Less, unless. 'Un' in the word 'unless' is not the negative prefix, but the preposition 'on.'

56. **Philomel**, the nightingale (Greek *Philomēla* = lover of melody). According to legend, she was a daughter of Pandion, King of Attica, and was changed at her own prayer into a nightingale to escape the vengeance of her brother-in-law Tereus. See *Son. i.* and notes.

deign a song, be pleased to sing (Lat. *dignor* = to think worthy).

57. **plight**, strain. There are two words 'plight' of diverse origin and use, and editors of Milton differ as to which is used here. (1) 'Plight' = something *plaited* or interwoven, and so applicable to a strain of sounds interwoven, as in the nightingale's song: Milton, in this sense, speaks of the 'plighted clouds,' *Com. 301.* (2) 'Plight' = something promised, a duty or condition, now chiefly used to signify an unfortunate condition (A.S. *pliht*, danger). The former is probably the meaning here.

58. **Smoothing the rugged brow of Night**, *i.e.* softening the stern aspect of night. See the same idea of the power of music repeated in *Com. 251*—

"Smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled."

'Smoothing' qualifies 'Philomel.'

59. **While Cynthia**, etc.: the nightingale's song being so sweet that the moon in rapture checks herself in her course in order to listen.

Cynthia, a surname of the Greek Artemis, the goddess of the moon, as Cynthius was of her brother Apollo, the god of the sun; both were born on Mount Cynthus in the isle of Delos. The Romans identified their goddess Diana with Artemis, and in this character she rode in a chariot drawn by four stags. Milton, however, here and elsewhere, speaks of dragons being yoked to her chariot: this applies rather to Ceres, the goddess of plenty. Shakespeare refers frequently to the "dragons of the Night."

On 'check,' see note on *L'Alleg. 96.*

60. **the accustomed oak**, the oak where the nightingale was accustomed to sing, and where the poet perhaps had often listened to it. He may refer (as Masson suggests) to some particular oak over which he had himself often watched the moon, thus giving a personal touch to his bold fancy. The use of the definite article 'the' favours this view.

61. **shunn'st the noise of folly**, avoidest the revels of the foolish. 'Noise,' in Elizabethan writers, has often the sense of 'music,' and it is used by Ben Jonson and Shakespeare to denote 'a company of musicians.' The 'noise of folly' might thus mean 'a company of foolish singers or revellers.'

62. **Most musical, most melancholy!** As in l. 57 the poet associated sweetness and sadness, so also in this line, almost as if music and melancholy were causally related. Comp. Shelley, *To a Sky'ark*—

“Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;

Our *sweetest* songs are those that tell of *saddest* thought.”

63. I often woo thee, chauntress, among the woods in order to hear thy even-song. ‘Chauntress,’ the feminine of ‘chaunter,’ one who chants or sings. ‘To enchant’ is to charm by song.

65. **missing thee**, if I miss thee, *i.e.* if I do not hear thy song.

unseen: see note on ‘not unseen,’ *L’Alleg.* 57. It has been argued from these words that *Il Penseroso* must have been written before *L’Allegro*.

66. **smooth-shaven green**, where the grass has been newly cut. ‘Green’ as a noun applies to ‘a flat stretch of grass-grown land.’ For the form of the compound adjective see note on *L’Alleg.* 22, and comp. ‘wide-watered,’ ‘civil-suited,’ ‘high-embowèd,’ etc.

67. **wandering moon**. The epithet ‘wandering’ is frequently applied to the moon in Latin and Italian poetry: “*vaga luna*,” Horace, *Sat.* i. 8; “*errantem lunam*,” Virgil, *Æn.* i. 742.

68. **noon**: here used in its general sense = highest position; comp. the general use of the word ‘zenith.’ Ben Jonson speaks of the “noon of night,” and Milton in *Sams. Agon.* applies it to men—“amidst their highth of *noon*.” The word is in prose usually restricted to the sense of ‘mid-day’; it is derived from the Lat. *nonus*, ninth, and the church services held at the ninth hour of the day (3 P.M.) were called *nones*. When these were changed to midday, the word ‘noon’ was used to denote that hour, and hence its present use.

Some interpret ‘highest noon’ as implying that the moon is nearly full.

69. **Like one**: see note on l. 9. ‘Like’ is an adjective; ‘one’ is governed by ‘to’ understood.

72. **Stooping**: Keightley’s note on this is: “He alludes here to that curious optical illusion by which, as the clouds pass over the moon, it seems to be she, not they, that is in motion. This is peculiarly observable when the wind is high, and the clouds are driven along with rapidity.” ‘Stooping’ and ‘riding’ are co-ordinate attributes of ‘moon.’

73. **plat of rising ground**, ‘level top of some hillock.’ ‘Plat’ is a *plot* or small piece of level ground: *plot* is the A.S. form of the word. Its relation etymologically with *flat plate*, etc., is doubtful, though commonly taken for granted.

74. **curfew sound.** 'Curfew' (Fr. *couvre-feu* = fire-cover), the bell that was rung at eight or nine o'clock in the evening as a signal that all fires and lights were to be extinguished. As this custom was still in force in Milton's time the sound would be familiar to him, though he is not here closely detailing his own experiences. It must be remembered also that 'curfew' or 'curfew bell' was sometimes used in the more general sense of 'a bell that sounded the hours.' 'Sound,' infinitive after 'hear'; 'to' (the so-called sign of the infinitive) being omitted after such verbs as make, see, hear, feel, bid, etc.

75. **some wide-watered shore,** the shore of some wide 'water.' These words do not show whether the poet refers to a lake, a river (e.g. the Thames), or even the sea-shore, for the word *water* may be used of any of these, and *shore* may be employed in its primary sense of 'boundary' or 'edge.' It is pointed out by Masson that in every other case in which Milton uses the word 'shore' he refers to the sea or to some vast expanse of water. 'Some' shows that the poet is describing an ideal scene, not an actual one.

76. **Swinging slow:** this would be an apt description of the sound of the distant sea, but it more probably refers to the curfew. Shakespeare has 'sullen bell' (*King Henry IV.* Pt. II. i. 1). Notice the effect of the rhythm and alliteration of this line in bringing out the meaning.

77. **air,** weather, state of the atmosphere.

78. **Some still removed place,** some quiet and retired spot (comp. l. 81). The Latin participle *remotus* (=moved back) meant either 'retired' or 'distant': Milton here uses 'removed' in the former sense, and Shakespeare has the same usage, employing also the noun 'removedness'=solitude. In modern English, when 'remote' is used without any qualification, it almost always denotes distance, either in time or place.

will fit, will be suited to my mood. In lines 77, 78, we find a future tense both in the principal and conditional clauses. This sequence of tenses is allowable in English, but the tense of the conditional clause may be varied, e.g. :

(1) Fut. Indic. "If the air *will not permit,*" etc.

(2) Pres. Indic. "If the air *does not permit,*" etc.

(3) Pres. Subjunc. "If the air *do not permit,*" etc.

The first form is the least common, though many Indian students use it invariably : it is a good rule to avoid it.

79. **through the room;** adverbial phrase modifying 'to counterfeit.'

80. **Teach light,** etc. : the red-hot ashes merely serve to make the darkness visible. It will be observed that the poet has now

shifted the scene from the country to the town, or at least from out-of-doors to indoors.

81. This line qualifies 'place,' line 78.

82. *Save*=except. The meaning is that the room would be perfectly quiet except for the chirping of the cricket on the hearth or the cry of the night-watchman. The cricket is an insect somewhat resembling a grasshopper, which makes a chirping noise.

83. *bellman's drowsy charm*. The watchman who, before the introduction of the modern police system, patrolled the streets at night, calling the hours, looking out for fires, thieves, and other nocturnal evils. He was accustomed to drawl forth scraps of pious poetry to 'charm' away danger. The word 'drowsy' may imply that these guardians of the night were of little use, being often half or wholly asleep.

84. *nightly harm*: comp. note on *Arcades*, 48.

85. *let my lamp*. "Evidently we are now back in the country, in the turret of some solitary mansion, where there are books, and perhaps astronomical instruments. How fine, however, not to give us the inside view of the turret-room first, but to imagine some one far off outside observing the ray of light slanting from its window!" (Masson). The construction is, 'Let (you) my lamp (to) be seen: 'let' is imperative, with an infinitive complement.

87. *outwatch the Bear*. 'Out' as a prefix here means *beyond* or *over*, as in *outweigh*, *outvote*, *outwit*, *outrun*, etc.; and 'watch'=wake. "To outwatch the Bear" is therefore to remain awake till daybreak, for the constellation of the Great Bear does not set below the horizon in northern latitudes, and only vanishes on account of the daylight. *Watch* and *wake* are cognate with *wait*: hence Chaucer's allusion in the *Squire's Tale*, where the maker of the wonderful brass horse is said to "have waited many a constellation Ere he had done this operation."

88. *With thrice great Hermes*, *i.e.* reading the books attributed to Hermes Trismegistus (*i.e.* 'thrice-great'). He was an ancient Egyptian philosopher named Thot or Theut, whom the Greeks identified with their god Hermes (the Latin Mercury); the new Platonists regarded him as the source of all knowledge, even Pythagoras and Plato having (it was pretended) derived their philosophy from him. A large number of works, really composed in the fourth century A.D., were ascribed to him, the most important being the *Poemander*, a dialogue treating of nature, the creation of the world, the deity, the human soul, etc.

or *unsphere* The spirit of Plato, "or may bring back the spirit of Plato from heaven," *i.e.* may search out the doctrines of

Plato by a careful study of his writings. 'Unsphere' is a hybrid (English and Greek); the verbal prefix denotes the reversal of an action as in *unlock*, *unload*, etc., and is distinct from the negative prefix in *untrue*, *uncouth*, etc. 'Unsphered' is obsolete, so is 'insphered' (*Com.* 3-6): we still speak, however, of a person's sphere or rank, but without the literal reference which the word always has in Milton's writings.

89. **to unfold What worlds**: infinitive of purpose = to unfold those worlds which, etc. The allusion is to one of Plato's dialogues, the *Phaedo*, in which he discusses the state of the soul after the death of the body. Comp. *Comus* 463-475.

91. **forsook, forsaken**. 'Forsook,' a form of the past tense, here used as a past participle. It must not be supposed that the word 'forsaken' did not exist. Milton, like Shakespeare (*Othello* iv. 2), deliberately uses a form of the past tense: comp. *Arc.* 4.

92. **Her mansion in this fleshly nook**, her temporary abode in the body. Trench points out that 'mansion' in our early literature is frequently used to denote a 'place of tarrying,' which might be for a longer or a shorter time: this is evidently the sense here: comp. *Comus* 2. The 'fleshly nook' is the body, so called in order to contrast it with the 'immortal mind.' Locke calls the body the 'clay cottage' of the mind, and in the Bible it is sometimes compared to a temple or tabernacle (2 *Cor.* v. 1, 2 *Pet.* i. 13): comp. 'earthy,' *Son.* xiv. 3.

The use of the possessive 'her' in this line may be explained by the fact that the Lat. *mens* (the mind) is feminine: it must be remembered also that *its* was not yet in general use and that Milton is fond of the feminine personification: comp. l. 143.

93. **And of those demons**. This, like 'worlds,' depends grammatically upon 'unfold,' but as 'to unfold of' is an awkward construction we may here supply some verb like 'tell.' This is an instance of zeugma.

In Plato's *Timaeus*, *Phaedo*, *Critias*, etc., we find references to the Greek *daimona* = spirits, who were not necessarily bad; in fact it was a subject of discussion with some of the Platonists whether there were bad, as well as good, spirits. During the Middle Ages the different orders and powers of demons or spirits were very variously stated: one writer (quoted in *Anat. of Mel.*) gives six kinds of sublunary spirits—"fiery, aerial, terrestrial, watery, and subterranean, besides fairies, satyrs, nymphs, etc." Milton here refers to four of these classes, each being conversant with one of the four elements—fire, air, water, earth. This division of the elements or elemental forms of matter dates from the time of the Greek philosopher Empedocles (B.C. 470).

95. **consent**; the demons are in sympathetic relation with certain planets and elements; e.g. one writer made "seven kinds

of aethereal spirits or angels, according to the number of the seven planets," and in *Par. Reg.* ii. Milton represents the fallen angels as presiding, under Satan, as powers over earth, air, fire, and water, and causing storms and disasters.

'Consent' is here used in its radical sense (L. *con*, with, and *sentire*, to feel), an exact rendering of the Greek *sym-pathy*. Comp. 1 *Henry VI.* i. 1.

97. **Sometime**, on some occasion: comp. *L'Alleg.* 57. Il Penseroso here passes to the study of the greatest and most solemn tragic writers.

98. **sceptred pall, kingly robe.** Both the pall and the sceptre were insignia of royalty, and in ancient Greek tragedies the kings and queens wore a sleeved tunic (*chiton*) falling to the feet, and over this a shawl-like garment called by the Romans *palla*. Prof. Hales suggests that 'in sceptred pall' may here mean 'with pall and with sceptre,' *i.e.* two things are expressed by one: comp. ll. 75 and 146.

99. **Presenting Thebes, etc.** 'Present' is here used in its technical sense, 'to represent'; we now speak of a theatrical 'representation.' Comp. *Arcades*, *sub-title*.

Aeschylus has a drama called *Seven against Thebes*; this city is also referred to in the *Antigone* and *Ædipus* of Sophocles, and the *Bacchae* of Euripides. Pelops (from whom the Peloponnesus is said to have derived its name) was the father of Atreus and great-grandfather of Agamemnon; his name was so celebrated that it was constantly used by the poets in connection with his descendants and the cities they inhabited. And the 'tale of Troy divine' (*i.e.* the story of the Trojan war) is dealt with in various plays by Sophocles and Euripides. Troy is here called 'divine' because, during its long siege, the gods took the keenest interest in the contest.

101, 102. These lines certainly refer to Shakespeare's great tragedies, and the words 'though rare' probably express Milton's sense both of Shakespeare's superiority over his contemporaries, and of the comparative barrenness of the English tragic drama until Shakespeare arose. (Comp. the preface to *Sams. Agon.*) We thus see clearly that the language applied to Shakespeare in *L'Allegro*, 133, referred to one aspect of the poet; here we have the other.

buskined stage, the tragic drama. 'Buskin' (Lat. *cothurnus*) was a high-heeled boot worn by Greek tragic actors in order to add to their stature, and so to their dignity: comp. *L'Alleg.* 132. The words 'buskin' and 'sock' came to denote the kinds of drama to which they belonged; and even to express certain styles of composition: thus Quintilian says, "Comedy does not strut in tragic buskins, nor does tragedy step along in

the slipper of comedy.” Grammatically, ‘what’ is nom. to ‘hath ennobled,’ its suppressed antecedent being obj. of ‘presenting.’

103. *sad Virgin*, i.e. Melancholy: comp. l. 31.

that thy power, etc.: ‘would that thy power,’ or ‘I would that thy power.’ This construction (which has all the force of an interjection) is often used to express a wish that cannot be realized. ‘Raise’ (l. 104), ‘bid’ (l. 105), and ‘call’ (l. 109) are all co-ordinate verbs.

104. *Musæus*, like Orpheus, a semi-mythological personage, represented as one of the earliest Greek poets. Milton here expresses a wish that his sacred hymns could be recovered. For ‘bower,’ comp. *Son.* viii. 9.

105. For the story of Orpheus, see note on *L’Allegro*, 145.

106. *warbled to the string*, sung to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument: see note on *Arc.* 87.

107. *Drew iron tears*. This expresses the inflexible nature of Pluto, the god of the lower world. In the same way we speak of an ‘iron will,’ ‘iron rule,’ etc.

109. *him that*, etc.: Chaucer, who left his *Squire’s Tale* unfinished. In this tale (one of the richest of the Canterbury Tales) we read of the Tartar king, Cambus Khan. Chaucer, like Milton, writes the name as one word, but, unlike Milton, and more correctly, he does not accent the penult. The following extracts (from Tyrwhitt’s edition of Chaucer) explain the allusions—

This noble king, this Tartar Cambuscan,
Had two sonnès by Elfeta his wife,
Of which the eldest son hight Algarsife,
That other was ycleped Camballo.
A daughter had this worthy king also,
That youngest was, and highte Canace
In at the hallè door all suddenly
There came a knight upon a steed of brass,
And in his hand a broad mirrór of glass;
Upon his thumb he had of gold a ring
And by his side a naked sword hanging.

The king of ‘Araby and Ind’ had sent the horse as a present to Cambuscan, and the mirror and ring to Canacè. Milton may have included Chaucer amongst the ‘great bards’ in whom Il Penseroso delighted, because the thought of the earliest Greek poets suggested Chaucer, “the well of English undefiled,” or (as Masson thinks) because the reference to the lost poems of Greece suggested the unfinished poem of Chaucer. Milton was well acquainted with the *Squire’s Tale* and with subsequent continuations of it (e.g. by Spenser).

112. **who had Canacè to wife**: (of him) who was Canacè's husband. Chaucer does not mention his name (except where he mistakenly calls him Camballo): Spenser makes her the wife of Triamond. 'To wife'; in such phrases 'to' seems to denote the end or purpose.

113. **That**, rel. pronoun, antecedent Canacè.

virtuous, full of power or efficacy. The Lat. *virtus*=manly excellence. In the English Bible 'virtue' is used in the sense of strength or power (comp. *Com.* 165), and we still say 'by virtue of'=by the power of. But the adjective 'virtuous' now denotes only moral excellence.

The ring referred to above, when worn on the thumb or carried in the purse, enabled the wearer to understand the language of birds and the healing properties of all herbs. The glass or mirror enabled its owner to look into the future and into men's hearts.

114. **of the wondrous horse**, sc. the story. Readers of the *Arabian Nights Entertainment* will remember the story of the enchanted horse, regarding which Warton says: "The imagination of this story consists in Arabian fiction, engrafted on Gothic chivalry. Nor is this Arabian fiction purely the sport of arbitrary fancy; it is, in a great measure, founded on Arabian learning. The idea of a horse of brass took its rise from the mechanical knowledge of the Arabians, and their experiments in metals."

116. **if aught else**, whatever else. This is a Latinism: many clauses in Latin introduced by *si quid*, *si quando*, etc. are best introduced in English by such words as 'whatever,' 'whenever,' etc.

great bards beside, other great bards. The poets referred to are such as Ariosto, Tasso, and Spenser, in whose romances Milton was well read. In one of his prose works he says: "I may tell you whither my younger feet wandered. I betook me among those lofty fables and romances which recount in solemn cantos the deeds of knighthood." 'Beside' as an adverb is now almost displaced by the later form 'besides.'

117. **sage and solemn tunes**, wise and dignified verse, as that of the Spenserian stanza. For 'solemn' see *Arc.* 7, note.

118. **turneys**. 'Turney,' a form of 'tourney' (Fr. *tourney*), a mock-fight, so called from the swift *turning* of the horses in the combat. 'Tournament' is merely a Latinised form of the word; comp. *L'Alleg.* 123.

trophies hung. These were arms or banners taken from a defeated enemy and *hung* up as memorials. The word is from the Greek *tropé*, a turning, *i.e.* causing the enemy to *turn*.

119. **enchantments**, use of magic arts. Radically, 'enchant-

ment' = magic verses sung when it was desired to place a person under some spell (Lat. *incantare*, to repeat a chant): comp. lines 63, 83, and *Lyc.* 59.

120. **Where more is meant, etc.**: in which poetry there is a deeper meaning than is apparent on the surface. The poets referred to in l. 116 had generally a high moral purpose in their writings; e.g. Spenser's *Faerie Queene* is a noble spiritual allegory, the particular references in it being "secondary senses lying only on the surface of the main design." The same is true of Tasso's *Enchanted Forest*.

121. **Thus, Night, etc.**: 'thus let me be often seen by thee, O Night, in thy pale course.'

pale career. Contrast 'pale' with the epithets applied by poets to the dawn, e.g. 'ruddy,' 'rosy-fingered,' etc.

122. **civil-suited Morn.** In *L'Allegro* the Sun appears in royal robes and surrounded by his liveried servants; in *Il Penseroso* Morning comes clad in the garb of a simple citizen and attended by wind and rain.

'Civil,' from Lat. *civis*, a citizen, is here used in its primary sense. It is opposed to military or ecclesiastical, as in 'civil engineer,' 'civil service.' It has also the meaning of 'polite' or 'well-mannered,' as contrasted with boorish or rustic manners; but it has lost (as Trench points out) all its deeper significance: "a *civil* man once was one who fulfilled all the duties and obligations flowing from his position as a *civis*."

123. **tricked and frounced**: literally, 'adorned with fine clothes and having the hair frizzled or curled.' In *Lycidas*, 170, the sun is said to *trick* his beams: the verb is cognate with the noun 'trick,' something neatly contrived.

'Frounced': the word originally meant 'to wrinkle the brow,' and there is an old French phrase, *fronser le front*, with this meaning. The present form of the word is 'founce.'

as, in the manner in which. For 'wont' see note on line 37.

124. **Attic boy**; the Athenian youth Cephalus, beloved by Eos (Aurora), the goddess of the dawn. It was while he was stag-hunting on Mount Hymettus in Attica that she fell in love with him.

125. **kerchieft**, having the head covered. 'Kerchief' is exactly similar in form to 'curfew' (*q.v.* line 74); it is from Fr. *couvre-chef*, head-cover. The original meaning being overlooked we have now such compounds as 'hand-kerchief,' 'neckerchief,' 'pocket-handkerchief.'

comely, becoming: comp. *Merry Wives of Windsor*, iii.

126. **piping**, whistling: 'loud,' used adverbially.

127. **ushered**, introduced (Lat. *ostium*, an entrance). The word here qualifies 'Morn.' 'Still' is an adjective qualifying 'shower': notice Milton's fondness for this word.

128. **hath blown his fill**, has exhausted itself, has ceased. As there is no personification here, *his* = *its*: in none of the poems in this volume does the word *its* occur. In fact, it is almost entirely ignored by Milton, being used only three times in the whole of his poetry; this arose from the fact that *its* was then a new word, and also because he did not seem to feel the need for it, its place being taken in his involved syntax by the relative pronoun and other connectives, or by *his*, *her*, *thereof*, etc. The word *its* does not occur in the language till the end of the sixteenth century, the possessive case of the neuter pronoun *it* and of the masculine *he* being *his*. This gave rise to confusion when the old gender system decayed, and the form *its* gradually came into use until, by the end of the seventeenth century, it was generally adopted.

Grammatically 'his fill' denotes the extent to which 'the gust hath blown,' and is therefore an adverbial adjunct. Some, however, would explain it as a cognate objective.

129. **Ending ... With minute-drops**; the end of the shower being marked by drops falling at intervals. 'Minute' (accent on first syllable) is applied as an adjective to something occurring at short intervals, once a minute or so, e.g. 'minute-guns,' 'minute-bells,' etc. Minute (accent on second syllable) = very small.

130. **eaves**, projecting edge of the roof. This word is singular, though often regarded as plural: the final 's' is part of the root, and the plural properly should be *eaveses* (which is not used). An 'eaves-dropper' is strictly one who stands under the drops that fall from the eaves, hence a 'secret listener.'

132. **flaring**, glittering or flashing; generally applied to a light whose brightness is offensive to the eye, and is so used here to suit the mood of *Il Penseroso*. 'Flare' is cognate with 'flash.'

me, Goddess, etc.; i.e. Melancholy, bring me, etc.

133. **twilight groves and shadows brown**, groves with such half-light as there is in the twilight, when the shadows cast on the ground are not deep black, but (as Milton says) 'brown.' Comp. *Par. Lost*, iv. 254—

“ Where the unpierced shade
Imbrowned the noon-tide bowers.”

Also *Par. Lost*, ix. 1086—

“ Where highest woods, impenetrable
To star or sunlight, spread their umbrage broad,
And brown as evening !”

The Italians express the approach of evening by a word meaning 'to embrown.'

134. **Sylvan**: Sylvanus, the god of fields and forests. 'Sylvan' is a misspelling of 'silvan' (Lat. *silva*, a wood); the spelling in *y* was made in order to assimilate *silva* to the Greek *hylé*, a wood, but the radical connection is doubtful.

135. **monumental oak**. The obvious meaning of 'monumental' is, as Masson suggests, 'memorial,' 'old,' 'telling of bygone years. An aged oak is a memorial of the flight of time; it suggests also massiveness.

136. **rude axe with heaved stroke**. This is an example of chiasmus, the epithet 'rude' belonging to 'stroke,' and 'heaved' to 'axe.' 'Heaved'=uplifted.

137. **nymphs, i.e. wood nymphs**: comp. line 154.

daunt, to frighten (from Lat. *domitare*, to subdue; hence 'indomitable'=not able to be daunted).

138. **hallowed haunt**, abode sacred to them.

139. **covert**, sheltered spot, thicket: a 'covert' is strictly a 'covered place.'

140. **no profaner eye, no unsympathetic eye**. 'Profaner'=somewhat profane; on this Latin use of the comparative see l. 15, note. 'Profane' (Lat. *pro*, before, and *fanum*, a temple) was applied to those who, not being initiated into the sacred rites, were compelled to wait outside the temple during the sacrifices; hence it came to mean (1) 'not sacred,' as in the phrase 'profane history,' and (2) 'impure,' as in *profane language*. Il Penseroso applies it to those not in sympathy with his mood.

141. **day's garish eye**. Milton frequently speaks of the 'eye of day' (comp. *Son.* i. 5, *Com.* 978, *Lyc.* 26). 'Garish'=staring or glaring, generally used, as here, to express dislike, though some Elizabethan writers use it in a good sense. There is an old English verb *gare*=to stare, formed, by the change of *s* to *r*, from A.S. *gasen*.

142. **honeyed thigh**. If this means that the bee collects honey on its thigh, it is a mistake; it is the pollen or flower-dust that is thus collected, while the honey is sucked into the animal's body. Virgil, however, who probably knew more about bees than Milton did, uses a similar expression (*Ecl.* i. 56).

143. **her**: see notes on lines 92 and 128.

sing, hum: the verb *sing* is very variously used by Elizabethan writers.

145. **consort**, other sounds of nature that accompany the humming of the bee, etc. 'Consort' is here used concretely, and in its original sense (Lat. *consors*, a partner). Old writers fre-

quently confused it with 'concert' = harmony, but the words are quite distinct, and in modern English they are never confused.

146. **Entice** : the nominatives of this verb are 'bee' and 'waters.' Its meaning is 'to induce to come'; by a common metaphor sleep is represented as shy, as easily frightened, as requiring to be wooed or enticed. Comp. 2nd *Henry IV.* iii. 1.

dewy-feathered Sleep. We have here one of those compound epithets (so frequent in Milton) which have been described as poems in miniature. In most of these the first word qualifies the second, so that 'dewy-feathered sleep' may mean 'Sleep with dewy feathers.' The god of Sleep (l. 10) was represented as winged, and he may be supposed to shake dew from his wings as the Archangel in *Par. Lost* v. 286 diffused fragrance by shaking his plumes.

It is common, however, for poets to speak of the dew of sleep (comp. *Richard III.* iv. 1, *Julius Caesar* ii. 1) without any reference to its being winged: we might therefore take 'dewy-feathered' to have the force of two co-ordinate adjectives 'dewy' and 'feathered': see note on l. 98.

147-150. This passage is a difficult one: Prof. Masson reads it thus, 'Let some strange mysterious dream wave (*i.e.* move to and fro) at his (*i.e.* Sleep's) wings in airy stream,' etc. It is customary for poets to speak of Dreams as the messengers of Sleep (see l. 10); here a dream is borne on the wings of Sleep and hovers over the poet in an airy stream of vivid images portrayed upon his mental eye.

Some, however, take 'his wings' to denote the Dream's wings, in which case *at* is difficult of explanation: one editor therefore suggests that it be struck out, and that 'wave' be regarded as a transitive verb! The previous view is preferable. (It is possible also to hold that the Dream's wings are displayed (*i.e.* reflected) in the airy stream, and that he waves *at* this reflection, as we say a dog barks *at* its shadow reflected in a pool of water.)

149. **lively** has its radical sense of 'life-like'; so we speak of a 'life-like portrait,' a *vivid* picture (Lat. *vivus*, living).

151. **breathe**: a verb in the imperative addressed to the goddess Melancholy, as 'bring,' 'hide,' and 'let' in the preceding lines. (Some would take it as an infinitive depending on 'let.')

153. **to mortals good**, good to mortals. 'Good' = propitious; comp. *Lyc.* 184. In this line 'Spirit' is to be pronounced as a monosyllable.

154. **Genius**, guardian spirit: see *Arcades* and *Comus* regarding the duties of such spirits.

155. **due feet**, my feet that are *due* at the places of worship

and learning. *Due, duty, and debt* are all from the Lat. *debitus*, owed; the last directly, the others through French.

156. **To walk** is here a transitive verb—to frequent, to traverse.

studious cloister's pale; the precincts or enclosure of some building devoted to learning and (as the next line shows) to religious services. 'Cloister' is a covered arcade forming part of a church or college: Milton may have been thinking of his life at Cambridge, though the details of the description do not apply to any particular building. The radical sense of the word is a *closed-in* place (Lat. *clausus*, shut).

'Pale' is a noun=enclosure; etymologically, a place shut in by pales or wooden stakes; hence our words *paling, impale, and palisade*. We still speak of the *pale* of the Church, the *English pale* in Ireland, the *pale* of a subject, etc.

157. **love the high-embowèd roof**. The poet here passes from the cloister to the inside of some church: (it may be the college-chapel that is in Milton's thoughts, or even St. Paul's Cathedral or Westminster Abbey). 'High-embowèd,' *i.e.* arched or vaulted, as in the Gothic style of architecture, which Milton, with all his Puritanism, never ceased to love. "Observe that only at this point of the poem is Penseroso in contact with his fellow-creatures. Throughout the rest he is solitary" (*Masson*).

The grammatical construction is peculiar: we cannot say, 'let my due feet never fail to love'; it is better therefore to read, 'let (me) love,' etc., *me* being implied in '*my* feet.' See note on *L'Alleg.* 122.

158. **antique**: see *L'Alleg.* 128, note.

massy proof: proof against the great weight of the stone roof, because they are massive. Shakespeare and Milton use 'proof' in the sense of 'strong,' and 'massy' is an older form of the adjective than 'massive,' occurring in Spenser and Shakespeare as well as here. Similar examples are 'adamantean proof' applied to a coat of mail, not because it is proof against adamant, but because, being made of adamant, it is proof against assailants (*Sams. Agon.* 134); also virtue-proof=strong against temptation, because virtuous (*Par. Lost*, v. 384). The introduction of a hyphen ('massy-proof'), which does not occur in the first and second editions, has caused some editors to interpret the words as 'proof against the mass they bear': in those cases, however, in which that against which the object is proof is mentioned, the first part of the compound is a noun, *e.g.* star-proof, shame-proof, sunbeam-proof (*Arc.* 88). The first interpretation is therefore more probably correct.

159. **storied windows**, windows of stained glass with stories from Scripture history represented on them. 'Story' is an

abbreviated form of 'history,' the latter being directly from Lat. *historia*, the other through the French. It has no connection with 'story' (= part of a house), which means something built (comp. *store*).

159. **dight**: see *L'Alleg.* 62, note.

160. **religious light**, such a light as is suited to a place of worship, and tending to prevent one's thoughts from being distracted. 'Religious,' like 'studious' (line 156), is a transferred epithet.

161. **pealing organ**, loud-sounding organ. Milton has several references to the organ (comp. *Par. Lost*, i. 708, xi. 560)—an instrument upon which he could himself play. 'Blow,' used in a semi-passive sense, and applied to wind-instruments (such as the organ). Line 163 depends on 'blow,' giving the circumstances of the action.

162. **quire**, band of singers or choristers. 'Quire' is another spelling of 'choir' (Lat. *chorus*, a band of singers, Greek *choros*, a band of singers and dancers). A 'choir' is now a body of trained singers who lead the voices of a congregation: the name is also applied to the part of the church in which they are seated. The 'quire below' here means 'the choir below the organ-gallery.' 'Quire,' denoting a collection of sheets of paper, is an entirely different word, being cognate with the French *cahier*, a small book (or, more probably, with the Lat. *quatuor*, four). See note, *Epitaph on M. of W.* 17.

163. **anthems**, sacred music. 'Anthem' is a contraction of the A.S. *antefn*, which is corrupted from the Lat. *antiphona* (Greek *anti*, in return, and *phónē*, the voice); it is therefore radically the same as the English word *antiphon*, which denotes music sung by choristers alternately, one half of the choir responding to the other.

clear, may mean 'clearly sung,' or (as in *Lyc.* 70) 'pure' or 'noble.'

164. **As**, relative pronoun, the antecedent 'such' being omitted, as is usual in Chaucer and other old writers.

165, 166. **Dissolve me into ecstasies**. The meaning of these beautiful lines cannot be adequately expressed in prose. The poet desires to hear music that will so melt his soul, so carry him out of himself, that he may almost learn the secrets of divine things. With 'dissolve' comp. 'melting voice' (*L'Alleg.* 142), and with 'ecstasies' comp. 'rapt soul' (line 40, note).

'Ecstasy' is the Greek *ekstasis*, standing or being taken out of one's self, as in a trance. It came afterwards to denote madness, as we say of madmen that they are 'beside themselves'; but its present meaning is enthusiasm or very strong feeling.

168. **peaceful hermitage.** This is a fitting conclusion to the life of Il Penseroso, thus alluded to by Scott (*Marmion*, ii.)—

“Here have I thought ’twere sweet to dwell,
And rear again the chaplain’s cell,
Like that same *peaceful hermitage*,
Where Milton long’d to spend his age.”

In old romances there is constant mention of hermits, men who had retired from society and were supposed to devote their lives to philosophic thought or religious contemplation. Burton, in *Anat. of Mel.*, says: “Voluntary solitariness is that which is familiar with melancholy.” ‘Hermitage’: in this word the suffix *-age* denotes place, as in ‘parsonage’; ‘her-mit,’ formerly written ‘eremite,’ is derived, through French and Latin, from Greek *erémos*, solitary, desert.

In line 167 we have an example of the jussive subjunctive, *i.e.* the subjunctive expressing a wish or desire, ‘And may ... find,’ etc.: this corresponds to a Latin subjunctive introduced by *quod* or *quod utinam*.

169. **hairy gown**, garment of coarse shaggy cloth. In the English Bible we read of raiment of camel’s hair worn by Elijah and John the Baptist. ‘Gown’ and ‘cell’ are objects of the verb ‘find.’

170. **spell**, read slowly and thoughtfully. We talk of ‘spelling out’ the meaning of a difficult passage, as a child names the letters of a word, giving each its proper power. In the same way the poet would learn the nature and powers of the stars and herbs (comp. *Son.* xvii. 6): A.S. *spel*, a story, as in *gospel*. Milton refers to this knowledge of the virtues of herbs in *Com.* 620-640, and *Epit. Damon.* 150-154.

171. **Of**, concerning. In this line ‘shew’ rhymes with ‘dew’: this points to the fact that, though the pronunciation *show* was familiar, it was not universal; the word is to be pronounced here like *shoe*: comp. *Son.* ii., where ‘sheweth’ rhymes with ‘youth.’

173. There may be a reference here to the old astrologers who claimed the power of predicting events from the study of the stars, but such a power was not the ambition of Milton: he rather means that wise experience of the aged, which enables them, through their knowledge of the past, to judge the probable results of different lines of action.

do attain: subjunctive after ‘till’: comp. l. 44.

174. **strain**, utterance: we speak of a cheerful or a sad *strain* of speech or music, probably with a metaphorical allusion to the notes of a stringed instrument: ‘strain’ is literally something *stretched*.

175. These pleasures, etc. ; comp. note on *L'Alleg.* 151. It will be noticed that the *conditional* nature of Milton's acceptance of Melancholy is not so distinctly expressed as that of Mirth.

No. LXII.

SONG OF THE EMIGRANTS IN BERMUDA.

BERMUDAS or Somers' Islands, British possessions in Mid-Atlantic, were so named respectively from Juan Bermudez, a Spaniard who first sighted them in 1515, and from Sir George Somers, an Englishman whose shipwreck here in 1609 was the immediate occasion of their being colonized from Virginia in 1611. Another accession of inhabitants was gained during the Civil Wars in the reign of Charles I., many having sought here a refuge from the troubles of that time ; it is to this that Marvell alludes. Some have endeavoured to identify the islands with the scene of Shakespeare's *Tempest* ; Berkeley also chose them in 1726 as the seat of a projected missionary establishment. The poet's description of the scenery and products of the islands is largely based on fact (obtained from Oxenbridge), but his chief concern is merely to give their beauty and fertility unstinted praise. In Chambers's *Encyclopaedia* we read: "The soil is poor in quality, and not more than a fourth is cultivable at all ; but there being no winter frosts, crops can be prepared for March, April, May, or June, and the large quantities of early potatoes, onions, tomatoes, and other garden vegetables, which in these months fetch high prices at the New York markets, enable the Bermudians to live comfortably on the income of their comparatively small portions of ground."

In the *Treasury of Sacred Song* Palgrave says regarding the poem under notice : "These emigrants are apparently supposed to be flying westward beyond the reach of Laud's ecclesiastical administration. But Marvell, at least in youth, held so equable an attitude between the contentions of his day, remaining, indeed, a lover of the monarchy at heart, that the motive of the poem was probably only chosen to gratify his intense feeling for natural scenery and imaginative hyperbole by this lovely picture." We may note how this feeling again reveals itself in the political poem celebrating the victory obtained by Blake over the Spaniards at Teneriffe in 1657 ; this is his picture of the island :

"For lest some gloominess might stain her sky,
Trees there the duty of the clouds supply :
O noble trust which heaven in this isle pours,
Fertile to be, yet never need the showers !
A happy people, which at once do gain
The benefits, without the ills, of rain !

Both health and profit fate cannot deny,
 Where still the earth is moist, the air still dry;
 The jarring elements no discord know,
 Fuel and rain together kindly grow;
 And coolness there with heat does never fight,
 This only rules by day and that by night."

Marvell was a firm friend of Protestant freedom and enlightened toleration. He was the true friend of Milton, with whom he was associated in the Latin Secretaryship, and his fine lines, beginning "When I beheld the poet blind and old," are well known. And to great learning, brilliant wit, and high personal charm he "joined the rarest quality of that evil time, a robust and intrepid rectitude."

2. **ocean's bosom** : comp. *Comus*, 21, "Sea-girt isles That, like to rich and various gems, inlay the unadorned *bosom of the deep*."

unespied, unseen and unwatched : the islands are not only remote, but also beyond the ken of the spies ("espial," 1 *Hen. VI.* 4. 3) of the religious oppressor. Spenser has "rocks and caves long unespied"; see also Dryden's *Aeneid*, ix. 783.

3. **row'd**, used intransitively. The transition to this use of the verb is through the reflective form : comp. *Par. Lost*, viii. 438, "The swan ... rows her state with oary feet."

4. **listening** : comp. *Par. Lost*, viii. 563, and *Hymn Nat.* 64, "the winds with wonder *whist*."

5. **His praise That**, *i.e.* the praise of Him that : see note, *L' Alleg.* 124.

7. **sea monsters** : see *Job.* xli; *Lyc.* 158, "the bottom of the monstrous world"; *Par. Lost*, i. 462, etc.

wracks. 'Wrack' (A. S. *wrecan*), to drive, cast forth; hence to destroy or ruin. *Wrack*, *wreck*, and *rack* ('To go to *rack* and ruin') are radically the same. Comp. *Par. Lost*, xi. 821, "universal *wrack*"; Drayton's *Poly.*, Song 11, "*wrackful* tempests"; also *Tempest*, i. 2. 26.

12. **prelate's rage** : see introductory note above.

14. **enamels**, beautifies : probably used here in the strict sense in which Milton uses it, 'to enamel' being literally 'to make bright.' *Enamel* is 'a molten or glass-like coating' (Fr. *amel*) : the sense of variegation or diversity is a secondary one : see *Lyc.* 139, note.

15. **sends ... in care** : comp. *Exodus*, xvi. 11.

17. **hangs ... does close**. The different forms of the verb are due to the requirements of the verse : contrast this with *Il Pens.* 46, No. XXXII., l. 13, and notes there.

18. **golden lamps**, etc. This admirably expresses the appearance of the ripe fruit glowing against its background of dark

green foliage. It must be remembered that Marvell had made 'the grand tour' of his day, visiting France, Italy, Spain, etc.

19. **pomegranates**: the allusion is to the hard translucent seeds of the pomegranate (Lat. *pomum granatum*, the apple filled with seeds).

20. **Ormus**: comp. *Par. Lost*, ii. 2, "the wealth of *Ormus* and of *Ind.*" Ormus is properly *Hurmuz*, a famous maritime city and minor kingdom near the mouth of the Persian Gulf. There are pearl fisheries near it, and the town was also a mart for diamonds. This passage has a bearing on the discussion whether, by the wealth of Ormus, Milton means pearls or diamonds.

23. **apples, pine-apples**: a fine example (says Palgrave) of Marvell's imaginative hyperbole. The pine-apple plant bears only a single fruit. The word *apple* has from the earliest period been used with great latitude in naming fruits, e.g. Aelfric, *Numb.* xi. 5, "cucumbers thaet sind eorth-aeppla"; 'Apple Punic,' obsolete name of the pomegranate; 'oak-apple,' etc.

25. **cedars**. The principal kind of tree in the islands is the so-called "Bermudas cedar," really a kind of juniper, which Marvell here erroneously identifies with the cedar of Lebanon.

28. **Proclaim the ambergris**, i.e. reveal, throw up on the shore. Ambergris is the name of a valuable odoriferous substance, of ashy colour, found floating in tropical seas. Originally called *amber*, the extended name *ambergris* (Fr. *ambre-gris*, gray amber) was applied to it in order to distinguish it from the fossil resin now called *amber*. In *Par. Reg.* ii. 344, Milton calls it "Gris amber"; comp. Drayton, *Poly.* xx. 337, "Their lips they sweetened had with costly *amber-grease*": this corruption and others (e.g. *amber-greece*, *greece of amber*, *amber de grece*) are due to an attempt to explain the adjective *gris*, whose meaning had been forgotten.

29. **rather, sooner**: we would *sooner* boast of the Gospel pearl than of the costly ambergris. On *rathe* = soon, early, see *Lyc.* 142, note; and comp. *In Mem.* cx.

30. **Gospel's pearl**: comp. "the pearl of great price" (*Matt.* xiii. 46). Notice this use of the explanatory genitive; 'the pearl' and 'Gospel' are in apposition: comp. "body's vest," No. LVIII., l. 51.

31. **rocks ... A temple**. Kingsley in his *Essays* says: "The original idea of a Christian Church was that of a grot—a cave." This is a historic fact.

34. **Heaven's vault**, the "bowed welkin" of *Comus*, 1015; the "vaulted arch" of *Cymb.* i. 6, and the *coeli convexa* of Virgil. A 'vault' is strictly an arched roof, hence a chamber with an arched roof.

35. Which, and it (*i.e.* our voice).
 36. Mexique bay, the Gulf of Mexico, S. W. of the Bermudas.
 39. chime ... time. The resemblance in expression and cadence between these closing lines and Moore's Canadian Boat-song is obvious :

“ Faintly as tolls the evening chime
 Our voices keep tune and our oars keep time.”

No. LXIII.

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC.

THIS ode was probably written by Milton before he left Cambridge.

1. Sirens : see note, No. xvii., l. 16. The spelling *syren* is incorrect : similar misspellings are seen in *sylvan* from Lat. *silva*, *tyro* from Lat. *tiro*, *style* from Lat. *stilus*.

pledges : see note, *Lyc.* 107, and comp. No LV., l. 1.

2. Sphere-born : see note, *Hymn Nat.* l. 125, and compare *Arcades*, 61 :

“ In deep of night, when drowsiness
 Hath locked up mortal sense, then listen I
 To the celestial Sirens' harmony,
 That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
 And sing to those that hold the vital shears.”

The allusion is to the Pythagorean notion of the music or harmony of the spheres, called by Tennyson, in *Parnassus*, “the great sphere-music of stars and constellations”; comp. *M. of V.* v. 60-65 ; *Twelfth Night*, III. l. 121 ; *Comus*, 977 ; *Lyc.* 180.

Voice and Verse : comp. *Par. Lost*, II. 556, “For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense.”

3. Wed, etc. : comp. *L'Alleg.* 137 and note, “soft Lydian airs Married to immortal verse.” On the power of music comp. *L'Alleg.* 135-150, *Il Pens.* 161-166.

5. high-raised phantasy. Here ‘phantasy’ is used in the wide sense of *Imagination*, and the effect of the music upon the exalted imagination is to “bring all Heaven before our eyes.”

6. concert, harmony, Lat. *concentus*. This is to be distinguished from *consent*, *i.e.* agreement, used in *Il Pens.* 95 ; see note there.

7. sapphire-colour'd : comp. the account of “the empyreal Heaven” in *Par. Lost*, II. 1049, “With opal towers and battlements adorned Of living sapphire” ; also *Par. Lost*, VI. 758.

10. **Seraphim.** The word is from Hebrew *seraph*, to burn; hence the epithets 'bright,' 'burning,' and 'fiery' (*Par. Lost*, II. 512). Milton is fond of these explanatory epithets: comp. *Par. Lost*, II. 577-583, and *Hymn Nat.* 113, note.

12. **Cherubic:** see note, *Hymn Nat.* 112. Milton used this epithet six times in his poems, and habitually distinguishes *cherubs* from *seraphs*: see *Par. Lost*, I. 324; VII. 198.

quires: see note, *Il Pens.* 162.

18. **noise:** see notes, *Il Pens.* 61, *Hymn Nat.* 97. In our sinful state we cannot 'answer' to the heavenly music, "which none can hear Of human mould with gross unpurgèd ear."

19. **disproportion'd, ugly, deformed:** see the description of Sin in the allegory of Sin and Death, *Par. Lost*, II.

20. **chime, harmony:** compare *Hymn Nat.* 128, note, and *Comus*, 1021. *Chime* is from Lat. *cymbalum*.

22. **motion:** comp. *Arc.* 71, "And the low world in measured motion draw After the heavenly tune."

23. **diapason:** see note, No. II., l. 15, "the diapason closing full in Man."

27. **consort, harmony:** see note, *Hymn Nat.* 132.

No. LXIV.

NOX NOCTI INDICAT SCIENTIAM.

FOR the title see *Psalms*, xix.: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge."

Habington (1605-1654) has himself, in his preface to *Castara*, supplied an estimate of his poetical abilities: "If not too indulgent to what is my own, I think even these verses will have that proportion in the world's opinion that heaven hath already allotted me in fortune: not too high as to be wondered at, nor so low as to be contemned." His *Castara* is a collection of lyrical pieces in praise of his wife, Lucy Herbert. He dwells constantly upon the purity of his *Castara*, and of his muse.

4. **Ethiop bride.** For the allusion, comp. *Il Pens.* 19, "that starred Ethiop queen," and note.

7. **Almighty's mysteries:** comp. *Il Pens.* 87-92.

9. **firmament, etc.** Comp. Addison's well-known *Ode*:

"The spacious firmament on high,
With all the blue ethereal sky,
And spangled heavens, a shining frame,
Their great Original proclaim.

The unwearied sun, from day to day,
Does his Creator's power display :
*And publishes to every land
The work of an Almighty hand.*"

11. **silent ... eloquent.** Again, comp. Addison's *Ode* :

" What though, *in solemn silence*, all
Move round the dark terrestrial ball ?
What though *no real voice, nor sound*,
Amidst their radiant orbs be found ?
In Reason's ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious voice ;
For ever singing as they shine,
' The hand that made us is divine.'"

15. **so small ... But**, etc. : 'no star is so insignificant *that we shall not discern*,' etc. See note, No. LV. 3, and Abbott, § 121.

character, mark : the metaphor is maintained, the skies being a book and even the smallest star a significant mark or letter of that book (Gk. *χαρακτήρ*, an engraved or stamped mark) : comp. the phrase, 'printed characters,' and *Comus*, 530, "reason's mintage *charactered* in the face."

21. **the Conqueror** : comp. Nos. VI., VII., VIII. in this collection, and ccxciii., Bk. IV.

26. **some nation**, etc., *i.e.* 'some nation, as yet undiscovered, may issue forth.'

28. **sway**, hold sway, bear rule.

35. **as**, etc. ; like yourselves, as you do.

38. **seeming mute** : comp. note, l. 11.

39. **fallacy**, vanity : comp. "fallacious hope," *Par. Lost*, II. 568. 'To confute (*i.e.* to prove fallacious) the fallacy of our desires' seems tautological, but the phrase 'fallacy of our desires' = vain desires.

41. **watch'd** : comp. *Hymn Nat.* 21, "And all the spangled host *keep watch* in squadrons bright" ; also ll. 117-124.

44. **nothing permanent**. In this poem the permanence of the stars teaches man his own transitoriness ; in Taylor's *Teaching from the Stars* the opposite lesson is put into the mouth of the stars :

" When some thousand years at most,
All their little time have spent,
One by one our sparkling host,
Shall forsake the firmament.
*We shall from our glory fall ;
You must live beyond us all.*"