

HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE 2  
SEMINAR & LECTURE (2<sup>nd</sup> year)

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**'COURSE PACKET'**

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**Contents:**

John Donne, "The Flea"; "The Good-Morrow"  
Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress"  
John Milton, "On His Deceased Wife"; "On His Blindness"  
Alexander Pope, "The Rape of the Lock"  
Thomas Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard"  
Samuel Johnson, "The Vanity of Human Wishes"  
William Cowper, "The Poplar Field"; "The Castaway"  
Robert Burns, "A Red Red Rose"; "To a Mouse"; "John Anderson My Jo"  
William Blake, "Introduction"; "The Lamb"; Holy Thursday"; "The Little Black Boy"; "The  
Little Boy Found"; "The Chimney Sweeper" (from *Songs of Innocence*); "Introduction"; "The  
Earth's Answer"; "A Poison Tree"; "The Schoolboy"; "The Chimney-Sweeper"; "The  
Tyger"; "Holy Thursday"; "London" (from *Songs of Experience*)  
Jonathan Swift, "A Modest Proposal"  
John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, *The First Book* and selections from 3 Books  
John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress* (extracts)

1-52 p.

## To His Coy Mistress

by Andrew Marvell

Had we but world enough, and time,  
This coyness, Lady, were no crime.  
We would sit down and think which way  
To walk and pass our long love's day.  
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side  
Shouldst rubies find: I by the tide  
Of Humber would complain. I would  
Love you ten years before the Flood,  
And you should, if you please, refuse  
Till the conversion of the Jews.  
My vegetable love should grow  
Vaster than empires, and more slow;  
An hundred years should go to praise  
Thine eyes and on thy forehead gaze;  
Two hundred to adore each breast;  
But thirty thousand to the rest;  
An age at least to every part,  
And the last age should show your heart;  
For, Lady, you deserve this state,  
Nor would I love at lower rate.

But at my back I always hear  
Time's wingèd chariot hurrying near;  
And yonder all before us lie  
Deserts of vast eternity.  
Thy beauty shall no more be found,  
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound  
My echoing song: then worms shall try  
That long preserved virginity,  
And your quaint honour turn to dust,  
And into ashes all my lust:  
The grave's a fine and private place,  
But none, I think, do there embrace.

Now therefore, while the youthful hue  
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,  
And while thy willing soul transpires  
At every pore with instant fires,  
Now let us sport us while we may,  
And now, like amorous birds of prey,  
Rather at once our time devour  
Than languish in his slow-chapt power.  
Let us roll all our strength and all  
Our sweetness up into one ball,  
And tear our pleasures with rough strife  
Thorough the iron gates of life:  
Thus, though we cannot make our sun  
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

## JOHN DONNE, "The Flea"

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,  
How little that which thou deniest me is;  
It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,  
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;  
Thou know'st that this cannot be said  
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead,  
Yet this enjoys before it woo,  
And pampered swells with one blood made of two,  
And this, alas, is more than we would do.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,  
Where we almost, nay more than married are.  
This flea is you and I, and this  
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;  
Though parents grudge, and you, w'are met,  
And cloistered in these living walls of jet.  
Though use make you apt to kill me,  
Let not to that, self-murder added be,  
And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since  
Purpled thy nail, in blood of innocence?  
Wherein could this flea guilty be,  
Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?  
Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that thou  
Find'st not thy self, nor me the weaker now;  
'Tis true; then learn how false, fears be:  
Just so much honor, when thou yield'st to me,  
Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.

### THE GOOD-MORROW.

I WONDER by my troth, what thou and I  
Did, till we loved? were we not wean'd till then?  
But suck'd on country pleasures, childishly?  
Or snorted we in the Seven Sleepers' den?  
'Twas so; but this, all pleasures fancies be;  
If ever any beauty I did see,  
Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.

And now good-morrow to our waking souls,  
Which watch not one another out of fear;  
For love all love of other sights controls,  
And makes one little room an everywhere.  
Let sea-discoverers to new worlds have gone;  
Let maps to other, worlds on worlds have shown;  
Let us possess one world; each hath one, and is one.

My face in thine eye, thine in mine appears,  
And true plain hearts do in the faces rest;  
Where can we find two better hemispheres  
Without sharp north, without declining west?  
Whatever dies, was not mix'd equally;  
If our two loves be one, or thou and I  
Love so alike that none can slacken, none can die.

**On His Blindness**

When I consider how my light is spent  
 Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
 And that one talent which is death to hide  
 Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent  
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
 My true account, lest he returning chide,  
 "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"  
 I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
 That murmur, soon replies: "God doth not need  
 Either man's work or his own gifts: who best  
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state  
 Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed  
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest:  
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

John Milton

**On his Deceased Wife by John Milton**

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused saint  
 Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,  
 Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,  
 Rescued from Death by force, though pale and faint.  
 Mine, as whom washed from spot of childbed taint  
 Purification in the Old Law did save,  
 And such as yet once more I trust to have  
 Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,  
 Came vested all in white, pure as her mind.  
 Her face was veiled; yet to my fancied sight  
 Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined  
 So clear as in no face with more delight.  
 But, oh! as to embrace me she inclined,  
 I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

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# Alexander Pope

1688-1744

After a retired childhood in Windsor Forest, under the double disability of retarded growth from chronic ill-health and of Catholic parentage in an age of civil penalties, Pope showed precocious talent in his *Pastorals* (1709) and *Essay on Criticism* (1711); *The Rape of the Lock* (1714, enlarged version) placed him at the forefront of contemporary poetry, while he became associated with the wits and satirists of the Scriblerus Club (Gay, Swift, Arbuthnot). His translation of Homer's *Iliad* (1715-20) established his financial security, permitting his long residence at Twickenham (then well outside London), where by the river he built up his famous garden and grotto, which show his interest in the visual arts. Despite his friendships with literary men, and with Martha Blount and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (see p. 256), his growing fame and his collaboration in the Scriblerian ridicule of bad writing increasingly involved him in literary warfare: Theobald criticised his edition of Shakespeare and was enthroned in *The Dunciad* (1728; revised in four books with C. Cibber as hero, 1743). Partly under the influence of the former politician Henry St John, Viscount Bolingbroke, Pope produced *An Essay on Man* (1733-4); the four *Moral Essays* (1731-5) are epistles to friends on appropriate topics. Also in the 1730s, he cultivated *Imitations of Horace*, in which he fruitfully exploits the parallels between his situation and the Roman satirist's, to criticise the decay of morality and literature, opposing the life of retired contemplation and friendship to the money-grubbing and corruption of business and public life: the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* stands as the prologue to these satires.

Pope laboured to refine the verse techniques inherited from Dryden, and attempted the traditional genres from pastoral to epic (mock, in his case). His great satires transcend personal animosity in their traditional concern to expose deviation from sound social and moral values. The romantic reaction against the heroic couplet reached its apogee in Matthew Arnold's verdict (1880) that 'Dryden and Pope are not classics of our poetry, they are classics of our prose'.

## THE RAPE OF THE LOCK†

### Canto I

What dire offence from amorous causes springs,  
What mighty contests rise from trivial things,  
I sing — This verse to Caryll, Musel is due;  
This, even Belinda may vouchsafe to view:  
Slight is the subject, but not so the praise,  
If she inspire, and he approve my lays.  
Say what strange motive, Goddess! could compel  
A well-bred lord t' assault a gentle belle?  
Oh, say what stranger cause, yet unexplored,  
Could make a gentle belle reject a lord?

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Canto V was added in 1717. The poem continually juxtaposes the trivial modern action with the mock-heroic manner: the speeches, battles, descent to the underworld, are epic in origin, with many echoes of the *Iliad*, *Aeneid*, and *Paradise Lost*; but the comparison is not entirely to the discredit of the modern world  
*dire offence* begins by traditional epic statement of the subject

*The Rape of the Lock* Pope's friend John Caryll (l.3) hoped he might laugh away the quarrel caused when Lord Perce cut a lock of hair from Arabella Fermor ('Belinda'). The two-canto version of 1712 was expanded by the 'machinery' and further incidents into five cantos in 1714; Clarissa's speech in



In tasks so bold can little men engage,  
 And in soft bosoms dwells such mighty rage?  
 Sol through white curtains shot a timorous ray,  
 And oped those eyes that must eclipse the day;  
 Now lapdogs give themselves the rousing shake,  
 And sleepless lovers just at twelve awake:  
 Thrice rung the bell, the slipper knocked the ground,  
 And the pressed watch<sup>t</sup> returned a silver sound.  
 Belinda still her downy pillow pressed,  
 Her guardian Sylph<sup>t</sup> prolonged the balmy rest:  
 'Twas he had summoned to her silent bed  
 The morning dream that hovered o'er her head.  
 A youth more glittering than a birthnight beau<sup>t</sup>  
 (That even in slumber caused her cheek to glow)  
 Seemed to her ear his winning lips to lay,  
 And thus in whispers said, or seemed to say:  
 'Fairest of mortals, thou distinguished care  
 Of thousand bright inhabitants of air!  
 If e'er one vision touched thy infant thought,  
 Of all the nurse and all the priest have taught,  
 Of airy elves by moonlight shadows seen,  
 The silver token, and the circled green,<sup>t</sup>  
 Or virgins visited by angel powers,  
 With golden crowns and wreaths of heavenly flowers,  
 Hear and believe! thy own importance know,  
 Nor bound thy narrow views to things below.  
 Some secret truths, from learned pride concealed,  
 To maids alone and children are revealed:  
 What though no credit doubting wits may give?  
 The fair and innocent shall still believe.  
 Know then unnumbered spirits round thee fly,  
 The light militia of the lower sky;  
 These, though unseen, are ever on the wings,  
 Hang o'er the box,<sup>t</sup> and hover round the Ring.<sup>t</sup>  
 Think what an equipage thou hast in air,  
 And view with scorn two pages and a chair.<sup>t</sup>  
 As now your own, our beings were of old,  
 And once enclosed in woman's beauteous mould;

*pressed watch* it indicates each quarter-hour  
 by chiming

*Sylph* a spirit of the air (as gnomes of earth,  
 nymphs of water, salamanders of fire), with  
 a hint of 'guardian angel'  
*birthnight beau* Courtier in magnificent attire  
 for the sovereign's birthday

*circled green* marks left on grass by fairies  
*box* in theatre  
*Ring* fashionable circular drive in Hyde Park  
*chair* sedan chair, for carrying passengers

Thence, by a soft transition, we repair  
 From earthly vehicles to these of air.  
 Think not, when woman's transient breath is fled,  
 That all her vanities at once are dead:  
 Succeeding vanities she still regards,  
 And, though she plays no more, o'erlooks the cards.  
 Her joy in gilded chariots,<sup>t</sup> when alive,  
 And love of ombre,<sup>t</sup> after death survive.  
 For when the fair in all their pride expire,  
 To their first elements<sup>t</sup> their souls retire:  
 The sprites of fiery termagants in flame  
 Mount up, and take a Salamander's name.  
 Soft yielding minds to water glide away,  
 And sip with Nymphs their elemental tea.  
 The graver prude sinks downward to a Gnome,  
 In search of mischief still on earth to roam.  
 The light coquettes in Sylphs aloft repair,  
 And sport and flutter in the fields of air.  
 'Know further yet; whoever fair and chaste  
 Rejects mankind, is by some Sylph embraced:  
 For spirits, freed from mortal laws, with ease  
 Assume what sexes and what shapes they please.  
 What guards the purity of melting maids,  
 In courtly balls and midnight masquerades,  
 Safe from the treacherous friend, the daring spark,<sup>t</sup>  
 The glance by day, the whisper in the dark,  
 When kind occasion prompts their warm desires,  
 When music softens, and when dancing fires?  
 'Tis but their Sylph, the wise Celestials know,  
 Though Honour is the word with men below.  
 'Some nymphs there are, too conscious of their face,  
 For life predestined to the Gnomes' embrace.  
 These swell their prospects and exalt their pride,  
 When offers are disdain'd, and love denied.  
 Then gay ideas crowd the vacant brain,  
 While peers and dukes, and all their sweeping train,  
 And garters,<sup>t</sup> stars, and coronets<sup>t</sup> appear,  
 And in soft sounds, "your Grace" salutes their ear.  
 'Tis these that early taint the female soul,  
 Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,

*chariot* pleasure carriage  
*ombre* the card game played in Canto III  
*elements* earth, air, fire, water; basic  
 constituents of matter

*spark* a lively man, a lover  
*garters* . . . coronets the external ornaments of  
 aristocratic rank

90 Teach infant cheeks a bidden blush to know,  
 And little hearts to flutter at a beau.  
 'Oft when the world imagine women stray,  
 The Sylphs through mystic mazes guide their way,  
 Through all the giddy circle they pursue,  
 And old impertinence expel by new.  
 95 What tender maid but must a victim fall  
 To one man's treat, but for another's ball?  
 When Florio speaks, what virgin could withstand,  
 If gentle Damon did not squeeze her hand?  
 With varying vanities, from every part,  
 100 They shift the moving toyshop of their heart;  
 Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots<sup>t</sup> sword-knots strive,  
 Beaux banish beaux, and coaches coaches drive.  
 This erring mortals levity may call;  
 Oh blind to truth! the Sylphs contrive it all.  
 105 'Of these am I, who thy protection claim,  
 A watchful sprite, and Ariel is my name.  
 Late, as I ranged the crystal wilds of air,  
 In the clear mirror of thy ruling star  
 I saw, alas! some dread event impend,  
 110 Ere to the main this morning sun descend,  
 But Heaven reveals not what, or how, or where:  
 Warned by the Sylph, Oh pious maid, beware!  
 This to disclose is all thy guardian can:  
 Beware of all, but most beware of Man!  
 115 He said; when Shock,<sup>t</sup> who thought she slept too long,  
 Leaped up, and waked his mistress with his tongue.  
 'Twas then, Belinda, if report say true,  
 Thy eyes first opened on a billet-doux;  
 Wounds, charms, and ardours were no sooner read,  
 120 But all the vision vanished from thy head.  
 \* And now, unveiled, the toilet<sup>t</sup> stands displayed,  
 Each silver vase in mystic order laid.  
 First, robed in white, the nymph intent adores,  
 With head uncovered, the cosmetic powers.  
 125 A heavenly image in the glass appears;  
 To that she bends, to that her eyes she rears;  
 Th' inferior priestess,<sup>t</sup> at her altar's side,  
 Trembling begins the sacred rites of pride.

*sword-knots* decorative ribbons on sword hilt

*Shock* a shough, rough-haired lap-dog

*toilet* the dressing-table, an altar at which

*inferior priestess* the maid, commonly called

Betty (l. 148)

*epic dream-warning*, *Pepe* parodies religious

ritual and the arming of the hero

*inferior priestess* the maid, commonly called

Betty (l. 148)

130 Unnumbered treasures ope at once, and here  
 The various offerings of the world appear;  
 From each she nicely culls with curious toil,  
 And decks the goddess with the glittering spoil.  
 This casket India's glowing gems unlocks,  
 And all Arabia<sup>t</sup> breathes from yonder box.  
 135 The tortoise here and elephant unite,  
 Transformed to combs, the speckled and the white.  
 Here files of pins extend their shining rows,  
 Puffs, powders, patches,<sup>t</sup> bibles, billet-doux.  
 Now awful beauty puts on all its arms;  
 140 The fair each moment rises in her charms,  
 Repairs her smiles, awakens every grace,  
 And calls forth all the wonders of her face;  
 Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,  
 And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes.  
 145 The busy Sylphs surround their darling care;  
 These set the head, and those divide the hair,  
 Some fold the sleeve, whilst others plait the gown;  
 And Betty's praised for labours not her own.

## Canto II

Not with more glories, in th' ethereal plain,  
 The sun first rises o'er the purpled main,  
 Than, issuing forth, the rival of his beams  
 Launched on the bosom of the silver Thames.  
 5 Fair nymphs and well-dressed youths around her shone,  
 But every eye was fixed on her alone.  
 On her white breast a sparkling cross she wore,  
 Which Jews might kiss, and infidels adore.  
 Her lively looks a sprightly mind disclose,  
 10 Quick as her eyes, and as unfixed as those:  
 Favours to none, to all she smiles extends;  
 Oft she rejects, but never once offends.  
 Bright as the sun, her eyes the gazers strike,  
 And, like the sun, they shine on all alike.  
 15 Yet graceful ease, and sweetness void of pride,  
 Might hide her faults, if belies had faults to hide:

*Arabia* eastern perfumes; the combs are of

tortoise-shell and ivory

*patches* artificial beauty-spots

If to her share some female errors fall,  
 Look on her face, and you'll forget 'em all.  
 This nymph, to the destruction of mankind,  
 Nourished two locks, which graceful hung behind  
 In equal curls, and well conspired to deck  
 With shining ringlets the smooth ivory neck.  
 Love in these labyrinths his slaves detains,  
 And mighty hearts are held in slender chains.  
 With hairy springs<sup>1</sup> we the birds betray,  
 Slight lines of hair surprise the finny prey,  
 Fair tresses man's imperial race ensnare,  
 And beauty draws us with a single hair.  
 Th' adventurous Baron the bright locks admired,  
 He saw, he wished, and to the prize aspired:  
 Resolved to win, he meditates the way,  
 By force to ravish, or by fraud betray;  
 For when success a lover's toil attends,  
 Few ask if fraud or force attained his ends.  
 For this, ere Phoebus rose, he had implored  
 Propitious Heaven, and every power adored,  
 But chiefly Love — to Love an altar built,  
 Of twelve vast French romances,<sup>2</sup> neatly gilt.  
 There lay three garters, half a pair of gloves,  
 And all the trophies of his former loves.  
 With tender billet-doux he lights the pyre,  
 And breathes three amorous sighs to raise the fire.  
 Then prostrate falls, and begs with ardent eyes  
 Soon to obtain, and long possess the prize:  
 The powers gave ear, and granted half his prayer,  
 The rest, the winds dispersed in empty air.  
 But now secure the painted vessel glides,  
 The sunbeams trembling on the floating tides,  
 While melting music steals upon the sky,  
 And softened sounds along the waters die.  
 Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,  
 Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay.  
 All but the Sylph — with careful thoughts oppressed,  
 Th' impending woe sat heavy on his breast.  
 He summons straight his denizens of air;  
 The lucid squadrons round the sails repair:

*springs* snares (two syllables)  
*French romances* long love stories, bound in  
 gold-stamped leather

Soft o'er the shrouds aerial whispers breathe,  
 That seemed but zephyrs to the train beneath.  
 Some to the sun their insect-wings unfold,  
 Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold.  
 Transparent forms too fine for mortal sight,  
 Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light.  
 Loose to the wind their airy garments flew,  
 Thin glittering textures of the filmy dew,  
 Dipped in the richest tincture of the skies,  
 Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes,  
 While every beam new transient colours flings,  
 Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings.  
 Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,  
 Superior<sup>1</sup> by the head was Ariel placed;  
 His purple pinions opening to the sun,  
 He raised his azure wand, and thus began:  
 'Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your chief give ear!  
 Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Daemons, hear!  
 Ye know the spheres and various tasks assigned  
 By laws eternal to th' aerial kind.  
 Some in the fields of purest ether play,  
 And bask and whiten in the blaze of day.  
 Some guide the course of wandering orbs on high,  
 Or roll the planets through the boundless sky.  
 Some less refined, beneath the moon's pale light  
 Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,  
 Or suck the mists in grosser air below,  
 Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,  
 Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,  
 Or o'er the glebe<sup>2</sup> distill the kindly rain.  
 Others on earth o'er human race preside,  
 Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide:  
 Of these the chief the care of nations own,  
 And guard with arms divine the British Throne.  
 'Our humbler province is to tend the fair,  
 Not a less pleasing, though less glorious care:  
 To save the powder from too rude a gale,  
 Nor let th' imprisoned essences exhale;  
 To draw fresh colours from the vernal flowers,  
 To steal from rainbows e'er they drop in showers

*superior* taller; Ariel's attributes and speech  
 again suggest the epic hero  
*glebe* cultivated land

- A brighter wash; to curl their waving hairs,  
 Assist their blushes, and inspire their airs;  
 Nay off, in dreams invention we bestow,  
 To change a founce, or add a furbelow.<sup>†</sup>  
 100 'This day, black omens threat the brightest fair  
 That e'er deserved a watchful spirit's care;  
 Some dire disaster, or by force or slight,  
 But what, or where, the Fates have wrapped in night:  
 105 Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,<sup>†</sup>  
 Or some frail china jar receive a flaw,  
 Or stain her honour or her new brocade,  
 Forget her prayers, or miss a masquerade,  
 Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball;  
 Or whether Heaven has doomed that Shock must fall.  
 Hasten then ye spirits! to your charge repair:  
 The fluttering fan be Zephyretta's care;  
 The drops<sup>†</sup> to thee, Brillante, we consign;  
 And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine;  
 115 Do thou, Crispissa, tend her favourite lock;  
 Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.  
 'To fifty chosen Sylphs, of special note,  
 We trust th' important charge, the petticoat;  
 Oft have we known that sevenfold fence to fail,  
 120 Though stiff with hoops, and armed with ribs of whale.<sup>†</sup>  
 Form a strong line about the silver bound,  
 And guard the wide circumference around.  
 'Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,  
 His post neglects, or leaves the fair at large,  
 125 Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins,  
 Be stopped in vials, or transfixed with pins;  
 Or plunged in lakes of bitter washes lie,  
 Or wedged whole ages in a bodkin's<sup>\*</sup> eye;  
 Gums and pomatums<sup>†</sup> shall his flight restrain,  
 While clogged he bears his silken wings in vain;  
 130 Or alum styptics<sup>†</sup> with contracting power  
 Shrink his thin essence like a rivelled flower:  
 Or, as Ixion<sup>†</sup> fixed, the wretch shall feel  
 The giddy motion of the whirling mill,

*furbelow*: ruffle on a lady's gown  
*Diana's law*: Diana was goddess of chastity  
*drops*: diamond earrings  
*whale*: petticoats were elaborately constructed  
*pomatums*: hair ornaments  
*styptics*: astringents; the domestic objects  
 contrast with the epic threats  
*Ixion*: mythical Greek seducer, bound in hell  
 to a moving wheel

- 135 In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow,  
 And tremble at the sea that froths below!  
 He spoke; the spirits from the sails descend;  
 Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend;  
 Some thread the mazy ringlets of her hair,  
 140 Some hang upon the pendants of her ear;  
 With beating hearts the dire event they wait,  
 Anxious, and trembling for the birth of Fate.

## Canto III

- Close by those meads forever crowned with flowers,  
 Where Thames with pride surveys his rising towers,  
 There stands a structure<sup>†</sup> of majestic frame,  
 Which from the neighbouring Hampton takes its name.  
 5 Here Britain's statesmen oft the fall foredoom  
 Of foreign tyrants, and of nymphs at home;  
 Here thou, great Anna! whom three realms obey,  
 Dost sometimes counsel take — and sometimes tea.<sup>†</sup>  
 Hither the heroes and the nymphs resort,  
 10 To taste awhile the pleasures of a court;  
 In various talk th' instructive hours they passed,  
 Who gave the ball, or paid the visit last;  
 One speaks the glory of the British Queen,  
 And one describes a charming Indian screen;  
 15 A third interprets motions, looks, and eyes;  
 At every word a reputation dies.  
 Snuff, or the fan, supply each pause of chat,  
 With singing, laughing, ogling, and all that.  
 Meanwhile, declining from the noon of day,  
 20 The sun obliquely shoots his burning ray;  
 The hungry judges soon the sentence sign,  
 And wretches hang that jurymen may dine;  
 The merchant from th' Exchange returns in peace,  
 And the long labours of the toilet cease.  
 25 Belinda now, whom thirst of fame invites,  
 Burns to encounter two adventurous knights,  
 At ombre<sup>†</sup> singly to decide their doom.

*structure*: Hampton Court Palace, upriver  
 from London; Queen Anne ruled until 1714  
*tea*: pronounced 'tay'  
*ombre*: . . . *Codille*: ombre, presented as an  
 epic battle; a game for three players with  
 nine cards each. The *Majordores* (highest  
 cards) are *Spadillo* (ace of spades), *Manillo*  
 (two of spades), *Basto* (ace of clubs); *Pam*  
 (knave of clubs) is the highest in loo, another  
 card game. The *amazon* is the watlike queen  
 of spades; *Codille*: defeat

needle

30 And swells her breast with conquests yet to come,  
 Straight the three bands prepare in arms to join,  
 Each band the number of the sacred nine.  
 Soon as she spreads her hand, th' aerial guard  
 Descend, and sit on each important card:  
 First Ariel perched upon a Matadore, †  
 35 Then each according to the rank they bore,  
 For Sylphs, yet mindful of their ancient race,  
 Are, as when women, wondrous fond of place.  
 Behold, four Kings in majesty revered,  
 With hoary whiskers and a forked beard;  
 40 And four fair Queens whose hands sustain a flower,  
 Th' expressive emblem of their softer power;  
 Four Knaves in garbs succinct, a trusty band,  
 Caps on their heads, and halberds in their hand;  
 And particoloured troops, a shining train,  
 Draw forth to combat on the velvet plain.  
 45 The skilful nymph reviews her force with care;  
 'Let Spades be trumps!' she said, and trumps they were.  
 Now move to war her sable Matadores,  
 In show like leaders of the swarthy Moors.  
 Spadillo † first, unconquerable lord!  
 50 Led off two captive trumps, and swept the board.  
 As many more Manillio † forced to yield,  
 And marched a victor from the verdant field.  
 Him Basto † followed, but his fate more hard  
 55 Gained but one trump and one plebian card.  
 With his broad sabre next, a chief in years,  
 The hoary Majesty of Spades appears,  
 Puts forth one manly leg, to sight revealed,  
 The rest his many-coloured robe concealed.  
 60 The rebel Knave, who dares his prince engage,  
 Proves the just victim of his royal rage.  
 Even mighty Pam, † that kings and queens o'erthrew  
 And mowed down armies in the fights of 100,  
 Sad chance of war! now destitute of aid,  
 Falls undistinguished by the victor Spade.  
 65 Thus far both armies to Belinda yield;  
 Now to the Baron fate inclines the field.  
 His warlike amazon † her host invades,  
 Th' imperial consort of the crown of Spades.  
 The Club's black tyrant first her victim died,  
 70 Spite of his haughty mien and barbarous pride:

75 What boots the regal circle on his head,  
 His giant limbs in state unwieldy spread?  
 That long behind he trails his pompous robe,  
 And of all monarchs only grasps the globe?  
 The Baron now his Diamonds pours apace;  
 Th' embroidered Queen, who shows but half his face,  
 And his refulgent Queen, with powers combined,  
 Of broken troops an easy conquest find.  
 80 Clubs, Diamonds, Hearts, in wild disorder seen,  
 With throngs promiscuous strew the level green.  
 Thus when dispersed a routed army runs,  
 Of Asia's troops, and Afric's sable sons,  
 With like confusion different nations fly,  
 Of various habit, and of various dye,  
 85 The pierced battalions disunited fall  
 In heaps on heaps; one fate o'erwhelms them all.  
 The Knave of Diamonds tries his wily arts,  
 And wins (oh shameful chance!) the Queen of Hearts.  
 At this, the blood the virgin's cheek forsook,  
 90 A livid paleness spreads o'er all her look;  
 She sees, and trembles at th' approaching ill,  
 Just in the jaws of ruin, and Codille; †  
 And now (as oft in some distempered state)  
 On one nice trick depends the general fate.  
 95 An Ace of Hearts steps forth: the King unseen  
 Lurked in her hand, and mourned his captive Queen.  
 He springs to vengeance with an eager pace,  
 And falls like thunder on the prostrate Ace.  
 The nymph exulting fills with shouts the sky,  
 The walls, the woods, and long canals reply.  
 100 Oh thoughtless mortals! ever blind to fate,  
 Too soon dejected, and too soon elate!  
 Sudden these honours shall be snatched away,  
 And cursed forever this victorious day.  
 105 For lo! the board with cups and spoons is crowned,  
 The berries crackle, and the mill turns round.  
 On shining altars † of Japan they raise  
 The silver lamp; the fiery spirits blaze;  
 110 From silver spouts the grateful liquors glide,  
 While China's earth receives the smoking tide.

altars lacquered tables, on which coffee is ritually made



At once they gratify their scent and taste,  
 And frequent cups prolong the rich repast.  
 Straight hover round the fair her airy band;  
 Some, as she sipped, the fuming liquor fanned,  
 Some o'er her lap their careful plumes displayed,  
 Trembling, and conscious of the rich brocade.  
 Coffee (which makes the politician wise,  
 And see through all things with his half-shut eyes)  
 Sent up in vapours to the Baron's brain  
 New stratagems, the radiant lock to gain.  
 Ah cease, rash youth! desist ere 'tis too late,  
 Fear the just Gods, and think of Scylla's fate!  
 Changed to a bird, and sent to flit in air,  
 She dearly pays for Nisus' injured hair!  
 But when to mischief mortals bend their will,  
 How soon they find fit instruments of ill!  
 Just then, Clarissa drew with tempting grace  
 A two-edged weapon from her shining case;  
 So ladies in romance assist their knight,  
 Present the spear, and arm him for the fight.  
 He takes the gift with reverence, and extends  
 The little engine on his fingers' ends;  
 This just behind Belinda's neck he spread,  
 As o'er the fragrant streams she bends her head:  
 Swift to the lock a thousand sprites repair,  
 A thousand wings, by turns, blow back the hair,  
 And thrice they twitched the diamond in her ear,  
 Thrice she looked back, and thrice the foe drew near.  
 Just in that instant, anxious Ariel sought  
 The close recesses of the virgin's thought;  
 As, on the noségay in her breast reclined,  
 He watched th' ideas rising in her mind,  
 Sudden he viewed, in spite of all her art,  
 An earthly lover lurking at her heart.  
 Amazed, confused, he found his power expired,  
 Resigned to fate, and with a sigh retired.  
 The Peer now spreads the glittering forfex wide,  
 To enclose the lock; now joins it, to divide.  
 Even then, before the fatal engine closed,  
 A wretched Sylph too fondly interposed;

*Scylla* transformed after her theft of the purple  
 lock which held her father Nisus's power

*forfex*

scissors ('the fatal engine')

Fate urged the shears, and cut the Sylph in twain  
 (But airy substance soon unites again):  
 The meeting points the sacred hair dis sever  
 From the fair head, for ever and for ever!  
 Then flashed the living lightning from her eyes,  
 And screams of horror rend th' affrighted skies.  
 Not louder shrieks to pitying heaven are cast,  
 When husbands or when lapdogs breathe their last;  
 Or when rich china vessels, fallen from high,  
 In glittering dust and painted fragments lie!  
 'Let wreaths of triumph now my temples twine,'  
 The victor cried, 'the glorious prize is mine!  
 While fish in streams, or birds delight in air,  
 Or in a coach and six the British fair,  
 As long as *Atalantis*' shall be read,  
 Or the small pillow grace a lady's bed,  
 While visits shall be paid on solemn days,  
 When numerous wax-lights in bright order blaze,  
 While nymphs take treats, or assignments give,  
 So long my honour, name, and praise shall live!  
 What Time would spare, from Steel receives its date,  
 And monuments, like men, submit to fate!  
 Steel could the labour of the gods' destroy,  
 And strike to dust th' imperial towers of Troy;  
 Steel could the works of mortal pride confound,  
 And hew triumphal arches to the ground.  
 What wonder then, fair nymph! thy hairs should feel  
 The conquering force of unresisted steel?

## Canto IV

But anxious cares the pensive nymph oppressed,  
 And secret passions laboured in her breast.  
 Not youthful kings in battle seized alive,  
 Not scornful virgins who their charms survive,  
 Not ardent lovers robbed of all their bliss,  
 Not ancient ladies when refused a kiss,  
 Not tyrants fierce that unrepenting die,  
 Not Cynthia when her manteau'st pinned awry,

*Atalantis* A recent (1709) book of court  
 scandal, by Mary Manley

*gods* Troy was built by Apollo and Poseidon  
*manteau* loose robe

10 E'er felt such rage, resentment and despair,  
 As thou, sad virgin! for thy ravished hair.  
 For, that sad moment, when the Sylphs withdrew,  
 And Ariel weeping from Belinda flew,  
 Umbriel;<sup>1</sup> a dusky, melancholy sprite  
 As ever sullied the fair face of light,  
 15 Down to the central earth, his proper scene,  
 Repaired to search the gloomy Cave of Spleen.<sup>†</sup>  
 And in a vapour reached the dismal dome,  
 No cheerful breeze this sullen region knows,  
 20 The dreaded east is all the wind that blows.  
 Here in a grotto, sheltered close from air,  
 And screened in shades from day's detested glare,  
 She sighs forever on her pensive bed,  
 Pain at her side, and Megrim<sup>‡</sup> at her head.  
 25 Two handmaids wait the throne: alike in place,  
 But differing far in figure and in face.  
 Her wrinkled form in black and white arrayed;  
 With store of prayers for mornings, nights and noons,  
 30 Her hand is filled; her bosom with lampoons.  
 There Affection with a sickly mien  
 Shows in her cheek the roses of eighteen,  
 Practised to lisp, and hang the head aside,  
 Faints into airs, and languishes with pride;  
 35 On the rich quilt sinks with becoming woe,  
 Wrapped in a gown, for sickness and for show.  
 The fair ones feel such maladies as these,  
 When each new nightdress gives a new disease.  
 40 A constant vapour o'er the palace flies,  
 Strange phantoms rising as the mists arise;  
 Dreadful as hermit's dreams in haunted shades,  
 Or bright as visions of expiring maids.  
 Now glaring fiends and snakes on rolling spires,  
 45 Pale spectres, gaping tombs, and purple fires;  
 Now lakes of liquid gold, Elysian scenes,  
 And crystal domes, and angels in machines.  
 Unnumbered throngs on every side are seen  
 Of bodies changed to various forms by Spleen.

Umbriel from Latin 'umbra' (shade); his visit to Spleen (fashionable melancholy) constitutes an epic descent  
 Megrim headache. The Cave combines pantomime effects with images of female hysteria

50 Here living teapots stand, one arm held out,  
 One bent; the handle this, and that the spout:  
 A pipkin<sup>†</sup> there like Homer's tripod walks;  
 Here sighs a jar, and there a goose pie talks;  
 Men prove with child as powerful fancy works,  
 And maids, turned bottles, call aloud for corks.  
 55 Safe passed the Gnome through this fantastic band,  
 A branch of healing spleenwort<sup>‡</sup> in his hand.  
 Then thus addressed the Power: 'Hail, wayward Queen!  
 Who rule the sex to fifty from fifteen;  
 Parent of vapours and of female wit,  
 60 Who give th' hysteric or poetic fit,  
 On various tempers act by various ways,  
 Make some take physic, others scribble plays;  
 Who cause the proud their visits to delay,  
 And send the godly in a pet to pray.  
 65 A nymph there is that all thy power disdains,  
 And thousands more in equal mirth maintains.  
 But oh! if e'er thy Gnome could spoil a grace,  
 Or raise a pimple on a beauteous face,  
 Like citron-waters<sup>§</sup> matrons' cheeks inflame,  
 Or change complexions at a losing game;  
 70 If e'er with airy horns<sup>¶</sup> I planted heads,  
 Or rumpled petticoats or tumbled beds,  
 Or caused suspicion when no soul was rude,  
 Or e'er to costive lapdog gave disease,  
 75 Which not the tears of brightest eyes could ease;  
 Hear me, and touch Belinda with chagrin:  
 That single act gives half the world the spleen.<sup>¶</sup>  
 The Goddess with a discontented air  
 80 Seems to reject him, though she grants his prayer.  
 A wondrous bag with both her hands she binds,  
 Like that where once Ulysses<sup>†</sup> held the winds;  
 There she collects the force of female lungs,  
 Sighs, sobs and passions, and the war of tongues.  
 85 A vial next she fills with fainting fears,  
 Soft sorrows, melting griefs and flowing tears.

pipkin earthenware pot; the allusion is to Iliad, XVIII.419  
 spleenwort a plant which counteracts spleen's effects  
 citron-waters brandy flavoured with lemon-like fruit  
 airy horns groundless signs of a man cuckolded by his wife  
 Ulysses given a bag of winds by Aeolus (Odyssey, X)

The Gnome rejoicing bears her gifts away,  
Spreads his black wings, and slowly mounts to day.

Sunk in Thalestris' arms the nymph he found,  
Her eyes dejected and her hair unbound.

Full o'er their heads the swelling bag he rent,  
And all the Furies issued at the vent.

Belinda burns with more than mortal ire,  
And fierce Thalestris fans the rising fire.

'O wretched maid!' she spread her hands, and cried  
(While Hampton's echoes, 'Wretched maid!' replied),  
'Was it for this you took such constant care

The bodkin, comb and essence to prepare;  
For this your locks in paper durance bound,

For this with torturing irons' wretched around?  
For this with fillets' strained your tender head,

And bravely bore the double loads of lead?<sup>†</sup>  
Gods! shall the ravisher display your hair,

While the fops envy, and the ladies stare!  
Honour forbid! at whose unrivalled shrine

Ease, pleasure, virtue, all, our sex resign.  
Methinks already I your tears survey,

Already hear the horrid things they say,  
Already see you a degraded toast,

Already see you a degraded toast,  
And all your honour in a whisper lost!

How shall I, then, your helpless fame defend?  
'Twill then be infamy to seem your friend!

And shall this prize, th' inestimable prize,  
Exposed through crystal to the gazing eyes,

And heightened by the diamond's circling rays,  
On that rapacious hand forever blaze?

Sooner shall grass in Hyde Park Circus grow,  
And wits take lodgings in the sound of Bow;<sup>†</sup>

Sooner let earth, air, sea, to chaos fall,  
Men, monkeys, lapdogs, parrots, perish all!

She said; then raging to Sir Plume' repairs,  
And bids her beau demand the precious hairs

(Sir Plume, of amber snuffbox justly vain,  
And the nice conduct of a clouded<sup>\*</sup> cane);

With earnest eyes, and round unthinking face,  
He first the snuffbox opened, then the case,

mottled

Thalestris Queen of the Amazons, hence a fierce woman

fillets headbands, in epic; the references (irons, lead) are to hairdressing

Circus a busy fashionable place; by contrast, Bow was middle-class  
Sir Plume a blustering, if gentlemanly, foil to the Baron

And thus broke out — 'My Lord, why, what the devil!  
Zounds! damn the lock!' fore Gad, you must be civil!

Plague on't! 'tis past — nay prithee, pox!  
Give her the hair' — he spoke, and rapped his box.

'It grieves me much,' replied the Peer again,  
But by this lock, this sacred lock I swear

(Which never more shall join its parted hair,  
Which never more its honours shall renew,

Clipped from the lovely head where late it grew),  
That while my nostrils draw the vital air,

This hand, which won it, shall forever wear.  
He spoke, and speaking, in proud triumph spread

The long-contended honours of her head.  
But Umbriel, hateful Gnome, forbears not so;

He breaks the vial whence the sorrows flow.  
Then see! the nymph in beauteous grief appears,

Her eyes half languishing, half drowned in tears;  
On her heaved bosom hung her drooping head,

Which with a sigh she raised; and thus she said:  
'Forever cursed be this detested day,

Which snatched my best, my favourite curl away!  
Happy! ah ten times happy had I been,

If Hampton Court these eyes had never seen!  
Yet am not I the first mistaken maid,

By love of courts to numerous ills betrayed.  
Oh had I rather unadmired remained

In some lone isle, or distant northern land;  
Where the gilt chariot never marks the way,

Where none learn ombre, none e'er taste bohea!<sup>†</sup>  
There kept my charms concealed from mortal eye,  
Like roses that in deserts bloom and die.

What moved my mind with youthful lords to roam?  
Oh had I stayed, and said my prayers at home!

'Twas this the morning omens seemed to tell;  
Thrice from my trembling hand the patch box fell;

The tottering china shook without a wind,  
Nay, Poll sat mute, and Shock was most unkind!

A Sylph too warned me of the threats of fate,  
In mystic visions, now believed too late!

Zounds — a mild oath.  
bohea tea. This speech imitates Achilles' lament for Patroclus: *Iliad*, XVIII



170 See the poor remnants of these slighted hairs!  
My hands shall rend what even thy rapine spares.  
These, in two sable ringlets taught to break,  
Once gave new beauties to the snowy neck;  
The sister lock now sits uncouth, alone,  
And in its fellow's fate foresees its own;  
Uncurled it hangs, the fatal shears demands,  
And tempts once more thy sacrilegious hands.  
175 Oh hadst thou, cruel! been content to seize  
Hairs less in sight, or any hairs but these!

## Canto V

She said: the pitying audience melt in tears,  
But Fate and Jove had stopped the Baron's ears,  
In vain Thalestris with reproach assails,  
For who can move when fair Belinda fails?  
5 Nor half so fixed the Trojan<sup>t</sup> could remain,  
While Anna begged and Dido raged in vain.  
Then grave Clarissa<sup>t</sup> graceful waved her fan;  
Silence ensued, and thus the nymph began:  
"Say why are beauties praised and honoured most,  
10 The wise man's passion, and the vain man's toast?  
Why decked with all that land and sea afford,  
Why angels called, and angel-like adored?  
Why round our coaches crowd the white-gloved beaux,  
Why bows the side box from its inmost rows?  
15 How vain are all these glories, all our pains,  
Unless good sense preserve what beauty gains;  
That men may say, when we the front-box grace,  
"Behold the first in virtue as in face!"  
Oh if to dance all night, and dress all day,  
20 Charmed the smallpox, or chased old age away,  
Who would not scorn what housewife's cares produce,  
Or who would learn one earthly thing of use?  
To patch, nay ogle, might become a saint,  
Nor could it sure be such a sin to paint.  
25 But since, alas! frail beauty must decay,  
Curled or uncurled, since locks will turn to grey,

Since painted, or not painted, all shall fade,  
And she who scorns a man must die a maid;  
What then remains, but well our power to use,  
And keep good humour still whate'er we lose?  
And trust me, dear, good humour can prevail,  
When airs, and flights, and screams, and scolding fail.  
Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll,  
Charms strike the sight, but merit wins the soul.

30 Belinda frowned, Thalestris called her prude;  
'To arms, to arms!' the fierce virago cries,  
And swift as lightning to the combat flies,  
All side in parties, and begin th' attack;  
Fans clap, silks rustle, and rough whalebones crack;  
Heroes' and heroines' shouts confusedly rise,  
And bass and treble voices strike the skies.  
No common weapons in their hands are found,  
Like gods they fight, nor dread a mortal wound.

35 So when bold Homer makes the gods engage,  
And heavenly breasts with human passions rage;  
'Gainst Pallas, Mars; Latona, Hermes arms;  
And all Olympus' rings with loud alarms;  
Jove's thunder roars, heaven trembles all around;  
Blue Neptune storms, the bellowing deeps resound;  
Earth shakes her nodding towers, the ground gives way;  
And the pale ghosts start at the flash of day!

40 Triumphant Umbriel on a sponce's<sup>t</sup> height  
Clapped his glad wings, and sat to view the fight:  
Propped on their bodkin spears, the sprites survey  
The growing combat, or assist the fray.  
While through the press enraged Thalestris flies,  
And scatters deaths around from both her eyes,  
A beau and witing perished in the throng,  
One died in metaphor, and one in song.

55 'O cruel nymph! a living death I bear,  
Cried Dapperwit,<sup>t</sup> and sunk beside his chair,  
A mournful glance Sir Fopling<sup>t</sup> upwards cast,  
'Those eyes are made so killing' — was his last:  
Thus on Maeander's flowery margin<sup>t</sup> lies

60 Olympos mountain of the gods, who in  
Homer fight each other and humans  
sponce candlestick fixed on a bracket  
Dapperwit like Sir Fopling, a character in  
Restoration comedy  
Maeander's flowery margin river-banks

Trojan ... Dido Aeneas deserted Dido of  
Carthage, despite her sister Anna  
Clarissa her speech, added in 1717, imitates  
that of Sarpedon to Glaucus, *Iliad*, XII.371—  
96

Th' expiring swan,<sup>1</sup> and as he sings he dies.  
 When bold Sir Plume had drawn Clarissa down,  
 Chloe stepped in, and killed him with a frown;  
 She smiled to see the doughty hero slain,  
 But at her smile the beau revived again.  
 Now Jove suspends his golden scales<sup>2</sup> in air,  
 Weighs the men's wits against the lady's hair;  
 The doubtful beam long nods from side to side;  
 At length the wits mount up, the hairs subside.  
 See, fierce Belinda on the Baron flies,  
 With more than usual lightning in her eyes;  
 Nor feared the chief th' unequal fight to try,  
 Who sought no more than on his foe to die.<sup>3</sup>  
 But this bold lord, with manly strength endured,  
 She with one finger and a thumb subdued:  
 Just where the breath of life his nostrils drew,  
 A charge of snuff the wily virgin threw;  
 The Gnomes direct, to every atom just,  
 The pungent grains of titillating dust.  
 Sudden, with starting tears each eye o'erflows,  
 And the high dome re-echoes to his nose.  
 'Now meet thy fate,' incensed Belinda cried,  
 And drew a deadly bodkin from her side.  
 (The same,<sup>4</sup> his ancient personage to deck,  
 Her great-great-grand sire wore about his neck  
 In three seal-rings; which after, melted down,  
 Formed a vast buckle for his widow's gown:  
 Her infant grandam's whistle next it grew,  
 The bells she jingled, and the whistle blew;  
 Then in a bodkin graced her mother's hairs,  
 Which long she wore, and now Belinda wears.)  
 'Boast not my fall,' he cried, 'insulting foe!  
 Thou by some other shalt be laid as low.  
 Nor think, to die dejects my lofty mind;  
 All that I dread is leaving you behind!  
 Rather than so, ah let me still survive,  
 And burn in Cupid's flames — but burn alive.'  
 'Restore the lock!' she cries; and all around  
 'Restore the lock!' the vaulted roofs rebound.

*swan* traditionally sings as it dies  
*golden scales* used in epic by Jove to decide a battle's outcome  
*die* the pun on sexual climax continues the poem's vein of innuendo (compare L98)  
*the same* parody of the descent of a heroic object

105 Not fierce Othello<sup>1</sup> in so loud a strain  
 Roared for the handkerchief that caused his pain.  
 But see how oft ambitious aims are crossed,  
 And chiefs contend till all the prize is lost!  
 The lock, obtained with guilt, and kept with pain,  
 In every place is sought, but sought in vain:  
 With such a prize no mortal must be blest,  
 So Heaven decrees! with Heaven who can contest?  
 Some thought it mounted to the lunar sphere,  
 Since all things lost on earth are treasured there.  
 There heroes' wits are kept in ponderous vases,  
 And beaux' in snuffboxes and tweezer-cases.  
 There broken vows and deathbed alms are found,  
 And lovers' hearts with ends of riband bound;  
 The courtier's promises, and sick man's prayers,  
 The smiles of harlots, and the tears of heirs,  
 Cages for gnats, and chains to yoke a flea,  
 Dried butterflies, and tomes of casuistry<sup>2</sup>  
 But trust the Muse — she saw it upward rise,  
 Though marked by none but quick poetic eyes  
 (So Rome's great founder to the heavens withdrew,  
 To Proculus' alone confessed in view):  
 A sudden star, it shot through liquid air,  
 And drew behind a radiant trail of hair.  
 Not Berenice's locks<sup>3</sup> first rose so bright,  
 The heavens bespangling with dishevelled light.  
 The Sylphs behold it kindling as it flies,  
 And pleased pursue its progress through the skies.  
 This the beau monde shall from the Mall<sup>4</sup> survey,  
 And hail with music its propitious ray.  
 This the blest lover shall for Venus' take,  
 And send up vows from Rosamonda's Lake.  
 This Partridge<sup>5</sup> soon shall view in cloudless skies,  
 When next he looks through Galileo's<sup>6</sup> eyes;  
 And hence th' egregious wizard shall foredoom  
 The fate of Louis,<sup>7</sup> and the fall of Rome.

*Othello* in Shakespeare's play, III.4  
*casuistry* quibbling about moral conduct  
*Proculus* saw Romulus ascend to heaven in a storm  
*Berenice's locks* offered to the gods for safe return of her husband Ptolemy III from war, they turned into a constellation  
*Mall* . . . Rosamonda's Lake walk in St James's Park (where the Lake was associated with unhappy love)  
*Venus* goddess of love  
*Partridge* astrologer, satirised by Swift c. 1708  
*Galileo* Italian astronomer (1564–1642), improved the telescope  
*Louis* Louis XIV, King of France (d.1715); Rome, of course, was long fallen

Then cease, bright nymph! to mourn thy ravished hair,  
Which adds new glory to the shining sphere!  
Not all the tresses that fair head can boast  
Shall draw such envy as the lock you lost.

145 For, after all the murders of your eye,  
When, after millions slain, yourself shall die;  
When those fair suns shall set, as set they must,  
And all those tresses shall be laid in dust;  
This lock the Muse shall consecrate to fame,  
150 And 'midst the stars inscribe Belinda's name!

1712-14

1714, 1717

## James Thomson

1700-48

Brought up in the Scottish borders, Thomson came to London at 25 and eventually became acquainted with the Scriblerus wits: his poetry represents a contemporary alternative to the urban, satiric strain. His four poems on the seasons appeared 1726-30, and the complete work was repeatedly revised to 1746, having great popularity. The blank verse, latinate diction and syntax owe much to Milton. The close study of nature is set in a framework of moral reflection and concern with the great author of the universe. Thomson also wrote dramas and, probably, 'Rule Britannia'. His last work, *The Castle of Indolence* (1748), is an allegory which returns to the stanza used by Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* (1590-6), whose archaic language it echoes.

## THE SEASONS

From *Summer*

'Tis raging noon; and, vertical, the Sun  
Darts on the head direct his forceful rays.

O'er heaven and earth, far as the ranging eye  
Can sweep, a dazzling deluge reigns; and all  
From pole to pole is undistinguished blaze.

In vain the sight dejected to the ground  
Stoops for relief; thence hot ascending steams

And keen reflection pain. Deep to the root  
Of vegetation parched, the cleaving fields

And slippery lawn an arid hue disclose,  
Blast fancy's blooms, and wither even the soul.

Echo no more returns the cheerful sound  
Of sharpening scythe: the mower, sinking, heaps

O'er him the humid hay, with flowers perfumed;  
And scarce a chirping grasshopper is heard

Through the dumb mead. Distressful nature pants.  
The very streams look languid from afar,

- 10 And new-born pleasure brings to happier men:  
The fields to all their wonted tribute bear;  
To warm their little loves the birds complain.  
I fruitless mourn to him that cannot hear,  
And weep the more because I weep in vain.

1742

1775

### ODE ON THE DEATH OF A FAVOURITE CAT, DROWNED IN A TUB OF GOLD FISHES†

- 15 'T was on a lofty vase's side,  
Where China's gayest art had dyed  
The azure flowers, that blow;  
Demurest of the tabby kind,  
The pensive Selima reclined,  
Gazed on the lake below.
- Her conscious tail her joy declared;  
The fair round face, the snowy beard,  
The velvet of her paws,  
Her coat that with the tortoise vies,  
Her ears of jet and emerald eyes,  
She saw; and purr'd applause.

10

- 15 Still had she gazed; but midst the tide  
Two angel forms were seen to glide,  
The genit' of the stream:  
Their scaly armour's Tyrian' hue  
Through richest purple to the view  
Betrayed a golden gleam.

15

*Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat* One of Horace Walpole's cats had recently drowned. Gray plays with various stylistic levels, using mock-heroic and animal fable

*purr'd applause* suggests Eve's of her reflection (*Paradise Lost*, IV.456-66)  
*genit'* presiding spirits  
*Tyrian'* purple (from ancient Tyre)

- 20 The hapless nymph with wonder saw:  
A whisker first and then a claw,  
With many an ardent wish,  
She stretched in vain to reach the prize.  
What female heart can gold despise?  
What cat's averse to fish?

- 25 Presumptuous maid! with looks intent  
Again she stretched, again she bent,  
Nor knew the gulf between.  
(Malignant Fate sat by and smiled)  
The slippery verge her feet beguiled,  
She tumbled headlong in.

30

- Eight times emerging from the flood  
She mew'd to every watery god,  
Some speedy aid to send.  
No dolphin' came, no nereid\* stirr'd:  
Nor cruel Tom nor Susan heard.  
A favourite has no friend!

35

- From hence, ye beauties, undeceived,  
Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,  
And be with caution bold.  
40 Not all that tempts your wandering eyes  
And heedless hearts is lawful prize;  
Nor all that glisters gold.

1747

1748

### ELEGY WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD†

- The curfew' tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

*dolphin* in Greek legend, one rescued Arion from the sea  
*Elegy written in a Country Churchyard* No specific churchyard may be intended: Gray was familiar with the visual properties of the 'graveyard' poetry of the 1740s, such as Robert Blair's *The Grave* (1743), and Edward Young's *Night Thoughts* (1742-5). Revised from the original drafts to give a complex view of the poet-figure, the *Elegy* was an instant popular success in its exploration of basic human themes, and its relation of imagery to emotion  
*curfew* signal bell

5 Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

10 Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower  
The moping owl does to the moon complain  
Of such as, wandering near her secret bower,  
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

15 Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,  
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,  
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,  
The rude! forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

20 The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,  
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,  
The cock's shrill clarion or the echoing horn,  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,  
Or busy housewife ply her evening care:  
No children run to lisp their sire's return,  
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

25 Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,  
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe\* has broke;  
How jocund did they drive their team afield!  
How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

30 Let not ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys and destiny obscure;  
Nor grandeur hear, with a disdainful smile,  
The short and simple annals of the poor.

35 The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
Awaits alike the inevitable hour.<sup>1</sup>  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

rude simple, uneducated

awaits . . . hour 'hour' is the verb's subject,  
as word order imitates action

40 Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault,  
If memory o'er their tomb no trophies<sup>1</sup> raise,  
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted<sup>2</sup> vault  
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

45 Can storied<sup>3</sup> urn or animated\* bust  
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?  
Can honour's voice provoke the silent dust,  
Or flattery soothe the dull cold ear of death?

50 Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;  
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,  
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

55 But knowledge to their eyes her ample page  
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;  
Chill penury repressed their noble rage,<sup>\*</sup>  
And froze the genial\* current of the soul.

60 Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

65 Some village-Hampden<sup>4</sup> that with dauntless breast  
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;  
Some mute inglorious Milton<sup>5</sup> here may rest,  
Some Cromwell<sup>6</sup> guiltless of his country's blood.

70 Th' applause of listening senates<sup>7</sup> to command,  
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,  
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,  
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

75 Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone  
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;  
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,  
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

trophies elaborate monuments  
fretted with carved patterns  
storied showing a narrative

Milton and Cromwell are other seventeenth-century types of famous states political assemblies

Hampden . . . Cromwell John Hampden (1594-1643), an MP, defied Charles I;

passion spirited

70 The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,  
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,<sup>†</sup>  
Or heap the shrine of luxury and pride  
With incense kindled at the muse's flame.

75 Far from the madding<sup>†</sup> crowd's ignoble strife  
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;  
Along the cool sequestered vale of life  
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

80 Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect  
Some frail memorial<sup>†</sup> still erected nigh,  
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,  
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unlettered muse,  
The place of fame and elegy supply:  
And many a holy text around she strews,  
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

85 For who to dumb forgetfulness a prey,  
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,  
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,  
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

90 On some fond breast the parting soul relies,  
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;  
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,  
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

95 For thee<sup>†</sup> who, mindful of th' unhonoured dead,  
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;  
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,  
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

100 Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,  
'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn  
Brushing with hasty steps the dew away  
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

*ingenuous shame* natural sense of honour  
*madding* acting madly  
*frail memorial* unsophisticated tombstone,  
with simple inscription  
*for thee . . .* these stanzas imagine a rustic  
describing to a third party the life and death  
of the isolated poet-figure whose own epitaph  
is then offered

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech  
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,  
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,  
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

105 'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,  
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,  
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,  
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

110 'One morn I missed him on the customed hill,  
Along the heath and near his favourite tree;  
Another came; nor yet beside the rill,  
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;

115 'The next with dirges due in sad array  
Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.  
Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay,  
Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

## THE EPITAPH

120 *Here rests his head upon the lap of earth  
A youth to fortune and to fame unknown.  
Fair science\* frowned not on his humble birth,  
And melancholy marked him for her own.*

learning

125 *Large was his bounty and his soul sincere,  
Heaven did a recompense as largely send:  
He gave to misery all he had, a tear,  
He gained from heaven ('twas all he wished) a friend.*

*No farther seek his merits to disclose,  
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode  
(There they alike in trembling hope repose),  
The bosom of his Father and his God.*

c. 1746-50

1751



## Samuel Johnson

1709–84

Johnson suffered early from defective eyesight and from scrofula, for which he was 'touched' for a cure by Queen Anne. His unusual knowledge as the son of a Lichfield bookseller took him to Pembroke College, Oxford, which poverty forced him to leave. After unsuccessful schoolteaching in the Midlands and marriage in 1734 to a much older widow, he went with his pupil David Garrick (the future actor) to London, where he contributed a wide range of work, including his own versions of the parliamentary debates, to *The Gentleman's Magazine*. In the Grub-Street world of hack-writers, he slowly became known as versatile, learned and independent: his poem *London* (1738) attracted Pope's attention; another imitation of Juvenal *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, his first signed work, and his tragedy *Irene* appeared in 1749. Johnson's periodical essay series *The Rambler* (1750–2) and *The Idler* (1758–60) established his reputation as literary critic and moralist, consolidated by his eastern tale *Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia* (1759). For some years he worked on his great English *Dictionary*, drawing on his wide reading: its publication in 1755 won public recognition and allowed him to repudiate the tardy patronage of Lord Chesterfield in a gesture symbolic of the professional writer's independence. This learning also benefited his edition of Shakespeare (1765), with its famous Preface.

Despite his tendency to melancholy, Johnson was a sociable man, the centre of various groups, notably the famous Club (1764), which comprised leading men of arts and public life (Reynolds, Garrick, Burke, Gibbon, Boswell, Goldsmith, Sheridan, C. J. Fox). His last twenty years, including his journey to the Hebrides in 1773, were documented in vivid detail by James Boswell in the *Life* (1791) and the *Tour* (1785). In the 1770s Johnson wrote political pamphlets on the Falkland Islands and against the American colonists' demands; his last major work was the series of prefaces known as the *Lives* of the English poets from the mid-seventeenth century to his own time, which embody his interest in literature and biography.

Johnson's large miscellaneous output, often hastily produced for

money or as a favour to a friend, almost always displays unexpected knowledge and a vigorous mind. A sincere Christian tortured by dark fears (he was haunted by Christ's parable of the talents), he became more regarded in the nineteenth century as the moralist-conversation-alist recorded by Boswell than the exponent of an allegedly cumbrous prose style. His restored reputation as a critic stands beside his great humanity: a friend of the derelict, he understood human frailty.

## THE VANITY OF HUMAN WISHES†

### *The Tenth Satire of Juvenal Imitated*

Let observation with extensive view,  
Survey mankind, from China to Peru,<sup>†</sup>  
Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,  
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;  
Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate,  
O'erspread with snares the clouded maze of fate,  
Where wavering man, betrayed by venturous pride,  
To tread the dreary paths without a guide,  
As treacherous phantoms in the mist delude,  
Shuns fancied ills, or chases airy good:  
How rarely reason guides the stubborn choice,  
Rules the bold hand, or prompts the suppliant voice;  
How nations sink, by darling schemes oppressed,  
When vengeance listens to the fool's request.  
15 Fate wings' with every wish th' afflictive dart,  
Each gift of nature, and each grace of art,  
With fatal heat impetuous courage glows,  
With fatal sweetness elocution flows,  
Impeachment stops the speaker's powerful breath,  
And restless fire precipitates' on death.  
20 But scarce observed, the knowing and the bold  
Fall in the general massacre of gold;

*The Vanity of Human Wishes* Johnson from China . . . Peru from east to west, 'imitates' the first-century Roman satirist by everywhere converting his stoicism into Christianity, his wings gives feathers to ensure accuracy on historical portraits into modern examples target (Flaminius, Charles XII of Sweden: images precipitates rushes down of struggle and warfare return). In style he aims at the original's declamatory grandeur

Wide-wasting pest that rages unconfined,  
 And crowds with crimes the records of mankind;  
 For gold his sword the hireling ruffian draws,  
 For gold the hireling judge distorts the laws;  
 Wealth heaped on wealth, nor truth nor safety buys,  
 The dangers gather as the treasures rise.  
 Let history tell where rival kings command,  
 And dubious title shakes the maddened land,  
 When statutes glean<sup>1</sup> the refuse of the sword,  
 How much more safe the vassal than the lord;  
 Low skulks the hind beneath the rage of power,  
 And leaves the wealthy traitor in the Tower,<sup>1</sup>  
 Untouched his cottage, and his slumbers sound,  
 Though confiscation's vultures hover round.  
 The needy traveller, serene and gay,  
 Walks the wild heath, and sings his toil away.  
 Does envy seize thee? crush th' upbraiding joy,  
 Increase his riches and his peace destroy;  
 Now fears in dire vicissitude invade,  
 The rustling brake alarms, and quivering shade,  
 Nor light nor darkness bring his pain relief,  
 One shows the plunder, and one hides the thief.  
 Yet still one general cry the skies assails,  
 And gain and grandeur load the tainted gales;  
 Few know the toiling statesman's fear or care,  
 Th' insidious rival and the gaping heir.  
 Once more, Democritus,<sup>1</sup> arise on earth,  
 With cheerful wisdom and instructive mirth,  
 See motley<sup>1</sup> life in modern trappings dressed,  
 And feed with varied fools th' eternal jest:  
 Thou who couldst laugh where want enchained caprice,  
 Toil crushed conceit, and man was of a piece;  
 Where wealth unloved without a mourner died,  
 And scarce a sycophant was fed by pride;  
 Where ne'er was known the form of mock debate,  
 Or seen a new-made mayor's unwieldy state;  
 Where change of favourites made no change of laws,  
 And senates heard before they judged a cause;  
 How wouldst thou shake at Britain's modish tribe,  
 Dart the quick taunt, and edge the piercing gibe!

*statutes glean* laws ruin those spared by war  
*Tower* Tower of London: a prison  
*Democritus* Greek 'laughing philosopher' of mankind's follies (c. 460–370 bc)  
*motley* varied, but also the dress of a fool

Attentive truth and nature to descry,  
 And pierce each scene with philosophic eye.  
 To thee were solemn toys or empty show,  
 The robes of pleasure and the veils of woe:  
 All aid the farce, and all thy mirth maintain,  
 Whose joys are causeless, or whose griefs are vain.  
 Such was the scorn that filled the sage's mind,  
 Renewed at every glance on humankind;  
 How just that scorn ere yet thy voice declare,  
 Search every state, and canvass every prayer.  
 Unnumbered supplicants crowd Preferment's<sup>1</sup> gate,  
 Athirst for wealth, and burning to be great;  
 Delusive fortune hears th' incessant call,  
 They mount, they shine, evaporate, and fall.<sup>1</sup>  
 On every stage the foes of peace attend,  
 Hate dogs their flight, and insult mocks their end.  
 Love ends with hope, the sinking statesman's door  
 Pours in the morning worshipper no more:  
 For growing names the weekly scribbler lies,  
 To growing wealth the dedicator flies,  
 From every room descends the painted face,  
 That hung the bright Palladium<sup>1</sup> of the place,  
 And smoked in kitchens, or in auctions sold,  
 To better features yields the frame of gold:  
 For now no more we trace in every line  
 Heroic worth, benevolence divine:  
 The form distorted justifies the fall,  
 And detestation rides th' indignant wall.  
 But will not Britain hear the last appeal,  
 Sign her foes' doom, or guard her favourites' zeal?  
 Through freedom's sons no more remonstrance rings,  
 Degrading nobles and controlling kings;  
 Our supple tribes repress their patriot throats,  
 And ask no questions but the price of votes:  
 With weekly libels<sup>1</sup> and septennial ale,<sup>1</sup>  
 Their wish is full to riot and to rail.  
 In full-blown dignity, see Wolsey<sup>1</sup> stand,  
 Law in his voice, and fortune in his hand:

*Preferment* advancement to office there, also its bestower  
*septennial ale* bibes to the parliamentary electors at seven-year intervals  
*Wolsey* the first of a series of representatives of different modes of life. Cardinal Wolsey (c. 1475–1530), Lord Chancellor to Henry VIII, fell from his great religious and secular power  
*evaporate . . . fall* the image may be of a shooting star, or firework  
*Palladium* the image of the goddess Pallas Athena, which protected Troy  
*libels* scurrilous campaign literature



- To him the church, the realm, their powers consign,  
Through him the rays of regal bounty shine,  
Turned by his nod the stream of honour flows,  
His smile alone security bestows:  
105 Still to new heights his restless wishes tower,  
Claim leads to claim, and power advances power;  
Till conquest unresisted ceased to please,  
And rights submitted, left him none to seize.  
At length his sovereign frowns — the train of state  
110 Mark the keen glance, and watch the sign to hate.  
Where'er he turns he meets a stranger's eye,  
His suppliants scorn him, and his followers fly;  
At once is lost the pride of awful state,  
The golden canopy, the glittering plate,  
115 The regal palace, the luxurious board,  
The liveried<sup>t</sup> army, and the menial lord.  
With age, with cares, with maladies oppressed,  
He seeks the refuge of monastic rest.  
Grief aids disease, remembered folly stings,  
120 And his last sighs reproach the faith of kings.  
Speak thou, whose thoughts at humble peace repine,  
Shall Wolsey's wealth, with Wolsey's end be thine?  
Or liv'st thou now, with safer pride content,  
The wisest justice on the banks of Trent?<sup>t</sup>  
125 For why did Wolsey near the steeps of fate,  
On weak foundations raise th' enormous weight?  
Why but to sink beneath misfortune's blow,  
With louder ruin to the gulfs below?  
What gave great Villiers<sup>t</sup> to th' assassin's knife,  
130 And fixed disease on Harley's<sup>t</sup> closing life?  
What murdered Wentworth,<sup>t</sup> and what exiled Hyde,<sup>t</sup>  
By kings protected, and to kings allied?  
What but their wish indulged in courts to shine,  
And power too great to keep, or to resign?  
135 When first the college rolls receive his name,  
The young enthusiast<sup>t</sup> quits his ease for fame;  
Through all his veins the fever of renown  
Burns from the strong contagion of the gown;

*liveried* uniformed servants  
*Trent* Midland river  
*Villiers* George, Duke of Buckingham,  
favourite of James I, murdered 1628  
*Harley* Robert Harley, Earl of Oxford, Lord  
Treasurer until Queen Anne's death (1714),  
then imprisoned  
*Wentworth* Thomas Wentworth, Earl of  
Strafford, adviser to Charles I, executed 1641  
*Hyde* Edward Hyde, Earl of Clarendon, Lord  
Chancellor under Charles II, father-in-law of  
James II, exiled 1667  
*enthusiast* as usual in this period, pejorative;  
a zealot, fanatic

- O'er Bodley's dome<sup>t</sup> his future labours spread,  
And Bacon's<sup>t</sup> mansion trembles o'er his head,  
Are these thy views? proceed, illustrious youth,  
And virtue guard thee to the throne of truth!  
140 Yet should thy soul indulge the generous heat,  
Till captive science yields her last retreat;  
Should reason guide thee with her brightest ray,  
And pour on misty doubt resistless day;  
Should no false kindness lure to loose delight,  
145 Nor praise relax, nor difficulty fright;  
Should tempting novelty thy cell refrain,  
And sloth effuse her opiate fumes in vain;  
Should beauty blunt on fops her fatal dart,  
Nor claim the triumph of a lettered heart;  
150 Should no disease thy torpid veins invade,  
Nor melancholy's phantoms haunt thy shade;  
Yet hope not life from grief or danger free,  
Nor think the doom of man reversed for thee:  
Deign on the passing world to turn thine eyes,  
And pause awhile from letters, to be wise;  
There mark what ills the scholar's life assail,  
Toil, envy, want, the patron,<sup>t</sup> and the jail.  
160 See nations slowly wise, and meanly just,  
To buried merit raise the tardy bust.  
If dreams yet flatter, once again attend,  
Hear Lydiat's<sup>t</sup> life, and Galileo's<sup>t</sup> end.  
165 Nor deem, when learning her last prize bestows,  
The glittering eminence exempt from foes;  
See when the vulgar scape, despised or awed,  
Rebellion's vengeful talons seize on Laud.<sup>t</sup>  
From meaner minds, though smaller fines content,  
170 The plundered palace or sequestered rent,  
Marked out by dangerous parts he meets the shock,  
And fatal learning leads him to the block:  
Around his tomb let art and genius weep,  
But hear his death, ye blockheads, hear and sleep.  
175 The festal blazes, the triumphal show,

*Bodley's dome* Bodleian Library, Oxford  
*(dome: buildings)*  
*Bacon* there was a legend that the study of  
Roger Bacon, Oxford philosopher and  
scientist (d.1292), would collapse on its bridge  
when a greater man passed under  
*patron*: changed from the earlier 'garret': see  
headnote on Chesterfield  
*Lydiat* Thomas Lydiat, mathematician, died  
poor in 1646  
*Galileo* the astronomer Galileo was  
imprisoned by the Inquisition, and died blind  
(1642)  
*Laud* William Laud, Chancellor of Oxford  
University, Archbishop of Canterbury,  
executed 1645

The ravished standard, and the captive foe,  
 The senate's thanks, the gazette's pompous tale,  
 With force resistless o'er the brave prevail.  
 Such bribes the rapid Greek† o'er Asia whirled,  
 For such the steady Romans shook the world;  
 For such in distant lands the Britons shine,  
 And stain with blood the Danube or the Rhine;  
 This power has praise, that virtue scarce can warm,  
 Till fame supplies the universal charm.  
 Yet reason frowns on war's unequal game,  
 Where wasted nations raise a single name,  
 And mortgaged states their grandsires' wreaths regret,  
 From age to age in everlasting debt;  
 Wreaths which at last the dear-bought right convey  
 To rust on medals, or on stones decay.  
 On what foundation stands the warrior's pride,  
 How just his hopes let Swedish Charles† decide;  
 A frame of adamant, a soul of fire,  
 No dangers fright him, and no labours tire;  
 O'er love, o'er fear, extends his wide domain,  
 Unconquered lord of pleasure and of pain;  
 No joys to him pacific sceptres yield,  
 War sounds the trumpet, he rushes to the field;  
 Behold surrounding kings their power combine,  
 And one capitulate, and one resign;  
 Peace courts his hand, but spreads her charms in vain;  
 'Think nothing gained,' he cries, 'till nought remain,  
 'On Moscow's walls till Gothic standards fly,  
 'And all be mine beneath the polar sky.'  
 The march begins in military state,  
 And nations on his eye suspended wait;  
 Stern famine guards the solitary coast,  
 And winter barricades the realms of frost;  
 He comes, not want and cold his course delay:—  
 Hide, blushing glory, hide Pultowa's day:  
 The vanquished hero leaves his broken bands,  
 And shows his miseries in distant lands;  
 Condemned a needy supplicant to wait,  
 While ladies interpose, and slaves debate.

rapid Greek Alexander the Great (356–323 bc)  
 Charles . . . Pultowa Charles XII of Sweden (1682–1718); Frederick IV of Denmark capitulated in 1700, Augustus II of Poland

abdicated in 1706 (l.200); defeated by Russia at Poltava (1709), C. went to Turkey; killed at Frederikshald, Norway, possibly by his own side

215 But did not chance at length her error mend?  
 Did no subverted empire mark his end?  
 Did rival monarchs give the fatal wound?  
 Or hostile millions press him to the ground?  
 His fall was destined to a barren strand,  
 A petty fortress, and a dubious hand;  
 He left the name, at which the world grew pale,  
 To point a moral, or adorn a tale.  
 All times their scenes of pompous woes afford,  
 From Persia's tyrant† to Bavaria's lord.  
 225 In gay hostility, and barbarous pride,  
 With half mankind embattled at his side,  
 Great Xerxes comes to seize the certain prey,  
 And starves exhausted regions in his way;  
 Attendant Flattery counts his myriads o'er,  
 Till counted myriads soothe his pride no more;  
 230 Fresh praise is tried till madness fires his mind,  
 The waves he lashes, and enchains the wind;  
 New powers are claimed, new powers are still bestowed,  
 Till rude resistance lops the spreading god;  
 The daring Greeks deride the martial show,  
 And heap their valleys with the gaudy foe;  
 Th' insulted sea with humbler thoughts he gains,  
 A single skiff to speed his flight remains;  
 Th' incumbered oar scarce leaves the dreaded coast  
 Through purple billows and a floating host.  
 240 The bold Bavian† in a luckless hour,  
 Tries the dread summits of Caesarean power,  
 With unexpected legions bursts away,  
 And sees defenceless realms receive his sway;  
 245 Short sway! fair Austria† spreads her mournful charms,  
 The queen, the beauty, sets the world in arms;  
 From hill to hill the beacon's rousing blaze  
 Spreads wide the hope of plunder and of praise;  
 The fierce Croatian,† and the wild Hussar,†  
 And all the sons of ravage crowd the war;  
 250 The baffled prince in honour's flattering bloom  
 Of hasty greatness finds the fatal doom,

Persia's tyrant Xerxes the Great punished the sea for destroying his boat-bridge; defeated by the Greeks in the sea-battle of Salamis, 480 bc  
 bold Bavian . . . Hussar Charles Albert

(1697–1745), Elector of Bavaria, became Holy Roman Emperor (l.242) despite the claims of Maria Theresa, fair Austria; his reign was short and unhappy. Croatians: with Hussar, troops of Austrian Empire

1738/

LONDON

A POEM IN IMITATION OF THE THIRD SATIRE OF JUVENAL

22

320 SAMUEL JOHNSON

What care, what rules your heedless charms shall save,  
Each nymph your rival, and each youth your slave?  
Against your fame with fondness hate combines,  
The rival batters, and the lover mines.

With distant voice neglected virtue calls,  
Less heard and less, the faint remonstrance falls;  
Tired with contempt, she quits the slippery reign,  
And pride and prudence take her seat in vain.  
In crowd at once, where none the pass defend,  
The harmless freedom, and the private friend.  
The guardians yield, by force superior plied;  
By interest, prudence; and by flattery, pride,  
Now beauty falls betrayed, despised, distressed,  
And hissing infamy proclaims the rest.

Where then shall hope and fear their objects find?  
Must dull suspense<sup>1</sup> corrupt the stagnant mind?

Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,  
Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?  
Must no dislike alarm, no wishes rise,  
No cries attempt the mercies of the skies?

Enquirer, cease, petitions yet remain,  
Which heaven may hear, nor deem religion vain.  
Still raise for good the supplicating voice,  
But leave to heaven the measure and the choice,  
Safe in his power, whose eyes discern afar  
The secret ambush of a specious prayer.

Implore his aid, in his decisions rest,  
Secure whate'er he gives, he gives the best.  
Yet when the sense of sacred presence fires,  
And strong devotion to the skies aspires,

Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,<sup>†</sup>  
Obedient passions, and a will resigned,  
For love, which scarce collective man can fill;  
For patience sovereign o'er transmuted ill;  
For faith, that panting for a happier seat,  
Counts death kind nature's signal of retreat:

These goods for man the laws of heaven ordain,  
These goods he grants, who grants the power to gain;  
With these celestial wisdom calms the mind,  
And makes the happiness she does not find.

1749

*Quis ineptae  
Tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus ut tenet se?*  
—JUVENAL.

Tho' grief and fondness in my breast rebel,  
When injur'd THALES bids the town farewell,  
Yet still my calmer thoughts his choice commend,  
I praise the hermit, but regret the friend,  
Resolved at length, from vice and LONDON far,  
To breathe in distant fields a purer air,  
And, fix'd on Cambria's solitary shore,  
Give to St. David one true Briton more.

For who would leave, unbrib'd, Hibernia's land,  
Or change the rocks of Scotland for the Strand?  
There none are swept by sudden fate away,  
But all whom hunger spares, with age decay:  
Here malice, rapine, accident, conspire,  
And now a rabble rages, now a fire;  
Their ambush here relentless ruffians lay,  
And here the fell attorney prowls for prey;  
Here falling houses thunder on your head,  
And here a female atheist talks you dead.

While THALES waits the wherry that contains  
Of dissipated wealth the small remains,  
On Thames's banks, in silent thought we stood,  
Where Greenwich smiles upon the silver flood:  
Struck with the seat that gave Eliza birth,  
We kneel, and kiss the consecrated earth;  
In pleasing dreams the blissful age renew,  
And call Britannia's glories back to view;  
Behold her cross triumphant on the main,  
The guard of commerce, and the dread of Spain,  
Ere masquerades debauch'd, excise oppress'd,  
Or English honour grew a standing jest.

A transient calm the happy scenes bestow,  
And for a moment lull the sense of woe.  
At length awaking, with contemptuous frown,  
Indignant THALES eyes the neighbouring town.  
Since worth, he cries, in these degenerate days,  
Wants ev'n the cheap reward of empty praise;  
In those curs'd walls, devote to vice and gain,  
Since unrewarded science toils in vain;  
Since hope but soothes to double my distress,  
And ev'ry moment leaves my little loss;  
While yet my steady steps no staff sustains,

<sup>1</sup>suspense suspension of judgment  
<sup>†</sup>healthful mind Johnson's version of Juvenal's  
<sup>†</sup>mens sana in corpore sano; the religious  
hope is his addition to the pagan model

23

X  
The Poplar Field

The poplars are fell'd; farewell to the shade,  
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade!  
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,  
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I first took a view  
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew;  
And now in the grass behold they are laid,  
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade!

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,  
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat,  
And the scene where his melody charm'd me before  
Resounds with his sweet flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,  
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,  
With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,  
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if any thing can,  
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man;  
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,  
Have a being less durable even than he.

William Cowper  
1731-1800

The son of a Hertfordshire clergyman, Cowper attended Westminster School alongside the future satirist-cleric, Charles Churchill. Always mentally delicate, he attempted suicide when involved in a dispute over a public appointment: a religious melancholy which led to belief in his own damnation was stayed by a hope of salvation arising from evangelical Christianity. In 1765, he found protection with a clergyman, Mr Unwin, and his wife, Cowper's spiritual companion until 1796. Further mental attacks and another suicide attempt left him convinced of his own rejection by God. With the evangelical clergyman, John Newton, he had written the *Olney Hymns* (1779), including 'God moves in a mysterious way'. Collections of poems in 1782 and 1785 produced satires and the comic tale *John Gilpin*; he also translated Homer (1791). His long blank verse poem *The Task* (1785) developed from a work of mental relief into tender description and meditation centred on his quiet rural life. In his writings, charm and humanity contrast sadly with images of destruction or isolation associated with his deeper fears ('The Castaway', 1799).

24

### THE CASTAWAY†

Obscurest night involved\* the sky,  
 Th' Atlantic billows roared,  
 When such a destined wretch as I,  
 Washed headlong from on board,  
 Of friends, of hope, of all bereft,  
 His floating home for ever left.

No braver chief could Albion boast  
 Than he with whom he went,  
 Nor ever ship left Albion's coast  
 With warmer wishes sent.  
 He loved them both, but both in vain,  
 Nor him beheld nor her again.

*The Castaway* Cowper read this incident in  
*Lord Anson's Voyage round the World*  
 (1748)

That tells his name, his worth, his age,  
 Is wet with Anson's tear.  
 And tears by bards or heroes shed  
 Alike immortalize the dead.

55 I therefore purpose not, or dream,  
 Descanting on his fate,  
 To give the melancholy theme  
 A more enduring date:  
 But misery still delights to trace  
 Its semblance in another's case.

No voice divine the storm allayed,  
 No light propitious shone,  
 When, snatched from all effectual aid,  
 We perished, each alone:  
 But I beneath a rougher sea,  
 And whelmed in deeper gulfs than he.

1799 1803

Not long beneath the whelming brine,  
 Expert to swim, he lay;  
 Nor soon he felt his strength decline,  
 Or courage die away;  
 But waged with death a lasting strife,  
 Supported by despair of life.

He shouted: nor his friends had failed  
 To check the vessel's course,  
 But so the furious blast prevailed,  
 That, pitiless perforce,  
 They left their outcast mate behind,  
 And scudded still before the wind.

Some succour yet they could afford;  
 And, such as storms allow,  
 The cask, the coop, the floated cord,  
 Delayed not to bestow.  
 But he (they knew) nor ship nor shore,  
 Whate'er they gave, should visit more.

Nor, cruel as it seemed, could he  
 Their haste himself condemn,  
 Aware that flight, in such a sea,  
 Alone could rescue them;  
 Yet bitter felt it still to die  
 Deserted, and his friends so nigh.

He long survives, who lives an hour  
 In ocean, self-upheld;  
 And so long he, with unspent power,  
 His destiny repelled;  
 And ever, as the minutes flew,  
 Entreated help, or cried — 'Adieu!'

At length, his transient respite past,  
 His comrades, who before  
 Had heard his voice in every blast,  
 Could catch the sound no more.  
 For then, by toil subdued, he drank  
 The stifling wave, and then he sank.

No poet wept him: but the page  
 Of narrative sincere,

50

# Robert Burns

1759-96

The son of a small farmer from Ayrshire, Burns spent much of his life trying to solve his financial problems by working the land, finally becoming an excise officer in 1789. As a youth, he was well aware of classic English poetry as well as the Scottish vernacular tradition of Ramsay and Fergusson, and in his own work the extent of dialect usage varies greatly. His first collection of *Poems*, which appeared at Kilmarnock in 1786, led to his lionisation by intellectual Edinburgh society, which chose to regard him inaccurately as a 'Heaven-taught ploughman'. (His unorthodox way of life and entanglements with women long distorted views of his career as a whole.) Burns's interest in the native tradition led him to collect and write many poems for *The Scots Musical Museum*, such as 'O my luve's like a red, red rose'. An early supporter of the French Revolution, Burns has remained popular for his pleas for human equality and his celebration of humble worth. More solemn works like *The Cotter's Saturday Night* are complemented by comic narrative in *Tam o' Shanter* and vigorous satire of complacency in 'Holy Willie's Prayer'.

## SONG. A RED RED ROSE

O my Luve's like a red, red rose,  
That's newly sprung in June;  
O my Luve's like the melody  
That's sweetly play'd in tune. —

5 As fair art thou, my bonie lass,  
So deep in luve am I;  
And I will love thee still, my Dear,  
Till a' the seas gang dry. —

Till a' the seas gang dry, my Dear,  
And the rocks melt wi' the sun:  
I will love thee still, my Dear,  
While the sands o' life shall run. —

And fare thee weel, my only Luve!  
And fare thee weel, a while!  
And I will come again, my Luve,  
Tho' it were ten thousand mile!

## TO A MOUSE

ON TURNING HER UP IN HER NEST WITH THE  
FLOUGH, NOVEMBER 1785

1 Wee, sleekit, cowrin, tim'rous beastie,  
O, what a panic's in thy breast!  
Thou need na start awa sac hasty  
Wi' bickering brattle!  
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,  
Wi' murdering pattie!

sleek  
hurryling  
scamper  
loth  
plough-staff

2 I'm truly sorry man's dominion  
Has broken Nature's social union,  
An' justifies that ill opinion  
Which makes thee startle  
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion  
An' fellow mortal!

3 I doubt na, whyles, but thou may thieve;  
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!  
A daimen icker in a thrave  
'S a sma' request;  
I'll get a blessin wi' the lave,  
An' never miss't!

sometimes  
odd ear;  
twenty-four  
sheaves  
what's left

4 Thy wee-bit housie, too, in ruin!  
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin!  
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,  
O' foggage green!  
An' bleak December's win's ensuin,  
Baith snell an' keen!

feeble; winds  
coarse grass  
bitter

5 Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,  
An' weary winter comin fast,

26

An' cozie here, beneath the blast,  
Thou thought to dwell,  
Till crash! the cruel coultter past  
Out thro' thy cell.

6

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,  
Has cost thee monie a weary nibble!  
Now thou's turned out, for a' thy trouble,  
But house or hald,  
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,  
An' cranreuch cauld!

stubble

Without:  
holding  
endure  
hoar-frost

7

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,  
In proving foresight may be vain:  
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men  
Gang aft agley,  
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,  
For promis'd joy!

alone

askew

8

Still thou art blest, compared wi' me!  
The present only toucheth thee:  
But och! I backward cast my e'e,  
On prospectis drear!  
An' forward, tho' I canna see,  
I guess an' fear!

JOHN ANDERSON MY JO

TUNE: (As Title)

John Anderson my jo, John,  
When we were first acquint,  
Your locks were like the raven,  
Your bonie brow was brent;  
But now your brow is beld, John,  
Your locks are like the snaw,  
But blessings on your frosty pow,  
John Anderson my jo!

acquaintec

straight

bald

pate

2

John Anderson my jo, John,  
We clamb the hill thegither,  
And monie a cauntic day, John,  
We've had wi' ane anither;

climbed;

together

jolly

must

Now we maun totter down, John,  
And hand in hand we'll go, John,  
And sleep thegither at the foot,  
John Anderson my jo!

Love and harmony combine,  
And around our souls intertwine  
While thy branches mix with mine,  
And our roots together join.  
Joys upon our branches sit,  
Chirping loud and singing sweet;  
Like gentle streams beneath our feet  
Innocence and virtue meet.

Thou the golden fruit dost bear,  
I am clad in flowers fair;  
Thy sweet boughs perfume the air,  
And the turtle buildeth there.  
There she sits and feeds her young,  
Sweet I hear her mournful song;  
And thy lovely leaves among,  
There is love: I hear his tongue.  
There is charming nest doth lay,  
There he sleeps the night away;  
There he sports along the day,  
And doth among our branches play.

#### MAD SONG

The wild winds weep,  
And the night is a-cold;  
Come hither, Sleep,  
And my griefs unfold:  
But lo! the morning peeps  
Over the eastern steeps,  
And the rustling birds of dawn  
The earth do scorn.  
Lo! to the vault  
Of paved heaven,  
With sorrow fraught  
My notes are driven:  
They strike the ear of night,  
Make weep the eyes of day;  
They make mad the roaring winds,  
And with tempests play.

After night I do croud,  
And with night will go;  
I turn my back to the east  
From whence comforts have increas'd;  
For light doth seize my brain  
With frantic pain.

From Songs of Innocence /1789/

#### INTRODUCTION

Piping down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he laughing said to me:

"Pipe a song about a Lamb!"  
So I piped with merry cheer.  
"Piper, pipe that song again;  
So I piped: he wept to hear.

"Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe,  
Sing thy songs of happy cheer."  
So I sung the same again  
While he wept with joy to hear.

"Piper, sit thee down and write  
In a book that all may read."  
So he vanish'd from my sight,  
And I pluck'd a hollow reed,  
And I made a rural pen,  
And I stain'd the water clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear.

#### THE LAMB

Little Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?  
Gave thee life and bid thee feed  
By the stream and o'er the mead;  
Gave thee clothing of delight,  
Softest clothing, woolly, bright;  
Gave thee such a tender voice  
Making all the vales rejoice?  
Little Lamb, who made thee?  
Dost thou know who made thee?



Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,  
Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:  
He is called by thy name,  
For he calls himself a Lamb.  
He is meek and he is mild;  
He became a little child:  
I a child and thou a lamb,  
We are called by his name.  
Little Lamb, God bless thee.  
Little Lamb, God bless thee.

#### HOLY THURSDAY

'Twas on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,  
The children walking two and two, in red and blue and green,  
Grey headed beardsles walk'd before, with wands as white as snow,  
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames' waters flow.  
O what a multitude they seem'd, these flowers of London town!  
Seated in companies they sit with radiance all their own.  
The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of lambs,  
Thousands of little boys and girls raising their innocent hands,  
Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song,  
Or like harmonious thundersings the seats of heaven among,  
Beneath them sit the aged men, wise guardians of the poor;  
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door.

#### THE LITTLE BLACK BOY

My mother bore me in the southern wild,  
And I am black, but O! my soul is white;  
White as an angel is the English child,  
But I am black, as if bereav'd of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,  
And sitting down before the heat of day  
She took me on her lap and kissed me,  
And pointing to the east, began to say:

"Look on the rising sun! there God does live,  
And gives his light and gives his heat away;  
And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive  
Comfort in morning, joy in the noon day.

"And we are put on earth a little space  
That we may learn to bear the beams of love;  
And these black bodies and this sun-burnt face  
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove;

"For when our souls have learn'd the heat to bear,  
The cloud will vanish: we shall hear his voice,  
Saying: 'come out from the grove, my love and care,  
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice.'"

Thus did my mother say, and kiss'd me.

And thus I say to little English boy:

When I from black and he from white cloud free  
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat, till he can bear  
To lean in joy upon our father's knee;  
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,  
And be like him, and he will then love me.

#### THE LITTLE BOY FOUND

The little boy lost in the lonely fen,  
Led by the wand'ring light,

Began to cry; but God, ever nigh,  
Appear'd like his father in white.

He kiss'd the child, and by the hand led,  
And to his mother brought,

Who is sorrow pale, thro' the lonely dale,  
Her little boy weeping sought.

#### THE CHIMNEY SWEEPER

When my mother died I was very young,  
And my father sold me while yet my tongue  
Could scarcely cry 'weep, weep, weep, weep.'  
So your chimney I sweep and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre who cried when his head,  
That curl'd like a lamb's back, was shav'd: so I said,  
"Hush, Tom, never mind it, for when your head's bare  
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair."

And so he was quiet, and that very night,  
As Tom was a sleeping, he had such a sight,  
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned and Jack,  
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black.

And by came an Angel who had a bright key,  
And he open'd the coffins and set them all free;  
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing, they run,  
And wash in a river, and shine in the Sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,  
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind;  
And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,  
He'd have God for his father and never want joy.  
And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark,  
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.  
Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm;  
So if all do their duty they need not fear harm.

From the S o n g s o f E x p e r i e n c e /1794/

#### INTRODUCTION

Hear the voice of the Bard!  
Who Present, Past, and Future sees,  
Whose ears have heard  
The Holy Word  
That walk'd among the ancient trees,  
Calling the lapsed Soul,  
And weeping in the evening dew,  
That might controll  
The starry pole  
And fallen fallen light renew!

"O Earth, O Earth return!  
Arise from out the dewy Grass;  
Night is worn  
And the morn  
Rises from the slumberous mass.

"Turn away no more:  
Why wilt thou turn away?  
The starry floor  
The wat'ry shore  
Is giv'n thee till the break of day."

#### EARTH'S ANSWER

Earth rais'd up her head  
From the darkness dread and drear.  
Her light fled:  
Stony dread!  
And her locks cover'd with grey despair.  
"Prison'd on wat'ry shore,  
Starry Jealousy does keep my den  
Cold and hoar;  
Weeping o'er,  
I hear the father of the ancient men.

"Selfish father of men,  
Cruel, jealous, selfish fear:  
Can delight,  
Chain'd in night,  
The virgins of youth and morning bear?  
"Does spring hide its joy  
When buds and blossoms grow?  
Does the sower  
Sow by night?  
Or the plowman in darkness plow?  
"Break this heavy chain  
That does freeze my bones around.  
Selfish! vain!  
Eternal bane!  
That free Love with a bondage bound."

#### A POISON TREE

I was angry with my friend:  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe:  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.  
And I water'd it in fears,  
Night and morning with my tears;  
And I sunned it with smiles,  
And with soft deceitful wiles.  
And it grew both day and night,  
Till it bore an apple bright;  
And my foe beheld it shine,  
And he knew that it was mine,  
And into my garden stole  
When the night had veil'd the pole:  
In the morning glad I see  
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.

### THE SCHOOLBOY

I love to rise in a summer morn  
When the birds sing on every tree,  
The distant huntsman winds his horn,  
And the skylark sings with me,  
O! what sweet company!

But to go to school in a summer morn,  
O! it drives all joy away;  
Under a cruel eye outworn,  
The little ones spend the day  
In sighing and dismay.

Ah! then at times I drooping sit,  
And spend many an anxious hour,  
Nor in my book can I take delight,  
Nor sit in learning's bower,  
Worn thro' with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy  
Sit in a cage and sing?  
How can a child, when fears annoy,  
But droop his tender wing,  
And forget his youthful spring?

O! father and mother, if buds are nipp'd  
And blossoms blown away,  
And if the tender plants are stripp'd  
Of their joy in the springing day,  
By sorrow and care's dismay,

How shall the summer arise in joy,  
Or the summer fruits appear?  
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy,  
Or bless the mellowing year,  
When the blasts of winter appear?

### THE CHIMNEY-SWEEPER

A little black thing among the snow,  
Crying "weep! weep!" in notes of woe!  
"Where are thy father and mother? say?" -  
"They are both gone up to the church to pray.

"Because I was happy upon the heath,  
And smil'd among the winter's snow,  
They clothed me in the clothes of death,  
And taught me to sing the notes of woe."

"And because I am happy, and dance and sing,  
They think they have done me no injury,  
And are gone to praise God and his priest and king,  
Who make up a heaven of our misery."

### THE TYGER

Tyger, Tyger, burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies  
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?  
On what wings dare he aspire?  
What the hand dare seize the fire?  
And what shoulder, and what art,  
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?  
And when thy heart began to beat,  
What dread hand? and what dread feet?

In what hammer? what the chain,  
In what furnace was thy brain?  
What the anvil? what dread grasp  
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears  
And water'd heaven with their tears,  
Did he smile his work to see?  
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tyger, Tyger, burning bright  
In the forests of the night,  
What immortal hand or eye  
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

### HOLY THURSDAY

Is this a holy thing to see  
In a rich and fruitful land,  
Babes reduc'd to misery,  
Fed with cold and usurous hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?  
Can it be a song of joy?  
And so many children poor?  
It is a land of poverty!

And their sun does never shine,  
And their fields are bleak and bare,  
And their ways are fill'd with thorns:  
It is eternal winter there.

For where-e'er the sun does shine,  
And where-e'er the rain does fall,  
Babe can never hunger there,  
Nor poverty the mind appall.

#### LONDON

I wander thro' each charter'd street  
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,  
And mark in every face I meet  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,  
In every Infants cry of fear,  
In every voice, in every ban,  
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the Chimney-sweeper's cry  
Every blackning Church appalls,  
And the hapless Soldiers' sigh  
Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear  
How the youthful Harlots' curse  
Blasts the new-born Infants' tear,  
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.

#### P o e m s f r o m M S S

##### THE GOLDEN NET

Three Virgins at the break of day:  
"Whither, young Man, whither away?  
Alas for woe! alas for woe!"  
They cry, and tears for ever flow.  
The one was Cloth'd in flames of fire,  
The other Cloth'd in iron wire,  
The other bright before my Eyes  
They bore a Net of golden twine  
To hang upon the Branches fine.  
Pitying I wept to see the woe  
That Love and Beauty undergo,  
To be consum'd in burning Fires  
And in ungratified Desires,

And in tears cloth'd night and day  
Melted all my Sound away.  
When they saw my Tears, a Smile  
That did Heaven itself beguile,  
Bore the Golden Net aloft  
As on downy Pinions soft  
Over the Morning of my Day.  
Underneath the Net I stray,  
Now intreating Burning Fire,  
Now intreating Iron Wire,  
Now intreating Tears and Sighs,  
O when will the morning rise?

#### From THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL /c.1818/

Was Jesus' Chaste, or did he  
Give any Lessons of Chastity?  
The morning blush'd fiery red:  
Mary was found in Adulterous bed;  
Earth groan'd beneath, and Heaven above  
Trembled at discovery of Love.  
Jesus was sitting in Moses' Chair,  
They brought the trembling Woman There.  
Moses commands she be ston'd to death:  
What was the sound of Jesus' breath?  
He laid His hand on Moses' Jaw;  
The Ancient Heavens, in Silent Awe,  
Writ with Curses from Pole to Pole,  
All away began to roll.  
The Earth, trembling and Naked lay  
In secret bed of Mortal Clay,  
Of Sinai felt the hand divine  
Putting back the bloody shrine,  
And She heard the breath of God  
And She heard by Eden's flood,  
"Good and Evil are no more!  
Sinai's trumpets, cease to roar!  
Cease, finger of God, to write!  
The Heavens are not clean in thy Sight.  
Thou art good, and thou Alone;  
Nor may the sinner cast one stone.  
T o b e G o o d o n l y i s t o b e  
A G o d o r e l s e a P h a r i s e e.  
Thou Angel of the Presence Divine,  
That didst create this Body of Mine,  
Wherefore hast thou writ these Laws  
And Created Hell's dark jaws?  
My Presence I will take from thee:  
A Cold Leper thou shalt be.

we shall be able to continue the Payment, I am not under the least Concern. One Thing I know, that when the Hen is starved to Death, there will be no more Golden Eggs.

I THINK it a little unhospitalable, and others may call it a subtil Piece of Malice; that, because there may be a Dozen Families in this Town, able to entertain their English Friends in a generous Manner at their Tables; their Guests, upon their Return to England, shall report, that we wallow in Riches and Luxury.

YET, I confess, I have known an Hospital, where all the Household-Officers grew rich; while the Poor, for whose Sake it was built, were almost starving for want of Food and Raiment.

TO conclude. If Ireland be a rich and flourishing Kingdom; its Wealth and Prosperity must be owing to certain Causes, that are yet concealed from the whole Race of Mankind; and the Effects are equally invisible. We need not wonder at Strangers, when they deliver such Paradoxes; but a Native and Inhabitant of this Kingdom, who gives the same verdict, must be either ignorant of this Stupidity; or a Man-pleaser, at the Expence of all Honour, Conscience, and Truth.

## A Modest Proposal

FOR Preventing the Children of poor People in Ireland, from being a Burden to their Parents or Country; and for making them beneficial to the Publick

1729

IT is a melancholly Object to those, who walk through this great Town, or travel in the Country; when they see the Streets, the Roads, and Cabin-doors crowded with Beggars of the Female Sex, followed by three, four, or six Children, all in Rags, and importing every Passenger for an Alms. These Mothers, instead of being able to work for their honest Livelyhood, are forced to employ all their Time in strolling to beg Sustainance for their helpless Infants; who, as they grow up, either turn Thieves for want of Work; or leave their dear Native Country, to fight for the Pretender in Spain, or sell themselves to the Barbadoes.

I THINK it is agreed by all Parties, that this prodigious Number  
1. James Stuart, claimant to the throne lost by his father, James II, in 1688.

of Children in the Arms, or on the Backs, or at the Heels of their Mothers, and frequently of their Fathers, is in the present deplorable State of the Kingdom, a very great additional Grievance; and therefore, whoever could find out a fair, cheap, and easy Method of making these Children sound and useful Members of the Commonwealth, would deserve so well of the Publick, as to have his Statue set up for a Preserver of the Nation.

BUT my Intention is very far from being confined to provide only for the Children of professed Beggars: It is of a much greater Extent, and shall take in the whole Number of Infants at a certain Age, who are born of Parents, in effect as little able to support them, as those who demand our Charity in the Streets.

AS to my own Part, having turned my Thoughts for many Years, upon this important Subject, and maturely weighed the several Schemes of other Projectors, I have always found them grossly mistaken in their Computation. It is true a Child, just dropt from its Dam, may be supported by her Milk, for a Solar Year with little other Nourishment; at most not above the Value of two Shillings; which the Mother may certainly get, or the Value in Scraps, by her lawful Occupation of Begging: And, it is exactly at one Year old, that I propose to provide for them in such a Manner, as, instead of being a Charge upon their Parents, or the Parish, or wanting Food and Raiment for the rest of their Lives; they shall, on the contrary, contribute to the Feeding, and partly to the Cloathing, of many Thousands.

THERE is likewise another great Advantage in my Scheme, that it will prevent those voluntary Abortions, and that horrid Practice of Women murdering their Bastard Children; alas! too frequent among us; sacrificing the poor innocent Babes, I doubt, more to avoid the Expence than the Shame; which would move Tears and Pity in the most Savage and inhuman Breast.

THE Number of Souls in Ireland being usually reckoned one Million and a half; of these I calculate there may be about Two hundred Thousand Couple whose Wives are Breeders; from which Number I subtract thirty thousand Couples, who are able to maintain their own Children; although I apprehend there cannot be so many, under the present Distresses of the Kingdom; but this being granted, there will remain an Hundred and Seventy Thousand Breeders. I again subtract Fifty Thousand, for those Women who miscarry, or whose Children die by Accident, or Disease, within the Year. There only remain an Hundred and Twenty Thousand Children of poor Parents, annually born: The Question therefore is, How this Number shall be reared, and provided for? Which, as I have already said, under the present Situation of Affairs, is utterly

impossible, by all the Methods hitherto proposed: For we can neither employ them in *Handicraft* or *Agriculture*; we neither build Houses, (I mean in the Country) nor cultivate Land: They can very seldom pick up a Livelyhood by *Stealing* until they arrive at six Years old; except where they are of towardly Parts; although, I confess, they learn the Rudiments much earlier; during which Time, they can, however, be properly looked upon only as *Probationers*; as I have been informed by a principal Gentleman in the County of *Cavan*, who protested to me, that he never knew above one or two Instances under the Age of six, even in a Part of the Kingdom so renowned for the *quickest Proficiency in that Art*.

I AM assured by our Merchants, that a Boy or a Girl before twelve Years old, is no saleable Commodity; and even when they come to this Age, they will not yield above Three Pounds, or Three Pounds and half a Crown at most, on the Exchange, which cannot turn to Account either to the Parents or the Kingdom; the Charge of Nutriment and Rags, having been at least four Times that Value.

I SHALL now therefore humbly propose my own Thoughts; which I hope will not be liable to the least Objection.

I HAVE been assured by a very knowing *American* of my Acquaintance in *London*; that a young healthy Child, well nursed, is, at a Year old, a most delicious, nourishing, and wholesome Food; whether *Stewed, Roasted, Baked, or Boiled*; and, I make no doubt, that it will equally serve in a *Fricasie, or Ragout*.

I DO therefore humbly offer it to *publick Consideration*, that of the Hundred and Twenty Thousand Children, already computed, Twenty thousand may be reserved for Breed; whereof only one Fourth Part to be Males; which is more than we allow to *Sheep, black Cattle, or Swine*; and my Reason is, that these Children are seldom the Fruits of Marriage, a Circumstance not much regarded by our *Savages*; therefore, one Male will be sufficient to serve four Females. That the remaining Hundred thousand, may, at a Year old, be offered in Sale to the Persons of *Quality and Fortune*, through the Kingdom; always advising the Mother to let them suck plentifully in the last Month, so as to render them plump, and fat for a good Table. A Child will make two Dishes at an Entertainment for Friends; and when the Family dines alone, the fore or hind Quarter will make a reasonable Dish; and seasoned with a little Pepper or Salt, will be very good Boiled on the fourth Day, especially in Winter.

I HAVE reckoned upon a Medium, that a Child just born will weigh Twelve Pounds; and in a solar Year, if tolerably nursed, encreaseth to twenty eight Pounds.

I GRANT this Food will be somewhat dear, and therefore very

proper for *Landlords*; who, as they have already devoured most of the Parents, seem to have the best Title to the Children.

INFANTS Flesh will be in Season throughout the Year; but more plentiful in *March*, and a little before and after: For we are told by a grave \* Author, an eminent *French Physician*, that *Fish being a prolific Dyet*, there are more Children born in *Roman Catholick Countries* about Nine Months after *Lent*, than at any other Season: Therefore reckoning a Year after *Lent*, the Markets will be more glutted than usual; because the Number of *Popish Infants*, is, at least, three to one in this Kingdom; and therefore it will have one other Collateral Advantage, by lessening the Number of *Papists* among us.

I HAVE already computed the Charge of nursing a Beggar's Child (in which List I reckon all *Cottagers, Labourers, and Four fifths of the Farmers*) to be about two Shillings per Annum, Rags included; and I believe, no Gentleman would repine to give Ten Shillings for the Carcase of a good fat Child; which, as I have said, will make four Dishes of excellent nutritive Meat, when he hath only some particular Friend, or his own Family, to dine with him. Thus the Squire will learn to be a good Landlord, and grow popular among his Tenants; the Mother will have Eight Shillings net Profit, and be fit for Work until she produceth another Child.

THOSE who are more thrifty (as I must confess the Times require) may flay the Carcase; the Skin of which, artificially dressed, will make admirable Gloves for *Ladies, and Summer Boots for fine Gentlemen*.

AS to our City of *Dublin*; Shambles may be appointed for this Purpose, in the most convenient Parts of it; and Butchers we may be assured will not be wanting; although I rather recommend buying the Children alive, and dressing them hot from the Knife, as we do roasting Pigs.

A VERY worthy Person, a true Lover of his Country, and whose Virtues I highly esteem, was lately pleased, in discoursing on this Matter, to offer a Refinement upon my Scheme. He said, that many Gentlemen of this Kingdom, having of late destroyed their Deer; he conceived, that the Want of Venison might be well supplied by the Bodies of young Lads and Maidens, not exceeding fourteen Years of Age, nor under twelve; so great a Number of both Sexes in every County being now ready to starve, for Want of Work and Service: And these to be disposed of by their Parents, if alive, or otherwise by their nearest Relations. But with due Deference to so excellent a Friend, and so deserving a Patriot, I cannot be altogether in his Sentiments. For as to the Males, my *American Acquaintance*

\* Rabelais.



assured me from frequent Experience, that their Flesh was generally tough and lean, like that of our School-boys, by continual Exercise, and their Taste disagreeable; and to fatten them would not answer the Charge. Then, as to the Females, it would, I think, with humble Submission, be a Loss to the Publick, because they soon would become Breeders themselves: And besides it is not improbable, that some scrupulous People might be apt to censure such a Practice (although indeed very unjustly) as a little bordering upon Cruelty; which, I confess, hath always been with me the strongest Objection against any Project, how well soever intended.

BUT in order to justify my Friend; he confessed, that this Expedient was put into his Head by the famous *Salmanazar*,<sup>2</sup> a Native of the Island *Formosa*, who came from thence to *London*, above twenty Years ago, and in Conversation told my Friend, that in his Country, when any young Person happened to be put to Death, the Executioner sold the Carcase to Persons of Quality, as a prime Dainty; and that, in his Time, the Body of a plump Girl of fifteen, who was crucified for an Attempt to poison the Emperor, was sold to his Imperial Majesty's prime Minister of State, and other great Mandarins of the Court, in Joints from the *Gibbet*, at Four hundred Crowns. Neither indeed can I deny, that if the same Use were made of several plump young girls in this Town, who, without one single Groat to their Fortunes, cannot stir Abroad without a Chair, and appear at the *Play-house*, and Assemblies in foreign Fineries, which they never will pay for; the Kingdom would not be the worse.

SOME Persons of a desponding Spirit are in great Concern about that vast Number of poor People, who are Aged, Diseased, or Maimed; and I have been desired to employ my Thoughts what Course may be taken, to ease the Nation of so grievous an Incumbrance. But I am not in the least Pain upon that Matter; because it is very well known, that they are every Day dying, and rotting, by Cold and Famine, and Filth, and Vermin, as fast as can be reasonably expected. And as to the younger Labourers, they are now in almost as hopeful a Condition: They cannot get Work, and consequently pine away for Want of Nourishment, to a Degree, that if at any Time they are accidentally hired to common Labour, they have not Strength to perform it; and thus the Country, and themselves, are in a fair Way of being soon delivered from the Evils to come.

I HAVE too long digressed; and therefore shall return to my Subject. I think the Advantages by the Proposal which I have made,

<sup>2</sup> George Psalmanazar, the professed author of *An Historical and Geographical Description of Formosa* (London, 1704); a known imposter, he was French by birth, and not the Formosan he claimed to be.

are obvious; and many, as well as of the highest Importance.

FOR, First, as I have already observed, it would greatly lessen the Number of Papists, with whom we are yearly overrun; being the principal Breeders of the Nation, as well as our most dangerous Enemies; and who stay at home on Purpose, with a Design to deliver the Kingdom to the Pretender; hoping to take their Advantage by the Absence of so many good Protestants, who have chosen rather to leave their Country, than stay at home, and pay Tithes against their Conscience, to an idolatrous Episcopal Curate.

SECONDLY, The poorer Tenants will have something valuable of their own, which, by Law, may be made liable to Distress, and help to pay their Landlord's Rent; their Com and Cattle being already seized, and Money a Thing unknown.

THIRDLY, Whereas the Maintenance of an Hundred Thousand Children, from two Years old, and upwards, cannot be computed at less than ten Shillings a Piece per Annum, the Nation's Stock will be thereby increased Fifty Thousand Pounds per Annum; besides the Profit of a new Dish, introduced to the Tables of all Gentlemen of Fortune in the Kingdom, who have any Refinement in Taste; and the Money will circulate among ourselves, the Goods being entirely of our own Growth and Manufacture.

FOURTHLY, The constant Breeders, besides the Gain of Eight Shillings Sterling per Annum, by the Sale of their Children, will be rid of the Charge of maintaining them after the first Year.

FIFTHLY, This Food would likewise bring great Custom to Taverns, where the Vintners will certainly be so prudent, as to procure the best Receipts for dressing it to Perfection; and consequently, have their Houses frequented by all the fine Gentlemen, who justly value themselves upon their Knowledge in good Eating; and a skilful Cook, who understands how to oblige his Guests, will contrive to make it as expensive as they please.

SIXTHLY, This would be a great Inducement to Marriage, which all wise Nations have either encouraged by Rewards, or enforced by Laws and Penalties. It would increase the Care and Tenderness of Mothers towards their Children, when they were sure of a Settlement for Life, to the poor Babes, provided in some Sort by the Publick, to their annual Profit instead of Expence. We should soon see an honest Emulation among the married Women, which of them could bring the fattest Child to the Market. Men would become as fond of their Wives, during the Time of their Pregnancy, as they are now of their Mares in Foal, their Cows in Calf, or Sows when they are ready to farrow; nor offer to beat or kick them, (as it is too frequent a Practice) for fear of a Miscarriage.

MANY other Advantages might be enumerated. For instance, the Addition of some Thousand Carcasses in our Exportation of barrell'd Beef: The Propagation of Swines *Flesh*, and Improvement in the Art of making good Bacon; so much wanted among us by the great Destruction of Pigs, too frequent at our Tables, which are no way comparable in Taste, or Magnificence, to a well-grown fat yearling Child; which, roasted whole, will make a considerable Figure at a Lord Mayor's Feast, or any other publick Entertainment. But this, and many others, I omit; being studious of Brevity.

SUPPOSING that one Thousand Families in this City, would be constant Customers for Infants *Flesh*; besides others who might have it at merry Meetings, particularly Weddings and Christenings; I compute that Dublin would take off, annually, about Twenty Thousand Carcasses; and the rest of the Kingdom (where probably they will be sold somewhat cheaper) the remaining Eighty Thou-

I CAN think of no one Objection, that will possibly be raised against this Proposal; unless it should be urged, that the Number of People will be thereby much lessened in the Kingdom. This I freely own; and it was indeed one principal Design in offering it to the World. I desire the Reader will observe, that I calculate my Remedy for this one individual Kingdom of IRELAND, and for no other that ever was, is, or I think ever can be upon Earth. Therefore, let no man talk to me of other Expedients: Of taxing our Absentees at five Shillings a Pound: Of using neither Cloaths, nor Household Furniture except what is of our own Growth and Manufacture: Of utterly rejecting the Materials and Instruments that promote foreign Luxury: Of curing the Expensiveness of Pride, Vanity, Idleness, and Gaming in our Women: Of introducing a Vein of Parsimony, Prudence and Temperance: Of learning to love our Country, wherein we differ even from LAPLANDERS, and the Inhabitants of TOPINAMBOO: Of quitting our Animosities, and Factions; nor act any longer like the Jews, who were murdering one another at the very Moment their City was taken: Of being a little cautious not to sell our Country and Consciences for nothing: Of teaching Landlords to have, at least, one Degree of Mercy towards their Tenants. Lastly, Of putting a Spirit of Honesty, Industry, and Skill into our Shop-keepers; who, if a Resolution could now be taken to buy only our native Goods, would immediately unite to cheat and exact upon us in the Price, the Measure, and the Goodness; nor could ever yet be brought to make one fair Proposal of just Dealing, though often and earnestly invited to it.

THEREFORE I repeat, let no Man talk to me of these and the

3. These are in fact measures that Swift had proposed in such tracts as his *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture*.

like Expedients; till he hath, at least, a Glimpse of Hope, that there will ever be some hearty and sincere Attempt to put them in Practice.

BUT, as to my self; having been wearied out for many Years with offering vain, idle, visionary Thoughts; and at length utterly despairing of Success, I fortunately fell upon this Proposal; which, as it is wholly new, so it hath something solid and real, of no Expence, and little Trouble, full in our own Power; and whereby we can incur no Danger in disobliging ENGLAND: For, this Kind of Commodity will not bear Exportation; the *Flesh* being of too tender a Consistence, to admit a long Continuance in Salt; *although, perhaps, I could name a Country, which would be glad to eat up our whole Nation without it.*

AFTER all, I am not so violently bent upon my own Opinion, as to reject any Offer proposed by wise Men, which shall be found equally innocent, cheap, easy, and effectual. But before something of that Kind shall be advanced, in Contradiction to my Scheme, and offering a better; I desire the Author, or Authors, will be pleased maturely to consider two Points. First, As Things now stand, how they will be able to find Food and Raiment, for a Hundred Thousand useless Mouths and Backs? And secondly, There being a round Million of Creatures in human Figure, throughout this Kingdom; whose whole Subsistence, put into a common Stock, would leave them in Debt two Millions of Pounds Sterling; adding those, who are Beggars by Profession, to the Bulk of Farmers, Cottagers, and Labourers, with their Wives and Children, who are Beggars in Effect; I desire those Politicians, who dislike my Overture, and may perhaps be so bold to attempt an Answer, that they will first ask the Parents of these Mortals, Whether they would not, at this Day, think it a great Happiness to have been sold for Food at a Year old, in the Manner I prescribe; and thereby have avoided such a perpetual Scene of Misfortunes, as they have since gone through; by the Oppression of Landlords; the Impossibility of paying Rent, without Money or Trade; the Want of common Sustenance, with neither House nor Cloaths, to cover them from the Inclemencies of Weather, and the most inevitable Prospect of intailing the like, or greater Miseries upon their Breed for ever.

I PROFESS, in the Sincerity of my Heart, that I have not the least personal Interest, in endeavouring to promote this necessary Work; having no other Motive than the publick Good of my Country, by advancing our Trade, providing for Infants, relieving the Poor, and giving some Pleasure to the Rich. I have no Children, by which I can propose to get a single penny; the youngest being nine Years old, and my Wife past Child-bearing.



Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,  
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top  
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed  
In the beginning how the heavens and earth  
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill  
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed  
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues  
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.  
And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer  
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,  
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first  
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,  
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,  
And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark  
Illumine, what is low raise and support;  
That, to the height of this great argument,  
I may assert Eternal Providence,  
And justify the ways of God to men.  
(from Book 1: 1-25)

O, had his powerful destiny ordained  
Me some inferiour Angel, I had stood  
Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised  
Ambition! Yet why not some other Power  
As great might have aspired, and me, though mean,  
Drawn to his part; but other Powers as great  
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within  
Or from without, to all temptations armed.  
Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?  
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,  
But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?  
Be then his love accursed, since love or hate,  
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.  
Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will  
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.  
Me miserable! which way shall I fly  
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?  
Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;  
And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep  
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,  
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.  
O, then, at last relent: Is there no place  
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?  
(Book 4: 57-80)

They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld  
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,  
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate  
With dreadful faces thronged, and fiery arms:

(from Book 12: 641-649)

From this Assyrian garden, where the Fiend  
Saw, undelighted, all delight, all kind  
Of living creatures, new to sight, and strange  
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,  
Godlike erect, with native honour clad  
In naked majesty seemed lords of all:  
And worthy seemed; for in their looks divine  
The image of their glorious Maker shone,  
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,  
(Severe, but in true filial freedom placed,)  
Whence true authority in men; though both  
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;  
For contemplation he and valour formed;  
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;  
He for God only, she for God in him:  
(from Book 4: 285-299)

--  
Forbids us then to taste! but his forbidding  
Commends thee more, while it infers the good  
By thee communicated, and our want:  
For good unknown sure is not had; or, had  
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.  
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,  
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?  
Such prohibitions bind not. But, if death  
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then  
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat  
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die!  
How dies the Serpent? he hath eaten and lives,  
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,  
Irrational till then. For us alone  
Was death invented? or to us denied  
This intellectual food, for beasts reserved?  
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first  
Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy  
The good befallen him, author unsuspect,  
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.  
What fear I then? rather, what know to fear  
Under this ignorance of good and evil,  
Of God or death, of law or penalty?  
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,  
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,  
Of virtue to make wise: What hinders then  
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?  
So saying, her rash hand in evil hour  
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she eat!  
Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat,  
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,  
That all was lost.  
(from Book 9: 762-794)

Some natural tears they dropt, but wiped them soon;  
The world was all before them, where to choose  
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:  
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,  
Through Eden took their solitary way.

37

and Eve but to Paradise, our sympathies gradually shift. Satan is no longer a glamorous underdog, fighting his adventurous way through the universe against enormous odds; he is a menacing vulture, a cormorant, a toad, a he discovers in the universe serve only to produce in him envious hatred and destructiveness. His sin is incestuous, as the allegory of Sin and Death who are weaker, less active, and less spectacular in every way, finally outweigh Satan in our interest and sympathy simply because they can respond to life, and to the terrifying experience of guilt, more vigorously than Satan can.

Seen overall—from above, as it were—*Paradise Lost* is a vast but delicately balanced structure. Its first half rises from Hell through Chaos to Heaven, and takes place mostly in these cosmic locales; its second half opens with the word "Descend," and is largely confined to earth, ending with Adam and Eve's descent from the Mount of Paradise to the "subjected plain" of our world. The adventure of the fallen Satan in the opening books balances the history of fallen mankind in the closing ones. Book 4, the entry of Satan (and the reader) into Paradise, balances Book 9, describing the loss of Paradise. Books 5 and 10 provide contrasting views of life in Eden before and after the Fall. At the center of the poem, balanced as on a fulcrum, are the account of the destructive war in Heaven (Book 6), and that of the Creation (Book 7).

Within the poem's larger structure, there are all sorts of secondary balances which readers will recognize for themselves. The consult in Hell (Book 2) is paralleled by a consult in Heaven (Book 3); Eve is generated from Adam as Sin is generated from Satan; Satan's fall parallels Adam's fall, and the parallel is prolonged into that extended series of falls and recoveries which is the history of mankind. Moloch contrasts with Mammon; the Son's mercy with the Father's justice; Raphael's affability with Michael's severity; and so on, almost without limit.

The structure of the poem is at once massive and delicate; its language is also both rich and strong. Milton's range of classical reference and gift for subordinated sentences are sometimes hard to follow. Footnotes, alas, provide the only proper solution to this problem. But one need not equal, or even follow, all Milton's learning in order to appreciate his poem, especially at a first reading. The poem progresses as through a garden of metaphor and reference which stretches away on either side of one, as far as the eye can see; on a first tour, it is enough to get the general prospect clear, without learning the name of each particular blossom. Ultimately, the reader who is experienced in the poem comes to appreciate its details—epic similes like Leviathan the seabeast (1.201); no less than the one-eyed Arimaspians and the gryphon (2.943); its epithets and circumlocutions like Mulciber (1.740), who is Vulcan, and Amram's son (1.339) who is Moses—without sense of strain or strangeness. Milton himself moved securely through the literatures of half a dozen languages and as many cultures; it is one of the supreme rewards of literary study to be able to follow him with an equivalent security.

*Paradise Lost* is at once a deeply traditional and a boldly original poem. Milton takes pains to fulfill the traditional prescriptions of the epic form; he gives us love, war, supernatural characters, a descent into Hell, a catalogue of warriors, all the conventional items of epic machinery. Yet no poem in

which the climax of the central action is a woman eating a piece of fruit can be a conventional epic. Similarly, Milton himself defined his moral purpose as being to "justify the ways of God to men." This seems no more than conventionally meek. Yet we cannot even think of equating the message of Milton's poem with Pope's injunction to "submit" because "whatever is is right." The way of life which Adam and Eve take up as the poem ends is that of the Christian pilgrimage through this world. Expelled from Eden, our first "grand parents" pick up the burdens of humanity as we know them, sustained by a faith which we also know, and go forth to seek a blessing that we do not know yet. They are to become wayfaring, warfaring Christians, like John Milton; and in this condition, with its weaknesses and strivings and inevitable defeats, there is a glory that no devil can ever understand. Thus Milton strikes, humanly as well as artistically, a grand resolving chord. It is the careful, triumphant balancing and tempering of this conclusion which completes the noble architecture of Milton's poem; and which makes of the end a richer, if not a more exciting, experience than the beginning.

From PARADISE LOST

Book 1

The Argument

This first book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed: then touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who, revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of angels, was, by the command of God, driven out of Heaven with all his crew, into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastens into the midst of things; presenting Satan, with his angels, now fallen into Hell—described here not in the center (for heaven and earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed), but in a place of utter darkness, fittest called Chaos. Here Satan with his angels lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion; calls up him who, next in order and dignity, lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded. They rise: their numbers; array of battle; their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech; comforts them with hope yet of regaining Heaven; but tells them, lastly, of a new world and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy

1. *Paradise Lost* appeared originally without any sort of prose aid to the reader; but, since many readers found the poem hard going, the printer asked Milton for some prose "Arguments" or summaries of the action in the various books, and prefixed them to later issues of the poem. We reprint those for the first two books and the ninth. 2. Adapted from Horace's prescription that the epic poet should start "in medias res."

38

or report in Heaven; for that angels were long before this visible creation was the opinion of many ancient fathers.<sup>3</sup> To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine<sup>4</sup> thereon, he refers to a full council: What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan rises, suddenly built out of the deep: the infernal peers there sit in council.

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit<sup>5</sup>  
 Of that forbidden tree whose mortal<sup>6</sup> taste  
 Brought death into the world, and all our woe,  
 With loss of Eden, till one greater Man<sup>7</sup>  
 Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,  
 Sing, Heavenly Muse,<sup>8</sup> that on the secret top  
 Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
 That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed  
 In the beginning how the heavens and earth  
 Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill<sup>9</sup>  
 Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed  
 Fast<sup>10</sup> by the oracle of God, I thence  
 Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
 That with no middle flight intends to soar  
 Above th' Aonian mount,<sup>2</sup> while it pursues  
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.  
 And chiefly thou, O Spirit,<sup>3</sup> that dost prefer  
 Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,  
 Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first  
 Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,  
 Dovelike sat'st brooding<sup>4</sup> on the vast abyss,  
 And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark  
 Illumine; what is low, raise and support;  
 That to the height of this great argument<sup>5</sup>

3. I.e., Church Fathers; the Christian writers of the first few centuries of the church.  
 4. I.e., what action to take upon their information.  
 5. Eve's apple, of course; but also all the consequences of eating it.  
 6. Deadly; but also "to mortals" (i.e., human beings).  
 7. Christ, the second Adam.  
 8. In Greek mythology, Urania, Muse of astronomy; but here identified, by references to Oreb and Sinai, with the Holy Spirit of the Bible, which inspired Moses ("that shepherd") to write Genesis and the other four books of the Pentateuch for the instruction of the Jews ("the chosen seed").  
 9. The hill of Sion and the brook of Siloa are two features of the landscape around Jerusalem likely to appeal to a Muse whose natural haunts are springs and mountains (see *Lycidas*, line 15). Milton's aim is to show that poetry is everywhere recognized as an inspiration close to that of religion.  
 1. Close.

I may assert Eternal Providence,  
 And justify the ways of God to men.  
 Say first (for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,  
 Nor the deep tract of Hell), say first what cause  
 Moved our grand<sup>6</sup> parents, in that happy state,  
 Favored of Heaven so highly, to fall off  
 From their Creator, and transgress his will  
 For<sup>7</sup> one restraint, lords of the world besides?<sup>8</sup>  
 Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?  
 Th' infernal serpent; he it was, whose guile,  
 Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived  
 The mother of mankind, what time<sup>9</sup> his pride  
 Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host  
 Of rebel angels, by whose aid aspiring  
 To set himself in glory above his peers,<sup>1</sup>  
 He trusted to have equaled the Most High,  
 If he opposed; and with ambitious aim  
 Against the throne and monarchy of God  
 Raised impious war in Heaven and battle proud,  
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power  
 Hurled headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky  
 With hideous ruin and combustion down  
 To bottomless perdition, there to dwell  
 In adamantine chains and penal fire,  
 Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.  
 Nine times the space that measures day and night  
 To mortal men, he with his horrid crew  
 Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf  
 Confounded though immortal. But his doom  
 Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought  
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain  
 Torments him; round he throws his baleful<sup>2</sup> eyes,  
 That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,  
 Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.  
 At once, as far as angels ken,<sup>3</sup> he views  
 The dismal situation waste and wild:  
 A dungeon horrible, on all sides round  
 As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames  
 No light,<sup>4</sup> but rather darkness visible  
 Served only to discover sights of woe,  
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace

6. First in importance; by implication, in time also.  
 7. Because of.  
 8. In every other respect.  
 9. I.e., at the time when.  
 1. His equals. The sentence mimics Satan's action, using clause loosely upon clause, and building ever higher, till "with vain attempt" (line 44) brings the whole structure crashing down. It is a dramatic entry into "the midst of things," where epics begin. Book 6 will recount more largely the war in Heaven, in the full narrative form which Aeneas used to tell Dido of the last days of Troy (*Aeneid* 2).  
 2. Malignant, as well as suffering.  
 3. As far as angels can see.  
 4. Omitting the verb conveys abruptly the paradox: fire-without-light.

And rest can never dwell, hope never comes  
 That comes to all,<sup>5</sup> but torture without end  
 Still urges,<sup>6</sup> and a fiery deluge, fed  
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed:  
 Such place Eternal Justice had prepared;  
 For those rebellious; here their prison ordain'd  
 In utter<sup>7</sup> darkness and their portion set  
 As far removed from God and light of Heaven,  
 As from the center<sup>8</sup> thrice to th' utmost pole.  
 O how unlike the place from whence they fell!  
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd  
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,  
 He soon discerns; and, weltering by his side,  
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,  
 Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd  
 Beëlzebub.<sup>9</sup> To whom th' arch-enemy,  
 And thence in Heaven call'd Satan,<sup>1</sup> with bold words  
 Breaking the horrid silence thus began:  
 "If thou beest he—but O how fallen! how chang'd  
 From him who in the happy realms of light  
 Clothed with transcendent brightness didst outshine  
 Myriads, though bright! if he whom mutual league,  
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope,  
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise,  
 Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd  
 In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest?  
 From what height fallen, so much the stronger proved  
 He with his thunder;<sup>2</sup> and till then who knew  
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,  
 Nor what the potent Victor in his rage  
 Can else inflict, do I repent or change,  
 Though chang'd in outward luster, that fixed mind  
 And high disdain, from sense of injured merit,  
 That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,  
 And to the fierce contention brought along  
 Innumerable force of spirits armed,  
 That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,

His utmost power with adverse power opposed  
 In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,  
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?  
 All is not lost: the unconquerable will,  
 And study<sup>4</sup> of revenge, immortal hate,  
 And courage never to submit or yield:  
 And what is else not to be overcome?<sup>5</sup>  
 That glory never shall his wrath or might  
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace  
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power<sup>6</sup>  
 Who from the terror of this arm so late  
 Doubted<sup>7</sup> his empire—that were low indeed;  
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath  
 This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of gods<sup>8</sup>  
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail;  
 Since, through experience of this great event,  
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,  
 We may with more successful hope resolve  
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,  
 Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,  
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy  
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny<sup>9</sup> of Heaven."  
 So spake th' apostate angel, though in pain,  
 Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair;  
 And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer:<sup>1</sup>  
 "O prince, O chief of many throned powers,  
 That led th' embattled seraphim<sup>2</sup> to war.  
 Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds  
 Fearless, endangered Heaven's perpetual King,  
 And put to proof his high supremacy,  
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate!<sup>3</sup>  
 Too well I see and rue the dire event!<sup>4</sup>  
 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat  
 Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host  
 In horrid destruction laid thus low,  
 As far as gods and heavenly essences  
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains

And rest can never dwell, hope never comes  
 That comes to all,<sup>5</sup> but torture without end  
 Still urges,<sup>6</sup> and a fiery deluge, fed  
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed:  
 Such place Eternal Justice had prepared;  
 For those rebellious; here their prison ordain'd  
 In utter<sup>7</sup> darkness and their portion set  
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 As from the center<sup>8</sup> thrice to th' utmost pole.  
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 Though chang'd in outward luster, that fixed mind  
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 And to the fierce contention brought along  
 Innumerable force of spirits armed,  
 That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,

5. The phrase echoes an expression in Dante ("All hope abandon, ye who enter here"), but Milton expresses it as a logical absurdity. Hope comes to "all," but not to Hell-dwellers; they are not included in "all."  
 6. Afflict.  
 7. "Complete" but also "outer."  
 8. The earth. Milton makes use in *Paradise Lost* of two images of the cosmos: (1) the earth, is the center of the created (Ptolemaic) cosmos of ten concentric spheres; but (2) the earth and the whole created cosmos are a mere appendage, hanging from Heaven by a golden chain, in the larger, aboriginal, and less shapely cosmos. In the present passage, the fall from Heaven to Hell (through the aboriginal universe) is described as thrice as far as

ruption and self-contradictions. "Fall": cease to exist.  
 9. The accusation is bold, but one of the aims of the poem is to show that Satan is a tyrant and God is not.  
 1. Comrade and equal  
 2. According to tradition, there were nine orders of angels—seraphim, cherubim, thrones, dominions, virtues, powers, principalities, archangels, and angels; but Milton does not use these systematic categories systematically.  
 3. The devil can conceive of any reason for God's continuing rule, except goodness and justice.  
 4. Outcome.

Invincible, and vigor soon returns,  
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state  
 Here swallowed up in endless misery;  
 But what if he our Conqueror (whom I now  
 Of force<sup>5</sup> believe almighty, since no less  
 Than such could have o'empowered such force as ours)  
 Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,  
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,  
 That we may so suffice<sup>6</sup> his vengeful ire,  
 Or do him mightier service as his thralls  
 By right of war, what'er his business be;  
 Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,  
 Or do his errands in the gloomy<sup>7</sup> deep?  
 What can it then avail though yet we feel  
 Strength undiminished, or eternal being  
 To undergo eternal punishment?

Whereto with speedy words th' arch-fiend<sup>7</sup> replied:  
 'Fallen cherub, to be weak is miserable,  
 Doing or suffering;<sup>8</sup> but of this be sure,  
 To do aught good never will be our task,  
 But ever to do ill our sole delight,  
 As being the contrary to his high will  
 Whom we resist. If then his providence  
 Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,  
 Our labor must be to pervert that end,  
 And out of good still to find means of evil;  
 Which oftimes may succeed, so as perhaps  
 Shall grieve him, if I fail not,<sup>9</sup> and disturb  
 His inmost counsels from their destined aim.  
 But see! the angry Victor hath recalled  
 His ministers of vengeance and pursuit  
 Back to the gates of Heaven; the sulphurous hail,  
 Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid  
 The fiery surge that from the precipice  
 Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,  
 Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,  
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now  
 To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.  
 Let us not slip<sup>1</sup> th' occasion, whether scorn  
 Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.  
 Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,  
 The seat of desolation, void of light,  
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames  
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend

5: Perforce, necessarily.  
 6: Satisfy.  
 7: A fiend is an enemy, one who hates; the word is an antonym of "friend."  
 8: Whether one is active or passive.  
 9: "Unless I'm mistaken" (direct from Latin *nisi fallor*).  
 1: I.e., let slip.

From off the tossing of these fiery waves;  
 There rest, if any rest can harbor there;  
 And reassembling our afflicted powers,<sup>2</sup>  
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend  
 Our enemy, our own loss how repair,  
 How overcome this dire calamity,  
 What reinforcement we may gain from hope,  
 If not, what resolution from despair."<sup>3</sup>  
 Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate  
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes  
 That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides  
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large  
 Lay floating many a rood,<sup>4</sup> in bulk as huge  
 As whom<sup>5</sup> the fables name of monstrous size,  
 Titanian or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,  
 Briareos or Typhon,<sup>6</sup> whom the den  
 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea beast  
 Leviathan,<sup>7</sup> which God of all his works  
 Created hugest that swim th' ocean-stream.  
 Him, haply, slumbering on the Norway foam,  
 The pilot of some small night-foundered<sup>8</sup> skiff,  
 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,  
 With fixèd anchor in his scaly rind  
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night  
 Invests<sup>9</sup> the sea, and wished morn delays:  
 So stretched out huge in length the arch-fiend lay,  
 Chained on the burning lake; nor ever thence  
 Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will  
 And high permission of all ruling Heaven  
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,  
 That with reiterated crimes he might  
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought  
 Evil to others, and enraged might see  
 How all his malice served but to bring forth  
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy shown  
 On man by him seduced, but on himself  
 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured.  
 Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool

2: Stricken armies.  
 3: Of the last nine lines of Satan's speech, no fewer than five rhyme. Milton may have felt the need for something like the couplet with which blank-verse dramatists cut off their scenes.  
 4: An old unit of measure, between six and eight yards.  
 5: I.e., as those whom.  
 6: Both the Titans, led by Briareos, and the earth-born Giants, represented by Typhon (who lived in Cilicia near Tarsus), fought with Jove. Briareos was said to have a hundred hands, and Typhon, a hundred heads, and both were said, by different authors, to have been punished for their rebellion (like Satan for his) by being thrown into the underworld. Briareos and Typhon are still heard grumbling from time to time under Mt. Etna.  
 7: The great sea monster of Isaiah 27.1 or Job 41; for Milton and us, simply a whale, but scaly (line 206).  
 8: Overtaken by darkness.  
 9: Wraps, covers. The story of sailors mooring to whales was an old one, but the reference to Norway suggests that Milton was thinking of a 16th-century version by Olaus Magnus, the Swedish historian.

185

190

195

200

205

210

215

220



His mighty stature; on each hand the flames  
 Driven backward slope their pointing spires,<sup>1</sup> and rolled  
 In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid<sup>2</sup> vale.  
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight:  
 Aloft, incumbent on<sup>3</sup> the dusky air,  
 That felt unusual weight; till on dry land  
 He lights, if it were land that ever burned  
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,  
 And such appeared in hue; as when the force  
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill  
 Torn from Pelorus<sup>4</sup> or the shattered side  
 Of thundering Etna, whose combustible  
 And fuelèd entrails thence conceiving fire,  
 Sublimed<sup>5</sup> with mineral fury, aid the winds,  
 And leave a singed bottom all involved<sup>6</sup>  
 With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole  
 Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate,  
 Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian<sup>7</sup> flood  
 As gods, and by their own recovered strength,  
 Not by the sufferance<sup>8</sup> of supernal power.

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"  
 Said then the lost archangel, "this the seat  
 That we must change for Heaven? this mournful gloom  
 For that celestial light? Be it so, since he  
 Who now is sovereign can dispose and bid  
 What shall be right: farthest from him is best,  
 Whom reason hath equaled, force hath made supreme  
 Above his equals.<sup>9</sup> Farewell, happy fields,  
 Where joy forever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,  
 Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,  
 Receive thy new possessor, one who brings  
 A mind not to be changed by place or time.  
 The mind is its own place, and in itself  
 Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.<sup>1</sup>  
 What matter where, if I be still the same,  
 And what I should be, all but less<sup>2</sup> than he  
 Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least  
 We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built  
 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence.

1. Points of flame.  
 2. Not simply "ghastly," but in the Latin sense, "bristling."  
 3. Resting upon.  
 4. Pelorus and Etna are volcanic mountains in Sicily, which Milton pictures as exploding under pressure of underground winds.  
 5. Vaporized.  
 6. Wrapped.  
 7. Of the river Styx, i.e., demonic, hellish.  
 8. Permissiveness.  
 9. Satan likes to think that by "reason" he is God's

Here we may reign secure; and in my choice  
 To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:  
 Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.  
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,  
 Th' associates and copartners of our loss,  
 Lie thus astonished<sup>3</sup> on th' oblivious pool,  
 And call them not to share with us their part  
 In this unhappy mansion, or once more  
 With rallied arms to try what may be yet  
 Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"  
 So Satan spake: and him Beëlzebub  
 Thus answered: "Leader of those armies bright,  
 Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foiled!  
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge  
 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft  
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge<sup>4</sup>  
 Of battle when it raged, in all assaults  
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume  
 New courage and revive, though now they lie  
 Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,  
 As we erewhile, astounded and amazed;  
 No wonder, fallen such a pernicious height!"  
 He scarce had ceased when the superior fiend  
 Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,  
 Ethereal temper,<sup>5</sup> massy, large, and round,  
 Behind him cast; the broad circumference  
 Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb  
 Through optic glass the Tuscan artist<sup>6</sup> views  
 At evening, from the top of Fesolè,  
 Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,  
 Rivers, or mountains in her spotty globe.  
 His spear, to equal which the tallest pine  
 Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast  
 Of some great admiral,<sup>7</sup> were but a wand,  
 He walked with, to support uneasy steps  
 Over the burning marl,<sup>8</sup> not like those steps  
 On Heaven's azure; and the torrid clime  
 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.  
 Nathless<sup>9</sup> he so endured, till on the beach  
 Of that inflamed<sup>10</sup> sea he stood, and called  
 His legions, angel forms, who lay entranced,  
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks

3. Stunned. The epithet "oblivious" is transferred from the fallen angels to the pool in which they have fallen.  
 4. Not the fringe of battle but the front line (Latin *acies*).  
 5. Tempered in celestial fire.  
 6. Galileo, who looked through a telescope ("optic glass") from the hill town of Fiesole outside Flor-  
 ence in the Val d'Arno, is the only contemporary mentioned by Milton in *Paradise Lost*.  
 7. Not the naval commander, but his flagship, usually the biggest of the fleet.  
 8. Soil.  
 9. A compressed, archaic form of "nonetheless."  
 10. Flaming, of course, but also fevered.

42

In Vallombrosa,<sup>2</sup> where th' Etrurian shades  
 High over-arched embower;<sup>3</sup> or scattered sedge  
 Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed  
 Hath vexed the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew  
 Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,  
 While with perfidious hatred they pursued  
 The sojourners of Coshen, who beheld  
 From the safe shore their floating carcasses  
 And broken chariot wheels;<sup>4</sup> so thick bestrown,  
 Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,  
 Under amazement of their hideous change.  
 He called so loud that all the hollow deep  
 Of Hell resounded: "Princes, potentates,  
 Warriors, the flower of Heaven, once yours, now lost,  
 If such astonishment as this can seize  
 Eternal spirits! or have ye chosen this place  
 After the toil of battle to repose  
 Your wearied virtue,<sup>5</sup> for the ease you find  
 To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?  
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn  
 To adore the Conqueror, who now beholds  
 Cherub and seraph rolling in the flood  
 With scattered arms and ensigns,<sup>6</sup> till anon  
 His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern  
 Th' advantage, and descending tread us down  
 Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts  
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf?  
 Awake, arise, or be forever fallen!"  
 They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprang  
 Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch  
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,  
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.  
 Nor did they not perceive<sup>7</sup> the evil plight  
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;  
 Yet to their general's voice they soon obeyed  
 Innumerable. As when the potent rod  
 Of Amram's son<sup>8</sup> in Egypt's evil day  
 Waved round the coast, up called a pitchy cloud

2. "Shady Valley," high in the Apennines about twenty miles from Florence, "Etruria" is Etruscan land, i.e., Tuscany.

3. I.e., form bowers by enclosing space.

4. Orion is a constellation, whose rising near sunset in late summer and autumn was associated with storms in the Red Sea, where sedge grows thick; these storms result in much floating seaweed. This reminds Milton of how the sea must have looked after the Israelites ("sojourners of Coshen") passed through it while escaping from Egypt, when it was covered with the littered corpses of Pharaoh ("Busiris") and his pursuing horsemen ("Mem-

phian chivalry").

5. Strength, but Satan's sarcasm makes use of the other connotation too.

6. Standards, battle flags.  
 7. The double negatives make a positive: they did indeed perceive both plight and pains. (Latin, *neque non*, "not . . . not," "and.")  
 8. Moses, who drew down a plague of locusts on Egypt (Exodus 10.12-15). Milton's learned locution is designed to keep Moses out of Hell, as well as from appearing too often in the poem (compare above, 307-11).

Of locusts, warping<sup>9</sup> on the eastern wind,  
 That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung  
 Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile;  
 So numberless were those bad angels seen  
 Hovering on wing under the cope<sup>10</sup> of Hell  
 Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires,  
 Till, as a signal given, th' uplifted spear  
 Of their great sultan<sup>2</sup> waving to direct  
 Their course, in even balance down they light  
 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;  
 A multitude like which the populous North<sup>3</sup>  
 Poured never from her frozen loins to pass  
 Rhene or the Danaw; when her barbarous sons  
 Came like a deluge on the South, and spread  
 Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.  
 Forthwith from every squadron and each band  
 The heads and leaders thither haste where stood  
 Their great commander; godlike shapes and forms  
 Excelling human; princely dignities,  
 And powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones,  
 Though of their names in Heavenly records now  
 Be no memorial, blotted out and rased<sup>4</sup>  
 By their rebellion from the Books of Life.  
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve  
 Got them new names, till, wandering o'er the earth,  
 Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,  
 By falsities and lies the greatest part  
 Of mankind they corrupted to forsake  
 God their Creator, and th' invisible  
 Glory of him that made them to transform  
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorned  
 With gay religions<sup>5</sup> full of pomp and gold,  
 And devils to adore for deities.  
 Then were they known to men by various names,  
 And various idols through the heathen world.  
 Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,<sup>6</sup>  
 Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,  
 At their great emperor's call, as next in worth  
 Came singly<sup>7</sup> where he stood on the bare strand,  
 While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.

9. Floating.

10. Roof.

2. A first use of the image, which will be reinforced later, of Satan as an Oriental despot.  
 3. The barbarian invasions of falling Rome began with crossings of the Rhine ("Rhene") and Danube ("Danaw") Rivers, and spread across Spain, via Gibraltar, to North Africa.  
 4. Erased. See above, line 81. Though reluctant

to state the view strongly, Milton believed all the pagan deities had been devils in disguise.

5. Ceremonies.

6. The catalogue of gods here is an epic convention; Homer catalogues ships, Virgil warriors.  
 7. One at a time. The diabolical aristocrats rally round Satan, while the "promiscuous crowd," the vulgar devils, stand apart.



Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.  
 With these came they who, from the bordering flood  
 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts  
 Egypt from Syrian ground,<sup>6</sup> had general names  
 Of Baalim and Ashtaroth, those male,  
 These feminine.<sup>7</sup> For spirits when they please  
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft  
 And uncompounded is their essence pure,  
 Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,  
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,  
 Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose,  
 Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,  
 Can execute their airy purposes,  
 And works of love or enmity fulfill.

For those the race of Israel off forsook  
 Their Living Strength,<sup>8</sup> and unfrequented left  
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down  
 To bestial gods; for which their heads as low  
 Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear  
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop  
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians called  
 Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns;  
 To whose bright image nightly by the moon  
 Sidonian virgins<sup>9</sup> paid their vows and songs  
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood  
 Her temple on th' offensive mountain,<sup>1</sup> built  
 By that uxorious king<sup>2</sup> whose heart, though large,  
 Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell  
 To idols foul. Thammuz<sup>3</sup> came next behind,  
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured  
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate  
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day;  
 While smooth Adonis<sup>4</sup> from his native rock  
 Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood  
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale  
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,  
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch  
 Ezekiel<sup>5</sup> saw, when, by the vision led,  
 His eye surveyed the dark idolatries

Of Moloch homicide,<sup>5</sup> lust hard by hate,  
 The first group of devils come from the Near  
 East, close neighbors and intimate enemies of  
 Jehovah at Jerusalem.  
 2. The rites of Moloch on "that opprobrious hill"  
 (the Mount of Olives) right opposite the Jewish  
 temple, and in the valley of Hinnom, so polluted  
 these places that they were turned into the refuse  
 dump of Jerusalem. Thus they became "Tophet" and  
 "Gehenna."  
 3. Chemos or Chemosh was another name for  
 Moloch, used in Moab, a nation lying south and  
 east of the Dead Sea ("th' asphaltic pool"). Many  
 of the geographical names clustered here come from  
 Isaiah 15-16.  
 4. For the story of how Peor seduced "Israel in  
 Sittim," see Numbers 25.  
 5. An epithet was often joined to a god's name as  
 a surname (e.g., *Jupiter Tonans*, *Jove the Thunderer*;  
 Milton's epithet involves almost a parody,  
 Moloch the Mankiller. The story of "good" Josiah  
 and his campaign against pagan gods is told in 2  
 Kings 23 and in 2 Chronicles 34.

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 These feminine.<sup>7</sup> For spirits when they please  
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft  
 And uncompounded is their essence pure,  
 Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,  
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,  
 Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose,  
 Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,  
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 Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,  
 Can execute their airy purposes,  
 And works of love or enmity fulfill.

44

Of alienated Judah. Next came one  
 Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark  
 Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopped off  
 In his own temple, on the grunsel-edge,<sup>6</sup>  
 Where he fell flat, and shamed his worshippers:  
 Dagon his name, sea monster, upward man  
 And downward fish; yet had his temple high  
 Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast  
 Of Palestine, in Cath and Asealon,  
 And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.<sup>7</sup>  
 Him followed Rimmon, whose delightful seat  
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks  
 Of Abbana and Pharpar, lucid streams.  
 He also 'gainst the house of God was bold:  
 A leper once he lost, and gained a king,  
 Ahaz,<sup>8</sup> his sottish conqueror, whom he drew  
 God's altar to disparage and displace  
 For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn  
 His odious offerings, and adore the gods  
 Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared  
 A crew who, under names of old renown,  
 Osiris, Isis, Orus,<sup>9</sup> and their train,  
 With monstrous shapes<sup>1</sup> and sorceries abused  
 Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek  
 Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms  
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel's scape  
 Th' infection, when their borrowed gold composed  
 The calf in Oreb,<sup>2</sup> and the rebel king  
 Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,  
 Likening his Maker to the grazed ox<sup>3</sup> —  
 Jehovah, who in one night when he passed  
 From Egypt marching, equaled<sup>4</sup> with one stroke  
 Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.  
 Belial<sup>5</sup> came last; than whom a spirit more lewd  
 Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love  
 Vice for itself. To him no temple stood

6. When the Philistines stole the ark of God, they tried to store it in the temple of their sea god, Dagon; but in the morning the mutilated statue of Dagon was found on the threshold ("grunsel-edge"). See 1 Samuel 5:1-5.  
 7. Milton names the five chief cities of the Philistines as places where Dagon was worshipped.  
 8. A Syrian general, Naaman, was cured of leprosy and converted from worship of Rimmon by the waters of the Jordan (2 Kings 5). King Ahaz, on the other hand, an Israelite monarch who conquered Damascus, was converted there to worship of Rimmon (2 Kings 16).  
 9. The second group of devils includes those from Egypt, driven in terror from heaven by the revolt of the giants (so Ovid tells us in *Metamorphoses* 5), and forced to wander through Egypt in animal disguises.  
 1. Monstrous, because often represented with animals' heads.  
 2. Aaron made a golden calf in the wilderness (Exodus 32); Milton thought it an idol of the Egyptian god Apis because the gold of which it was made had been borrowed from the Egyptians.  
 3. Jeroboam, "the rebel king," doubled Aaron's sin by making two golden calves (1 Kings 12:28-30).  
 4. Leveled. See Exodus 12:12 for Jehovah's vengeance on the first-born of Egypt and their gods.  
 5. Belial was never worshipped as a god; his name was originally an abstract noun meaning "wickedness"; hence used mainly in set phrases like "sons of Belial." He comes last, because weak and slothful.

Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he  
 In temples and at altars, when the priest  
 Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons,<sup>6</sup> who filled  
 With lust and violence the house of God?  
 In courts and palaces he also reigns,  
 And in luxurious cities, where the noise  
 Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,  
 And injury and outrage; and when night  
 Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons  
 Of Belial, flown<sup>7</sup> with insolence and wine.  
 Witness the streets of Sodom,<sup>8</sup> and that night  
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door  
 Exposed a matron, to avoid worse rape.  
 These were the prime in order and in might;  
 The rest were long to tell, though far renowned,  
 Th' Ionian gods, of Javan's issue held  
 Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,  
 Their boasted parents;<sup>9</sup> Titan, Heaven's first-born,  
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seized  
 By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove,  
 His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;  
 So Jove usurping reigned.<sup>1</sup> These, first in Crete  
 And Ida known, thence on the snowy top  
 Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,  
 Their highest heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,  
 Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds  
 Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old  
 Flew over Adria to th' Hesperian fields,  
 And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost isles.  
 All these and more came flocking; but with looks  
 Downcast and damp,<sup>2</sup> yet such wherein appeared  
 Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief  
 Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost  
 In loss itself; which on his countenance cast  
 Like doubtful hue.<sup>3</sup> But he, his wonted pride  
 Soon recollecting, with high words that bore

6. The misdeeds of Eli's sons, and the epithet "sons of Belial" applied to them, will be found in 1 Samuel 2:12-17.  
 7. Flushed. Puritans liked to call their enemies sons of Belial; this passage, with its present tense verbs, may reflect Milton's view of Restoration London.  
 8. In Sodom and Gibeah ancient outrages befell, described in Genesis 19 and Judges 19.  
 9. The Titans were regarded as gods by the Greeks ("Javan's issue," i.e., offspring of Javan, son of Japhet; son of Noah), but were admittedly created later than Heaven and Earth (Uranus and Co.) whose children they were said to be. Milton's Christian humanism naturally led him, wherever possible, to use classic myths as analogues (parallels or reflections) of Christian history.  
 1. Cronos or Saturn, one of the Titans, deposed his elder brother, married his sister Rhea, and ruled until Zeus, who had been reared in secret on Mt. Ida in Crete, overthrew his own father and came to rule on Mt. Olympus. The Olympic gods, headed by Zeus, were also worshipped in Delphi, Dodona, and throughout the "Doric (Grecian) land." Meanwhile Saturn (lines 519-21), after his downfall, fled across the Adriatic Sea ("Adria") to Italy ("th' Hesperian fields"), crossed "the Celtic utmost isles".  
 2. Depressed.  
 3. Their comfort is the chilly one of finding themselves not completely annihilated; and at first it is reflected in Satan's face.

Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised  
 Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears:  
 Then straight commands that at the warlike sound  
 Of trumpets loud and clarions<sup>4</sup> be upreared  
 His mighty standard. That proud honor claimed

Azazel<sup>5</sup> as his right, a cherub tall:  
 Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled  
 Th' imperial ensign; which, full high advanced,  
 Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,  
 With gems and golden luster rich emblazed,  
 Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while  
 Sonorous metal<sup>6</sup> blowing martial sounds:  
 At which the universal host up sent

A shout that tore Hell's concave,<sup>7</sup> and beyond  
 Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.<sup>8</sup>  
 All in a moment through the gloom were seen  
 Ten thousand banners rise into the air,

With orient<sup>9</sup> colors waving: with them rose  
 A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms  
 Appeared, and serried<sup>1</sup> shields in thick array  
 Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move  
 In perfect phalanx to the Dorian<sup>2</sup> mood  
 Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised  
 To height of noblest temper heroes old

Arming to battle, and instead of rage  
 Deliberate valor breathed, firm and unmoved  
 With dread of death to fight or foul retreat;  
 Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage<sup>3</sup>  
 With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase  
 Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain  
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,  
 Breathing united force with fixed thought,  
 Moved on in silence to soft pipes that charmed  
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil. And now  
 Advanced in view they stand, a horrid<sup>4</sup> front  
 Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise  
 Of warriors old with ordered spear and shield,  
 Awaiting what command their mighty chief  
 Had to impose. He through the armed files<sup>5</sup>  
 Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse<sup>6</sup>  
 The whole battalion views, their order due,

4. Small, shrill, treble trumpets.

5. Among the historians of angels and devils, a traditional diabolic leader.

6. Reverberant trumpets.

7. Vault.

8. Disorder and darkness, the first materials of the cosmos, still maintain a kingdom between Heaven and Hell.

9. Lustrous, like the colors of a pearl.

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1. Locked together.

2. Severe, simple. The shrill trumpet, which first roused the courage of the devils, now gives way to firm, martial tones, played on instruments of softer timbre, in the Spartan manner.

3. Assuage.

4. Bristling.

5. Across. Satan glances, like a reviewing officer, down the files and columns.

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Their visages and stature as of gods;  
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart  
 Distends with pride, and hardening in his strength  
 Glories: for never, since created man,<sup>6</sup>

Met such embodied force as named with these  
 Could merit more than that small infantry  
 Warred on by cranes;<sup>7</sup> though all the giant brood  
 Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were joined  
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side  
 Mixed with auxiliar<sup>8</sup> gods; and what resounds  
 In fable or romance of Uther's son,  
 Begirt with British and Armoric knights;  
 And all who since, baptized or infidel,

Jousted in Asramont or Montalban,  
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond;  
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore:

When Charlemagne with all his peerage fell  
 By Fontarabba.<sup>9</sup> Thus far these beyond  
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed<sup>1</sup>  
 Their dread commander. He above the rest  
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent

Stood like a tower. His form had yet not lost  
 All her<sup>2</sup> original brightness, nor appeared  
 Less than archangel ruined, and th' excess  
 Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen  
 Looks through the horizontal<sup>3</sup> misty air  
 Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon  
 In dim eclipse<sup>4</sup> disastrous twilight sheds

On half the nations, and with fear of change  
 Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone  
 Above them all th' archangel; but his face  
 Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care  
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows  
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate<sup>5</sup> pride  
 Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast  
 Signs of remorse and passion<sup>6</sup> to behold

The fellows of his crime, the followers rather

6. I.e., since the creation of man.

7. The pygmies had periodic fights with the cranes, which (according to Pliny) they won by riding to battle on pigs and goats. This would make them easy; but Milton wanted the pun on "infans." His idea is that, compared with the devils, all other armies that ever were would look puny.

8. Allied.

9. The Giants of Greek mythology were born at Phlegra (line 577); Milton imagines them joined with the Seven who fought against Thebes, and the whole Greek host that besieged Troy ("Ilium"), plus the various gods who helped on both sides.

He even adds the knights "British or Armoric" (from Brittany) who fought with King Arthur ("Uther's

son"), and includes a list of proper names taken from the cycles of romance and suggesting vast, remote armies. Fontarabba, the best known, was reputed to be the scene of Roland's last stand in the *Chanson de Roland*; Milton thus mingles the fall of Charlemagne with that of his best-known knight.

1. Obeyed.

2. *Forma*, in Latin, is feminine; hence "her."

3. The rays of the sun as it first rises are almost horizontal.

4. Time of ill omen. "Disastrous": threatening disaster.

5. Thoughtful, conscious.

6. Compassion.

(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned  
 Forever now to have their lot in pain;  
 Millions of spirits for his fault amerced<sup>7</sup>  
 Of Heaven, and from eternal splendors flung  
 For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,  
 Their glory withered; as when Heaven's fire  
 Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,  
 With singed top their stately growth, though bare,  
 Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared  
 To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend  
 From wing to wing, and half enclose him round  
 With all his peers: attention held them mute.  
 Thrice he essayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,  
 Tears such as angels weep burst forth; at last  
 Words interwove with sighs found out their way:

"O myriads of immortal spirits! O powers  
 Matchless, but with th' Almighty!—and that strife  
 Was not inglorious, though th' event<sup>8</sup> was dire,  
 As this place testifies, and this dire change,  
 Hatelful to utter. But what power of mind,  
 Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth  
 Of knowledge past or present, could have feared  
 How such united force of gods, how such  
 As stood like these, could ever know repulse?  
 For who can yet believe, though after loss,  
 That all these puissant<sup>9</sup> legions, whose exile  
 Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to reascend,  
 Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?  
 For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,  
 If counsels different,<sup>1</sup> or danger shunned  
 By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns  
 Monarch in Heaven, till then as one secure  
 Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,  
 Consent or custom, and his regal state  
 Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed,  
 Which tempted our attempt,<sup>2</sup> and wrought our fall.  
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,  
 So as not either to provoke or dread  
 New war provoked: our better part remains  
 To work in close design,<sup>3</sup> by fraud or guile,  
 What force effected not; that he no less  
 At length from us may find, who overcomes  
 By force hath overcome but half his foe.  
 Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife

7. Deprived.  
 8. Outcome, result.  
 9. Potent, powerful.  
 1. Contradictory or even selfish, but also, in an obsolete sense, delaying.

There went a fame<sup>4</sup> in Heaven that he ere long  
 Intended to create, and therein plant  
 A generation whom his choice regard  
 Should favor equal to the sons of Heaven.  
 Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps  
 Our first eruption—thither, or elsewhere;  
 For this infernal pit shall never hold  
 Celestial spirits in bondage, nor th' abyss  
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts  
 Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired,  
 For who can think submission? War, then, war  
 Open or understood,<sup>5</sup> must be resolved."

He spake; and, to confirm his words, out flew  
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs  
 Of mighty cherubim; the sudden blaze  
 Far round illumined Hell. Highly they raged  
 Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms,  
 Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,<sup>6</sup>  
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.  
 There stood a hill not far, whose grisly<sup>7</sup> top  
 Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire  
 Shone with a glossy scurf,<sup>8</sup> undoubted sign  
 That in his womb was hid metallic ore,  
 The work of sulphur.<sup>9</sup> Thither, winged with speed,  
 A numerous brigade hastened: as when bands  
 Of pioneers<sup>1</sup> with spade and pickax armed  
 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field  
 Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on,  
 Mammon, the least erected<sup>2</sup> spirit that fell  
 From Heaven; for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts  
 Were always downward bent, admiring more  
 The riches of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,  
 Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed  
 In vision beatific. By him first

Men also, and by his suggestion taught,  
 Ransacked the center, and with impious hands  
 Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth  
 For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew  
 Opened into the hill a spacious wound  
 And digged out ribs<sup>3</sup> of gold. Let none admire  
 That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best  
 Deserve the precious bane. And here let those  
 Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell

substances of all metals.  
 1. Sappers, engineers.  
 2. Elevated. Mammon is not a god but an abstract word meaning "wealth"; cf. Belial.  
 3. Bars, of course, but also suggesting golden-haired Eve, who was a "precious bane" (sweet poison) dug out of Adam's side. "Admire": wonder.

4-Rumor: "Rife", common.  
 5-Agred-upon, tacit, hence secret.  
 6-Like. Roman legions, the fallen angels applaud by beating swords on shields.  
 7-Horrible.  
 8-Crust.  
 9-Sulphur and mercury were considered the basic

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2. Satan is an inveterate punster and player on words.  
 3. I.e., our best choice is to achieve by secret schemes.  
 7. Deprived.  
 8. Outcome, result.  
 9. Potent, powerful.  
 1. Contradictory or even selfish, but also, in an obsolete sense, delaying.

Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,  
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame  
 And strength and art are easily outdone  
 By spirits reprobate,<sup>4</sup> and in an hour  
 What in an age they with incessant toil  
 And hands innumerable scarce perform.  
 Night on the plain, in many cells prepared,  
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire  
 Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude  
 With wondrous art founded the massy ore.  
 Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion-dross.  
 A third as soon had formed within the ground  
 A various mold, and from the boiling cells  
 By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook.<sup>5</sup>  
 As in an organ, from one blast of wind  
 To many a row of pipes the soundboard breathes.  
 Anon out of the earth a fabric huge  
 Rose like an exhalation, with the sound  
 Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,  
 Built like a temple, where pillars<sup>6</sup> round  
 Were set, and Doric pillars<sup>7</sup> overlaid  
 With golden architrave, nor did there want  
 Cornice or frieze, with bossy<sup>8</sup> sculptures graven;  
 The roof was fretted<sup>9</sup> gold. Not Babylon  
 Nor great Alcairo such magnificence  
 Equaled in all their glories, or seat  
 Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat  
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove  
 In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile  
 Stood fixed<sup>2</sup> her stately height; and straight the doors  
 Opening their brazen folds discover, wide  
 Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth  
 And level pavement: from the archèd roof,  
 Pendent by subtle magic, many a row  
 Of stary lamps and blazing cressets<sup>3</sup> fed  
 With naphtha and asphaltus yielded light  
 As from a sky. The hasty multitude  
 Admiring entered; and the work some praise,  
 And some the architect. His hand was known  
 In Heaven by many a towered structure high,  
 Where scepter'd angels held their residence,  
 And sat as princes, whom the supreme King

4. The tower of Babel and the Pyramids of Egypt ("works of Memphian kings") are easily outdone by the devils ("spirits reprobate").

5. After melting the gold with fire from the lake and pouring it into molds, the devils cause their building to rise by a sort of spiritual-musical magic.

6. Columns set in a wall.

7. Doric pillars are severe and plain.

8. Embossed.

9. Patterned.

1. At Babylon in Assyria there were temples "Belus" or Baal; at Alcairo (modern Cairo, under Memphis) in Egypt, they were to Osiris, and whose names was Serapis (here, but not ordinarily, accented on the first syllable).

2. Complete. "Straight": straightway.

3. Basketlike lamps, hung from the ceiling.

Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,  
 Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright:  
 Nor was his name unheard or unadored  
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land  
 Men called him Mulciber,<sup>4</sup> and how he fell  
 From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove  
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn  
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,  
 A summer's day, and with the setting sun  
 Dropped from the zenith like a falling star,  
 On Lemnos th' Aegean isle. Thus they relate,  
 Erring,<sup>5</sup> for he with this rebellious rout  
 Fell long before; nor aught availed him now  
 To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he scape  
 By all his engines, but was headlong sent  
 With his industrious crew to build in Hell.  
 Meanwhile the winged heralds, by command  
 Of sovereign power, with awful ceremony  
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim  
 A solemn council forthwith to be held  
 At Pandemonium,<sup>6</sup> the high capital  
 Of Satan and his peers.<sup>7</sup> Their summons called  
 From every band and squared regiment  
 By place or choice the worthiest; they anon  
 With hundreds and with thousands trooping came  
 Attended.<sup>8</sup> All access was thronged, the gates  
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall  
 Though like a covered field, where champions bold  
 Mont ride in armed, and at the soldier's<sup>9</sup> chair  
 Defied the best of paynim chivalry  
 To mortal combat, or career with lance)  
 Thick swarmed; both on the ground and in the air,  
 Flashed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees  
 In springtime, when the sun with Taurus' rides,  
 Pour forth their populous youth about the hive  
 To clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers  
 Fly to and fro; or on the smoothed plank,  
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,  
 New rubbed with balm, expatiate, and confer<sup>2</sup>  
 Their state-affairs: so thick the airy crowd  
 Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given,

"All-Gods."

7. Nobility.

8. I. e., each with his bodyguards.

9. Sultani's. "Paynim": pagan.

1. The sun is in the Zodiacal sign of Taurus from about April 19 to May 20.

2. Spread out and discuss, bring together. The simile of bees prepares for the sudden contraction of the devils' size; they can shrink or dilate at will.

Hephaestus, or Vulcan, was sometimes known "Ausonian land" (Italy) by the secondary epithet "Mulciber." The story of Jove's tossing him out of Heaven is told, to the accompaniment of much comic laughter, in *Iliad* 1.

Millon tells the story, and gives it six lines of English poetry (740-46), but in the end connects it as a corrupt version of the biblical truth: "Pandemonium" (a Miltonic coinage) means literally "All-Demons"; an inversion of Pantheon,



In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,  
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room  
 Throng numberless—like that pygmean race  
 Beyond the Indian mount;<sup>3</sup> or fairy elves,  
 Whose midnight revels by a forest side  
 Or fountain some belated peasant sees,  
 Or dreams he sees, while overhead the Moon  
 Sits arbitress,<sup>4</sup> and nearer to the Earth  
 Wheels her pale course; they, on their mirth and dance  
 Intent, with jocund<sup>5</sup> music charm his ear;  
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.  
 Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms  
 Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,  
 Though without number still, amidst the hall  
 Of that infernal court. But far within,  
 And in their own dimensions like themselves,  
 The great seraphic lords and cherubim  
 In close recess and secret conclave sat,  
 A thousand demigods on golden seats,  
 Frequent and full.<sup>6</sup> After short silence then,  
 And summons read, the great consult began.

## Book 2

### The Argument

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven: some advise it, others dissuade. A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan—to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal or not much inferior to themselves, about this time to be created. Their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search; Satan, their chief, undertakes alone the voyage; is honored and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain<sup>1</sup> the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell-gates; finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them; by whom at length they are opened, and discover<sup>2</sup> to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

High on a throne of royal state, which far  
 Outshone the wealth of Ormus<sup>3</sup> and of Ind,

3. The pygmies were supposed to live beyond the Himalayas, "the Indian mount."

4. Witness.

5. Merry.

6. Crowded ("frequent") and in full complement

("full"); all present and accounted for.

1. Pass.

2. Discover.

3. An island in the Persian Gulf, modern Hormuz, famous for pearls. "Ind": India.

Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand  
 Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,  
 Satan exalted sat, by merit raised  
 To that bad eminence; and from despair  
 Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires  
 Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue  
 Vain war with Heaven; and by success<sup>4</sup> untaught,  
 His proud imaginations thus displayed:  
 "Powers and dominions, deities of Heaven!  
 For since no deep within her gulf can hold  
 Immortal vigor, though oppressed and fallen,  
 I give not Heaven for lost: from this descent  
 Celestial virtues rising will appear  
 More glorious and more dread than from no fall,  
 And trust themselves to fear no second fate.  
 Me though just right and the fixed laws of Heaven  
 Did first create your leader, next, free choice,  
 With what besides, in council or in fight,  
 Hath been achieved of merit, yet this loss  
 Thus far at least recovered, hath much more  
 Established in a safe unenvied throne  
 Yielded with full consent.<sup>5</sup> The happier state  
 In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw  
 Envy from each inferior; but who here  
 Will envy whom the highest place exposes  
 Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim,  
 Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share  
 Of endless pain? Where there is then no good  
 For which to strive, no strife can grow up there  
 From faction; for none sure will claim in Hell  
 Precedence, none, whose portion is so small  
 Of present pain, that with ambitious mind  
 Will covet more. With this advantage then  
 To union and firm faith and firm accord,  
 More than can be in Heaven, we now return  
 To claim our just inheritance of old,  
 Surer to prosper than prosperity  
 Could have assured us,<sup>6</sup> and by what best way,  
 Whether of open war or covert guile,  
 We now debate; who can advise, may speak."  
 He ceased, and next him Moloch, sceptered king,  
 Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit  
 That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair.  
 His trust was with th' Eternal to be deemed

4. Outcome, result; experience of either sort, good or bad.

5. He lays claim to the throne by just-right, fixed laws, free choice—and the fact that no-one else will want such a dangerous job.

6. Note the play on "sure—prosper—prosperity—assured." An Elizabethan critic famous for his picturesque terminology, George Puttenham, calls this figure "epanalepsis, or the echo sound, otherwise the slow return." It is a favorite device of Milton's.

City of Destruction (the present world seen at the point of apocalypse) to the Celestial City. The dreamer, reminiscent of Will Langland in *Piers Plowman*, can only reach in vision what Christian, within the vision, can attain in act, and the poignant final words reflect their difference: "which, when I had seen, I wished myself among them." The book draws upon medieval allegory and upon the chivalric romances that gave the young Bunyan guilty delight; one can see, after reading of Apollyon, why Dr. Johnson remarked, "There is reason to think that he had read Spenser."<sup>1</sup> But the verve of the book is no less strong in the homely adaptation of spiritual experience to realistic scenes; and the satirical accuracy with which it renders the jury of Vanity Fair makes one recognize a kinship (for all the differences of viewpoint) with Dryden's adaptation of the story of David and Absalom or even with Swift's brisk allegory in *A Tale of a Tub*. In an age when so many wrote critically of Puritan zeal and religious enthusiasm, it is good to have so eloquent a spokesman for them and so fine a specimen, as well, of popular literature.

Bunyan's text provides marginal references to Scripture at many points; the most important of these are given in the notes.

### From The Pilgrim's Progress

From This World to That Which Is To Come.

As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den,<sup>1</sup> and I laid me down in that place to sleep: and as I slept I dreamed a dream. I dreamed, and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great burden upon his back.<sup>2</sup> I looked and saw him open the book and read therein; and, as he read, he wept, and trembled; and not being able longer to contain, he brake out with a lamentable cry, saying, What shall I do?

In this plight, therefore, he went home and restrained himself as long as he could, that his wife and children should not perceive his distress; but he could not be silent long, because that his trouble increased. Wherefore at length he brake his mind to his wife and children; and thus he began to talk to them. O my dear wife, said he, and you the children of my bowels, I, your dear friend, am in myself undone by reason of a burden that lieth hard upon me; moreover, I am for certain informed that this our city will be burned with fire from heaven, in which fearful overthrow both myself, with thee, my wife, and you my sweet babes, shall miserably come to ruin, except (the which yet I see not) some way of escape can be found whereby we may be delivered. At this his relations were sore amazed; not for that they believed that what he had said to them was true, but because they thought that some frenzy distemper had got into his head; therefore, it drawing towards night, and they

1. Often taken as a reference to the Bedford prison.  
2. See Isaiah 64:6: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags"; Psalms 38:4: "For mine iniquities are gone over my head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me"; Habakkuk 2:2: "And the Lord answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, so that he may run that readeth it."

hoping that sleep might settle his brains, with all haste they got him to bed. But the night was as troublesome to him as the day; wherefore, instead of sleeping, he spent it in sighs and tears. So, when the morning was come, they would know how he did. He told them, Worse and worse. He also set to talking to them again: but they began to be hardened. They also thought to drive away his distemper by harsh and surly carriages to him: sometimes they would deride, sometimes they would chide, and sometimes they would quite neglect him. Wherefore he began to retire himself to his chamber, to pray for and pity them, and also to condole his own misery; he would also walk solitarily in the fields, sometimes reading and sometimes praying: and thus for some days he spent his time.

Now, I saw upon a time, when he was walking in the fields, that he was (as he was wont) reading in his book<sup>3</sup> and greatly distressed in his mind; and as he read, he burst out, as he had done before, crying, What shall I do to be saved?

I saw also that he looked this way and that way, as if he would run; yet he stood still, because, as I perceived, he could not tell which way to go. I looked then, and saw a man named Evangelist<sup>4</sup> coming to him, who asked, Wherefore dost thou cry?

He answered, Sir, I perceive by the book in my hand that I am condemned to die, and after that to come to judgment, and I find that I am not willing to do the first, nor able to do the second.

Then said Evangelist, Why not willing to die, since this life is attended with so many evils? The man answered, Because I fear that this burden that is upon my back will sink me lower than the grave, and I shall fall into Tophet.<sup>5</sup> And, sir, if I be not fit to go to prison, I am not fit to go to judgment, and from thence to execution; and the thoughts of these things make me cry.

Then said Evangelist, If this be thy condition, why standest thou still? He answered, Because I know not whither to go. Then he gave him a parchment roll, and there was written within, Fly from the wrath to come.

The man therefore read it and, looking upon Evangelist very carefully, said, Whither must I fly? Then said Evangelist, pointing with his finger over a very wide field, Do you see yonder wicket-gate?<sup>6</sup> The man said, No. Then said the other, Do you see yonder shining light? He said, I think I do. Then said Evangelist, Keep that light in your eye, and go up directly thereto: so shalt thou see the gate; at which when thou knockest, it shall be told thee what thou shalt do.

So I saw in my dream that the man began to run. Now, he had not run

3. The Bible.

4. The name was a term for an itinerant preacher, for any of the authors of the Four Gospels, and, in its literal sense, for the bringer of good news or glad tidings.

5. The name of a refuse dump which became a symbol of damnation; cf. Isaiah 30:33:

"For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the King it is prepared: he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it."

6. A small gate for foot-passengers, as opposed to a large gate for horsemen or coaches; cf. Matthew 7:13-14: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."



far from his own door, but his wife and children perceiving it, began to cry after him to return; but the man put his fingers in his ears, and ran on, crying, Life! life! eternal life! So he looked not behind him, but fled towards the middle of the plain. . . .

[Apollyon]

But now in this Valley of Humiliation poor Christian was hard put to it; for he had gone but a little way before he espied a foul fiend coming over the field to meet him; his name is Apollyon.<sup>7</sup> Then did Christian begin to be afraid, and to cast in his mind whether to go back or to stand his ground. But he considered again that he had no armour for his back, and therefore thought that to turn the back to him might give him the greater advantage with ease to pierce him with his darts. Therefore he resolved to venture and stand his ground. For, thought he, had I no more in mine eye than the saving of my life, 'twould be the best way to stand.

So he went on, and Apollyon met him. Now the monster was hideous to behold; he was clothed with scales like a fish (and they are his pride), he had wings like a dragon, feet like a bear, and out of his belly came fire and smoke, and his mouth was as the mouth of a lion. When he was come up to Christian, he beheld him with a disdainful countenance and thus began to question with him.

APOL. Whence come you? and whither are you bound?

CHR. I am come from the City of Destruction, which is the place of all evil, and am going to the City of Zion.<sup>8</sup>

APOL. By this I perceive thou art one of my subjects, for all that country is mine, and I am the prince and god of it. How is it, then, that thou hast run away from thy king? Were it not that I hope thou mayest do me more service, I would strike thee now at one blow to the ground.

CHR. I was born, indeed, in your dominions, but your service was hard, and your wages such as a man could not live on, for the wages of sin is death,<sup>9</sup> therefore, when I was come to years, I did as other considerate persons do, look out if perhaps I might mend myself.

APOL. There is no prince that will thus lightly lose his subjects, neither will I as yet lose thee; but since thou complainest of thy service and wages, be content to go back. What our country will afford, I do here promise to give thee.

CHR. But I have let myself to another, even to the King of Princes; and how can I, with fairness, go back with thee?

APOL. Thou hast done in this, according to the proverb, changed a bad for a worse; but it is ordinary for those that have professed themselves his servants, after a while to give him the slip and return again to me. Do thou so too, and all shall be well.

7. Literally, the Destroyer or the "angel of the bottomless pit" (Revelation 9:11). His description is based on the account of Leviathan in Job 41 and of the "great beast" of Revelation 13, both taken as types of Satan. See also the dragon Sin in Spenser, *Faerie Queene* I.xi.

8. The New Jerusalem, i.e. the celestial city of Revelation 21:2.

9. Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

CHR. I have given him my faith, and sworn my allegiance to him; how, then, can I go back from this and not be hanged as a traitor?

APOL. Thou didst the same to me, and yet I am willing to pass by all, if now thou wilt yet turn again and go back.

CHR. What I promised thee was in my nonage; and, besides, I count the Prince under whose banner now I stand is able to absolve me; yea, and to pardon also what I did as to my compliance with thee; and besides (O thou destroying Apollyon) to speak truth, I like his service, his wages, his servants, his government, his company, and country, better than thine; and, therefore, leave off to persuade me further; I am his servant, and I will follow him.

APOL. Consider, again, when thou art in cool blood, what thou art like to meet with in the way that thou goest. Thou knowest that, for the most part, his servants come to an ill end, because they are transgressors against me and my ways. How many of them have been put to shameful deaths! And, besides, thou countest his service better than mine, whereas he never came yet from the place where he is to deliver any that served him out of their hands; but as for me, how many times, as all the world very well knows, have I delivered, either by power or fraud, those that have faithfully served me, from him and his, though taken by them; and so I will deliver thee.

CHR. His forbearing at present to deliver them is on purpose to try their love, whether they will cleave to him to the end; and as for the ill end thou sayest they come to, that is most glorious in their account; for, for present deliverance, they do not much expect it, for they stay for their glory, and then they shall have it, when their Prince comes in his and the glory of the angels.

APOL. Thou hast already been unfaithful in thy service to him; and how dost thou think to receive wages of him?

CHR. Wherein, O Apollyon, have I been unfaithful to him?

APOL. Thou didst faint at first setting out, when thou wast almost choked in the Gulf of Despond;<sup>10</sup> thou didst attempt wrong ways to be rid of thy burden, whereas thou shouldst have stayed till thy Prince had taken it off; thou didst sinfully sleep and lose thy choice thing; thou wast, also, almost persuaded to go back at the sight of the lions; and when thou talkest of thy journey and of what thou hast heard and seen, thou art inwardly desirous of vain-glory in all that thou sayest or doest.

CHR. All this is true, and much more which thou hast left out; but the Prince whom I serve and honour is merciful and ready to forgive; but, besides, these infirmities possessed me in thy country, for there I sucked them in; and I have groaned under them, been sorry for them, and have obtained pardon of my Prince.

APOL. Then Apollyon broke out into a grievous rage, saying, I am an enemy to this Prince; I hate his person, his laws, and people; I am come out on purpose to withstand thee.

CHR. Apollyon, beware what you do; for I am in the king's highway, the way of holiness; therefore take heed to yourself.

APOL. Then Apollyon straddled quite over the whole breadth of the way, and said, I am void of fear in this matter: prepare thyself to die; for I swear

10. Recalling Christian's earlier temptation to despair and the temporary loss of the parchment roll, "his pass into the Celestial City."

by my infernal den that thou shalt go no further; here will I spill thy soul.  
And with that he threw a flaming dart at his breast; but Christian had a shield in his hand, with which he caught it, and so prevented the danger of that.

Then did Christian draw, for he saw it was time to bestir him: and Apollyon as fast made at him, throwing darts as thick as hail; by the which, notwithstanding all that Christian could do to avoid it, Apollyon wounded him in his head, his hand, and foot. This made Christian give a little back; Apollyon therefore followed his work amain, and Christian again took courage and resisted as manfully as he could. This sore combat lasted for above half a day, even till Christian was almost quite spent; for you must know that Christian, by reason of his wounds, must needs grow weaker and weaker.

Then Apollyon, spying his opportunity, began to gather up close to Christian, and wrestling with him, gave him a dreadful fall; and with that Christian's sword flew out of his hand. Then said Apollyon, I am sure of thee now. And with that he had almost pressed him to death, so that Christian began to despair of life. But as God would have it, while Apollyon was fetching of his last blow, thereby to make a full end of this good man, Christian nimbly stretched out his hand for his sword, and caught it, saying, Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall I shall arise; and with that gave him a deadly thrust, which made him give back, as one that had received his mortal wound. Christian perceiving that, made at him again, saying, Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. And with that Apollyon spread forth his dragon's wings, and sped him away, that Christian for a season saw him no more. . . .

[Vanity Fair]

Then I saw in my dream, that when they<sup>11</sup> were got out of the wilderness, they presently saw a town before them, and the name of that town is Vanity; and at the town there is a fair kept, called Vanity Fair.<sup>12</sup> It is kept all the year long; it beareth the name of Vanity Fair, because the town where it is kept is lighter than vanity; and also because all that is there sold or that cometh thither is vanity. As is the saying of the wise, all that cometh is vanity.

This fair is no new-erected business, but a thing of ancient standing; I will show you the original of it.

Almost five thousand years ago, there were pilgrims walking to the Celestial City, as these two honest persons are: and Beelzebub, Apollyon, and Legion,<sup>13</sup> with their companions, perceiving by the path that the pilgrims made, that their way to the city lay through this town of Vanity, they contrived here to set up a fair; a fair wherein should be sold all sorts of vanity, and that it should last all the year long; therefore at this fair are all such merchandise sold, as houses, lands, trades, places, honours, preferments,<sup>14</sup> titles, countries,

11. Christian has been joined by Faithful.

12. Probably based upon Bunyan's experience of the great annual fair at Stourbridge, near Cambridge; "vanity" in the sense of something empty or worthless, like the cheap or false wares often sold at fairs.

13. Named for the "unclean spirit" or devil, who replies, when asked his name, "My name is Legion; for we are many" (Mark 5:9).

14. Promotions.

kingdoms, lusts, pleasures, and delights of all sorts, as whores, bawds, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold, pearls, precious stones, and what not.

And, moreover, at this fair there is at all times to be seen juggling, cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, knaves, and rogues, and that of every kind. Here are to be seen, too, and that for nothing, thefts, murders, adulteries, false swearers, and that of a blood-red colour.

And as in other fairs of less moment, there are the several rows and streets, under their proper names, where such wares are vended; so here likewise you have the proper places, rows, streets (viz. countries and kingdoms), where the wares of this fair are soonest to be found. Here is the Britain Row, the French Row, the Italian Row, the Spanish Row, the German Row, where several sorts of vanities are to be sold. But, as in other fairs, some one commodity is as the chief of all the fair, so the ware of Rome and her merchandise is greatly promoted in this fair; only our English nation, with some others, have taken a dislike thereto.

Now, as I said, the way to the Celestial City lies just through this town where this lusty fair is kept; and he that will go to the City, and yet not go through this town, must needs go out of the world. The Prince of Princes himself, when here, went through this town to his own country, and that upon a fair day too; yea, and as I think, it was Beelzebub, the chief lord of this fair, that invited him to buy of his vanities; yea, would have made him lord of the fair, would he but have done him reverence as he went through the town. Yea, because he was such a person of honour, Beelzebub had him from street to street, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a little time, that he might, if possible, allure the Blessed One to cheapen<sup>15</sup> and buy some of his vanities; but he had no mind to the merchandise, and therefore left the town without laying out so much as one farthing upon these vanities. This fair, therefore, is an ancient thing, of long standing, and a very great fair.

Now these pilgrims, as I said, must needs go through this fair. Well, so they did: but, behold, even as they entered into the fair, all the people in the fair were moved, and the town itself as it were in a hubbub about them; and that for several reasons: for—

First, the pilgrims were clothed with such kind of raiment as was diverse from the raiment of any that traded in that fair. The people therefore of the fair, made a great gazing upon them: some said they were fools, some they were bedlams,<sup>16</sup> and some, they are outlandish men.<sup>17</sup>

Secondly, and as they wondered at their apparel, so they did likewise at their speech; for few could understand what they said. They naturally spoke the language of Canaan, but they that kept the fair were the men of this world;

15. To bid or bargain for; referring to the temptation of Christ: "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the Kingdoms of the world. . . . And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me" (Matthew 4:8-9).

16. Madmen.

17. Foreigners; emphasizing, in dress as below in speech, the difference of style between the worldly and the devout, the speech of the latter—like Bunyan's prose—often steeped in the idiom of the Bible. See Isaiah 19:18: "In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the Lord of hosts."

so that, from one end of the fair to the other, they seemed barbarians each to the other.

Thirdly, but that which did not a little amuse the merchandisers, was that these pilgrims set very light by all their wares; they care not so much as to look upon them; and if they called upon them to buy, they would put their fingers in their ears, and cry, Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity, and look upwards, signifying that their trade and traffic was in heaven.

One chanced mockingly, beholding the carriages of the men, to say unto them, What will ye buy? But they, looking gravely upon him, answered, We buy the truth. At that there was an occasion taken to despise the men the more; some mocking, some taunting, some speaking reproachfully, and some calling upon others to smite them. At last things came to a hubbub and great stir in the fair, insomuch that all order was confounded. Now was word presently brought to the great one of the fair, who quickly came down, and deputed some of his most trusty friends to take these men into examination, about whom the fair was almost overturned. . . .

[A trial is held, in which Faithful is accused by three witnesses, Envy, Superstition, and Pickthank.]

Then went the jury out, whose names were Mr. Blind-man, Mr. No-good, Mr. Malice, Mr. Love-just, Mr. Live-loose, Mr. Heady, Mr. High-mind, Mr. Enmity, Mr. Liar, Mr. Cruelty, Mr. Hate-light, and Mr. Implacable; who every one gave in his private verdict against him among themselves, and afterwards unanimously concluded to bring him in guilty before the Judge. And first, among themselves, Mr. Blind-man, the foreman, said, I see clearly that this man is a heretic. Then said Mr. No-good, Away with such a fellow from the earth. Ay, said Mr. Malice, for I hate the very looks of him. Then said Mr. Love-just, I could never endure him. Nor I, said Mr. Live-loose, for he would always be condemning my way. Hang him, hang him, said Mr. Heady. A sorry scrub,<sup>18</sup> said Mr. High-mind. My heart riseth against him, said Mr. Enmity. He is a rogue, said Mr. Liar. Hanging is too good for him, said Mr. Cruelty. Let's despatch him out of the way, said Mr. Hate-light. Then said Mr. Implacable, might I have all the world given me, I could not be reconciled to him; therefore, let us forthwith bring him in guilty of death. And so they did; therefore he was presently condemned to be had from the place where he was, to the place from whence he came, and there to be put to the most cruel death that could be invented.

They therefore brought him out to do with him according to their law; and, first, they scourged him, then they buffeted him, then they lanced his flesh with knives; after that, they stoned him with stones, then pricked him with their swords; and, last of all, they burned him to ashes at the stake. Thus came Faithful to his end.

Now I saw that there stood behind the multitude a chariot and a couple of horses, waiting for Faithful, who (so soon as his adversaries had despatched him) was taken up into it, and straightway was carried up through the clouds, with sound of trumpet, the nearest way to the celestial gate.

18. Insignificant fellow.

But as for Christian, he had some respite, and was remanded back to prison. So he there remained for a space; but He that overrules all things, having the power of their rage in his own hand, so wrought it about, that Christian for that time escaped them, and went his way. . . .

[Faithful is replaced by the convert, Hopeful.]

#### [The Celestial City]

. . . I saw in my dream that these two men went in at the gate: and lo, as they entered, they were transfigured, and they had raiment put on that shone like gold. There were also that met them with harps and crowns and gave them to them—the harps to praise withal, and the crowns in token of honour. Then I heard in my dream that all the bells in the city rang again for joy, and that it was said unto them, Enter ye into the joy of your Lord. I also heard the men themselves, that they sang with a loud voice, saying, Blessing and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.

Now, just as the gates were opened to let in the men, I looked in after them, and, behold, the City shone like the sun; the streets also were paved with gold, and in them walked many men with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands, and golden harps to sing praises withal.

There were also of them that had wings, and they answered one another without intermission, saying, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord. And after that they shut up the gates; which, when I had seen, I wished myself among them. . . .

1678

### GEORGE SAVILE, MARQUESS OF HALIFAX

1633-1695

Although his wit was great and indiscreet, leading many to doubt his faith and his principles, Halifax led a life of devoted public service, holding major offices in three reigns. His parliamentary leadership reached its high point in the debate of 1680 over the bill designed to exclude James II from the throne. The bill had passed the House of Commons readily and was championed in the House of Lords by Shaftesbury (the Achitophel of Dryden's satire, as Halifax is the Jotham), with whom Halifax had often sided. On this occasion Halifax met Shaftesbury's powerful oratory with greater eloquence of his own, rising to speak sixteen times over seven hours, and brought the bill to defeat.

He wrote *Advice to a Daughter* (1688), addressed to the mother-to-be of the famous Lord Chesterfield; a brilliant *Character of King Charles II*; as well as political pamphlets and maxims. In *The Character of a Trimmer* he defends himself against the charge of compromise and lukewarmness, redefining a Trimmer as one who, in a boat overbalanced by shifting of sides, conceives "it would do as well if the boat went even, without endangering the passengers. . . ." Elsewhere he remarks that the "best party is but a kind of conspiracy against the rest of the nation," and he expects abuse for his detachment: "Nothing hath an uglier look to us than reason, when it is not of our side." He found Montaigne's *Essays* "the book in the world I am the best entertained