

EIGHTH EDITION

VOLUME I



THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY

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The Norton Anthology
of English Literature

EIGHTH EDITION

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The Early Seventeenth Century 1603-1660

- 1603: Death of Elizabeth I; accession of James I, first Stuart king of England
- 1605: The Gunpowder Plot, a failed effort by Catholic extremists to blow up Parliament and the king
- 1607: Establishment of first permanent English colony in the New World at Jamestown, Virginia
- 1625: Death of James I; accession of Charles I
- 1642: Outbreak of civil war; theaters closed
- 1649: Execution of Charles I; beginning of Commonwealth and Protectorate, known inclusively as the Interregnum (1649—60)
- 1660: End of the Protectorate; restoration of Charles II

Queen Elizabeth died on March 24, 1603, after ruling England for more than four decades. The Virgin Queen had not, of course, produced a child to inherit her throne, but her kinsman, the thirty-six-year old James Stuart, James VI of Scotland, succeeded her as James I without the attempted coups that many had feared. Many welcomed the accession of a man in the prime of life, supposing that he would prove more decisive than his notoriously vacillating predecessor. Worries over the succession, which had plagued the reigns of the Tudor monarchs since Henry VIII, could finally subside: James already had several children with his queen, Anne of Denmark. Writers and scholars jubilantly noted that their new ruler had literary inclinations. He was the author of treatises on government and witchcraft, and some youthful efforts at poetry.

Nonetheless, there were grounds for disquiet. James had come to maturity in Scotland, in the seventeenth century a foreign land with a different church, different customs, and different institutions of government. Two of his books, *The True Law of Free Monarchies* (1598) and *Basilikon Doron* (1599), expounded authoritarian theories of kingship: James's views seemed incompatible with the English tradition of "mixed" government, in which power was shared by the monarch, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. As Thomas Howard wrote in 1611, while Elizabeth "did talk of her subjects' love and good affection," James "talketh of his subjects' fear and subjection." James liked to imagine himself as a modern version of the wise, peace-loving Roman Augustus Caesar, who autocratically governed a vast empire. The Romans had deified their emperors, and while the Christian James could not expect the same, he insisted on his closeness to divinity. Kings, he believed, derived their powers from God rather than from the people. As God's specially chosen delegate, surely he deserved his subjects' reverent, unconditional obedience.

Yet unlike the charismatic Elizabeth, James was personally unprepossessing. One contemporary, Anthony Weldon, provides a barbed description: "His tongue too large for his mouth, which ever made him speak full in the mouth, and drink very uncomely as if eating his drink . . . he never washed his hands . . . his walk was ever circular, his fingers ever in that walk fiddling about his codpiece." Unsurprisingly, James did not always inspire in his subjects the deferential awe to which he thought himself entitled.

The relationship between the monarch and his people and the relationship between England and Scotland would be sources of friction throughout James's reign. James had hoped to unify his domains as a single nation, "the empire of Britain." But the two realms' legal and ecclesiastical systems proved difficult to reconcile, and the English Parliament, traditionally a sporadically convened advisory body to the monarch, offered robustly xenophobic opposition. The failure of unification was only one of several clashes with the English Parliament, especially with the House of Commons, which had authority over taxation. After James died in 1625 and his son, Charles I, succeeded him, tensions persisted and intensified. Charles, indeed, attempted to rule without summoning Parliament at all between 1629 and 1638. By 1642 England was up in arms, in a civil war between the king's forces and armies loyal to the House of Commons. The conflict ended with Charles's defeat and beheading in 1649.

Although in the early 1650s the monarchy as an institution seemed as dead as the man who had last worn the crown, an adequate replacement proved difficult to devise. Executive power devolved upon a "Lord Protector," Oliver Cromwell, former general of the parliamentary forces, who wielded power nearly as autocratically as Charles had done. Yet without an institutionally sanctioned method of transferring power upon Cromwell's death in 1658, the attempt to fashion a commonwealth without a hereditary monarch eventually failed. In 1660 Parliament invited the eldest son of the old king home from exile. He succeeded to the throne as King Charles II.

As James's accession marks the beginning of "the early seventeenth century," his grandson's marks the end. Literary periods often fail to correlate neatly with the reigns of monarchs, and the period 1603–60 can seem especially arbitrary. Many of the most important cultural trends in seventeenth-century Europe neither began nor ended in these years but were in the process of unfolding slowly, over several centuries. The Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century was still ongoing in the seventeenth, and still producing turmoil. The printing press, invented in the fifteenth century, made books ever more widely available, contributing to an expansion of literacy and to a changed conception of authorship. Although the English economy remained primarily agrarian, its manufacturing and trade sectors were expanding rapidly. England was beginning to establish itself as a colonial power and as a leading maritime nation. From 1550 on, London grew explosively as a center of population, trade, and literary endeavor. All these important developments got under way before James came to the throne, and many of them would continue after the 1714 death of James's great-granddaughter Queen Anne, the last of the Stuarts to reign in England.

From a literary point of view, 1603 can seem a particularly capricious dividing line because at the accession of James I so many writers happened to be in midcareer. The professional lives of William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, John Donne, Francis Bacon, Walter Raleigh, and many less important writers—

Thomas Dekker, George Chapman, Samuel Daniel, Michael Drayton, and Thomas Heywood, for instance—straddle the reigns of Elizabeth and James. The Restoration of Charles II, with which this section ends, is likewise a more significant political than literary milestone: John Milton completed *Paradise Lost* and wrote two other major poems in the 1660s. Nonetheless, recognizing the years 1603—60 as a period sharpens our awareness of some important political, intellectual, cultural, and stylistic currents that bear directly upon literary production. It helps focus attention too upon the seismic shift in national consciousness that, in 1649, could permit the formal trial, conviction, and execution of an anointed king at the hands of his former subjects.

STATE AND CHURCH, 1603-40

In James's reign, the most pressing difficulties were apparently financial, but money troubles were merely symptoms of deeper quandaries about the proper relationship between the king and the people. Compared to James's native Scotland, England seemed a prosperous nation, but James was less wealthy than he believed. Except in times of war, the Crown was supposed to fund the government not through regular taxation but through its own extensive land revenues and by exchanging Crown prerogatives, such as the collection of taxes on luxury imports, in return for money or services. Yet the Crown's independent income had declined throughout the sixteenth century as inflation eroded the value of land rents. Meanwhile, innovations in military technology and shipbuilding dramatically increased the expense of port security and other defenses, a traditional Crown responsibility. Elizabeth had responded to straitened finances with parsimony, transferring much of the expense of her court, for instance, onto wealthy subjects, whom she visited for extended periods on her annual "progresses." She kept a tight lid on honorific titles too, creating new knights or peers very rarely, even though the years of her reign saw considerable upward social mobility. In consequence, by 1603 there was considerable pent-up pressure both for "honors" and for more tangible rewards for government officials. As soon as James came to power, he was immediately besieged with applicants.

James responded with what seemed to him appropriate royal munificence, knighting and ennobling many of his courtiers and endowing them with opulent gifts. His expenses were unavoidably higher than Elizabeth's, because he had to maintain not only his own household, but also separate establishments for his queen and for the heir apparent, Prince Henry. Yet he quickly became notorious for his financial heedlessness. Compared to Elizabeth's, his court was disorderly and wasteful, marked by hard drinking, gluttonous feasting, and a craze for hunting. "It is not possible for a king of England . . . to be rich or safe, but by frugality," warned James's lord treasurer, Robert Cecil, but James seemed unable to restrain himself. Soon he was deep in debt and unable to convince Parliament to bankroll him by raising taxes.

The king's financial difficulties set his authoritarian assertions about the monarch's supremacy at odds with Parliament's control over taxation. How were his prerogatives as a ruler to coexist with the rights of his subjects? Particularly disturbing to many was James's tendency to bestow high offices upon favorites apparently chosen for good looks rather than for good judgment. James's openly romantic attachment first to Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, and then to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, gave rise to widespread

rumors of homosexuality at court. The period had complex attitudes toward same-sex relationships; on the one hand, "sodomy" was a capital crime (though it was very rarely prosecuted); on the other hand, passionately intense male friendship, sometimes suffused with eroticism, constituted an important cultural ideal. In James's case, at least, contemporaries considered his susceptibility to lovely, expensive youths more a political than a moral calamity. For his critics, it crystallized what was wrong with unlimited royal power: the ease with which a king could confuse his own whim with a divine mandate.

Despite James's ungainly demeanor, his frictions with Parliament, and his chronic problems of self-management, he was politically astute. Often, like Elizabeth, he succeeded not through decisiveness but through canny inaction. Cautious by temperament, he characterized himself as a peacemaker and, for many years, successfully kept England out of the religious wars raging on the Continent. His 1604 peace treaty with England's old enemy, Spain, made the Atlantic safe for English ships, a prerequisite for the colonization of the New World and for regular long-distance trading expeditions into the Mediterranean and down the African coast into the Indian Ocean. During James's reign the first permanent English settlements were established in North America, first at Jamestown, then in Bermuda, at Plymouth, and in the Caribbean. In 1611 the East India Company established England's first foothold in India. Even when expeditions ended disastrously, as did Henry Hudson's 1611 attempt to find the Northwest Passage and Walter Raleigh's 1617 expedition to Guiana, they often asserted territorial claims that England would exploit in later decades.

Although the Crown's deliberate attempts to manage the economy were often misguided, its frequent inattention or refusal to interfere had the unintentional effect of stimulating growth. Early seventeenth-century entrepreneurs undertook a wide variety of schemes for industrial or agricultural improvement. Some ventures were almost as loony as Sir Politic Would-be's ridiculous moneymaking notions in Ben Jonson's *Volpone* (1606), but others were serious, profitable enterprises. In the south, domestic industries began manufacturing goods like pins and light woollens that had previously been imported. In the north, newly developed coal mines provided fuel for England's growing cities. In the east, landowners drained wetlands, producing more arable land to feed England's rapidly growing population. These endeavors gave rise to a new respect for the practical arts, a faith in technology as a means of improving human life, and a conviction that the future might be better than the past: all important influences upon the scientific theories of Francis Bacon and his seventeenth-century followers. Economic growth in this period owed more to the initiative of individuals and small groups than to government policy, a factor that encouraged a reevaluation of the role of self-interest, the profit motive, and the role of business contracts in the betterment of the community. This reevaluation was a prerequisite for the secular, contractual political theories proposed by Thomas Hobbes and John Locke later in the seventeenth century.

On the vexations faced by the Church of England, James was likewise often most successful when he was least activist. Since religion cemented sociopolitical order, it seemed necessary to English rulers that all of their subjects belong to a single church. Yet how could they do so when the Reformation had discredited many familiar religious practices and had bred disagreement over many theological issues? Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English

people argued over many religious topics. How should public worship be conducted, and what sorts of qualifications should ministers possess? How should Scripture be understood? How should people pray? What did the sacrament of Communion mean? What happened to people's souls after they died? Elizabeth's government had needed to devise a common religious practice when actual consensus was impossible. Sensibly, it sought a middle ground between traditional and reformed views. Everyone was legally required to attend Church of England services, and the form of the services themselves was mandated in the Elizabethan Book of Common Prayer. Yet the Book of Common Prayer deliberately avoided addressing abstruse theological controversies. The language of the English church service was carefully chosen to be open to several interpretations and acceptable to both Protestant- and Catholic-leaning subjects.

The Elizabethan compromise effectively tamed many of the Reformation's divisive energies and proved acceptable to the majority of Elizabeth's subjects. To staunch Catholics on one side and ardent Protestants on the other, however, the Elizabethan church seemed to have sacrificed truth to political expediency. Catholics wanted to return England to the Roman fold; while some of them were loyal subjects of the queen, others advocated invasion by a foreign Catholic power. Meanwhile the Puritans, as they were disparagingly called, pressed for more thoroughgoing reformation in doctrine, ritual, and church government, urging the elimination of "popish" elements from worship services and "idolatrous" religious images from churches. Some, the Presbyterians, wanted to separate lay and clerical power in the national church, so that church leaders would be appointed by other ministers, not by secular authorities. Others, the separatists, advocated abandoning a national church in favor of small congregations of the "elect."

The resistance of religious minorities to Elizabeth's established church opened them to state persecution. In the 1580s and 1590s, Catholic priests and the laypeople who harbored them were executed for treason, and radical Protestants for heresy. Both groups greeted James's accession enthusiastically; his mother had been the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots, while his upbringing had been in the strict Reformed tradition of the Scottish Presbyterian Kirk.

James began his reign with a conference at Hampton Court, one of his palaces, at which advocates of a variety of religious views could openly debate them. Yet the Puritans failed to persuade him to make any substantive reforms. Practically speaking, the Puritan belief that congregations should choose their leaders diminished the monarch's power by stripping him of authority over ecclesiastical appointments. More generally, allowing people to choose their leaders in any sphere of life threatened to subvert the entire system of deference and hierarchy upon which the institution of monarchy itself seemed to rest. "No bishop, no king," James famously remarked.

Nor did Catholics fare well in the new reign. Initially inclined to lift Elizabeth's sanctions against them, James hesitated when he realized how entrenched was the opposition to toleration. Then, in 1605, a small group of disaffected Catholics packed a cellar adjacent to the Houses of Parliament with gunpowder, intending to detonate it on the day that the king formally opened Parliament, with Prince Henry, the Houses of Lords and Commons, and the leading justices in attendance. The conspirators were arrested before they could effect their plan. If the "Gunpowder Plot" had succeeded, it would have eliminated much of England's ruling class in a single tremendous explo-

sion, leaving the land vulnerable to invasion by a foreign, Catholic power. Not surprisingly, the Gunpowder Plot dramatically heightened anti-Catholic paranoia in England, and its apparently miraculous revelation was widely seen as a sign of God's care for England's Protestant governors.

By and large, then, James's ecclesiastical policies continued along the lines laid down by Elizabeth. By appointing bishops of varying doctrinal views, he restrained any single faction from controlling church policy. The most important religious event of James's reign was a newly commissioned translation of the Bible. First published in 1611, it was a typically moderating document. A much more graceful rendering than its predecessor, the Geneva version produced by Puritan expatriates in the 1550s, the King James Bible immediately became the standard English Scripture. Its impressive rhythms and memorable phrasing would influence writers for centuries. On the one hand, the new translation contributed to the Protestant aim of making the Bible widely available to every reader in the vernacular. On the other hand, unlike the Geneva Bible, the King James Version translated controversial and ambiguous passages in ways that bolstered conservative preferences for a ceremonial church and for a hierarchically organized church government.

James's moderation was not universally popular. Some Protestants yearned for a more confrontational policy toward Catholic powers, particularly toward Spain, England's old enemy. In the first decade of James's reign, this party clustered around James's eldest son and heir apparent, Prince Henry, who cultivated a militantly Protestant persona. When Henry died of typhoid fever in 1612, those who favored his policies were forced to seek avenues of power outside the royal court. By the 1620s, the House of Commons was developing a vigorous sense of its own independence, debating policy agendas often quite at odds with the Crown's and openly attempting to use its power to approve taxation as a means of exacting concessions from the king.

James's second son, Prince Charles, came to the throne upon James's death in 1625. Unlike his father, Charles was not a theorist of royal absolutism, but he acted on that principle with an inflexibility that his father had never been able to muster. By 1629 he had dissolved Parliament three times in frustration with its recalcitrance, and he then began more than a decade of "personal rule" without Parliament. Charles was more prudent in some respects than his father had been—he not only restrained the costs of his own court, but paid off his father's staggering debts by the early 1630s. Throughout his reign, he conscientiously applied himself to the business of government. Yet his refusal to involve powerful individuals and factions in the workings of the state inevitably alienated them, even while it cut him off dangerously from important channels of information about the reactions of his people. Money was a constant problem, too. Even a relatively frugal king required some funds for ambitious government initiatives; but without parliamentary approval, any taxes Charles imposed were widely perceived as illegal. As a result, even wise policies, such as Charles's effort to build up the English navy, spawned misgivings among many of his subjects.

Religious conflicts intensified. Charles's queen, the French princess Henrietta Maria, supported an entourage of Roman Catholic priests, protected English Catholics, and encouraged several noblewomen in her court to convert to the Catholic faith. While Charles remained a staunch member of the Church of England, he loved visual splendor and majestic ceremony in all aspects of life, spiritual and otherwise—proclivities that led his Puritan sub-

jects to suspect him of popish sympathies. Charles's profound attachment to his wife, so different from James's neglect of Anne, only deepened their qualms. Like many fellow Puritans, Lucy Hutchinson blamed the entire debacle of Charles's reign on his wife's influence.

Charles's appointment of William Laud as archbishop of Canterbury, the ecclesiastical head of the English Church, further alienated Puritans. Laud subscribed to a theology that most Puritans rejected. As followers of the sixteenth-century reformer John Calvin, Puritans held that salvation depended upon faith in Christ, not "works." Works were meaningless because the deeds of sinful human beings could not be sanctified in the absence of faith; moreover, the Fall had so thoroughly corrupted human beings that they could not muster this faith without the help of God's grace. God chose (or refused) to extend grace to particular individuals on grounds that human beings were incapable of comprehending, and his decision had been made from eternity, before the individuals concerned were even born. In other words, Puritans believed, God predestined people to be saved or damned, and Christ's redemptive sacrifice was designed only for the saved group, the "elect." Laud, by contrast, advocated the Arminian doctrine that through Christ, God made redemption freely available to all human beings. Individuals could choose whether or not to respond to God's grace, and they could work actively toward their salvation by acts of charity, ritual devotion, and generosity to the church.

Although Laud's theology appears more generously inclusive than the Calvinist alternative, his ecclesiastical policies were uncompromising. Stripping many Puritan ministers of their posts, Laud aligned the doctrine and ceremonies of the English church with Roman Catholicism, which like Arminianism held works in high regard. In an ambitious project of church renovation, Laud installed religious paintings and images in churches; he thought they promoted reverence in worshippers, but the Puritans believed they encouraged idolatry. He rebuilt and resituated altars, making them more ornate and prominent: another change that dismayed Puritans, since it implied that the Eucharist rather than the sermon was the central element of a worship service. In the 1630s thousands of Puritans departed for the New England colonies, but many more remained at home, deeply discontented.

As the 1630s drew to a close, Archbishop Laud and Charles attempted to impose a version of the English liturgy and episcopal organization upon Presbyterian Scotland. Unlike his father, Charles had little acquaintance with his northern realm, and he drastically underestimated the difficulties involved. The Scots objected both on nationalist and on religious grounds, and they were not shy about expressing their objections: the bishop of Brechin, obliged to conduct divine service in the prescribed English style, mounted the pulpit armed with two pistols against his unruly congregation, while his wife, stationed on the floor below, backed him up with a blunderbuss. In the conflict that followed, the Bishops' Wars of 1639 and 1640, Charles's forces met with abject defeat. Exacerbating the situation, Laud was simultaneously insisting upon greater conformity within the English church. Riots in the London streets and the Scots' occupation of several northern English cities forced Charles to call the so-called Long Parliament, which would soon be managing a revolution.

LITERATURE AND CULTURE, 1603-40

Old Ideas and Next

In the first part of the seventeenth century, exciting new scientific theories were in the air, but the older ways of thinking about the nature of things had not yet been superseded. Writers such as John Donne, Robert Burton, and Ben Jonson often invoked an inherited body of concepts even though they were aware that those concepts were being questioned or displaced. The Ptolemaic universe, with its fixed earth and circling sun, moon, planets, and stars, was a rich source of poetic imagery. So were the four elements—fire, earth, water, and air—that together were thought to comprise all matter, and the four bodily humors—choler, blood, phlegm, and black bile—which were supposed to determine a person's temperament and to cause physical and mental disease when out of balance. Late Elizabethans and Jacobeans (so called from *Jacobus*, Latin for James) considered themselves especially prone to melancholy, an ailment of scholars and thinkers stemming from an excess of black bile. Shakespeare's Hamlet is melancholic, as is Bosola in John Webster's *Duchess of Malfi* and Milton's title figure in "Il Penseroso" ("the serious-minded one"). In his panoramic *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Burton argued that melancholy was universal.

Key concepts of the inherited system of knowledge were analogy and order. Donne was especially fond of drawing parallels between the macrocosm, or "big world," and the microcosm, or "little world," of the individual human being. Also widespread were versions of the "chain of being" that linked and ordered various kinds of beings in hierarchies. The order of nature, for instance, put God above angels, angels above human beings, human beings above animals, animals above plants, plants above rocks. The social order installed the king over his nobles, nobles over the gentry, gentry over yeomen, yeomen over common laborers. The order of the family set husband above wife, parents above children, master and mistress above servants, the elderly above the young. Each level had its peculiar function, and each was connected to those above and beneath in a tight network of obligation and dependency. Items that occupied similar positions in different hierarchies were related by analogy: thus a monarch was like God, and he was also like a father, the head of the family, or like a lion, most majestic of beasts, or like the sun, the most excellent of heavenly bodies. A medieval or Renaissance poet who calls a king a sun or a lion, then, imagines himself not to be forging a metaphor in his own creative imagination, but to be describing something like an obvious fact of nature. Many Jacobean tragedies, Shakespeare's *King Lear* perhaps most comprehensively, depict the catastrophes that ensue when these hierarchies rupture, and both the social order and the natural order disintegrate.

Yet this conceptual system was itself beginning to crumble. Francis Bacon advocated rooting out of the mind all the intellectual predilections that had made the old ideas so attractive: love of ingenious correlations, reverence for tradition, and a priori assumptions about what was possible in nature. Instead, he argued, groups of collaborators ought to design controlled experiments to find the truths of nature by empirical means. Even as Bacon was promoting his views in *The Advancement of Learning*, *Novum Organum*, and *The New Atlantis*, actual experiments and discoveries were calling the old verities into question. From the far-flung territories England was beginning to colonize or to trade with, collectors brought animal, plant, and ethnological novelties,

many of which were hard to subsume under old categories of understanding. William Harvey's discovery that blood circulated in the body shook received views on the function of blood, casting doubt on the theory of the humors. Galileo's telescope provided evidence confirming Copernican astronomical theory, which dislodged the earth from its stable central position in the cosmos and, in defiance of all ordinary observation, set it whirling around the sun. Galileo found evidence as well of change in the heavens, which were supposed to be perfect and incorruptible above the level of the moon. Donne, like other writers of his age, responded with a mixture of excitement and anxiety to such novel ideas as these:

And new philosophy calls all in doubt:
The element of fire is quite put out;
The sun is lost, and the earth, and no man's wit
Can well direct him where to look for it.

Several decades later, however, Milton embraced the new science, proudly recalling a visit during his European tour to "the famous Galileo, grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican licensers thought." In *Paradise Lost*, he would make complex poetic use of the astronomical controversy, considering how, and how far, humans should pursue scientific knowledge.

Patrons, Printers, and Acting Companies

The social institutions, customs, and practices that had supported and regulated writers in Tudor times changed only gradually before 1640. As it had under Elizabeth, the church promoted writing of several kinds: devotional treatises; guides to meditation; controversial tracts; "cases of conscience," which work out difficult moral issues in complex situations; and especially sermons. Since everyone was required to attend church, everyone heard sermons at least once and often twice on Sunday, as well as on religious or national holidays. The essence of a sermon, Protestants agreed, was the careful exposition of Scripture, and its purpose was to instruct and to move. Yet styles varied; while some preachers, like Donne, strove to enthrall their congregations with all the resources of artful rhetoric, others, especially many Puritans, sought an undecorated style that would display God's word in its own splendor. Printing made it easy to circulate many copies of sermons, blurring the line between oral delivery and written text and enhancing the role of printers and booksellers in disseminating God's word.

Many writers of the period depended in one way or another upon literary patronage. A Jacobean or Caroline aristocrat, like his medieval forebears, was expected to reward dependents in return for services and homage. Indeed, his status was gauged partly on the size of his entourage (that is one reason why in *King Lear* the hero experiences his daughters' attempts to dismiss his retainers as so intensely humiliating). In the early seventeenth century, although commercial relationships were rapidly replacing feudal ones, patronage pervaded all walks of life: governing relationships between landlords and tenants, masters and servants, kings and courtiers. Writers were assimilated into this system partly because their works reflected well on the patron, and partly because their all-around intelligence made them useful members of a great man's household. Important patrons of the time included the royal family—especially Queen Anne, who sponsored the court masques, and Prince

Henry—the members of the intermarried Sidney/Herbert family, and the Countess of Bedford, Queen Anne's confidante.

Because the patronage relationship often took the form of an exchange of favors rather than a simple financial transaction, its terms were very variable and are difficult to recover with any precision at this historical remove. A poet might dedicate a poem or a work to a patron in the expectation of a simple cash payment. But a patron might provide a wide range of other benefits: a place to live; employment as a secretary, tutor, or household servant; or gifts of clothing (textiles were valuable commodities). Donne, for instance, received inexpensive lodging from the Drury family, for whom he wrote the *Anniversaries*; a suit of clerical attire from Lucy Russell, Countess of Bedford, when he took orders in the Church of England; and advancement in the church from King James. Ben Jonson lived for several years at the country estates of Lord Aubigny and of Robert Sidney, in whose honor he wrote "To Penshurst"; he received a regular salary from the king in return for writing court masques; and he served as chaperone to Sir Walter Raleigh's son on a Continental tour. Aemilia Lanyer apparently resided for some time in the household of Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland. Andrew Marvell lived for two years with Thomas Fairfax, tutored his daughter and wrote "Upon Appleton House" for him. All these quite different relationships and forms of remuneration fall under the rubric of patronage.

The patronage system required the poets involved to hone their skills at eulogizing their patrons' generosity and moral excellence. Jonson's epigrams and many of Lanyer's dedicatory poems evoke communities of virtuous poets and patrons joined by bonds of mutual respect and affection. Like the line between sycophantic flattery and truthful depiction, the line between patronage and friendship could be a thin one. Literary manuscripts circulated among circles of acquaintances and supporters, many of whom were, at least occasionally, writers as well as readers. Jonson esteemed Mary Wroth both as a fellow poet and as a member of the Sidney family to whom he owed so much. Donne became part of a coterie around Queen Anne's closest confidante, Lucy Russell, Countess of Bedford, who was also an important patron for Ben Jonson, Michael Drayton, and Samuel Daniel. The countess evidently wrote poems herself, although only one attributed to her has apparently survived.

Presenting a poem to a patron, or circulating it among the group of literary people who surrounded the patron, did not require printing it. In early-seventeenth-century England, the reading public for sophisticated literary works was tiny and concentrated in a few social settings: the royal court, the universities, and the Inns of Court, or law schools. In these circumstances, manuscript circulation could be an effective way of reaching one's audience. So a great deal of writing remained in manuscript in early-seventeenth-century England. The collected works of many important writers of the period—most notably John Donne, George Herbert, William Shakespeare, and Andrew Marvell—appeared in print only posthumously, in editions produced by friends or admirers. Other writers, like Robert Herrick, collected and printed their own works long after they were written and (probably) circulated in manuscript. In consequence, it is often difficult to date accurately the composition of a seventeenth-century poem. In addition, when authors do not participate in the printing of their own works, editorial problems multiply—when, for instance, the printed version of a poem is inconsistent with a surviving manuscript copy.

Nonetheless, the printing of all kinds of literary works was becoming more common. Writers such as Francis Bacon or Robert Rurton, who hoped to reach large numbers of readers with whom they were not acquainted, usually arranged for the printing of their texts soon after they were composed. The sense that the printing of lyric poetry, in particular, was a bit vulgar began to fade when the famous Ben Jonson collected his own works in a grand folio edition.

Until 1640 the Stuart kings kept in place the strict controls over print publication originally instituted by Henry VIII, in response to the ideological threat posed by the Reformation. King Henry had given the members of London's Stationer's Company a monopoly on all printing; in return for their privilege, they were supposed to submit texts to prepublication censorship. In the latter part of the sixteenth century, presses associated with the universities at Oxford and Cambridge would begin operation as well, but they were largely concerned with scholarly and theological books. As a result, with a very few exceptions (such as George Herbert's *The Temple*, published by Cambridge University Press), almost all printed literary texts were produced in London. Most of them were sold there as well, in the booksellers' stalls set up outside St. Paul's Cathedral.

The licensing system located not only primary responsibility for a printed work, but its ownership, with the printer rather than with the author. Printers typically paid writers a onetime fee for the use of their work, but the payment was scanty, and the authors of popular texts realized no royalties from the many copies sold. As a result, no one could make a living as a writer in the early seventeenth century by producing best sellers. The first writer formally to arrange for royalties was apparently John Milton, who received five pounds up front for *Paradise Lost*, and another five pounds and two hundred copies at the end of each of the first three impressions. Still, legal ownership of and control over a printed work remained with the printer: authorial copyright would not become a reality until the early eighteenth century.

In monetary terms, a more promising outlet for writers was the commercial theater, which provided the first literary market in English history. Profitable and popular acting companies, established successfully in London in Elizabeth's time, continued to play a very important cultural role under James and Charles. Because the acting companies staged a large number of different plays and paid for them at a predictable, if not generous, rate, they enabled a few hardworking writers to support themselves as full-time professionals. One of them, Thomas Dekker, commented bemusedly on the novelty of being paid for the mere products of one's imagination: "the theater," he wrote, "is your poet's Royal Exchange upon which their muses—that are now turned to merchants—meeting, barter away that light commodity of words." In James's reign, Shakespeare was at the height of his powers: *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, and other important plays were first staged during these years. So were Jonson's major comedies: *Volpone*, *Epicene*, *The Alchemist*, and *Bartholomew Fair*. The most important new playwright was John Webster, whose dark tragedies *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi* combined gothic horror with stunningly beautiful poetry.

Just as printers were legally the owners of the texts they printed, so theater companies, not playwrights, were the owners of the texts they performed. Typically, companies guarded their scripts closely, permitting them to be printed

only in times of financial distress or when they were so old that printing them seemed unlikely to reduce the paying audience. As a result, many Jacobean and Caroline plays are lost to us or available only in corrupt or posthumous versions. For contemporaries, though, a play was "published" not by being printed but by being performed. Aware of the dangerous potential of plays in arousing the sentiments of large crowds of onlookers, the Stuarts, like the Tudors before them, instituted tight controls over dramatic performances. Acting companies, like printers, were obliged to submit works to the censor before public presentation.

Authors, printers, and acting companies who flouted the censorship laws were subject to imprisonment, fines, or even bodily mutilation. Queen Elizabeth cut off the hand of a man who disagreed in print with her marriage plans, King Charles the ears of a man who inveighed against court masques. Jonson and his collaborators found themselves in prison for ridiculing King James's broad Scots accent in one of their comedies. The effects of censorship on writers' output were therefore far reaching across literary genres. Since overt criticism or satire of the great was so dangerous, political writing was apt to be oblique and allegorical. Writers often employed animal fables, tales of distant lands, or long-past historical events to comment upon contemporary issues.

While the commercial theaters were profitable businesses that made most of their money from paying audiences, several factors combined to bring writing for the theater closer to the Stuart court than it had been in Elizabeth's time. The Elizabethan theater companies had been officially associated with noblemen who guaranteed their legitimacy (in contrast to unsponsored traveling players, who were subject to punishment as vagrants). Early in his reign, James brought the major theater companies under royal auspices. Shakespeare's company, the most successful of the day, became the King's Men: it performed not only all of Shakespeare's plays but also *Volpone* and *The Duchess of Malfi*. Queen Anne, Prince Henry, Prince Charles, and Princess Elizabeth sponsored other companies of actors. Royal patronage, which brought with it tangible rewards and regular court performances, naturally encouraged the theater companies to pay more attention to courtly taste. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* put onstage Scots history and witches, two of James's own interests; in *King Lear*, the hero's disastrous division of his kingdom may reflect controversies over the proposed union of Scotland and England. In the first four decades of the seventeenth century, court-affiliated theater companies such as the King's Men increasingly cultivated audiences markedly more affluent than the audiences they had sought in the 1580s and 1590s, performing in intimate, expensive indoor theaters instead of, or as well as, in the cheap popular amphitheaters. *The Duchess of Malfi*, for instance, was probably written with the King's Men's indoor theater at Blackfriars in mind, because several scenes depend for their effect upon a control over lighting that is impossible outdoors. Partly because the commercial theaters seemed increasingly to cater to the affluent and courtly elements of society, they attracted the ire of the king's opponents when civil war broke out in the 1640s.

Jacobean Writers and Genres

The era saw important changes in poetic fashion. Some major Elizabethan genres fell out of favor—long allegorical or mythological narratives, sonnet sequences, and pastoral poems. The norm was coming to be short, concentrated, often witty poems. Poets and prose writers alike often preferred the

jagged rhythms of colloquial speech to the elaborate ornamentation and near-musical orchestration of sound that many Elizabethans had sought. The major poets of these years, Jonson, Donne, and Herbert, led this shift and also promoted a variety of "new" genres: love elegy and satire after the classical models of Ovid and Horace, epigram, verse epistle, meditative religious lyric, and country-house poem. Although these poets differed enormously from one another, all three exercised an important influence on the poets of the next generation.

A native Londoner, Jonson first distinguished himself as an acute observer of urban manners in a series of early, controversial satiric plays. Although he wrote two of his most moving poems to his dead children, Jonson focused rather rarely on the dynamics of the family relationships that so profoundly concerned his contemporary Shakespeare. When generational and dynastic matters do figure in his poetry, as they do at the end of "To Penshurst," they seem part of the agrarian, feudal order that Jonson may have romanticized but that he suspected was rapidly disappearing. By and large, Jonson interested himself in relationships that seemed to be negotiated by the participants, often in a bustling urban or courtly world in which blood kinship no longer decisively determined one's social place. Jonson's poems of praise celebrate and exemplify classical and humanist ideals of friendship: like-minded men and women elect to join in a community that fosters wisdom, generosity, civic responsibility, and mutual respect. In the plays and satiric poems, Jonson stages the violation of those values with such riotous comprehensiveness that the very survival of such ideals seem endangered: the plays swarm with voracious swindlers and their eager victims, social climbers both adroit and inept, and a dizzying assortment of morons and misfits. In many of Jonson's plays, rogues or wits collude to victimize others; their stormy, self-interested alliances, apparently so different from the virtuous friendships of the poems of praise, in fact resemble them in one respect: they are connections entered into by choice, not by law, inheritance, or custom.

Throughout his life, Jonson earned his living entirely from his writing, composing plays for the public theater while also attracting patronage as a poet and a writer of court masques. His acute awareness of his audience was partly, then, a sheerly practical matter. Yet Jonson's yearning for recognition ran far beyond any desire for material reward. A gifted poet, Jonson argued, was a society's proper judge and teacher, and he could only be effective if his audience understood and respected the poet's exalted role. Jonson set out unabashedly to create that audience and to monumentalize himself as a great English author. In 1616 he took the unusual step, for his time, of collecting his poems, plays, and masques in an elegant folio volume.

Jonson's influence upon the next generation of writers, and through them into the Restoration and the eighteenth century, was an effect both of his poetic mastery of his chosen modes and of his powerful personal example. Jonson mentored a group of younger poets, known as the Tribe, or Sons, of Ben, meeting regularly with some of them in the Apollo Room of the Devil Tavern in London. Many of the royalist, or Cavalier, poets—Robert Herrick, Thomas Carew, Richard Lovelace, Sir John Suckling, Edmund Waller, Henry Vaughan in his secular verse—proudly acknowledged their relationship to Jonson or gave some evidence of it in their verse. Most of them absorbed too Jonson's attitude toward print and in later decades supervised the publication of their own poems.

Donne, like Jonson, spent most of his life in or near London, often in the

company of other writers and intellectuals—indeed, in the company of many of the same writers and intellectuals, since the two men were friends and shared some of the same patrons. Yet, unlike Jonson's, most of Donne's poetry concerns itself not with a crowded social panorama, but with a dyad—with the relationship between the speaker and one single other being, a woman or God—that in its intensity blots out the claims of lesser relationships. Love for Donne encompasses an astonishing range of emotional experiences, from the lusty impatience of "To His Mistress Going to Bed" to the cheerful promiscuity of "The Indifferent" to the mysterious platonic telepathy of "Air and Angels," from the vengeful wit of "The Apparition" to the postcoital tranquility of "The Good Morrow." While for Jonson the shared meal among friends often becomes an emblem of communion, for Donne sexual consummation has something of the same highly charged symbolic character, a moment in which the isolated individual can, however temporarily, escape the boundaries of selfhood in union with another:

The phoenix riddle hath more with
By us: we two being one, are it.
So, to one neutral thing both sexes fit.

In the religious poems, where Donne both yearns for a physical relationship with God and knows it is impossible, he does not abandon his characteristic bodily metaphors. The doctrine of the Incarnation—God's taking material form in the person of Jesus Christ—and the doctrine of the bodily resurrection of the dead at the Last Day are Christian teachings that fascinate Donne, to which he returns again and again in his poems, sermons, and devotional writings. While sexual and religious love had long shared a common vocabulary, Donne delights in making that overlap seem new and shocking. He likens conjoined lovers to saints; demands to be raped by God; speculates, after his wife's death, that God killed her because He was jealous of Donne's divided loyalty; imagines Christ encouraging his Bride, the church, to "open" herself to as many men as possible.

Throughout Donne's life, his faith, like his intellect, was anything but quiet. Born into a family of devout Roman Catholics just as the persecution of Catholics was intensifying in Elizabethan England, Donne eventually became a member of the Church of England. If "Satire 3" is any indication, the conversion was attended by profound doubts and existential crisis. Donne's restless mind can lead him in surprising and sometimes unorthodox directions, to a qualified defense of suicide, for instance, in *Biathanatos*. At the same time, overwhelmed with a sense of his own unworthiness, he courts God's punishment, demanding to be spat upon, flogged, burnt, broken down, in the expectation that suffering at God's hand will restore him to grace and favor.

In both style and content, Donne's poems were addressed to a select few rather than to the public at large. His style is demanding, characterized by learned terms, audaciously far-fetched analogies, and an intellectually sophisticated play of ironies. Even Donne's sermons, attended by large crowds, share the knotty difficulty of the poems, and something too of their quality of intimate address. Donne circulated his poems in manuscript and largely avoided print publication (most of his poems were printed after his death in 1631). By some critics Donne has been regarded as the founder of a Metaphysical school of poetry. We find echoes of Donne's style in many later poets: in Thomas Carew, who praised Donne as a "monarch of wit," George Herbert, Richard

Crashaw, John Cleveland, Sir John Suckling, Abraham Cowley, and Andrew Marvell.

Herbert, the younger son of a wealthy, cultivated, and well-connected family, seemed destined in early adulthood for a brilliant career as a diplomat or government servant. Yet he turned his back on worldly greatness to be ordained a priest in the Church of England. Moreover, eschewing a highly visible career as an urban preacher, he spent the remaining years of his short life ministering to the tiny rural parish of Bemerton. Herbert's poetry is shot through with the difficulty and joy of this renunciation, with all it entailed for him. Literary ambition—pride in one's independent creativity—appears to Herbert a temptation that must be resisted, whether it takes the form of Jonson's openly competitive aspiration for literary preeminence or Donne's brilliantly ironic self-displaying performances. Instead, Herbert seeks out models for poetic agency: the secretary taking dictation from a master, the musician playing in harmonious consort with others, the member of a church congregation who speaks with and for a community.

Herbert destroyed his secular verse in English and he turned his volume of religious verse over to a friend only on his deathbed, desiring him to print it if he thought it would be useful to "some dejected poor soul," but otherwise to burn it. The 177 lyrics contained in that volume, *The Temple*, display a complex religious sensibility and great artistic subtlety in an amazing variety of stanza forms. Herbert was the major influence on the next generation of religious lyric poets and was explicitly recognized as such by Henry Vaughan and Richard Crashaw.

The Jacobean period also saw the emergence of what would become a major prose genre, the familiar essay. The works of the French inventor of the form, Michel de Montaigne, appeared in English translation in 1603, influencing Shakespeare as well as such later writers as Sir Thomas Browne. Yet the first essays in English, the work of Francis Bacon, attorney general under Elizabeth and eventually lord chancellor under James, bear little resemblance to Montaigne's intimate, tentative, conversational pieces. Bacon's essays present pithy, sententious, sometimes provocative claims in a tone of cool objectivity, tempering moral counsel with an awareness of the importance of prudence and expediency in practical affairs. In *Novum Organum* Bacon adapts his deliberately discontinuous mode of exposition to outline a new scientific method, holding out the tantalizing prospect of eventual mastery over the natural world and boldly articulating the ways in which science might improve the human condition. In his fictional Utopia, described in *The New Atlantis*, Bacon imagines a society that realizes his dream of carefully orchestrated collaborative research, so different from the erratic, uncoordinated efforts of alchemists and amateurs in his own day. Bacon's philosophically revolutionary approach to the natural world profoundly impacted scientifically minded people over the next several generations. His writings influenced the materialist philosophy of his erstwhile secretary, Thomas Hobbes, encouraged Oliver Cromwell to attempt a large-scale overhaul of the university curriculum during the 1650s, and inspired the formation of the Royal Society, an organization of experimental scientists, after the Restoration.

The reigns of the first two Stuart kings mark the entry of Englishwomen, in some numbers, into authorship and publication. Most female writers of the period were from the nobility or gentry; all were much better educated than most women of the period, many of whom remained illiterate. In 1611 Aemilia

Lanyer was the first Englishwoman to publish a substantial volume of original poems. It contained poetic dedications, a long poem on Christ's passion, and a country-house poem, all defending women's interests and importance. In 1613 Elizabeth Cary, Lady Falkland, was the first Englishwoman to publish a tragedy, *Mariam*, a closet drama that probes the situation of a queen subjected to her husband's domestic and political tyranny. In 1617 Rachel Speght, the first female polemicist who can be securely identified, published a defense of her sex in response to a notorious attack upon "Lewd, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women"; she was also the author of a long dream-vision poem. Lady Mary Wroth, niece of Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke, wrote a long prose romance, *Urania* (1612), which presents a range of women's experiences as lovers, rulers, counselors, scholars, storytellers, poets, and seers. Her Petrarchan sonnet sequence *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, published with *Urania*, gives poetic voice to the female in love.

THE CAROLINE ERA, 1625-40

When King Charles came to the throne in 1625, "the fools and bawds, mimics and catamites of the former court grew out of fashion," as the Puritan Lucy Hutchinson recalled. The changed style of the court directly affected the arts and literature of the Caroline period (so called after *Carolus*, Latin for Charles). Charles and his queen, Henrietta Maria, were art collectors on a large scale and patrons of such painters as Peter Paul Rubens and Sir Anthony Van Dyke; the latter portrayed Charles as a heroic figure of knightly romance, mounted on a splendid stallion. The conjunction of chivalric virtue and divine beauty or love, symbolized in the union of the royal couple, was the dominant theme of Caroline court masques, which were even more extravagantly hyperbolic than their Jacobean predecessors. Even as Henrietta Maria encouraged an artistic and literary cult of platonic love, several courtier-poets, such as Carew and Suckling, wrote playful, sophisticated love lyrics that both alluded to this fashion and sometimes urged a more licentiously physical alternative.

The religious tensions between the Caroline court's Laudian church and the Puritan opposition produced something of a culture war. In 1633 Charles reissued the *Book of Sports*, originally published by his father in 1618, prescribing traditional holiday festivities and Sunday sports in every parish. Like his father, he saw these recreations as the rural, downscale equivalent of the court masque: harmless, healthy diversions for people who otherwise spent most of their waking hours hard at work. Puritans regarded masques and rustic dances alike as occasions for sin, the Maypole as a vestige of pagan phallus worship, and Sunday sports as a profanation of the Sabbath. In 1632 William Prynne staked out the most extreme Puritan position, publishing a tirade of over one thousand pages against stage plays, court masques, Maypoles, Laudian church rituals, stained-glass windows, mixed dancing, and other outrages, all of which he associated with licentiousness, effeminacy, and the seduction of popish idolatry. For this cultural critique, Prynne was stripped of his academic degrees, ejected from the legal profession, set in the pillory, sentenced to life imprisonment, and had his books burned and his ears cut off. The severity of the punishments indicates the perceived danger of the book and the inextricability of literary and cultural affairs from politics.

Milton's astonishingly virtuosic early poems also respond to the tensions of the 1630s. Milton repudiated both courtly aesthetics and also Prynne's whole-

sale prohibitions, developing reformed versions of pastoral, masque, and hymn. In "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," the birth of Christ coincides with a casting out of idols and a flight of false gods, stanzas that suggest contemporary Puritan resistance to Archbishop Laud's policies. Milton's magnificent funeral elegy "Lycidas" firmly rejects the poetic career of the Cavalier poet, who disregards high artistic ambition to "sport with Amaryllis in the shade / Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair." The poem also vehemently denounces the establishment clergy, ignorant and greedy "blind mouths" who rob their flocks of spiritual nourishment.

THE REVOLUTIONARY ERA, 1640-60

Early in the morning on January 30, 1649, Charles Stuart, the dethroned king Charles I, set off across St. James Park for his execution, surrounded by a heavy guard. He wore two shirts because the weather was frigid, and he did not want to look as if he were shivering with fear to the thousands who had gathered to watch him be beheaded. The black-draped scaffold had been erected just outside James I's elegant Banqueting House, inside of which so many court masques, in earlier decades, had celebrated the might of the Stuart monarchs and assured them of their people's love and gratitude. To those who could not attend, newsbooks provided eyewitness accounts of the dramatic events of the execution, as they had of Charles's trial the week before. Andrew Marvell also memorably describes the execution scene in "An Horatian Ode."

The execution of Charles I was understood at the time, and is still seen by many historians today, as a watershed event in English history. How did it come to pass? Historians do not agree over what caused "the English revolution," or, as it is alternatively called, the English civil war. One group argues that long-term changes in English society and the English economy led to rising social tensions and eventually to violent conflict. New capitalist modes of production in agriculture, industry, and trade were often incompatible with older feudal norms. The gentry, an affluent, highly educated class below the nobility but above the artisans, mechanics, and yeomen, played an increasingly important part in national affairs, as did the rich merchants in London; but the traditional social hierarchies failed to grant them the economic, political, and religious freedoms they believed they deserved. Another group of historians, the "revisionists," emphasize instead short-term and avoidable causes of the war—unlucky chances, personal idiosyncrasies, and poor decisions made by a small group of individuals.

Whatever caused the outbreak of hostilities, there is no doubt that the twenty-year period between 1640 and 1660 saw the emergence of concepts central to bourgeois liberal thought for centuries to come: religious toleration, separation of church and state, freedom from press censorship, and popular sovereignty. These concepts developed out of bitter disputes centering on three fundamental questions: What is the ultimate source of political power? What kind of church government is laid down in Scripture, and therefore ought to be settled in England? What should be the relation between the church and the state? The theories that evolved in response to these questions contained the seeds of much that is familiar in modern thought, mixed with much that is forbiddingly alien. It is vital to recognize that the participants in the disputes were not haphazardly attempting to predict the shape of modern liberalism, but were responding powerfully to the most important problems of

their day. The need to find right answers seemed particularly urgent for the Millenarians among them, who, interpreting the upheavals of the time through the lens of the apocalyptic Book of Revelation, believed that their day was very near to being the last day of all.

When the so-called Long Parliament convened in 1640, it did not plan to execute a monarch or even to start a war. It did, however, want to secure its rights in the face of King Charles's perceived absolutist tendencies. Refusing merely to approve taxes and go home, as Charles would have wished, Parliament insisted that it could remain in session until its members agreed to disband. Then it set about abolishing extralegal taxes and courts, reining in the bishops' powers, and arresting (and eventually trying and executing) the king's ministers, the Earl of Strafford and Archbishop Laud. The collapse of effective royal government meant that the machinery of press censorship, which had been a Crown responsibility, no longer restrained the printing of explicit commentary on contemporary affairs of state. As Parliament debated, therefore, presses poured forth a flood of treatises arguing vociferously on all sides of the questions about church and state, creating a lively public forum for political discussion where none had existed before. The suspension of censorship permitted the development of weekly newsbooks that reported, and editorialized on, current domestic events from varying political and religious perspectives.

As the rift widened between Parliament and the king in 1641, Charles sought to arrest five members of Parliament for treason, and Londoners rose in arms against him. The king fled to York, while the queen escaped to the Continent. Negotiations for compromise broke down over the issues that would derail them at every future stage: control of the army and the church. On July 12, 1642, Parliament voted to raise an army, and on August 22 the king stood before a force of two thousand horse and foot at Nottingham, unfurled his royal standard, and summoned his liege men to his aid. Civil war had begun. Regions of the country, cities, towns, social classes, and even families found themselves painfully divided. The king set up court and an alternative parliament in Oxford, to which many in the House of Lords and some in the House of Commons transferred their allegiance.

In the First Civil War (1642–46), Parliament and the Presbyterian clergy that supported it had limited aims. They hoped to secure the rights of the House of Commons, to limit the king's power over the army and the church—but not to depose him—and to settle Presbyterianism as the national established church. As Puritan armies moved through the country, fighting at Edgehill, Marston Moor, Naseby, and elsewhere, they also undertook a crusade to stamp out idolatry in English churches, smashing religious images and stained-glass windows and lopping off the heads of statues as an earlier generation had done at the time of the English Reformation. Their ravages are still visible in English churches and cathedrals.

The Puritans were not, however, a homogeneous group, as the 1643 Toleration Controversy revealed. The Presbyterians wanted a national Presbyterian church, with dissenters punished and silenced as before. But Congregationalists, Independents, Baptists, and other separatists opposed a national church and pressed for some measure of toleration, for themselves at least. The religious radical Roger Williams, just returned from New England, argued that Christ mandated the complete separation of church and state and the civic toleration of all religions, even Roman Catholics, Jews, and

Muslims. Yet to most people, the civil war itself seemed to confirm that people of different faiths could not coexist peacefully. Thus even as sects continued to proliferate—Seekers, Finders, Antinomians, Fifth Monarchists, Quakers, Muggletonians, Ranters—even the most broad-minded of the age often attempted to draw a line between what was acceptable and what was not. Predictably, their lines failed to coincide. In *Areopagitica* (1644), John Milton argues vigorously against press censorship and for toleration of most Protestants—but for him, Catholics are beyond the pale. Robert Herrick and Sir Thomas Rowne regarded Catholic rites, and even some pagan ones, indulgently but could not stomach Puritan zeal.

In 1648, after a period of negotiation and a brief Second Civil War, the king's army was definitively defeated. His supporters were captured or fled into exile, losing position and property. Yet Charles, imprisoned on the Isle of Wight, remained a threat. He was a natural rallying point for those disillusioned by parliamentary rule—many people disliked Parliament's legal but heavy taxes even more than they had the king's illegal but lighter ones. Charles repeatedly attempted to escape and was accused of trying to open the realm to a foreign invasion. Some powerful leaders of the victorious New Model Army took drastic action. They expelled royalists and Presbyterians, who still wanted to come to an accommodation with the king, from the House of Commons and abolished the House of Lords. With consensus assured by the purgation of dissenting viewpoints, the army brought the king to trial for high treason in the Great Hall of Westminster.

After the king's execution, the Rump Parliament, the part of the House of Commons that had survived the purge, immediately established a new government "in the way of a republic, without king or House of Lords." The new state was extremely fragile. Royalists and Presbyterians fiercely resented their exclusion from power and pronounced the execution of the king a sacrilege. The Rump Parliament and the army were at odds, with the army rank and file arguing that voting rights ought not be restricted to men of property. The Levellers, led by John Lilburne, called for suffrage for all adult males. An associated but more radical group, called the Diggers or True Levellers, pushed for economic reforms to match the political ones. Their spokesman, Gerrard Winstanley, wrote eloquent manifestos developing a Christian communist program. Meanwhile, Millenarians and Fifth Monarchists wanted political power vested in the regenerate "saints" in preparation for the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth foretold in the biblical Book of Revelation. Quakers defied both state and church authority by refusing to take oaths and by preaching incendiary sermons in open marketplaces. Most alarming of all, out of proportion to their scant numbers, were the Ranters, who believed that because God dwelt in them none of their acts could be sinful. Notorious for sexual license and for public nudity, they got their name from their deliberate blaspheming and their penchant for rambling prophecy. In addition to internal disarray, the new state faced serious external threats. After Charles I's execution, the Scots and the Irish—who had not been consulted about the trial—immediately proclaimed his eldest son, Prince Charles, the new king. The prince, exiled on the Continent, was attempting to enlist the support of a major European power for an invasion.

The formidable Oliver Cromwell, now undisputed leader of the army, crushed external threats, suppressing rebellions in Ireland and Scotland. The Irish war was especially bloody, as Cromwell's army massacred the Catholic

natives in a frenzy of religious hatred. When trade rivalries erupted with the Dutch over control of shipping lanes in the North Sea and the English Channel, the new republic was again victorious. Yet the domestic situation remained unstable. Given popular disaffection and the unresolved disputes between Parliament and the army, the republic's leaders dared not call new elections. In 1653 power effectively devolved upon Cromwell, who was sworn in as Lord Protector for life under England's first written constitution. Many property owners considered Cromwell the only hope for stability, while others, including Milton, saw him as a champion of religious liberty. Although persecution of Quakers and Ranters continued, Cromwell sometimes intervened to mitigate the lot of the Quakers. He also began a program to readmit Jews to England, partly in the interests of trade but also to open the way for their conversion, supposedly a precursor of the Last Day as prophesied in the Book of Revelation.

The problem of succession remained unresolved, however. When Oliver Cromwell died in 1658, his son, Richard, was appointed in his place, but he had inherited none of his father's leadership qualities. In 1660 General George Monck succeeded in calling elections for a new "full and free" parliament, open to supporters of the monarchy as well as of the republic. The new Parliament immediately recalled the exiled prince, officially proclaiming him King Charles II on May 8, 1660. The period that followed, therefore, is called the Restoration: it saw the restoration of the monarchy and with it the royal court, the established Church of England, and the professional theater.

Over the next few years, the new regime executed some of the regicides that had participated in Charles I's trial and execution and harshly repressed radical Protestants (the Baptist John Bunyan wrote *Pilgrim's Progress* in prison). Yet Charles II, who came to the throne at Parliament's invitation, could not lay claim to absolute power as his father had done. After his accession, Parliament retained its legislative supremacy and complete power over taxation, and exercised some control over the king's choice of counselors. It assembled by its own authority, not by the king's mandate. During the Restoration years, the journalistic commentary and political debates that had first flourished in the 1640s remained forceful and open, and the first modern political parties developed out of what had been the royalist and republican factions in the civil war. In London and in other cities, the merchant classes, filled with dissenters, retained their powerful economic leverage. Although the English revolution was apparently dismantled in 1660, its long-term effects profoundly changed English institutions and English society.

LITERATURE AND CULTURE, 1640-60

The English civil war was disastrous for the English theater. One of Parliament's first acts after hostilities began in 1642 was to abolish public plays and sports, as "too commonly expressing lascivious mirth and levity." Some drama continued to be written and published, but performances were rare and would-be theatrical entrepreneurs had to exploit loopholes in the prohibitions by describing their works as "operas" or presenting their productions in semiprivate circumstances.

As the king's government collapsed, the patronage relationships centered upon the court likewise disintegrated. Many leading poets were staunch royalists, or **Cavaliers**, who suffered considerably in the war years. Robert Herrick

lost his position; Richard Lovelace was imprisoned; Margaret Cavendish went into exile. With their usual networks of manuscript circulation disrupted, many royalist writers printed their verse. Volumes of poetry by Thomas Carew, John Denham, John Suckling, James Shirley, Richard Lovelace, and Robert Herrick appeared in the 1640s. Their poems, some dating from the 1620s or 1630s, celebrate the courtly ideal of the good life: good food, plenty of wine, good verse, hospitality, and high-spirited loyalty, especially to the king. One characteristic genre is the elegant love lyric, often with a *carpe diem* theme. In Herrick's case especially, apparent ease and frivolity masks a frankly political subtext. The Puritans excoriated May Day celebrations, harvest-home festivities, and other time-honored holidays and "sports" as unscriptural, idolatrous, or frankly pagan. For Herrick, they sustained a community that strove neither for ascetic perfection nor for equality among social classes, but that knew the value of pleasure in cementing social harmony and that incorporated everyone—rich and poor, unlettered and learned—as the established church had traditionally tried to do.

During the 1640s and 1650s, as they faced defeat, the Cavaliers wrote movingly of the relationship between love and honor, of fidelity under duress, of like-minded friends sustaining one another in a hostile environment. They presented themselves as amateurs, writing verse in the midst of a life devoted to more important matters: war, love, the king's service, the endurance of loss. Rejecting the radical Protestant emphasis on the "inner light," which they considered merely a pretext for presumptuousness and violence, the Cavalier poets often cultivated a deliberately unidiosyncratic, even self-deprecating poetic persona. Thus the poems of Richard Lovelace memorably express sentiments that he represents not as the unique insights of an isolated genius, but as principles easily grasped by all honorable men. When in "The Vine" Herrick relates a wet dream, he not only laughs at himself but at those who mistake their own fantasies for divine inspiration.

During the 1650s, royalists wrote lyric poems in places far removed from the hostile centers of parliamentary power. In Wales, Henry Vaughan wrote religious verse expressing his intense longing for past eras of innocence and for the perfection of heaven or the millennium. Also in Wales, Katherine Philips wrote and circulated in manuscript poems that celebrate female friends in terms normally reserved for male friendships. The publication of her poems after the Restoration brought Philips some celebrity as "the Matchless Orinda." Richard Crashaw, an exile in Paris and Rome and a convert to Roman Catholicism, wrote lush religious poetry that attempted to reveal the spiritual by stimulating the senses. Margaret Cavendish, also in exile, with the queen in Paris, published two collections of lyrics when she returned to England in 1653; after the Restoration she published several dramas and a remarkable Utopian romance, *The Blazing World*.

Several prose works by royalist sympathizers have become classics in their respective genres. Thomas Hobbes, the most important English philosopher of the period, another exile in Paris, developed his materialist philosophy and psychology there and, in *Leviathan* (1651), his unflinching defense of absolute sovereignty based on a theory of social contract. Some royalist writing seems to have little to do with the contemporary scene, but in fact carries a political charge. In *Religio Medici* (1642–43), Sir Thomas Browne presents himself as a genial, speculative doctor who loves ritual and ceremony not for complicated theological reasons, but because they move him emotionally. While he can

sympathize with all Christians, even Roman Catholics, and while he recognizes in himself many idiosyncratic views, he willingly submits his judgment to the Church of England, in sharp contrast to Puritans bent on ridding the church of its errors. Izaak Walton's treatise on fishing, *The Complete Angler* (1653), presents a dialogue between Walton's persona, Piscator the angler, and Venator the hunter. Piscator, speaking like many Cavalier poets for the values of warmheartedness, charity, and inclusiveness, converts the busy, war-like Venator, a figure for the Puritan, to the tranquil and contemplative pursuit of fishing.

The revolutionary era gave new impetus to women's writing. The circumstances of war placed women in novel, occasionally dangerous situations, giving them unusual events to describe and prompting self-discovery. The autobiographies of royalists Lady Anne Halkett and Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, published after the Restoration, report their experiences and their sometimes daring activities during those trying days. Lucy Hutchinson's memoir of her husband, Colonel John Hutchinson, first published in 1806, narrates much of the history of the times from a republican point of view. Leveler women offered petitions and manifestos in support of their cause and of their imprisoned husbands. The widespread belief that the Holy Spirit was moving in unexpected ways encouraged a number of female prophets: Anna Trapnel, Mary Cary, and Lady Eleanor Davies. Their published prophecies often carried a strong political critique of Charles or of Cromwell. Quaker women came into their own as preachers and sometimes as writers of tracts, authorized by the Quaker belief in the spiritual equality of women and men, and by the conviction that all persons should testify to whatever the inner light communicates to them. Many of their memoirs, such as Dorothy Waugh's "Relation," were originally published both to call attention to their sufferings and to inspire other Quakers to similar feats of moral fortitude.

While most writers during this period were royalists, two of the best, Andrew Marvell and John Milton, sided with the republic. Marvell wrote most of the poems for which he is still remembered while at Nunappleton in the early 1650s, tutoring the daughter of the retired parliamentary general Thomas Fairfax; in 1657 he joined his friend Milton in the office of Cromwell's Latin Secretariat. In Marvell's love poems and pastorals, older convictions about ordered harmony give way to wittily unresolved or unresolvable oppositions, some playful, some painful. Marvell's conflictual worldview seems unmistakably the product of the unsettled civil war decades. In his country-house poem "Upon Appleton House," even agricultural practices associated with regular changes of the season, like the flooding of fallow fields, become emblems of unpredictability, reversal, and category confusion. In other poems Marvell eschews an authoritative poetic persona in favor of speakers that seem limited or even a bit unbalanced: a mower who argues for the values of pastoral with disconcerting belligerence, a nymph who seems to exemplify virginal innocence but also immature self-absorption and possibly unconscious sexual perversity. Marvell's finest political poem, "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland," celebrates Cromwell's providential victories even while inviting sympathy for the executed king and warning about the potential dangers of Cromwell's meteoric rise to power.

A promising, prolific young poet in the 1630s, Milton committed himself to the English republic as soon as the conflict between the king and Parliament began to take shape. His loyalty to the revolution remained unwavering despite

his disillusion when it failed to realize his ideals: religious toleration for all Protestants and the free circulation of ideas without prior censorship. First as a self-appointed adviser to the state, then as its official defender, he addressed the great issues at stake in the 1640s and the 1650s. In a series of treatises he argued for church disestablishment and for the removal of bishops, for a republican government based on natural law and popular sovereignty, for the right of the people to dismiss from office and even execute their rulers, and, most controversial even to his usual allies, in favor of divorce on the grounds of incompatibility. Milton was a Puritan, but both his theological heterodoxies and his poetic vision mark him as a distinctly unusual one.

During his years as a political polemicist, Milton also wrote several sonnets, revising that small, love-centered genre to accommodate large private and public topics: a Catholic massacre of proto-Protestants in the foothills of Italy, the agonizing questions posed by his blindness, various threats to intellectual and religious liberty. In 1645 he published his collected English and Latin poems as a counterstatement to the royalist volumes of the 1640s. Yet his most ambitious poetry remained to be written. Milton probably wrote some part of *Paradise Lost* in the late 1650s and completed it after the Restoration, encompassing in it all he had thought, read, and experienced of tyranny, political controversy, evil, deception, love, and the need for companionship. This cosmic blank-verse epic assimilates and critiques the epic tradition and Milton's entire intellectual and literary heritage, classical and Christian. Yet it centers not on martial heroes but on a domestic couple who must discover how to live a good life day by day, in Eden and later in the fallen world, amid intense emotional pressures and the seductions of evil.

Seventeenth-century poetry, prose, and drama retains its hold on readers because so much of it is so very good, fusing intellectual power, emotional passion, and extraordinary linguistic artfulness. Poetry in this period ranges over an astonishing variety of topics and modes: highly erotic celebrations of sexual desire, passionate declarations of faith and doubt, lavishly embroidered paeans to friends and benefactors, tough-minded assessments of social and political institutions. English dramatists were at the height of their powers, situating characters of unprecedented complexity in plays sometimes remorselessly satiric, sometimes achingly moving. In these years English prose becomes a highly flexible instrument, suited to informal essays, scientific treatises, religious meditation, political polemic, biography and autobiography, and journalistic reportage. Literary forms evolve for the exquisitely modulated representation of the self: dramatic monologues, memoirs, spiritual autobiographies, sermons in which the preacher takes himself for an example. Finally, we have in Milton an epic poet who assumed the role of inspired prophet, envisioning a world created by God but shaped by human choice and imagination.

Additional information about the Early Seventeenth Century, including primary texts and images, is available at Norton Literature Online (www.norton.com/literature). Online topics are

- Gender, Family, Household
- *Paradise Lost* in Context
- Civil Wars of Ideas
- Emigrants and Settlers

THE EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

TEXTS	CONTEXTS
1603 James I, <i>Basilizon Doron</i> reissued	1603 Death of Elizabeth I; accession of James I. Plague
1604 William Shakespeare, <i>Othello</i>	
1605 Shakespeare, <i>King Lear</i> . Ben Jonson, <i>The Masque of Blackness</i> . Francis Bacon, <i>The Advancement of Learning</i>	1605 Gunpowder Plot, failed effort by Roman Catholic extremists to blow up Parliament
1606 Jonson, <i>Volpone</i> . Shakespeare, <i>Macbeth</i>	
	1607 Founding of Jamestown colony in Virginia
1609 Shakespeare, <i>Sonnets</i>	1609 Galileo begins observing the heavens with a telescope
1611 "King James" Bible (Authorized Version). Shakespeare, <i>The Tempest</i> . John Donne, <i>The First Anniversary</i> ¹ . Aemilia Lanyer, <i>Salve Dens Rex Judaeorum</i>	
1612 Donne, <i>The Second Anniversary</i> ¹	1612 Death of Prince Henry
1613 Elizabeth Cary, <i>The Tragedy of Mariam</i>	
1614 John Webster, <i>The Duchess of Malfi</i>	
1616 Jonson, <i>Works</i> . James I, <i>Works</i>	1616 Death of Shakespeare
	1618 Beginning of the Thirty Years War
	1619 First African slaves in North America exchanged by Dutch frigate for food and supplies at Jamestown
1620 Bacon, <i>Novum Organum</i>	1620 Pilgrims land at Plymouth
1621 Mary Wroth, <i>The Countess of Montgomery's Urania</i> and <i>Pamphilia to Amphilanthus</i> . Robert Burton, <i>The Anatomy of Melancholy</i>	1621 Donne appointed dean of St. Paul's Cathedral
1623 Shakespeare, First Folio	
1625 Bacon, <i>Essays</i>	1625 Death of James I; accession of Charles I; Charles I marries Henrietta Maria
	1629 Charles I dissolves Parliament
1633 Donne, <i>Poems</i> . George Herbert, <i>The Temple</i>	1633 Galileo forced by the Inquisition to recant the Copernican theory
1637 John Milton, "Lycidas"	
1640 Thomas Carew, <i>Poems</i>	1640 Long Parliament called (1640-53). Archbishop Laud impeached
1642 Thomas Browne, <i>Religio Medici</i> . Milton, <i>The Reason of Church Government</i>	1642 First Civil War begins (1642-46). Parliament closes the theaters
1643 Milton, <i>The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce</i>	1643 Accession of Louis XIV of France

TEXTS	CONTEXTS
1644 Milton, <i>Areopagitica</i>	
1645 Milton, <i>Poems</i> . Edmund Waller, <i>Poems</i>	1645 Archbishop Laud executed. Royalists defeated at Naseby
1648. Robert Herrick, <i>Hesperides</i> and <i>Noble Numbers</i>	1648 Second Civil War. "Pride's Purge" of Parliament
1649 Milton, <i>The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates</i> and <i>Eikonoklastes</i>	1649 Trial and execution of Charles I. Republic declared. Milton becomes Latin Secretary (1649-59)
1650 Henry Vaughan, <i>Silex Scintillans</i> (Part II, 1655)	
1651 Thomas Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> . Andrew Marvell, "Upon Appleton House" (unpublished)	1652 Anglo-Dutch War (1652-54) 1653 Cromwell made Lord Protector 1658 Death of Cromwell; his son Richard made Protector
1660 Milton, <i>Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth</i>	1660 Restoration of Charles II to throne. Royal Society founded 1662 Charles II marries Catherine of Rraganza 1665 The Great Plague 1666 The Great Fire
1666 Margaret Cavendish, <i>The Blazing World</i>	
1667 Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> (in ten books). Katherine Philips, <i>Collected Poems</i> . John Dryden, <i>Annus Mirabilis</i>	
1671 Milton, <i>Paradise Regained</i> and <i>Samson Agonistes</i>	
1674 Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i> (in twelve books)	1674 Death of Milton
1681 Marvell, <i>Poems</i> , published posthumously	

JOHN DONNE
1572-1631

Lovers' eyeballs threaded on a string. A god who assaults the human heart with a battering ram. A teardrop that encompasses and drowns the world. John Donne's poems abound with startling images, some of them exalting and others grotesque. With his strange and playful intelligence, expressed in puns, paradoxes, and the elaborately sustained metaphors known as "conceits." Donne has enthralled and sometimes enraged readers from his day to our own. The tired clichés of love poetry—cheeks like roses, hearts pierced by the arrows of love—emerge reinvigorated and radically transformed by his hand, demanding from the reader an unprecedented level of mental alertness and engagement. Donne prided himself on his wit and displayed it not only in his conceits but in his grasp of learned and obscure discourses ranging from theology to alchemy, from cosmology to law. Yet for all their ostentatious intellectuality, Donne's poems never give the impression of being academic exercises put into verse. Rather, they are intense dramatic monologues in which the speaker's ideas and feelings seem to shift and evolve from one line to the next. Donne's prosody is equally dramatic, mirroring in its variable and jagged rhythms the effect of speech (and eliciting from his classically minded contemporary Ben Jonson the gruff observation that "Donne, for not keeping of accent deserved hanging").

Donne began life as an outsider, and in some respects remained one until death. He was born in London in 1572 into a devout Roman Catholic household. The family was prosperous, but, as the poet later remarked, none had suffered more heavily for its loyalty to the Catholic Church: "I have been ever kept awake in a meditation of martyrdom." Donne was distantly related to the great Catholic humanist and martyr Sir Thomas More. Closer to home, a Jesuit uncle was executed by the brutal method of hanging, castrating, disemboweling, and quartering, and his own brother Henry, arrested for harboring a priest, died in prison of the plague. As a Catholic in Protestant England, growing up in decades when anti-Roman feeling reached new heights, Donne could not expect any kind of public career, nor even to receive a university degree (he left Oxford without one and studied law for a time at the Inns of Court). What he could reasonably expect instead was prejudice, official harassment, and crippling financial penalties. He chose not to live under such conditions. At some point in the 1590s, having returned to London after travels abroad, and having devoted some years to studying theological issues, Donne converted to the English church.

The poems that belong with certainty to this period of his life—the five satires and most of the elegies—reveal a man both fascinated by and keenly critical of English society. Four of the satires treat commonplace Elizabethan topics—foppish and obsequious courtiers, bad poets, corrupt lawyers and a corrupt court—but are unique both in their visceral revulsion and in their intellectual excitement. Donne uses striking images of pestilence, itchy lust, vomit, excrement, and pox to create a unique satiric world, busy, vibrant, and corrupt, in which his dramatic speakers have only to step outside the door to be inundated by all the fools and knaves in Christendom. By contrast, the third satire treats the quest for true religion—the question that preoccupied him above all others in these years—in terms that are serious, passionately witty, and deeply felt. Donne argues that honest doubting search is better than the facile acceptance of any religious tradition, epitomizing that point brilliantly in the image of Truth on a high and craggy hill, very difficult to climb. What is certain is that society's values are of no help whatsoever to the individual seeker—none will escape the final judgment by pleading that "A Harry, or a Martin taught [them] this." In the love elegies Donne seems intent on making up for his social powerlessness through witty representations of mastery in the bedroom and of adventurous travel. In "Elegy 16" he imagines his speaker embarking on a journey "O'er the white Alps" and with mingled tenderness and condescension argues down a naive mistress's pro-

posals to accompany him. And in "Elegy 19," his fondling of a naked lover becomes in a famous conceit the equivalent of exploration in America. Donne's interest in satire and elegy—classical Roman genres, which he helped introduce to English verse—is itself significant. He wrote in English, but he reached out to other traditions.

If Donne's conversion to the Church of England promised him security, social acceptance, and the possibility of a public career, that promise was soon to be cruelly withdrawn. In 1596–97 he participated in the Earl of Essex's military expeditions against Catholic Spain in Cadiz and the Azores (the experience prompted two remarkable descriptive poems of life at sea, "The Storm" and "The Calm") and upon his return became secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal. This should have been the beginning of a successful public career. But his secret marriage in 1601 to Egerton's seventeen-year-old niece Ann More enraged Donne's employer and the bride's wealthy father; Donne was briefly imprisoned and dismissed from service. The poet was reduced to a retired country life beset by financial insecurity and a rapidly increasing family; Ann bore twelve children (not counting miscarriages) by the time she died at age thirty-three. At one point, Donne wrote despairingly that while the death of a child would mean one less mouth to feed, he could not afford the burial expenses. In this bleak period, he wrote but dared not publish *Biathanatos*, a paradoxical defense of suicide.

As his family grew, Donne made every effort to reinstate himself in the favor of the great. To win the approval of James I, he penned *Pseudo-Martyr* (1610), defending the king's insistence that Catholics take the Oath of Allegiance. This set an irrevocable public stamp on his renunciation of Catholicism, and Donne followed up with a witty satire on the Jesuits, *Ignatius His Conclave* (1611). In the same period he was producing a steady stream of occasional poems for friends and patrons such as Somerset (the king's favorite), the Countess of Bedford, and Magdalen Herbert, and for small coteries of courtiers and ladies. Like most gentlemen of his era, Donne saw poetry as a polite accomplishment rather than as a trade or vocation, and in consequence he circulated his poems in manuscript but left most of them uncollected and unpublished. In 1611 and 1612, however, he published the first and second *Anniversaries* on the death of the daughter of his patron Sir Robert Drury.

For some years King James had urged an ecclesiastical career on Donne, denying him any other means of advancement. In 1615 Donne finally consented, overcoming his sense of unworthiness and the pull of other ambitions. He was ordained in the Church of England and entered upon a distinguished career as court preacher, reader in divinity at Lincoln's Inn, and dean of St. Paul's. Donne's metaphorical style, bold erudition, and dramatic wit established him as a great preacher in an age that appreciated learned sermons powerfully delivered. Some 160 of his sermons survive, preached to monarchs and courtiers, lawyers and London magistrates, city merchants and trading companies. As a distinguished clergyman in the Church of England, Donne had traveled an immense distance from the religion of his childhood and the adventurous life of his twenties. Yet in his sermons and late poems we find the same brilliant and idiosyncratic mind at work, refashioning his profane conceits to serve a new and higher purpose. In "Expostulation 19" he praises God as the greatest of literary stylists: "a figurative, a metaphorical God," imagining God as a conceit-maker like himself. In poems, meditations, and sermons, Donne came increasingly to be engaged in anxious contemplation of his own mortality. In "Hymn to God My God, in My Sickness," Donne imagines himself spread out on his deathbed like a map showing the route to the next world. Only a few days before his death he preached "Death's Duel," a terrifying analysis of all life as a decline toward death and dissolution, which contemporaries termed his own funeral sermon. On his deathbed, according to his contemporary biographer Izaak Walton, Donne had a portrait made of himself in his shroud and meditated on it daily. Meditations upon skulls as emblems of mortality were common in the period, but nothing is more characteristic of Donne than to find a way to meditate on his own skull.

Given the shape of Donne's career, it is no surprise that his poems and prose works display an astonishing variety of attitudes, viewpoints, and feelings on the great subjects of love and religion. Yet this variety cannot be fully explained in biographical terms. The poet's own attempt to distinguish between Jack Donne, the young rake, and Dr. Donne, the grave and religious dean of St. Paul's, is (perhaps intentionally) misleading. We do not know the time and circumstances for most of Donne's verses, but it is clear that many of his finest religious poems predate his ordination, and it is possible that he continued to add to the love poems known as his "songs and sonnets" after he entered the church. Theological language abounds in his love poetry, and daringly erotic images occur in his religious verse.

Donne's "songs and sonnets" have been the cornerstone of his reputation almost since their publication in 1633. The title *Songs and Sonnets* associates them with the popular miscellanies of love poems and sonnet sequences in the Petrarchan tradition, but they directly challenge the popular Petrarchan sonnet sequences of the 1590s. The collection contains only one formal sonnet, the "songs" are not notably lyrical, and Donne draws upon and transforms a whole range of literary traditions concerned with love. Like Petrarch, Donne can present himself as the despairing lover of an unattainable lady ("The Funeral"); like Ovid he can be lighthearted, witty, cynical, and frankly lustful ("The Flea," "The Indifferent"); like the Neoplatonists, he espouses a theory of transcendent love, but he breaks from them with his insistence in many poems on the union of physical and spiritual love. What binds these poems together and grants them enduring power is their compelling immediacy. The speaker is always in the throes of intense emotion, and that emotion is not static but constantly shifting and evolving with the turns of the poet's thought. Donne seems supremely present in these poems, standing behind their various speakers. Where Petrarchan poets exhaustively catalogue their beloved's physical features (though in highly conventional terms), Donne's speakers tell us little or nothing about the loved woman, or about the male friends imagined as the audience for many poems. Donne's repeated insistence that the private world of lovers is superior to the wider public world, or that it somehow contains all of that world, or obliterates it, is understandable in light of the many disappointments of his career. Yet this was also a poet who threw himself headlong into life, love, and sexuality, and later into the very visible public role of court and city preacher.

Donne was long grouped with Herbert, Vaughan, Crashaw, Marvell, Traherne, and Cowley under the heading of "Metaphysical poets." The expression was first employed by critics like Samuel Johnson and William Hazlitt, who found the intricate conceits and self-conscious learning of these poets incompatible with poetic beauty and sincerity. Early in the twentieth century, T. S. Eliot sought to restore their reputation, attributing to them a unity of thought and feeling that had since their time been lost. There was, however, no formal "school" of Metaphysical poetry, and the characteristics ascribed to it by later critics pertain chiefly to Donne. Like Ben Jonson, John Donne had a large influence on the succeeding generation, but he remains a singularity.

FROM SONGS AND SONNETS¹The Flea²

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
 How little that which thou deniest me is;
 Me it sucked first, and now sucks thee,
 And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;
 5 Thou know'st that this cannot be said
 A sin, or shame, or loss of maidenhead,⁰ *virginity*
 Yet this enjoys before it woo,
 And pampered⁰ swells with one blood made of two,³ *overfed*
 And this, alas, is more than we would do.

10 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, we are met,
 15 And cloistered⁴ in these living walls of jet.⁰ *hlack*
 Though use⁰ make you apt to kill me,⁵ *habit*
 Let not to that, self-murder added be,
 And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
 20 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;
 25 '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.

1633

The Good-Morrow⁰*morning greeting*

I wonder, by my troth,⁰ what thou and I *good faith*
 Did, till we loved? Were we not weaned till then,
 But sucked on country pleasures, childishly?

I. Donne's love poems were written over nearly two decades, beginning around 1595; they were not published in Donne's lifetime but circulated widely in manuscript. The title *Songs and Sonnets* was supplied in the second edition (1635), which grouped the poems by kind, but neither this arrangement nor the more haphazard organization of the first edition (1633) is Donne's own. In Donne's time the term "sonnet" often meant simply "love lyric," and in fact there is only one formal sonnet in this collection. For the poems we present

we follow the 1635 edition, beginning with the extremely popular poem "The Flea."

2. This insect afforded a popular erotic theme for poets all over Europe, deriving from a pseudo-Ovidian medieval poem in which a lover envies the flea for the liberties it takes with his mistress's body.

3. The swelling suggests pregnancy.

4. As in a convent or monastery.

5. By denying me sexual gratification.

- Or snorted⁰ we in the seven sleepers' den?¹ *snored*
 5 'Twas so; but^o this, all pleasures fancies be. *except for*
 If ever any beauty I did see,
 Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee.
- And now good morrow to our waiting souls,
 Which watch not one another out of fear;
 10 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 others, worlds on worlds have shown:
 Let us possess one world;² each hath one, and is one.
- 15 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 mixed equally;³
 20 If our two loves be one, or thou and I
 Love so alike that none do slacken, none can die.

1633

Song

- Go and catch a falling star,
 Get with child a mandrake root,¹
 Tell me where all past years are,
 Or who cleft the Devil's foot,
 5 Teach me to hear mermaids⁰ singing, *sirens*
 Or to keep off envy's stinging,
 And find
 What wind
 Serves to advance an honest mind.
- 10 If thou beest born to strange sights,
 Things invisible to see,
 Ride ten thousand days and nights,
 Till age snow white hairs on thee,
 Thou, when thou return'st, wilt tell me
 15 All strange wonders that befell thee,
 And swear
 No where
 Lives a woman true, and fair.

1. Cave in Ephesus where, according to legend, seven Christian youths hid from pagan persecutors and slept for 187 years.

2. "Our world" in many manuscripts.

3. Scholastic philosophy taught that when the elements were imperfectly mixed ("not mixed equally"), matter was mutable and mortal; con-

versely, when the elements were perfectly mixed, matter was immutable and hence immortal.

1. The mandrake root, or mandragora, is forked like the lower part of the human body. It was thought to shriek when pulled from the ground and to kill all humans who heard it; it was also (paradoxically) thought to help women conceive.

If thou find'st one, let me know,
 20 Such a pilgrimage were sweet;
 Yet do not, I would not go,
 Though at next door we might meet;
 Though she were true when you met her,
 And last till you write your letter,
 25 Yet she
 Will be
 False, ere I come, to two, or three.

1633

The Undertaking

I have done one braver⁰ thing *more glorious*
 Than all the Worthies¹ did,
 And yet a braver thence doth spring,
 Which is, to keep that hid.

5 It were but madness now t' impart
 The skill of specular stone,²
 When he which can have learned the art
 To cut it, can find none.

So, if I now should utter this,
 10 Others (because no more
 Such stuff to work upon, there is)
 Would love but as before.

But he who loveliness within
 Hath found, all outward loathes,
 15 For he who color loves, and skin,
 Loves but their oldest clothes.

If, as I have, you also do
 Virtue attired in woman see,
 And dare love that, and say so too,
 20 And forget the He and She;

And if this love, though placed so,
 From profane men you hide,
 Which will no faith on this bestow,
 Or, if they do, deride;

1. According to medieval legend, the Nine Worthies, or supreme heroes of history, included three Jews (Joshua, David, Judas Maccabaeus), three pagans (Hector, Alexander, Julius Caesar), and three Christians (Arthur, Charlemagne, Godfrey of

Boulogne).

2. A transparent or translucent material, reputed to have been used in antiquity for windows, but no longer known. Great skill was needed to cut it.

25 Then you have done a braver thing
 Than all the Worthies did;
 And a braver thence will spring,
 Which is, to keep that hid.

1633

The Sun Rising¹

Busy old fool, unruly sun,
 Why dost thou thus
 Through windows and through curtains call on us?
 Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?
 Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide
 Late schoolboys and sour prentices,
 Go tell court huntsmen that the king will ride,²
 Call country ants to harvest offices;³
 Love, all alike, no season knows nor clime,
 10 Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.

Thy beams, so reverend and strong
 Why shouldst thou think?
 I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
 But that I would not lose her sight so long;
 15 If her eyes have not blinded thine,
 Look, and tomorrow late, tell me,
 Whether both th' Indias of spice and mine⁴
 Be where thou leftst them, or lie here with me.
 Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
 20 And thou shalt hear, All here in one bed lay.

She is all states,⁰ and all princes I, *nations*
 Nothing else is.
 Princes do but play us; compared to this,
 All honor's mimic, all wealth alchemy.
 25 Thou, sun, art half as happy as we,
 In that the world's contracted thus;
 Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be
 To warm the world, that's done in warming us.
 Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
 This bed thy center is, these walls thy sphere.⁵

1633

1. Some lines of this poem recall Ovid, *Amores* 1.13.

2. King James was very fond of hunting.

3. Autumn chores. "Country ants": farm drudges.

4. The India of "spice" is the East Indies; that of

"mine" (gold), the West Indies.

5. According to the old Ptolemaic astronomy, the earth was the center of the sun's orbit, and the sun's motion was contained within its sphere.

The Indifferent¹

I can love both fair and brown,²
 Her whom abundance melts, and her whom want betrays,
 Her who loves loneness best, and her who masks and plays,
 Her whom the country formed, and whom the town,
 5 Her who believes, and her who tries,⁰ *tests*
 Her who still⁰ weeps with spongy eyes, *always*
 And her who is dry cork, and never cries;
 I can love her, and her, and you, and you,
 I can love any, so she be not true.

10 Will no other vice content you?
 Will it not serve your turn to do as did your mothers?
 Or have you all old vices spent, and now would find out others?
 Or doth a fear that men are true torment you?
 O we are not, be not you so;

15 Let me, and do you, twenty know.
 Rob me, but bind me not, and let me go.
 Must I, who came to travail thorough³ you,
 Grow your fixed subject, because you are true?

Venus heard me sigh this song,
 20 And by love's sweetest part, variety, she swore,
 She heard not this till now; and that it should be so no more.
 She went, examined, and returned ere long,
 And said, Alas, some two or three
 Poor heretics in love there be,
 25 Which think to stablish dangerous constancy.
 But I have told them, Since you will be true,
 You shall be true to them who are false to you.

1633

The Canonization¹

For God's sake hold your tongue, and let me love,
 Or chide my palsy, or my gout,
 My five gray hairs, or ruined fortune, flout,
 With wealth your state, your mind with arts improve,
 5 Take you a course, get you a place,²
 Observe His Honor, or His Grace,³
 Or the king's real, or his stamped face⁴
 Contemplate; what you will, approve,⁰ *try, test*
 So you will let me love.

1. Some lines of this poem recall Ovid, *Amores* 2.4.
 2. Both blonde and brunette.
 3. Through. "Travail": grief.
 1. The poem plays off against the Roman Catholic process of determining that certain persons are

saints, proper objects of veneration and prayer.
 2. An appointment, at court or elsewhere. "Take you a course": follow some career.
 3. Pay court to some lord or bishop.
 4. On coins; "real" (royal) refers also to a particular Spanish coin.

10 Alas, alas, who's injured by my love?
 What merchant's ships have my sighs drowned?
 Who says my tears have overflowed his ground?
 When did my colds a forward⁰ spring remove?⁵ *early*
 When did the heats which my veins fill
 15 Add one man to the plaguy bill?⁶
 Soldiers find wars, and lawyers find out still
 Litigious men, which quarrels move,
 Though she and I do love.

Call us what you will, we are made such by love;
 20 Call her one, me another fly,
 We're tapers too, and at our own cost die,⁷
 And we in us find the eagle and the dove.
 The phoenix riddle hath more wit
 By us: we two being one, are it.⁸

25 So, to one neutral thing both sexes fit.
 We die and rise the same, and prove
 Mysterious by this love.

We can die by it, if not live by love,
 And if unfit for tombs and hearse
 30 Our legend be, it will be fit for verse;
 And if no piece of chronicle we prove,
 We'll build in sonnets pretty rooms;⁹
 As well a well-wrought urn becomes⁰ *befits*

The greatest ashes, as half-acre tombs,
 35 And by these hymns,¹ all shall approve⁰ *confirm*
 Us canonized for love:

And thus invoke us: You whom reverend love
 Made one another's hermitage;
 You, to whom love was peace, that now is rage;
 40 Who did the whole world's soul contract,² and drove
 Into the glasses of your eyes
 (So made such mirrors, and such spies, *spyglasses, telescopes*
 That they did all to you epitomize)
 Countries, towns, courts:³ Beg from above
 45 A pattern of your love!

1633

5. Petrarchan lovers traditionally sigh, weep, and are frozen because of their mistresses' neglect.

6. Deaths from the plague, which raged in summer, were recorded by parish in weekly lists.

7. Flies were emblems of transience and lustfulness; tapers (candles) attract flies to their death and also consume themselves. "Die" in the punning terminology of the period means to experience orgasm, and there was a superstition that intercourse shortened life.

8. The eagle signifies strength and vision; the dove, meekness and mercy. The phoenix was a mythic Arabian bird, only one of which existed at any one time. After living five hundred years, it was consumed by fire, then rose triumphantly from its

ashes a new bird. Thus it was a symbol of immortality and sometimes associated with Christ. "Eagle" and "dove" are also alchemical terms for processes leading to the rise of "phoenix," a stage in the transmutation of metals to gold.

9. "Rooms" (punning on the Italian meaning of "stanza") will contain their exploits, as prose chronicle histories contain great deeds done in the world.

1. The lover's own poems.

2. An alternative meaning is "extract."

3. "Countries, towns, courts" are objects of the verb "drove." The notion is that eyes both see and reflect the outside world, and so can contain all of it.

Song

Sweetest love, I do not go,
 For weariness of thee,
 Nor in hope the world can show
 A fitter love lor me;
 5 But since that I
 Must die at last, 'tis best,
 To use myself in jest
 Thus by feigned deaths⁰ to die. *i.e., absences*

Yesternight the sun went hence
 10 And yet is here today,
 He hath no desire nor sense,
 Nor half so short a way:
 Then fear not me,
 But believe that I shall make
 15 Speedier journeys, since I take
 More wings and spurs than he.

O how feeble is man's power,
 That if good fortune fall,⁰ *happen*
 Cannot add another hour,
 20 Nor a lost hour recall!
 But come bad chance,
 And we join to't our strength,
 And we teach it art and length,
 Itself o'er us to'advance.

25 When thou sigh'st, thou sigh'st not wind,
 But sigh'st my soul away,
 When thou weep'st, unkindly¹ kind,
 My life's blood doth decay.
 It cannot be
 30 That thou lov'st me, as thou say'st,
 If in thine my life thou waste,
 Thou art the best of me.

Let not thy divining⁰ heart *prophetic*
 Forethink me any ill,
 35 Destiny may take thy part,
 And may thy fears fulfill;
 But think that we
 Are but turned aside to sleep;
 They who one another keep
 40 Alive, ne'er parted be.

1. Also carries the meaning "unnaturally."

Air and Angels

Twice or thrice had I loved thee,
 Before I knew thy face or name;
 So in a voice, so in a shapeless flame,
 Angels affect us oft, and worshipped be;
 5 Still⁰ when, to where thou wert, I came, *always*
 Some lovely glorious nothing¹ I did see.
 But since my soul, whose child love is,
 Takes limbs of flesh, and else could nothing do,²
 More subtle⁰ than the parent is *rarefied*
 10 Love must not be, but take a body too;
 And therefore what thou wert, and who,
 I bid love ask, and now
 That it assume thy body I allow,
 And fix itself in thy lip, eye, and brow.
 15 Whilst thus to ballast love I thought,
 And so more steadily to have gone,
 With wares which would sink⁰ admiration, *overwhelm*
 I saw I had love's pinnacle⁰ overfraught;⁰ *small boat / overballasted*
 Every thy hair for love to work upon
 20 Is much too much, some fitter must be sought;
 For, nor in nothing, nor in things
 Extreme and scatt'ring⁰ bright, can love inhere, *diffused, dazzling*
 Then as an angel, face and wings
 Of air, not pure as it, yet pure doth wear,
 25 So thy love may be my love's sphere;³
 Just such disparity
 As is 'twixt air and angels' purity,
 'Twixt women's love and men's will ever be.⁴

1633

Break of Day¹

'Tis true, 'tis day; what though it be?
 O wilt thou therefore rise from me?
 Why should we rise because 'tis light?
 Did we lie down because 'twas night?
 5 Love, which in spite of darkness brought us hither,
 Should in despite of light keep us together.

Light hath no tongue, but is all eye;
 If it could speak as well as spy,

1. Spiritual beauty, the true object of love in Neoplatonic philosophy.

2. My soul could not function unless it were in a body.

3. Each sphere was thought to be governed by an angel (an intelligence).

4. It was commonly believed that angels, when they appeared to humans, assumed a body of air

which, though pure, was less so than the angel's spiritual essence.

1. An aubade, or song of the lovers' parting at dawn, this poem is unusual for Donne in having a female speaker. The poem was given a musical setting and published in 1622, in William Corkine's *Second Book of Ayers*.

This were the worst that it could say,
 10 That being well, I fain^o would stay, *gladly*
 And that I loved my heart and honor so
 That I would not from him, that had them, go.

Must business thee from hence remove?
 O, that's the worst disease of love.
 15 The poor, the foul, the false, love can
 Admit, but not the busied man.
 He which hath business, and makes love, doth do
 Such wrong, as when a married man doth woo.

1622, 1633

A Valediction:¹ Of Weeping

Let me pour forth
 My tears before thy face whilst I stay here,
 For thy face coins them, and thy stamp^o they bear, *image*
 And by this mintage they are something worth,
 5 For thus they be
 Pregnant of thee;
 Fruits of much grief they are, emblems^o of more— *symbols*
 When a tear falls, that thou falls which it bore,
 So thou and I are nothing then, when on a diverse^o shore. *different*

10 On a round ball
 A workman that hath copies by can lay
 An Europe, Afric, and an Asia,
 And quickly make that, which was nothing, all;²
 So doth each tear
 15 Which thee doth wear,³
 A globe, yea world, by that impression grow,
 Till thy tears mixed with mine do overflow
 This world; by waters sent from thee, my heaven dissolved so.

O more than moon,
 20 Draw not up seas to drown me in thy sphere;⁴
 Weep me not dead in thine arms, but forbear
 To teach the sea what it may do too soon.
 Let not the wind
 Example find
 25 To do me more harm than it purposeth;
 Since thou and I sigh one another's breath,
 Whoe'er sighs most is cruelest, and hastes the other's death.

1633

1. A farewell poem, one of four so titled in the *Songs and Sonnets*. Another is "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning," p. 1275.

2. I.e., on a blank globe one can place maps of the continents and so convert a cipher ("nothing") into

the whole world ("all").

3. Which bears your image.

4. A star or planet with more power of attraction than the moon might not only affect tides but draw the very seas unto itself.

Love's Alchemy

Some that have deeper digged love's mine than I,
 Say where his centric⁰ happiness doth lie: *central*
 I have loved, and got, and told,
 But should I love, get, tell, till I were old,
 .5 I should not find that hidden mystery;
 O, 'tis imposture all:
 And as no chemic⁰ yet the elixir¹ got, *alchemist*
 But glorifies his pregnant pot²
 If by the way to him befall
 10 Some odoriferous thing, or medicinal;
 So lovers dream a rich and long delight,
 But get a winter-seeming summer's night.³

Our ease, our thrift, our honor, and our day,
 Shall we for this vain bubble's shadow pay?
 15 Ends love in this, that my man" *servant*
 Can be as happy as I can, if he can
 Endure the short scorn of a bridegroom's play?
 That loving wretch that swears
 'Tis not the bodies marry, but the minds,
 20 Which he in her angelic finds,
 Would swear as justly that he hears,
 In that day's rude hoarse minstrelsy, the spheres.⁴
 Hope not for mind in women; at their best
 Sweetness and wit, they are but mummy, possessed.⁵

1633

A Nocturnal upon Saint Lucy's Day,
Being the Shortest Day¹

'Tis the year's midnight and it is the day's,
 Lucy's, who scarce seven hours herself unmasks;
 The sun is spent, and now his flasks²
 Send forth light squibs,⁰ no constant rays. *small fireworks*
 5 The world's whole sap is sunk;

1. A magic medicine sought by alchemists and reputed to heal all ills.

2. A fertile (and womb-shaped) retort, calling up the common analogy between producing the elixir of life and human generation.

3. A night cold as in winter and short as in summer.

4. The perfect harmony of the planets, moving in concentric crystalline "spheres," is contrasted with the boisterous serenade of pots, pans, and trumpets performed on the wedding night.

5. The syntax of the last two lines is unclear, and they are punctuated differently in various copies. The 1633 edition reads: "at their best, / Sweetnesse, and wit they'are, but, *mummy*, possesst."

Many modern editors punctuate as we do here. "Mummy" suggests a corpselike body, without mind or spirit.

1. The nocturne, or night office of the Roman Catholic Church, is a service held in the primitive church at midnight. St. Lucy's Day fell on December 13 according to the old calendar still in use in England at the time, and its vigil (the previous day and night) is the winter solstice, the shortest day of the year. At this time of the year, the sun rises after 8 A.M. in the latitude of London and sets well before 4 P.M.

2. The stars are "flasks," thought to store up light from the sun.

The general balm th' hydroptic³ earth hath drunk,
 Whither, as to the bed's feet, life is shrunk,
 Dead and interred; yet all these seem to laugh,
 Compared with me, who am their epitaph.

Study me, then, you who shall lovers be
 At the next world, that is, at the next spring;
 For I am every dead thing
 In whom love wrought new alchemy.
 For his art did express⁰
 A quintessence⁴ even from nothingness,
 From dull privations and lean emptiness.
 He ruined me, and I am re-begot
 Of absence, darkness, death: things which are not.

extract

All others from all things draw all that's good,
 Life, soul, form, spirit, whence they being have;
 I, by love's limbeck,⁵ am the grave
 Of all that's nothing. Oft a flood
 Have we two wept, and so
 Drowned the whole world, us two; oft did we grow
 To be two chaoses when we did show
 Care to aught⁰ else; and often absences
 Withdrew our souls, and made us carcasses.

anything

But I am by her death (which word wrongs her)
 Of the first nothing the elixir grown;⁶
 Were I a man, that I were one
 I needs must know; I should prefer,
 If I were any beast,
 Some ends, some means; yea plants, yea stones detest
 And love.⁷ All, all some properties invest.
 If I an ordinary nothing were,
 As shadow, a light and body must be here.

But I am none; nor will my sun renew.
 You lovers, for whose sake the lesser sun
 At this time to the Goat⁸ is run
 To fetch new lust and give it you,
 Enjoy your summer all.
 Since she enjoys her long night's festival,
 Let me prepare towards her, and let me call
 This hour her vigil and her eve, since this
 Both the year's and the day's deep midnight is.

1633

3. Dropsical, thus insatiably thirsty. "General balm": the supposedly life-preserving essence of all things.

4. The reputed fifth essence, a celestial element beyond the mundane four elements (earth, water, air, fire), thought to be latent in all things and to be a universal cure. Alchemists sought to extract it.

5. Alembic; a vessel used in distilling.

6. I.e., the quintessence of that absolute nothingness that existed before the creation.

7. Beasts have intentions; plants and even stones (like lodestones) have attractions and antipathies.

8. The sign of Capricorn, which the sun enters at the winter solstice; the goat is an emblem of sexual vigor.

The Bait¹

Come live with me and be my love,
 And we will some new pleasures prove,⁰ *try*
 Of golden sands and crystal brooks,
 With silken lines and silver hooks.

5 There will the river whispering run,
 Warmed by thine eyes more than the sun.
 And there the enamored fish will stay,
 Begging themselves they may betray.

10 When thou wilt swim in that live bath,
 Each fish, which every channel hath,
 Will amorously to thee swim,
 Gladder to catch thee, than thou him.

15 If thou, to be so seen, beest loath,
 By sun or moon, thou darkenest both;
 And if myself have leave to see,
 I need not their light, having thee.

20 Let others freeze with angling reeds,
 And cut their legs with shells and weeds,
 Or treacherously poor fish beset
 With strangling snare or windowy net.

Let coarse bold hands from slimy nest
 The bedded fish in banks outwrest,
 Or curious traitors, sleeve-silk flies,²
 Bewitch poor fishes' wandering eyes.

25 For thee, thou need'st no such deceit,
 For thou thyself art thine own bait;
 That fish that is not caught thereby,
 Alas, is wiser far than I.

1633

The Apparition

When by thy scorn, O murderess, I am dead,
 And that thou thinkst thee free
 From all solicitation from me,
 Then shall my ghost come to thy bed,
 5 And thee, feigned vestal,¹ in worse arms shall see;
 Then thy sick taper will begin to wink,^o *flicker*

1. This poem is Donne's response to Marlowe's "Passionate Shepherd to His Love." Another of the many responses was Raleigh's "The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd."

2. Flies made of unraveled silk. "Curious": exquisitely made.

1. Virgins consecrated to the Roman goddess Vesta.

And he whose thou art then, being tired before,
 Will, if thou stir, or pinch to wake him, think
 Thou call'st for more,
 10 And in false sleep will from thee shrink,
 And then, poor aspen wretch,² neglected thou
 Bathed in a cold quicksilver sweat³ wilt lie
 A verier⁰ ghost than I; *truer*
 What I will say, I will not tell thee now,
 15 Lest that preserve thee; and since my love is spent,
 I had rather thou shouldst painfully repent,
 Than by my threatenings rest still innocent.

1633

A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning¹

As virtuous men pass mildly away,
 And whisper to their souls to go,
 Whilst some of their sad friends do say
 The breath goes now, and some say, No;
 5 So let us melt, and make no noise,
 No tear-floods, nor sigh-tempests move;
 'Twere profanation⁰ of our joys *desecration*
 To tell the laity our love.
 Moving of th' earth brings harms and fears,
 10 Men reckon what it did and meant;
 But trepidation of the spheres,
 Though greater far, is innocent.²
 Dull sublunary³ lovers' love
 (Whose soul is sense) cannot admit
 15 Absence, because it doth remove
 Those things which elemented⁰ it. *composed*
 But we, by a love so much refined
 That ourselves know not what it is,
 Inter-assured of the mind,
 20 Care less, eyes, lips, and hands to miss.
 Our two souls therefore, which are one,
 Though I must go, endure not yet

2. Aspen leaves flutter in the slightest breeze.

3. Sweating in terror; quicksilver (mercury) was a stock prescription for venereal disease, and sweating was part of the cure.

1. For "valediction" see p. 1271, n. 1. Izaak Walton speculated that this poem was addressed to Donne's wife on the occasion of his trip to the Continent in 1611, but there is no proof of that. Donne was, however, apprehensive about that trip; Walton also heard that, while abroad, Donne had a

startling vision of his wife holding a dead baby at about the time she gave birth to a stillborn child.

2. Earthquakes cause damage and were thought to be portentous. "Trepidation" (in the Ptolemaic cosmology) is an oscillation of the ninth or crystalline sphere imparted to all the inner spheres. Though a much more violent motion than an earthquake, it is neither destructive nor sinister.

3. Beneath the moon, therefore earthly, sensual, and subject to change.

A breach, but an expansion,
 Like gold to airy thinness beat.

25 If they be two, they are two so
 As stiff twin compasses⁴ are two;
 Thy soul, the fixed foot, makes no show
 To move, but doth, if th' other do.

And though it in the center sit,
 30 Yet when the other far doth roam,
 It leans and hearkens after it,
 And grows erect, as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must,
 Like th' other foot, obliquely run;
 35 Thy firmness makes my circle just,
 And makes me end where I begun.

1633

The Ecstasy¹

Where, like a pillow on a bed,
 A pregnant bank swelled up to rest
 The violet's reclining head,
 Sat we two, one another's best.

5 Our hands were firmly cemented
 With a fast balm^o which thence did spring, *perspiration*
 Our eye-beams² twisted, and did thread
 Our eyes upon one double string;

So to intergraft our hands, as yet
 10 Was all our means to make us one,
 And pictures in our eyes³ to get^o *beget*
 Was all our propagation.

As 'twixt two equal armies Fate
 Suspends uncertain victory,
 15 Our souls (which to advance their state
 Were gone out) hung 'twixt her and me;

And whilst our souls negotiate there,
 We like sepulchral statues lay;
 All day the same our postures were,
 20 And we said nothing all the day.

4. The two legs of a geometer's or draftsman's compass. This simile is the most famous example of the "metaphysical conceit" (see the "Literary Terminology" appendix to this volume).

1. From *ekstasis* (Greek), a movement of the soul

outside of the body.

2. Invisible shafts of light, thought of as going out of the eyes and thereby enabling one to see things.

3. Reflections of each in the other's eyes, often called "making babies."

If any, so by love refined
 That he soul's language understood,
 And by good love were grown all mind,⁴
 Within convenient distance stood,

 25 He (though he knew not which soul spake,
 Because both meant, both spake the same)
 Might thence a new concoction⁵ take,
 And part far purer than he came.

 This ecstasy doth unperplex,
 30 We said, and tell us what we love;
 We see by this it was not sex;
 We see we saw not what did move;⁰ *motivate us*

 But as all several⁰ souls contain *separate*
 Mixture of things, they know not what,
 35 Love these mixed souls doth mix again,
 And makes both one, each this and that.

 A single violet transplant,
 The strength, the color, and the size
 (All which before was poor and scant)
 40 Redoubles still,⁰ and multiplies. *continually*

 When love with one another so
 Interinanimates two souls,
 That abler soul, which thence doth flow,
 Defects of loneliness controls.

 45 We then, who are this new soul, know
 Of what we are composed and made,
 For th' atomies⁰ of which we grow *components*
 Are souls, whom no change can invade.

 But O alas, so long, so far
 50 Our bodies why do we forbear?
 They are ours, though they are not we; we are
 The intelligences, they the sphere.⁶

 We owe them thanks because they thus
 Did us to us at first convey,
 55 Yielded their forces, sense, to us,
 Nor are dross to us, but allay.⁷

 On man heaven's influence works not so
 But that it first imprints the air.⁸

4. On this higher love, see Bembo's ladder of love from Castiglione's *The Courtier*.

5. In the alchemical sense of sublimation or purification.

6. In Ptolemaic astronomy, each planet, set in a transparent "sphere" that revolved and so carried

it around the earth, was inhabited by a controlling angelic "intelligence."

7. "Dross" is an impurity that weakens metal; "allay" (alloy) strengthens it.

8. Astrological influences were thought to work on people through the medium of the surrounding air.

So soul into the soul may flow,
 60 Though it to body first repair.⁰ *go*

As our blood labors to beget
 Spirits⁹ as like souls as it can,
 Because such fingers need⁰ to knit *are needed*
 That subtle knot which makes us man,

65 So must pure lovers' souls descend
 T' affections, and to faculties
 Which sense may reach and apprehend;
 Else a great prince in prison lies.

To our bodies turn we then, that so
 70 Weak men on love revealed may look;
 Love's mysteries¹ in souls do grow,
 But yet the body is his book.

And if some lover, such as we,
 Have heard this dialogue of one,²
 75 Let him still mark⁰ us; he shall see *observe*
 Small change when we are to bodies gone.

1633

The Funeral

Whoever comes to shroud me, do not harm
 Nor question much
 That subtle wreath of hair which crowns my arm;
 The mystery, the sign you must not touch,
 5 For 'tis my outward soul,
 Viceroy to that, which then to heaven being gone,
 Will leave this to control,
 And keep these limbs, her¹ provinces, from dissolution.

For if the sinewy thread² my brain lets fall
 10 Through every part
 Can tie those parts and make me one of all,
 These hairs which upward grew, and strength and art
 Have from a better brain,
 Can better do it; except⁰ she meant that I *unless*
 15 By this should know my pain,
 As prisoners then are manacled, when they're condemned to die.

9. Subtle substances thought to be produced by the blood to serve as intermediaries between body and soul.

1. The implied comparison is with God's mysteries, which are revealed and may be read in the book of Nature and the book of Scripture.

2. "Dialogue of one" because "both meant, both spake the same" (line 26).

1. The soul's, but also the mistress's (cf. "she," line 14).

2. The nervous system.

Whate'er she meant by it, bury it with me,
 For since I am
 Love's martyr, it might breed idolatry,
 20 If into others' hands these relics³ came:
 As 'twas humility
 To afford to it all that a soul can do,
 So 'tis some bravery,
 That since you would save⁴ none of me, I bury some of you.

1633

The Blossom

 Little think'st thou, poor flower,
 Whom I have watched six or seven days,
 And seen thy birth, and seen what every hour
 Gave to thy growth, thee to this height to raise,
 5 And now dost laugh and triumph on this bough,
 Little think'st thou
 That it will freeze anon, and that I shall
 Tomorrow find thee fall'n, or not at all.

 Little think'st thou, poor heart,
 10 That labor'st yet to nestle thee,
 And think'st by hovering here to get a part
 In a forbidden or forbidding tree,¹
 And hop'st her stiffness by long siege to bow,
 Little think'st thou
 is That thou tomorrow, ere that sun doth wake,
 Must with this sun and me a journey take.

 But thou, which lov'st to be
 Subtle to plague thyself, wilt say,
 Alas, if you must go, what's that to me?
 20 Here lies my business, and here I will stay:
 You go to friends whose love and means present
 Various content⁰
 To your eyes, ears, and tongue, and every part.
 If then your body go, what need you a heart?

satisfactions

25 Well, then, stay here; but know,
 When thou hast stayed and done thy most,
 A naked thinking heart that makes no show
 Is to a woman but a kind of ghost.
 How shall she know my heart; or, having none,
 30 Know thee for one?

3. Body parts or other objects belonging to a saint, venerated by Roman Catholics.

4. All the early printed texts read "have" (which carries sexual connotations), while many manu-

scripts read "save."

1. The fruit of this tree is "forbidden" (presumably because the woman is married) or "forbidding" (because she is unwilling).

Practice may make her know some other part,
But take my word, she doth not know a heart.

Meet me at London, then,
Twenty days hence, and thou shalt see
35 Me fresher and more fat^o by being with men *prosperous*
Than if I had stayed still with her and thee.
For God's sake, if you can, be you so too:
I would give you
There to another friend, whom we shall find
40 As glad to have my body as my mind.

1633

The Relic

When my grave is broke up again
Some second guest to entertain
(For graves have learned that woman-head^o *female trait*
To be to more than one a bed),¹
5 And he that digs it spies
A bracelet of bright hair about the bone,
Will he not let us alone,
And think that there a loving couple lies,
Who thought that this device might be some way
10 To make their souls, at the last busy day,^o *Judgment Day*
Meet at this grave, and make a little stay?

If this fall^o in a time, or land, *happen*
Where mis-devotion² doth command,
Then he that digs us up will bring
15 Us to the bishop and the king,
To make us relics; then
Thou shalt be a Mary Magdalen, and I
A something else thereby;
All women shall adore us, and some men;
20 And since at such times, miracles are sought,
I would have that age by this paper taught
What miracles we harmless lovers wrought.

First, we loved well and faithfully,
Yet knew not what we loved, nor why,
25 Difference of sex no more we knew,
Than our guardian angels do;
Coming and going, we
Perchance might kiss, but not between those meals;³
Our hands ne'er touched the seals^o *sexual organs*

1. Graves were often used to inter successive corpses, the bones of previous occupants being deposited in charnel houses.

2. False devotion, superstition, i.e., Roman Catholicism.

3. The kisses of salutation and parting.

- 30 Which nature, injured by late law, sets free:⁴
 These miracles we did: but now, alas,
 All measure and all language I should pass,
 Should I tell what a miracle she was.

1633

A Lecture upon the Shadow

- Stand still, and I will read to thee
 A lecture, Love, in love's philosophy.
 These three hours that we have spent
 Walking here, two shadows went
 5 Along with us, which we ourselves produced;
 But, now the sun is just above our head,
 We do those shadows tread
 And to brave⁰ clearness all things are reduced. *splendid*
 So, whilst our infant loves did grow,
 10 Disguises did and shadows flow
 From us and our care;^o but now, 'tis not so. *caution*
- That love hath not attained the high'st degree
 Which is still diligent lest others see.
- Except⁰ our loves at this noon stay, *unless*
 15 We shall new shadows make the other way.
 As the first were made to blind
 Others, these which come behind
 Will work upon ourselves, and blind our eyes.
 If our loves faint and westwardly decline,
 20 To me thou falsely thine
 And I to thee mine actions shall disguise.
 The morning shadows wear away,
 But these grow longer all the day,
 But, oh, love's day is short if love decay.
- 25 Love is a growing or full constant light,
 And his first minute after noon is night.

1635

Elegy¹ 16. On His Mistress

By our first strange and fatal interview,
 By all desires which thereof did ensue,

4. Human law forbids the free love permitted by nature. "Late": recent (comparatively speaking).

1. In Latin poetry, an elegy is a discursive or reflective poem written in "elegiacs" (unrhymed

couplets of alternating dactylic hexameters and pentameters). This meter was used for funeral laments and especially for love poetry. The most famous collection of elegies was Ovid's *Amores*.

By our long starving hopes, by that remorse⁰ *pity*
 Which my words' masculine persuasive force
 5 Begot in thee, and by the memory
 Of hurts which spies and rivals threatened me,
 I calmly beg; but by thy father's wrath,
 By all pains which want and divorcement hath,
 I conjure thee; and all the oaths which I
 10 And thou have sworn to seal joint constancy
 Here I unswear and over swear them thus:
 Thou shalt not love by ways so dangerous.
 Temper, oh fair love, love's impetuous rage;
 Be my true mistress still, not my feigned page.²
 15 I'll go, and, by thy kind leave, leave behind
 Thee, only worthy to nurse in my mind
 Thirst to come back. Oh, if thou die before,
 My soul from other lands to thee shall soar.
 Thy (else almighty) beauty cannot move
 20 Rage from the seas, nor thy love teach them love,
 Nor tame wild Boreas' harshness.³ Thou hast read
 How roughly he in pieces shivered
 Fair Orithea, whom he swore he loved.
 Fall ill or good, 'tis madness to have proved⁰ *sought out*
 25 Dangers unurged; feed on this flattery,
 That absent lovers one in th' other be.
 Dissemble nothing, not a boy, nor change
 Thy body's habit,⁰ nor mind's; be not strange *clothing*
 To thyself only; all will spy in thy face
 30 A blushing womanly discovering grace.
 Richly clothed apes are called apes, and as soon
 Eclipsed as bright we call the moon the moon.
 Men of France, changeable chameleons,
 Spitals⁰ of diseases, shops of fashions, *hospitals*
 35 Love's fuelers⁴ and the rightest company
 Of players which upon the world's stage be,
 Will quickly know thee, and know thee; and alas!⁵
 Th' indifferent⁰ Italian, as we pass *bisexual*
 His warm land, well content to think thee page,
 40 Will hunt thee with such lust and hideous rage
 As Lot's fair guests were vexed.⁶ But none of these
 Nor spongy, hydroptic⁷ Dutch shall thee displease
 If thou stay here. O stay here, for, for thee,
 England is only a worthy gallery
 45 To walk in expectation, till from thence
 Our greatest king call thee to his presence.⁸

Several of Donne's elegies—almost all written in the 1590s—take Ovid as their principal model and resemble him in ingenious wit and in frank and unapologetic eroticism.

2. The speaker's mistress wanted to accompany him abroad, disguised as a page boy. Such escapades occasionally took place in real life; in 1605, Elizabeth Southwell, disguised as a page, went abroad with Sir Robert Dudley.

3. God of the north wind; in *Metamorphoses* 6 Ovid describes the wild force with which Boreas abducted Orithea.

4. Providers of aphrodisiacs.

5. May pun on "a lass." "Know": in the sexual sense.

6. The inhabitants of Sodom tried to rape two angels who visited Lot in the guise of men to warn of the city's impending destruction. (Genesis 19.1-11).

7. Dropsical, thus insatiably thirsty.

8. Throne rooms commonly had antechambers (galleries) where visitors waited until the monarch was ready to see them.

When I am gone, dream me some happiness,
 Nor let thy looks our long-hid love confess;
 Nor praise nor dispraise me, bless nor curse
 50 Openly love's force, nor in bed fright thy nurse
 With midnight's startings, crying out "Oh, oh!
 Nurse, oh my love is slain, I saw him go
 O'er the white Alps alone; I saw him, I,
 Assailed, fight, taken, stabbed, bleed, fall, and die."
 55 Augur me better chance, except dread Jove
 Think it enough for me t' have had thy love.

1635

Elegy 19. To His Mistress Going to Bed¹

Come, Madam, come, all rest my powers defy,
 Until I labor, I in labor lie.²
 The foe oft-times having the foe in sight,
 Is tired with standing though he never fight.
 5 Off with that girdle,⁰ like heaven's zone⁰ glistening, *belt / zodiac*
 But a far fairer world encompassing.
 Unpin that spangled breastplate³ which you wear
 That th' eyes of busy fools may be stopped there.
 Unlace yourself, for that harmonious chime
 10 Tells me from you that now it is bed-time.
 Off with that happy busk,^o which I envy, *bodice*
 That still⁰ can be and still can stand so nigh. *always*
 Your gown going off, such beauteous state reveals
 As when from flowery meads th' hill's shadow steals.
 15 Off with that wiry coronet and show
 The hairy diadem which on you doth grow;
 Now off with those shoes, and then safely tread
 In this love's hallowed temple, this soft bed.
 In such white robes, heaven's angels used to be
 20 Received by men; thou, angel, bring'st with thee
 A heaven like Mahomet's paradise;⁴ and though
 Ill spirits walk in white, we easily know
 By this these angels from an evil sprite,
 Those set our hairs, but these our flesh upright.
 25 License my roving hands, and let them go
 Before, behind, between, above, below.
 O my America! my new-found-land,
 My kingdom, safeliest when with one man manned,
 My mine of precious stones, my empery,⁰ *empire*
 30 How blest am I in this discovering thee!
 To enter in these bonds is to be free;

1. This poem reworks the central situation of Ovid's *Amores* 1.5 in much more dramatic terms.

2. "Labor" in the dual sense of "get to work (sexually)" and "distress."

3. The stomacher, an ornamental, often jeweled,

covering for the chest, worn under the lacing of the bodice.

4. A place of sensual pleasure, thought to be populated by seductive houris for the delectation of the faithful.

There where my hand is set, my seal shall be.⁵
 Full nakedness! All joys are due to thee.
 As souls unbodied, bodies unclothed must be,
 To taste whole joys. Gems which you women use
 Are like Atalanta's balls,⁶ cast in men's views,
 That when a fool's eye lighteth on a gem,
 His earthly soul may covet theirs, not them.
 Like pictures, or like books' gay coverings, made
 For laymen, are all women thus arrayed;
 Themselves are mystic books, which only we
 (Whom their imputed grace will dignify)
 Must see revealed.⁷ Then since that I may know,
 As liberally as to a midwife show
 Thyself: cast all, yea, this white linen hence,
 Here is no penance, much less innocence.⁸
 To teach thee, I am naked first; why then
 What need'st thou have more covering than a man?

1669

Satire 3 In satire the author holds a subject up to ridicule. Like his elegies, Donne's five verse satires were written in his twenties and are in the forefront of an effort in the 1590s (by Donne, Ben Jonson, Joseph Hall, and John Marston) to naturalize those classical forms in England. While elements of satire figure in many different kinds of literature, the great models for formal verse satire were the Roman poets Horace and Juvenal, the former for an urbanely witty style, the latter for an indignant or angry manner. While Donne's other satires call on these models, his third satire more nearly resembles those of a third Roman satirist, Persius, known for an abstruse style and moralizing manner. This work is a strenuous discussion of an acute theological problem, for the age and for Donne himself: How may one discover the true Christian church among so many claimants to that role? At the time Donne wrote this, he was in the process of leaving the Roman Catholic Church of his heritage for the Church of England.

Satire 3

Kind pity chokes my spleen;¹ brave⁰ scorn forbids *defiant*
 Those tears to issue which swell my eyelids;
 I must not laugh, nor weep^o sins, and be wise: *lament*
 Can railing then cure these worn maladies?

5. The jokes mingle law with sex: where he has signed a document (placed his hand) he will now place his seal; and in the bonds of her arms he will find freedom.

6. Atalanta, running a race against her suitor Hippomenes, was beaten when he dropped golden apples ("balls") for her to pick up. Donne reverses the story.

7. By granting favors to their lovers, women impute to them grace that they don't deserve, as

God (in Calvinist doctrine) imputes grace to undeserving sinners. Laymen can only look at the covers of mystic books (clothed women), but "we" elect can read them (see women naked).

8. Some manuscripts read: "There is no penance due to innocence." White garments would be appropriate either for the innocent virgin or for the sinner doing formal penance.

1. The seat of bile, hence scorn and ridicule.

5 Is not our mistress, fair Religion,
 As worthy of all our souls' devotion
 As virtue was to the first blinded age?²
 Are not heaven's joys as valiant to assuage
 Lusts, as earth's honor was to them?⁰ Alas, *pagans*
 10 As we do them in means, shall they surpass
 Us in the end, and shall thy father's spirit
 Meet blind philosophers in heaven, whose merit
 Of strict life may be imputed faith,³ and hear
 Thee, whom he taught so easy ways and near
 15 To follow, damned? O, if thou dar'st, fear this;
 This fear great courage and high valor is.
 Dar'st thou aid mutinous Dutch,⁴ and dar'st thou lay
 Thee in ships, wooden sepulchers, a prey
 To leaders' rage, to storms, to shot, to dearth?⁰ *famine*
 20 Dar'st thou dive seas and dungeons⁰ of the earth? *mines, caves*
 Hast thou courageous fire to thaw the ice
 Of frozen north discoveries?⁵ And thrice
 Colder than salamanders, like divine
 Children in the oven,⁶ fires of Spain and the line,
 25 Whose countries limbecks to our bodies be,
 Canst thou for gain bear?⁷ And must every he
 Which cries not "Goddess!" to thy mistress, draw,⁰ *fight a duel*
 Or eat thy poisonous words? Courage of straw!
 O desperate coward, wilt thou seem bold, and
 30 To thy foes and His⁰ (who made thee to stand *God's*
 Sentinel in his world's garrison) thus yield,
 And for forbidden wars leave th' appointed field?⁸
 Know thy foes: The foul Devil (whom thou
 Strivest to please) for hate, not love, would allow
 35 Thee fain⁰ his whole realm to be quit;⁰ and as *gladly / to satisfy you*
 The world's all parts wither away and pass,⁹
 So the world's self, thy other loved foe, is
 In her decrepit wane, and thou, loving this,
 Dost love a withered and worn strumpet; last,
 40 Flesh (itself's death) and joys which flesh can taste
 Thou lovest; and thy fair goodly soul, which doth
 Give this flesh power to taste joy, thou dost loathe.
 Seek true religion. O, where? Mirreus,¹

2. The age of paganism, blind to Christianity but capable of natural morality ("virtue").

3. Donne's formulation wittily turns on its head the key concept of Protestant theology—that salvation is to be achieved only by imputing Christ's merits to Christians through faith—by suggesting that virtuous pagans might be saved by imputing faith to them on the basis of their moral life.

4. English volunteers took frequent part with the Dutch in their wars against Spain. Donne himself had sailed in two raiding expeditions against the Spanish.

5. Many explorers tried to find a northwest passage to the Pacific.

6. In the biblical story (Daniel 3), Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego were rescued from a fiery furnace. The salamander (a lizardlike creature) was

thought to be so cold-blooded that it could live in fire.

7. The object of "bear" is "fires of Spain and the line"—inquisitorial and equatorial heats, which roast people as chemists heat materials in "limbecks" (alembics, or vessels for distilling).

8. Of moral struggle.

9. The common belief that the world was growing old and becoming decrepit.

1. The satiric types in this passage represent different creeds: "Mirreus" is a Roman Catholic; "Crantz," an austere Calvinist Presbyterian of Geneva; "Graius" a Church of England Erastian who believes in any religion sponsored by the state; "Phrygius," a skeptic; and "Graccus," a complete relativist.

Thinking her unhoused here, and fled from us,
 Seeks her at Rome; there, because he doth know
 That she was there a thousand years ago.
 He loves her rags so, as we here obey
 The statecloth² where the prince sat yesterday.
 Crantz to such brave loves will not be enthralled,
 But loves her only, who at Geneva is called
 Religion—plain, simple, sullen, young,
 Contemptuous, yet unhandsome; as among
 Lecherous humors,⁰ there is one that judges *temperaments*
 No wenchs wholesome but coarse country drudges.
 Graius stays still at home here, and because
 Some preachers, vile ambitious bawds, and laws
 Still new, like fashions, bid him think that she
 Which dwells with us is only perfect, he
 Embraceth her whom his godfathers will
 Tender to him, being tender, as wards still
 Take such wives as their guardians offer, or
 Pay values.³ Careless Phrygius doth abhor
 All, because all cannot be good, as one
 Knowing some women whores, dares marry none.
 Graccus loves all as one, and thinks that so
 As women do in divers countries go
 In divers habits,⁰ yet are still one kind, *styles of clothing*
 So doth, so is religion; and this blind-
 ness too much light breeds;⁴ but unmoved thou
 Of force⁰ must one, and forced but one allow; *necessity*
 And the right; ask thy father which is she,
 Let him ask his; though truth and falsehood be
 Near twins, yet truth a little elder is;
 Be busy to seek her, believe me this,
 He's not of none, nor worst, that seeks the best.⁵
 To adore, or scorn an image, or protest,
 May all be bad; doubt wisely; in strange way
 To stand inquiring right, is not to stray;
 To sleep, or run wrong, is. On a huge hill,
 Cragged and steep, Truth stands, and he that will
 Reach her, about must, and about must go,
 And what the hill's suddenness resists, win so;
 Yet strive so, that before age, death's twilight,
 Thy soul rest, for none can work in that night.⁶
 To will⁰ implies delay, therefore now do. *intend a future act*
 Hard deeds, the body's pains; hard knowledge too
 The mind's endeavors reach,⁰ and mysteries *achiei>e*
 Are like the sun, dazzling, yet plain to all eyes.
 Keep the truth which thou hast found; men do not stand
 In so ill case here, that God hath with his hand

2. The royal canopy, a symbol of kingly power.

3. If minors in care of a guardian (in wardship) rejected the wives offered ("tendered") to them they had to pay fines ("values").

4. I.e., Graccus considers the differences between religions merely incidental, like womens' clothes,

but his apparently tolerant, "enlightened" attitude is itself a form of blindness.

5. The person who seeks the best church is neither an unbeliever nor the worst sort of believer.

6. Echoes John 9.4, "the night cometh, when no man can work."

Signed kings' blank charters to kill whom they hate,
 Nor are they vicars, but hangmen to fate.⁷
 Fool and wretch, wilt thou let thy soul be tied
 To man's laws, by which she shall not be tried
 95 At the last day? O, will it then boot⁰ thee *profit*
 To say a Philip, or a Gregory,
 A Harry, or a Martin taught thee this?⁸
 Is not this excuse for mere⁰ contraries *complete*
 Equally strong? Cannot both sides say so?
 100 That thou mayest rightly obey power, her bounds know;
 Those passed, her nature and name is changed; to be
 Then humble to her is idolatry.
 As streams are, power is; those blest flowers that dwell
 At the rough stream's calm head, thrive and prove well,
 105 But having left their roots, and themselves given
 To the stream's tyrannous rage, alas, are driven
 Through mills, and rocks, and woods, and at last, almost
 Consumed in going, in the sea are lost:
 So perish souls, which more choose men's unjust
 no Power from God claimed, than God himself to trust.

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Sappho to Philaenis¹

Where is that holy fire, which verse is said
 To have? Is that enchanting force decayed?
 Verse, that draws⁰ Nature's works, from⁰ Nature's law, *copies / according to*
 Thee, her best work, to her work² cannot draw.
 5 Have my tears quenched my old poetic fire;
 Why quenched they not as well, that of desire?
 Thoughts, my mind's creatures, often are with thee,
 But I, their maker, want their liberty.
 Only thine image in my heart doth sit,
 10 But that is wax, and fires environ it.
 My fires have driven, thine have drawn it hence;
 And I am robbed of picture, heart, and sense.
 Dwells with me still mine irksome memory,
 Which both to keep and lose, grieves equally.
 15 That tells me how fair thou art: thou art so fair,
 As gods, when gods to thee I do compare,
 Are graced thereby:³ and to make blind men see,
 What things gods are, I say they are like to thee.
 For, if we justly call each silly⁰ man *ordinary'*

7. Kings are not God's vicars on earth, with license ("blank charters") to persecute or kill whomever they wish on grounds of religion.

8. "Philip" is Philip II of Spain, "Gregory" is Pope Gregory XIII or XIV, "Harry" is England's Henry VIII, and "Martin" is Martin Luther.

1. A heroic epistle, modeled on Ovid's *Heroides*, erotic poems set forth as letters between famous lovers and often with female speakers. Sappho was

a famous woman poet of Lesbos (b. 612 B.C.E.). Her poems to her several female lovers made "lesbian" a term for same-sex love between women.

2. I.e., you are not drawn to sexual intimacy ("Nature's work") by poetry, which imitates nature's works.

3. I.e., when I compare you to gods it is they who are exalted by the comparison.

A little world,⁴ what shall we call thee then?
 Thou art not soft, and clear, and straight, and fair,
 As down, as stars, cedars, and lilies are,
 But thy right hand, and cheek, and eye, only
 Are like thy other hand, and cheek, and eye.
 Such was my Phao⁵ awhile, but shall be never,
 As thou wast, art, and, oh, mayst thou be ever.
 Here lovers swear in their idolatry,
 . That I am such; but grief discolors me.
 And yet I grieve the less, lest grief remove
 My beauty, and make me unworthy of thy love.
 Plays some soft boy with thee, oh there wants yet
 A mutual feeling which should sweeten it.
 His chin, a thorny hairy unevenness
 Doth threaten, and some daily change possess.
 Thy body is a natural paradise,
 In whose self, unmanured,⁶ all pleasure lies,
 Nor needs perfection,⁶ why shouldst thou then
 Admit the tillage of a harsh rough man?
 Men leave behind them that which their sin shows,
 And are as thieves traced, which rob when it snows.
 But of our dalliance no more signs there are,
 Than fishes leave in streams, or birds in air.
 And between us all sweetness may be had;
 All, all that Nature yields, or Art can add.
 My two lips, eyes, thighs, differ from thy two,
 But so, as thine from one another do;
 And, oh, no more; the likeness being such,
 Why should they not alike in all parts touch?
 Hand to strange hand, lip to lip none denies;
 Why should they breast to breast, or thighs to thighs?
 Likeness begets such strange self-flattery,
 That touching myself, all seems done to thee.
 Myself I embrace, and mine own hands I kiss,
 And amorously thank myself for this.
 Me, in my glass,⁷ I call thee; but alas,
 When I would kiss, tears dim mine eyes, and glass.
 O cure this loving madness, and restore
 Me to me; thee, my half,⁷ my all, my more.
 So may thy cheeks' red outwear scarlet dye,⁸
 And their white, whiteness of the galaxy,⁸
 So may thy mighty, amazing beauty move
 Envy in all women, and in all men, love,
 And so be change, and sickness, far from thee,
 As thou by coming near, keep'st them from me.

*untilled, unfertilized**mirror**the milky way*

1633

4. The traditional belief that man is a microcosm containing in himself everything that is in the entire world, the macrocosm.

5. Sappho was said to have loved a handsome youth named Phaon.

6. A woman was said to receive "perfection" only when she married and had sex with her husband.

7. Some manuscripts read "heart."

8. Sappho promises that her verse will preserve her lover's beauty and its fame.

An Anatomy of the World: The First Anniversary Donne composed and published this poem in 1611 to mark the first anniversary of the death of Elizabeth Drury, fifteen-year-old daughter of his patron and friend Sir Robert Drury. On the actual occasion of her death he composed a "Funeral Elegy," and on the second anniversary he wrote a companion poem to this one, titled *The Progress of the Soul: The Second Anniversary*, publishing all three poems together in 1612. This is not a poem about personal grief: responding to criticism of his wildly hyperbolic praises of Elizabeth, Donne commented that he had never met the young woman but intended rather to describe "the Idea of a woman, and not as she was." Nor is this merely a poem to please a patron, though Donne obviously hoped to do that. Rather, as the full title indicates, Donne took the occasion of Elizabeth's untimely death to analyze (the term "anatomy" evokes both a rigorous logical analysis and a medical dissection in an anatomy theater) the corruption, decay, and disintegration of the world in all its aspects, due ultimately to the Fall of humankind. Here, the death of the young virgin Elizabeth is made to figure that loss and all its dire effects; in *The Second Anniversary* her death figures the soul's progress to heavenly glory. For the *Anatomy*, we give the long introduction (lines 1—90) and the first two of the four meditations (lines 91—246), each of which contains a lament for the various aspects of humankind's and the world's deterioration, a eulogy of the dead girl as symbol of lost innocence, and a two-line refrain. The marginal glosses on the left-hand side are by Donne, added in 1612.

From An Anatomy of the World: The First Anniversary

rymto the When that rich soul which to her heaven is gone,
 Whom all they celebrate who know they have one
 (For who is sure he hath a soul, unless
 It see, and judge, and follow worthiness,
 And by deeds praise it? He who doth not this, 5
 May lodge an inmate soul, but 'tis not his);
 When that queen ended here her progress time,¹
 And, as to her standing house,² to heaven did climb,
 Where, loath to make the saints attend⁰ her long, *await*
 She's now a part both of the choir and song, 10
 This world in that great earthquake languished;
 For in a common bath of tears it bled,
 Which drew the strongest vital spirits³ out:
 But succored⁰ then with a perplexed doubt, *comforted.*
 Whether the world did lose or gain in this 15
 (Because since now no other way there is
 But goodness to see her, whom all would see,
 All must endeavor to be good as she),
 This great consumption⁰ to a fever turned, *wasting disease*
 And so the world had fits; it joyed, it mourned. 20
 And as men think that agues physic are,⁴
 And the ague being spent, give over care,

1. "That queen" is the soul of Elizabeth Drury, implicitly compared to Queen Elizabeth, who liked to go on "progresses," formal visits from one country house to another.

2. I.e., her royal palace or permanent residence.

3. "Vital spirits" of the blood were mysterious agents supposed to link soul with body.

4. "Ague" is chills and fever. "Physic": medicine. Some people think the fever stage of the disease is itself a cure.

So thou, sick world, mistak'st thyself to be
 Well, when, alas, thou art in a lethargy.⁰ *in a near-death coma*
 Her death did wound and tame thee then, and then 25
 Thou might'st have better spared the sun, or man;
 That wound was deep, but 'tis more misery
 That thou hast lost thy sense and memory.
 'Twas heavy⁰ then to hear thy voice of moan, *sad, depressing*
 But this is worse, that thou art speechless grown. 30
 Thou hast forgot thy name thou hadst; thou wast
 Nothing but she, and her thou hast O'erpast.⁰ *outlined*
 For as a child kept from the font,⁰ until *baptismal font*
 A prince, expected long, come to fulfill
 The ceremonies, thou unnamed had'st laid, 35
 Had not her coming, thee her palace made:⁵
 Her name defined thee, gave thee form and frame,
 And thou forget'st to celebrate thy name.
 Some months she hath been dead (but being dead,
 Measures of times are all determined),⁰ *ceased*
 But long she hath been away, long, long, yet none
 Offers to tell us who it is that's gone.
 But as in states doubtful of future heirs,
 When sickness without remedy impairs
 The present prince, they're loath it should be said 45
 The prince doth languish, or the prince is dead:
 So mankind, feeling now a general thaw,⁰ *melting, disintegration*
 A strong example gone, equal to law,
 The cement which did faithfully compact
 And glue all virtues, now resolved,⁰ and slacked, *dissolved*
 Thought it some blasphemy to say she was dead,
 Or that our weakness was discovered⁰ *disclosed*
 In that confession; therefore spoke no more
 Than tongues, the soul being gone, the loss deplore.
 But though it be too late to succor thee, 55
 Sick world, yea, dead, yea, putrefied, since she,
 Thy intrinsic balm⁶ and thy preservative,
 Can never be xenewed, thou never live,
 I (since no man can make thee live) will try
 What we may gain by thy anatomy.⁷ 60
 Her death hath taught us dearly that thou art
 Corrupt and mortal in thy purest part.
 Let no man say, the world itself being dead,
 Tis labor lost to have discovered
 The world's infirmities, since there is none 65
 Alive to study this dissection;
 For there's a kind of world remaining still,
 Though she which did inanimate and fill
 The world be gone, yet in this last long night,
 Her ghost doth walk; that is, a glimmering light, 70
 A faint weak love of virtue and of good

*What life the world
hath still.*

5. The sick world is still being addressed; until it was made her palace, the world was a nameless nothing.

6. A medicine that preserved one in perfect health

forever.

7. I.e., by dissecting and analyzing the world's corpse.

Reflects from her on them which understood
 Her worth; and though she have shut in all day,
 The twilight of her memory doth stay;
 Which, from the carcass of the old world free,
 Creates a new world; and new creatures be
 Produced:⁸ the matter and the stuff of this,
 Her virtue, and the form our practice is;
 And though to be thus elemented,⁰ arm
 These creatures, from home-born intrinsic harm
 (For all assumed⁰ unto this dignity
 So many weedless Paradises be,
 Which of themselves produce no venomous sin,
 Except some foreign serpent bring it in),
 Yet, because outward storms the strongest break,
 And strength itself by confidence grows weak,
 This new world may be safer, being told
 The dangers and diseases of the old:
 For with due temper men do then forgo
 Or covet things, when they their true worth know.

*The sickness of the
 world.*

*Impossibility of
 health.*

There is no health; physicians say that we
 At best enjoy but a neutrality.

And can there be worse sickness than to know
 That we are never well, nor can be so?

We are born ruinous,⁰ poor mothers cry
 That children come not right, nor orderly,
 Except they headlong come and fall upon
 An ominous precipitation.⁹

How witty's⁰ ruin! How importunate
 Upon mankind! It labored to frustrate
 Even God's purpose; and made woman, sent
 For man's relief, cause of his languishment.
 They were to good ends, and they are so still,
 But accessory, and principal in ill.¹

For that first marriage was our funeral:
 One woman at one blow then killed us all,
 And singly, one by one, they kill us now.
 We do delightfully ourselves allow
 To that consumption; and profusely blind,
 We kill ourselves to propagate our kind.²

And yet we do not that; we are not men:
 There is not now that mankind which was then
 When as the sun and man did seem to strive
 (Joint tenants³ of the world) who should survive;
 When stag and raven and the long-lived tree,
 Compared with man, died in minority;⁴

Shortness of life.

constituted

raised

falling into ruin

ingenious is
 100

8. The sun was thought to have power to breed new life out of carcasses and mud.

9. "We do not make account that a child comes right, except it come with the head forward, and thereby prefigure that headlong falling into calamities which it must suffer after" (Donne, *Sermons*, ed. Potter and Simpson, 4.333).

1. Women are only helpers in good but leaders in evil. "That first marriage" (line 105): Adam and

Eve's.

2. Popular superstition had it that every act of sex shortened one's life by a day.

3. Joint owners. The survivor would enjoy sole ownership.

4. Stags, ravens, and oak trees were thought to live particularly long, but compared with early humans, they died in youth.

When, if a slow-paced star had stolen away
 From the observer's marking, he might stay
 Two or three hundred years to see it again,
 And then make up his observation plain; 120
 When, as the age was long, the size was great;
 Man's growth confessed and recompensed the meat;⁵
 So spacious and large, that every soul
 Did a fair kingdom and large realm control;
 And when the very stature, thus erect, 125
 Did that soul a good way towards heaven direct.
 Where is this mankind now? Who lives to age
 Fit to be made Methusalem his page?
 Alas, we scarce live long enough to try
 Whether a new-made clock run right, or lie. 130
 Old grandsires talk of yesterday with sorrow,
 And for our children we reserve tomorrow.
 So short is life that every peasant strives,
 In a torn house, or field, to have three lives.⁶
 And as in lasting, so in length is man 135
 Contracted to an inch, who was a span;⁷
 For had a man at first in forests strayed,
 Or shipwrecked in the sea, one would have laid
 A wager that an elephant or whale
 That met him would not hastily assail 140
 A thing so equal to him: now, alas,
 The fairies and the pygmies well may pass
 As credible; mankind decays so soon,
 We're scarce our fathers' shadows cast at noon.
 Only death adds to our length:⁸ nor are we grown 145
 In stature to be men, till we are none.
 But this were light,⁰ did our less volume hold *a trifle*
 All the old text, or had we changed to gold
 Their silver; or disposed into less glass
 Spirits of virtue,⁹ which then scattered was. 150
 But 'tis not so: we're not retired, but damped;¹
 And as our bodies, so our minds are cramped:
 'Tis shrinking, not close weaving, that hath thus
 In mind and body both bedwarfed us.
 We seem ambitious, God's whole work to undo; 155
 Of nothing He made us, and we strive, too,
 To bring ourselves to nothing back; and we
 Do what we can to do it so soon as He.
 With new diseases² on ourselves we war,
 And with new physic,³ a worse engine⁰ far. *contrivance*

5. Early humans were thought to have eaten better than modern humans, lived longer, and grown to greater stature. Methuselah ("Methusalem," below) is said to have lived 969 years (Genesis 5.27).

6. Leases of farmland were often made for "three lives," i.e., through the longest-lived of three designated persons.

7. I.e., the distance from the tip of the thumb to the tip of the little finger, about nine inches.

8. The corpse of a person was said to measure a little more than his or her height when alive.

9. I.e., distilled virtue, which would fit into a smaller bottle. "Virtue" includes the sense of "power" as well as that of "goodness."

1. I.e., not compressed but shrunk.

2. I.e., influenza, and especially syphilis.

3. New medications—said to be far worse than the diseases they ostensibly combated.

Thus man, this world's vice-emperor, in whom
 All faculties, all graces are at home—
 And if in other creatures they appear,
 They're but man's ministers and legates there,
 To work on their rebellions, and reduce 165
 Them to civility, and to man's use—
 This man, whom God did woo, and loath to attend⁰ wait
 Till man came up, did down to man descend,
 This man, so great, that all that is, is his,
 Oh what a trifle, and poor thing he is! 170
 If man were anything, he's nothing now:
 Help, or at least some time to waste, allow⁰ one might give
 To his other wants, yet when he did depart⁰ part
 With her whom we lament, he lost his heart.
 She, of whom th' ancients seemed to prophesy 175
 When they called virtues by the name of *she*,⁴
 She in whom virtue was so much refined
 That for allay⁰ unto so pure a mind alloy
 She took the weaker sex, she that could drive
 The poisonous tincture, and the stain of Eve, iso
 Out of her thoughts and deeds, and purify
 All, by a true religious alchemy;
 She, she is dead; she's dead: when thou knowest this,
 Thou knowest how poor a trifling thing man is.
 And learn'st thus much by our anatomy, iss
 The heart being perished, no part can be free.
 And that except thou feed (not banquet)⁵ on
 The supernatural food, religion,
 Thy better growth grows withered and scant;
 Be more than man, or thou'rt less than an ant. 190
 Then, as mankind, so is the world's whole frame
 Quite out of joint, almost created lame:
 For, before God had made up all the rest,
 Corruption entered and depraved the best.
 It seized the angels,⁶ and then first of all 195
 The world did in her cradle take a fall,
 And turned her brains, and took a general maim,
 Wronging each joint of th' universal frame.
 The noblest part, man, felt it first; and then
 Both beasts and plants, cursed in the curse of man.⁷ 200
 So did the world from the first hour decay,
 That evening was beginning of the day,⁸
 And now the springs and summers which we see
 Like sons of women after fifty be.⁹
 And new philosophy calls all in doubt: 205
 The element of fire is quite put out;¹

*Decay of nature in
other parts.*

4. The virtues are all represented in Latin by feminine nouns and portrayed as female figures.

5. Taste, nibble. A banquet usually contained deserts and delicacies.

6. The angels who fell from heaven with Satan and became demons. As purely intellectual beings, angels are the world's "brains" (line 197).

7. For a similar account of the way humankind's

fall corrupted the physical universe, see *Paradise Lost* 10.706ff.

8. The world's day began with the darkness of sin.

9. Women giving birth after the age of fifty were thought to produce feeble or defective children.

1. The Polish astronomer Copernicus in the 16th century and the Italian Galileo in the 17th argued a "new philosophy," that the sun, not the earth,

The sun is lost, and the earth, and no man's wit^o *intellect*
 Can well direct him where to look for it.
 And freely men confess that this world's spent, *exhausted*
 When in the planets and the firmament^o *sky*
 They seek so many new;² they see that this
 Is crumbled out again to his atomies.^o *atoms*
 'Tis all in pieces, all coherence gone;
 All just supply, and all relation:
 Prince, subject; father, son,³ are things forgot, 215
 For every man alone thinks he hath got
 To be^o a phoenix, and that there can be *has become*
 None of that kind of which he is, but he.⁴
 This is the world's condition now, and now
 She that should all parts to reunion bow, 220
 She that had all magnetic force alone,
 To draw and fasten sundered parts in one;
 She whom wise nature had invented then
 When she observed that every sort of men
 Did in their voyage in this world's sea stray, 225
 And needed a new compass for their way;
 She that was best, and first original
 Of all fair copies, and the general
 Steward to Fate;⁵ she whose rich eyes and breast
 Gilt the West Indies, and perfumed the East;⁶ 230
 Whose having breathed in this world did bestow
 Spice on those isles, and bade them still smell so,
 And that rich Indie which doth gold inter
 Is but as single money,^o coined from her; *small change*
 She to whom this world must itself refer 235
 As suburbs, or the microcosm of her,
 She, she is dead; she's dead: when thou know'st this,
 Thou know'st how lame a cripple this world is.
 And learn'st thus much by our anatomy,
 That this world's general sickness doth not lie 240
 In any humor,⁷ or one certain part;
 But, as thou sawest it rotten at the heart,
 Thou seest a hectic^o fever hath got hold *consumptive*
 Of the whole substance, not to be controlled,
 And that thou hast but one way not to admit 245
 The world's infection, to be none of it.

1611

was the center of the cosmos. This theory also contradicted the notion that a realm of fire surrounded the earth beyond the air.

2. Galileo's first accounts of his telescope observations were published in 1610, intensifying speculations as to whether there were other inhabited worlds.

3. I.e., all traditional relationships.

4. Legend had it that there was only one phoenix on earth at any one time.

5. Fate or Providence disposes all things, but she was their "Steward," dispensing what has been decreed.

6. The West Indies were a source of gold, the East Indies a source of spices and perfumes.

7. The four bodily "humors"—blood, phlegm, bile, choler—were thought to combine to make up a temperament; when they are out of balance a person is ill. So with the world.

From Holy Sonnets¹

1

Thou hast made me, and shall thy work decay?
 Repair me now, for now mine end doth haste;
 I run to death, and death meets me as fast,
 And all my pleasures are like yesterday.
 5" I dare not move my dim eyes any way,
 Despair behind, and death before doth cast
 Such terror, and my feeble flesh doth waste
 By sin in it, which it towards hell doth weigh. *incline, weigh down*
 Only thou art above, and when towards thee
 10 By thy leave I can look, I rise again;
 But our old subtle foe so tempteth me
 That not one hour myself I can sustain.
 Thy grace may wing^o me to prevent^o his art, *give wings to/forestall*
 And thou like adamant^o draw mine iron heart. *magnetic lodestone*

1635

5

I am a little world² made cunningly
 Of elements, and an angelic sprite;^o *spirit, soul*
 But black sin hath betrayed to endless night
 My world's both parts, and O, both parts must die.
 5 You which beyond that heaven which was most high
 Have found new spheres, and of new lands can write,³
 Pour new seas in mine eyes, that so I might
 Drown my world with my weeping earnestly,
 Or wash it if it must be drowned no more.⁴
 10 But O, it must be burnt! Alas, the fire
 Of lust and envy have burnt it heretofore,
 And made it fouler; let their flames retire,
 And burn me, O Lord, with a fiery zeal
 Of thee and thy house, which doth in eating heal.⁵

1635

7

At the round earth's imagined corners,⁶ blow
 Your trumpets, angels; and arise, arise

1. Donne wrote a variety of religious poems (called "Divine Poems"), including a group of nineteen "Holy sonnets" that reflect his interest in Jesuit and especially Protestant meditative procedures. He probably began writing them about 1609, a decade or so after leaving the Catholic Church. Our selections follow the traditional numbering established in Sir Herbert Grierson's influential edition, since for most of these sonnets we cannot tell when they were written or in what order they were intended to appear.

2. The traditional idea of the human being as

microcosm (a "little world"), containing in miniature all the features of the macrocosm, or great world.

3. Astronomers, especially Galileo, and explorers.

4. God promised Noah (Genesis 9.11) never to flood the earth again.

5. See Psalm 69.9: "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." These lines refer to three lands of flame—those of the Last Judgment, those of lust and envy, and those of zeal, which alone save.

6. Cf. Revelation 7.1: "I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth."

From death, you numberless infinities
 Of souls, and to your scattered bodies go:
 5 All whom the flood did, and fire⁷ shall, o'erthrow,
 All whom war, dearth,⁰ age, agues,⁰ tyrannies, *famine I fevers*
 Despair, law, chance hath slain, and you whose eyes
 Shall behold God, and never taste death's woe.⁸
 But let them sleep, Lord, and me mourn a space;
 10 For, if above all these, my sins abound,
 'Tis late to ask abundance of thy grace
 When we are there. Here on this lowly ground,
 Teach me how to repent; for that's as good
 As if thou hadst sealed my pardon with thy blood.

1633

9

If poisonous minerals, and if that tree⁹
 Whose fruit threw death on else-immortal us,
 If lecherous goats, if serpents envious¹
 Cannot be damned, alas! why should I be?
 5 Why should intent or reason, born in me,
 Make sins, else equal, in me more heinous?
 And, mercy being easy and glorious
 To God, in his stern wrath why threatens he?
 But who am I that dare dispute with thee
 10 O God? Oh, of thine only worthy blood
 And my tears, make a heavenly Lethean² flood,
 And drown in it my sin's black memory.
 That thou remember them some claim as debt;
 I think it mercy if thou wilt forget.³

1633

10

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
 Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
 For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
 Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
 5 From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
 Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
 And soonest our best men with thee do go,
 Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.⁴
 Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
 10 And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
 And poppy⁰ or charms can make us sleep as well *opium*

7. Noah's flood, and the universal conflagration at the end of the world (Revelation 6.11).

8. Those who will be alive at the Second Coming (cf. Luke 9.27).

9. The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, whose fruit was forbidden to Adam and Eve in Eden.

1. Traits commonly associated with these crea-

tures.

2. In classical mythology, the waters of the river Lethe in the underworld caused total forgetfulness.

3. Cf. Jeremiah 31.34: "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more."

4. I.e., to find rest for their bones and freedom ("delivery") for their souls.

And better than thy stroke; why swell'st⁰ thou then? *puff with pride*
 One short sleep past, we wake eternally
 And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.⁵

1633

11

Spit in my face ye Jews, and pierce my side,
 Buffet, and scoff,⁰ scourge, and crucify me, *scoff at*
 For I have sinned, and sinned, and only he,
 Who could do no iniquity, hath died:
 5 But by my death cannot be satisfied⁰ *atoned for*
 My sins, which pass the Jews' impiety:
 They killed once an inglorious⁰ man, but I *obscure*
 Crucify him daily,⁶ being now glorified.
 Oh let me then, his strange love still admire:⁰ *wonder at*
 10 Kings pardon, but he bore our punishment.⁷
 And Jacob came clothed in vile harsh attire
 But to supplant, and with gainful intent:⁸
 God clothed himself in vile man's flesh, that so
 He might be weak enough to suffer woe.

1633

13

What if this present were the world's last night?
 Mark in my heart, O soul, where thou dost dwell,
 The picture of Christ crucified, and tell
 Whether that countenance can thee affright.
 5 Tears in his eyes quench the amazing light,
 Blood fills his frowns, which from his pierced head fell;
 And can that tongue adjudge thee unto hell
 Which prayed forgiveness for his foes' fierce spite?
 No, no; but as in my idolatry
 10 I said to all my profane⁰ mistresses, *secular*
 Beauty of pity, foulness only is
 A sign of rigor:⁹ so I say to thee,
 To wicked spirits are horrid shapes assigned,
 This beauteous form assures a piteous mind.

1633

14

Batter my heart, three-personed God; for you
 As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;

5. Cf. 1 Corinthians 15.26: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

6. Cf. Hebrews 6.6: "they [sinners] crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh."

7. Kings may pardon crimes, but the King of Kings, Christ, bore the punishment due to our sins.

8. Jacob disguised himself in goatskins to gain from his blind father the blessing belonging to the firstborn son, his brother Esau (Genesis 27.1—36).

9. In Neoplatonic theory, beautiful features are the sign of a compassionate mind, while ugliness signifies the contrary.

That I may rise and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend
 Your force to break, blow, burn, and make me new.
 5 I, like an usurped town, to another due,
 Labor to admit you, but O, to no end;
 Reason, your viceroy¹ in me, me should defend,
 But is captived, and proves weak or untrue.
 Yet dearly I love you, and would be loved fain,^o *gladly*
 10 But am betrothed² unto your enemy.
 Divorce me, untie or break that knot again;
 Take me to you, imprison me, for I,
 Except^o you enthrall me, never shall be free, *unless*
 Nor ever chaste, except you ravish³ me.

1633

17

Since she whom I loved hath paid her last debt⁴
 To Nature, and to hers, and my good is dead,
 And her soul early into heaven ravished,
 Wholly on heavenly things my mind is set.
 5 Here the admiring her my mind did whet
 To seek thee, God; so streams do show the head;^o *source*
 But though I have found thee, and thou my thirst hast fed,
 A holy thirsty dropsy^o melts me yet. *immoderate thirst*
 But why should I beg more love, whenas thou
 10 Dost woo my soul, for hers offering all thine:
 And dost not only fear lest I allow
 My love to saints and angels, things divine,
 But in thy tender jealousy dost doubt^o *fear*
 Lest the world, flesh, yea, devil put thee out.

1899

18

Show me, dear Christ, thy spouse⁵ so bright and clear.
 What! is it she which on the other shore
 Goes richly painted? or which, robbed and tore,
 Laments and mourns in Germany and here?⁶
 5 Sleeps she a thousand, then peeps up one year?
 Is she self-truth, and errs? now new, now outwore?
 Doth she, and did she, and shall she evermore
 On one, on seven, or on no hill appear?⁷

1. The governor in your stead.

2. Humanity's relationship with God has been described in terms of marriage and adultery from the time of the Hebrew prophets.

3. Rape, also overwhelm with wonder. "Enthrall": enslave, also enchant.

4. Donne's wife died in 1617 at the age of thirty-three, having just given birth to her twelfth child. This very personal sonnet and the following two survive in a single manuscript discovered only in 1892.

5. The church is commonly called the bride of

Christ. Cf. Revelation 19.7—8: "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. / And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white."

6. I.e., the painted woman (the Church of Rome) or the ravished virgin (the Lutheran and Calvinist churches in Germany and England).

7. The church on one hill is probably Solomon's temple on Mount Moriah; that on seven hills is the Church of Rome; that on no hill is the Presbyterian church of Geneva.

Dwells she with us, or like adventuring knights
 10 First travel we to seek, and then make love?
 Betray, kind husband, thy spouse to our sights,
 And let mine amorous soul court thy mild dove,
 Who is most true and pleasing to thee then
 When she is embraced and open to most men.⁸

1899

19

Oh, to vex me, contraries meet in one:
 Inconstancy unnaturally hath begot
 A constant habit; that when I would not
 I change in vows, and in devotion.
 5 As humorous⁰ is my contrition
 As my profane love, and as soon forgot:
 As riddingly distempered, cold and hot,⁹
 As praying, as mute, as infinite, as none.
 I durst not view heaven yesterday; and today
 10 In prayers, and flattering speeches I court God:
 Tomorrow I quake with true fear of his rod.
 So my devout fits come and go away
 Like a fantastic ague:¹ save⁰ that here
 Those are my best days, when I shake with fear.

*subject to xvhim**except*

1899

Good Friday, 1613. Riding Westward

Let man's soul be a sphere, and then, in this,
 The intelligence that moves, devotion is,¹
 And as the other spheres, by being grown
 Subject to foreign motions, lose their own,
 5 And being by others hurried every day,
 Scarce in a year their natural form² obey;
 Pleasure or business, so, our souls admit
 For^o their first mover, and are whirled by it.
 Hence is't, that I am carried towards the West
 10 This day, when my soul's form bends toward the East.
 There I should see a Sun³ by rising, set,
 And by that setting endless day beget:

instead of

8. The final lines wittily rework, with startling sexual associations, Song of Solomon 5.2: "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled." That biblical book was often interpreted as the song of love between Christ and the church.

9. Arising from the unbalanced humors, inexplicably changeable.

1. A fever, attended with paroxysms of hot and cold and trembling fits. "Fantastic": capricious, extravagant.

1. As angelic intelligences guide the celestial spheres, so devotion is or should be the guiding

principle of the soul.

2. Their true moving principle or intelligence. The orbit of the celestial spheres was thought to be governed by an unmoving outermost sphere, the primum mobile, or first mover (line 8), but sometimes outside influences ("foreign motions," line 4) deflected the spheres from their correct orbits.

3. The "sun" / "Son" pun was an ancient one. Christ the Son of God "set" when he rose on the Cross, and that setting (death) gave rise to the Christian era and the promise of immortality.

- But that Christ on this cross did rise and fall,
Sin had eternally benighted all.
- 15 Yet dare I almost be glad I do not see
That spectacle, of too much weight for me.
Who sees God's face, that is self-life, must die;⁴
What a death were it then to see God die?
It made his own lieutenant,⁰ Nature, shrink; *deputy*
- 20 It made his footstool crack, and the sun wink.⁵
Could I behold those hands which span the poles,
And tune⁶ all spheres at once, pierced with those holes?
Could I behold that endless height which is
Zenith to us, and t'our antipodes,⁷
- 25 Humbled below us? Or that blood which is
The seat⁰ of all our souls, if not of his, *dwelling place*
Make dirt of dust, or that flesh which was worn
By God for his apparel, ragg'd and torn?
If on these things I durst not look, durst I
- 30 Upon his miserable mother cast mine eye,
Who was God's partner here, and furnished thus
Half of that sacrifice which ransomed us?
Though these things, as I ride, be from⁰ mine eye, *away from.*
They are present yet unto my memory,
- 35 For that looks towards them; and thou look'st towards me,
O Savior, as thou hang'st upon the tree.
I turn my back to thee but to receive
Corrections,⁸ till thy mercies bid thee leave.⁰ *cease*
O think me worth thine anger; punish me;
- 40 Burn off my rusts and my deformity;
Restore thine image so much, by thy grace,
That thou may'st know me, and I'll turn my face.

1633

A Hymn to Christ, at the Author's Last Going into Germany¹

- In what torn ship soever I embark,
That ship shall be my emblem of thy ark;⁰ *Noah's ark*
What sea soever swallow me, that flood
Shall be to me an emblem of thy blood;
- 5 Though thou with clouds of anger do disguise
Thy face, yet through that mask I know those eyes,
Which, though they turn away sometimes, they never will despise.
- I sacrifice this island⁰ unto thee, *England*
And all whom I loved there, and who loved me;

4. God told Moses, "Thou canst not see my face, for there shall no man see me, and live" (Exodus 33.20).

5. An earthquake and eclipse supposedly accompanied the Crucifixion (Matthew 27.45, 51). Cf. Isaiah 66.1: "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool."

6. Some manuscripts read "turn."

7. God is at once the highest point for us and for

our "antipodes," those who live on the opposite side of the earth.

8. Suggests a flogging.

1. Donne went to Germany in 1619 as chaplain to the Earl of Doncaster. The mission was a diplomatic one, to the king and queen of Bohemia, King James's son-in-law and daughter, who at that time were mainstays of the Protestant cause on the Continent.

- 10 When I have put our seas twixt them and me,
 Put thou thy sea² betwixt my sins and thee.
 As the tree's sap doth seek the root below
 In winter, in my winter now I go
 Where none but thee, th' eternal root of true love, I may know.
- 15 Nor thou nor thy religion dost control⁰ *censure, restrain*
 The amorousness of an harmonious soul,
 But thou wouldst have that love thyself; as thou
 Art jealous, Lord, so I am jealous now.
 Thou lov'st not, till from loving more³ thou free
- 20 My soul; whoever gives, takes liberty;
 Oh, if thou car'st not whom I love, alas, thou lov'st not me.
- Seal then this bill of my divorce to all
 On whom those fainter beams of love did fall;
 Marry those loves which in youth scattered be
- 25 On fame, wit, hopes (false mistresses) to thee.
 Churches are best for prayer that have least light:
 To see God only, I go out of sight,
 And to 'scape stormy days, I choose an everlasting night.

1633

Hymn to God My God, in My Sickness¹

Since I am coming to that holy room
 Where, with thy choir of saints for evermore,
 I shall be made thy music; as I come
 I tune the instrument here at the door,
 5 And what I must do then, think now before.²

Whilst my physicians by their love are grown
 Cosmographers, and I their map, who lie
 Flat on this bed, that by them may be shown
 That this is my southwest discovery³
 10 *Per fretum febris*,⁴ by these straits to die,

I joy, that in these straits, I see my West;
 For, though their currents yield return to none,
 What shall my West hurt me? As West and East
 In all flat maps (and I am one)⁵
 15 So death doth touch the resurrection.

Is the Pacific Sea my home? Or are
 The Eastern riches?⁰ Is Jerusalem? *Cathay, China*

2. Sea of Christ's blood.

3. From loving any other thing.

1. Though Izaak Walton, Donne's friend and biographer, assigns this poem to the last days of his life, it was probably written during another illness, in December 1623.

2. This and the previous poem are less hymns (songs of praise) than meditations preparing (tun-

ing the instrument) for such hymns.

3. South is the region of heat, west the region of sunset and death.

4. Through the straits of fever, with a pun on straits as sufferings, rigors, and a geographical reference to the Strait of Magellan.

5. If a flat map is pasted on a round globe, west and east meet.

Anyan,⁶ and Magellan, and Gibraltar,
 All straits, and none but straits, are ways to them,
 20 Whether where Japhet dwelt, or Cham, or Shem.⁷

We think that Paradise and Calvary,
 Christ's cross and Adam's tree, stood in one place;
 Look, Lord and find both Adams⁸ met in me;
 As the first Adam's sweat surrounds my face,
 25 May the last Adam's blood my soul embrace.

So, in his purple wrapped,⁹ receive me, Lord;
 By these his thorns⁰ give me his other crown; *crown of thorns*
 And, as to others' souls I preached thy word,
 Be this my text, my sermon to mine own:
 30 Therefore that he may raise the Lord throws down.

1635

A Hymn to God the Father¹

Wilt thou forgive that sin where I begun,
 Which is my sin, though it were done before?²
 Wilt thou forgive that sin through which I run,
 And do run still, though still I do deplore?
 5 When thou hast done,³ thou hast not done,
 For I have more.

Wilt thou forgive that sin by which I have won
 Others to sin? and made my sin their door?
 Wilt thou forgive that sin which I did shun
 10 A year or two, but wallowed in a score?
 When thou hast done, thou hast not done,
 For I have more.

I have a sin of fear, that when I have spun
 My last thread, I shall perish on the shore;
 15 Swear by thy self, that at my death thy Son
 Shall shine as he shines now and heretofore;
 And, having done that, thou hast done,
 I fear⁴ no more.

1633

6. Anian, a strait on the west coast of America, shown on early maps as separating America from Asia.

7. The three sons of Noah by whom the world was repopulated after the Flood (Genesis 10). The descendants of Japhet were thought to inhabit Europe; those of Cham (Ham), Africa; and those of Shem, Asia.

8. Adam and Christ. Legend had it that Christ's cross was erected on the spot, or at least in the region, where the tree forbidden to Adam in Eden had stood.

9. In his blood, also in his kingly robes.

1. This hymn was used as a congregational hymn. Walton tells us that Donne wrote it during his illness of 1623, had it set to music, and was delighted to hear it performed (as it frequently was) by the choir of St. Paul's Cathedral.

2. I.e., he inherits the original sin of Adam and Eve.

3. In the refrains, Donne puns on his own name and may pun on his wife's maiden name, Ann More.

4. Some manuscripts read "have."

*From Biathanatos*¹

Beza,² a man as eminent and illustrious in the full glory and noon of learning as others were in the dawning and morning, when any the least sparkle was notorious, confessed of himself that only for the anguish of a scurf,³ which overran his head, he had once drowned himself from the Miller's Bridge in Paris, if his uncle by chance had not then come that way. I have often such a sickly inclination. And whether it be because I had my first breeding and conversation with men of a suppressed and afflicted religion,⁴ and hungry of an imagined martyrdom; or that the common enemy find that door worse locked against him in me;⁵ or that there be a perplexity and flexibility in the doctrine itself; or because my conscience ever assures me that no rebellious grudging at God's gifts, nor other sinful concurrence accompanies these thoughts in me; or that a brave scorn, or that a faint cowardliness beget it, whensoever any affliction assails me, methinks I have the keys of my prison in mine own hand, and no remedy presents itself so soon to my heart as mine own sword. Often meditation of this has won me to a charitable interpretation of their action who die so, and provoked me a little to watch and exagitate⁶ their reasons, which pronounce so peremptory judgments upon them.

1607-8

1646

*From Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*¹*Meditation 4**Medicusque vocatur.*The physician is sent for.²

It is too little to call man a little world; except God, man is a diminutive to nothing.³ Man consists of more pieces, more parts, than the world; than the world doth, nay, than the world is. And if those pieces were extended and stretched out in man as they are in the world, man would be the giant and the world the dwarf; the world but the map, and the man the world. If all the veins

1. Greek for "violent death." Donne wrote this treatise, the first English defense of suicide, for private circulation, probably in 1607–8; it was first published by his son in 1646.

2. Theodore Beza (1519–1605) was a much admired French Calvinist theologian.

3. An incrustation especially affecting the head, in which scales continually drop off the skin.

4. Roman Catholicism. Donne's family suffered under the repressions leveled against that religion: he was in part educated by a Jesuit uncle who was later executed.

5. I.e., the devil finds easiest access to me through this temptation.

6. Attack.

1. Donne's *Devotions* were composed in the aftermath of his serious illness in the winter of 1623, though Donne characteristically writes as if the events of the illness were happening as he

describes them. The *Devotions* recount in twenty-three sections the stages ("emergent occasions") of the illness and recovery; the term associates the exercise with a popular kind of Protestant meditation on the occasions that daily life presents to us. Each section contains a "meditation upon our human condition," an "expostulation and debate with God," and a prayer to God. The book was published almost immediately, offering its meditation on an intensely personal experience as exemplary for others.

2. Donne's Latin epigraphs are followed by his English translations, often quite free.

3. This meditation is based on the notion that each human being is a microcosm, a little world, analogous in every respect to the macrocosm, or great world. But in playing with this notion, Donne paradoxically reverses it.

in our bodies were extended to rivers, and all the sinews to veins of mines, and all the muscles that lie upon one another to hills, and all the bones to quarries of stones, and all the other pieces to the proportion of those which correspond to them in the world, the air would be too little for this orb of man to move in, the firmament would be but enough for this star. For as the whole world hath nothing to which something in man doth not answer,⁴ so hath man many pieces of which the whole world hath no representation. Enlarge this meditation upon this great world, man, so far as to consider the immensity of the creatures this world produces. Our creatures are our thoughts, creatures that are born giants, that reach from east to west, from earth to heaven, that do not only bestride all the sea and land, but span the sun and firmament at once: my thoughts reach all, comprehend all.

Inexplicable mystery! I their creator am in a close prison, in a sick bed, anywhere, and any one of my creatures, my thoughts, is with the sun, and beyond the sun, overtakes the sun, and overgoes the sun in one pace, one step, everywhere. And then as the other world produces serpents and vipers, malignant and venomous creatures, and worms and caterpillars, that endeavor to devour that world which produces them, and monsters compiled and complicated⁵ of divers parents and kinds, so this world, our selves, produces all these in us, in producing diseases and sicknesses of all those sorts; venomous and infectious diseases, feeding and consuming diseases, and manifold and entangled diseases made up of many several ones. And can the other world name so many venomous, so many consuming, so many monstrous creatures, as we can diseases of all these kinds? O miserable abundance, O beggarly riches! How much do we lack of having remedies for every disease, when as yet we have not names for them?

But we have a Hercules against these giants, these monsters: that is the physician. He musters up all the forces of the other world to succor this, all nature to relieve man. We have the physician but we are not the physician. Here we shrink in our proportion, sink in our dignity in respect of very mean creatures who are physicians to themselves. The hart that is pursued and wounded, they say, knows an herb which, being eaten, throws off the arrow: a strange kind of vomit.⁶ The dog that pursues it, though he be subject to sickness, even proverbially knows his grass that recovers him. And it may be true that the druggier is as near to man as to other creatures; it may be that obvious and present simples,⁷ easy to be had, would cure him; but the apothecary is not so near him, nor the physician so near him, as they two are to other creatures.⁸ Man hath not that innate instinct to apply these natural medicines to his present danger, as those inferior creatures have. He is not his own apothecary, his own physician, as they are. Call back therefore thy meditation again, and bring it down.⁹ What's become of man's great extent and proportion, when himself shrinks himself and consumes himself to a handful of dust? What's become of his soaring thoughts, his compassing thoughts, when himself brings himself to the ignorance, to the thoughtlessness, of the grave? His diseases are his own, but the physician is not; he hath them at home, but he must send for the physician.

4. Correspond.

5. Mixed.

6. Deer supposedly expelled arrows wounding them by eating the herb dittany.

7. Medicinal plants.

8. One who administers drugs might do this for

man as well as for other creatures, but one who sells drugs ("the apothecary") and the physician do not know how to prescribe for man as well as for other creatures.

9. I.e., apply it to the present situation.

*Meditation 17**Nunc lento sonitu dicunt, morieris.*

Now this bell tolling softly for another, says to me, Thou must die.

Perchance he for whom this bell¹ tolls may be so ill as that he knows not it tolls for him; and perchance I may think myself so much better than I am, as that they who are about me and see my state may have caused it to toll for me, and I know not that. The church is catholic, universal, so are all her actions; all that she does belongs to all. When she baptizes a child, that action concerns me; for that child is thereby connected to that head which is my head too, and ingrafted into that body² whereof I am a member. And when she buries a man, that action concerns me: all mankind is of one author and is one volume; when one man dies, one chapter is not torn out of the book, but translated³ into a better language; and every chapter must be so translated. God employs several translators; some pieces are translated by age, some by sickness, some by war, some by justice; but God's hand is in every translation, and his hand shall bind up all our scattered leaves again for that library where every book shall lie open to one another. As therefore the bell that rings to a sermon calls not upon the preacher only, but upon the congregation to come, so this bell calls us all; but how much more me, who am brought so near the door by this sickness. There was a contention as far as a suit⁴ (in which piety and dignity, religion and estimation,⁵ were mingled) which of the religious orders should ring to prayers first in the morning; and it was determined that they should ring first that rose earliest. If we understand aright the dignity of this bell that tolls for our evening prayer, we would be glad to make it ours by rising early, in that application, that it might be ours as well as his whose indeed it is. The bell doth toll for him that thinks it doth; and though it intermit again, yet from that minute that that occasion wrought upon him, he is united to God. Who casts not up his eye to the sun when it rises? But who takes off his eye from a comet when that breaks out? Who bends not his ear to any bell which upon any occasion rings? But who can remove it from that bell which is passing a piece of himself out of this world? No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.⁶ If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were. Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind; and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.⁷ Neither can we call this a begging of misery or a borrowing of misery, as though we were not miserable enough of ourselves but must fetch in more from the next house, in taking upon us the misery of our neighbors. Truly it were an excusable covetousness if we did; for affliction is a treasure, and scarce any man hath enough of it. No man hath affliction enough that is not matured and ripened by it, and made fit for God by that affliction. If a man carry treasure in bullion, or in a wedge of gold, and have none coined into current moneys, his treasure will not defray⁸ him as he travels. Tribulation is treasure in the nature of it, but it is not current money in the use of it, except we get nearer and nearer our

1. The "passing bell" for the dying.

2. The church.

3. Punning on the literal sense, "carried across."

4. Controversy that went as far as a lawsuit.

5. Self-esteem.

6. Mainland.

7. This phrase gave Hemingway the title for his novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

8. Meet his expenses.

home, heaven, by it. Another man may be sick too, and sick to death, and this affliction may lie in his bowels as gold in a mine and be of no use to him; but this bell that tells me of his affliction digs out and applies that gold to me, if by this consideration of another's danger I take mine own into contemplation and so secure myself by making my recourse to my God, who is our only security.

From *Ex-postulation* 19

[THE LANGUAGE OF GOD]

My God, my God, thou art a direct God, may I not say a literal God, a God that wouldst be understood literally and according to the plain sense of all that thou sayest. But thou art also (Lord, I intend it to thy glory, and let no profane misinterpreter abuse it to thy diminution), thou art a figurative, a metaphorical God too: a God in whose words there is such a height of figures, such voyages, such peregrinations to fetch remote and precious metaphors, such extensions, such spreadings, such curtains of allegories, such third heavens of hyperboles, so harmonious elocutions, so retired and so reserved expressions, so commanding persuasions, so persuading commandments, such sinews even in thy milk and such things in thy words, as all profane⁹ authors seem of the seed of the serpent that creeps; thou art the dove that flies. Oh, what words but thine can express the inexpressible texture and composition of thy word; in which, to one man, that argument that binds his faith to believe that to be the word of God is the reverent simplicity of the word, and to another, the majesty of the word; and in which two men, equally pious, may meet, and one wonder that all should not understand it, and the other as much that any man should. So, Lord, thou givest us the same earth to labor on and to lie in; a house and a grave of the same earth; so, Lord, thou givest us the same word for our satisfaction and for our inquisition,¹ for our instruction and for our admiration too. For there are places that thy servants Jerome and Augustine would scarce believe (when they grew warm by mutual letters) of one another that they understood them, and yet both Jerome and Augustine call upon persons whom they knew to be far weaker than they thought one another (old women and young maids) to read thy Scriptures, without confining them to these or those places.²

Neither art thou thus a figurative, a metaphorical God, in thy word only, but in thy works too. The style of thy works, the phrase of thine actions, is metaphorical. The institution of thy whole worship in the old law was a continual allegory; types and figures³ overspread all, and figures flowed into figures, and poured themselves out into further figures. Circumcision carried a figure of baptism,⁴ and baptism carries a figure of that purity which we shall have in perfection in the New Jerusalem. Neither didst thou speak and work in this language only in the time of the prophets; but since thou spokest in thy son it is so too. How often, how much more often, doth thy son call himself

9. Secular.

1. Investigation.

2. Saints Jerome and Augustine did in fact differ over the proper way of interpreting the Bible, yet they both encouraged its use by the unlearned.

3. Anticipations or prefigurations, especially persons and events in the Hebrew Bible that were read

as prefiguring Christ, or some aspect of the New Testament or of Christian practice. For a beautiful poem exemplifying this process, see Herbert, "The Bunch of Grapes" (p. 1617).

4. Both circumcision and baptism are rites of admission to a religious community.

a way and a light and a gate and a vine and bread than the son of God or of man? How much oftener doth he exhibit a metaphorical Christ than a real, a literal? This hath occasioned thine ancient servants, whose delight it was to write after thy copy,⁵ to proceed the same way in their expositions of the Scriptures, and in their composing both of public liturgies and of private prayers to thee, to make their accesses to thee in such a kind of language as thou wast pleased to speak to them, in a figurative, in a metaphorical language; in which manner I am bold to call the comfort which I receive now in this sickness, in the indication of the concoction⁶ and maturity thereof, in certain clouds⁷ and residences⁸ which the physicians observe, a discovering of land from sea after a long and tempestuous voyage. * * *

1623

1624

*From Death's Duel*¹

[Donne's last sermon, on Psalm 68.20: "And unto God the Lord belong the issues² of Death"—i.e., from death.]

* * * First, then, we consider this *exitus mortis*, to be *liberatio a morte*, that with God, the Lord are the issues of death, and therefore in all our deaths, and the deadly calamities of this life, we may justly hope of a good issue from him; and all our periods and transitions in this life, are so many passages from death to death. Our very birth and entrance into this life is *exitus a morte*, an issue from death, for in our mother's womb we are dead so, as that we do not know we live, not so much as we do in our sleep, neither is there any grave so close, or so putrid a prison, as the womb would be unto us, if we stayed in it beyond our time, or died there before our time. In the grave the worms do not kill us, we breed and feed, and then kill the worms which we ourselves produced. In the womb the dead child kills the mother that conceived it, and is a murderer, nay a parricide, even after it is dead. And if we be not dead so in the womb, so as that being dead, we kill her that gave us our first life, our life of vegetation,³ yet we are dead so, as David's Idols are dead. In the womb we have eyes and see not, ears and hear not.⁴ There in the womb we are fitted for works of darkness, all the while deprived of light: And there in the womb we are taught cruelty, by being fed with blood, and may be damned, though we be never born. * * *

5. Text.

6. Ripening.

7. Cloudy urine.

8. Residues.

1. The printed version of this sermon (1632) has the subtitle "A Consolation to the Soul, against the dying life, and living death of the body." Donne's friend and executor Henry King (later bishop of Chichester) supplied the further information that the sermon was delivered at Whitehall, before King Charles, that it was delivered only a few days before Donne's death, and that it was fitly styled "the author's own funeral sermon." Donne was a powerful and popular preacher, and this sermon was especially moving according to the testimony of many auditors, including Izaak Walton (see his

account of Donne on his deathbed, p. 1309). Besides the personal drama of the preacher himself visibly ill and perhaps dying, the audience must have responded to the almost unbearably graphic analysis of the forms of death and decay—a theme that often preoccupied Donne. As in his poems, the language is personal, rich in learning and curious lore, dazzling in verbal ingenuity and metaphor. As in the *Devotions*, the sentences are long, sinuous, and elaborate. Typically, he uses a number of Latin phrases, but almost always translates or paraphrases them immediately.

2. Passages out.

3. I.e., of growth.

4. Paraphrases Psalm 115.5-6.

But then this *exitus a morte* is but *introitus in mortem*, this issue, this deliverance from that death, the death of the womb, is an entrance, a delivering over to another death, the manifold deaths of this world. We have a winding-sheet⁵ in our mother's womb, which grows with us from our conception, and we come into the world wound up in that winding-sheet, for we come to seek a grave. * * *

Now this which is so singularly peculiar to him [Christ], that his flesh should not see corruption, at his second coming, his coming to Judgment, shall extend to all then alive, their flesh shall not see corruption. . . . But for us that die now and sleep in the state of the dead, we must all pass this posthume death, this death after death, nay this death after burial, this dissolution after dissolution, this death of corruption and putrefaction, of vermiculation and incineration, of dissolution and dispersion in and from the grave. When those bodies that have been the children of royal parents, and the parents of royal children, must say with Job, to corruption, thou art my father, and to the worm thou art my mother and my sister.⁶ Miserable riddle, when the same worm must be my mother, and my sister, and myself. Miserable incest, when I must be married to my mother and my sister, beget, and bear that worm which is all that miserable penury; when my mouth shall be filled with dust, and the worm shall feed, and feed sweetly upon me,⁷ when the ambitious man shall have no satisfaction, if the poorest alive tread upon him, nor the poorest receive any contentment in being made equal to princes, for they shall be equal but in dust. One dies at his full strength, being wholly at ease and in quiet, and another dies in the bitterness of his soul, and never eats with pleasure, but they lie down alike in the dust, and the worm covers them.⁸ The worm covers them in Job, and in Isaiah, it covers them and is spread under them, the worm is spread under thee, and the worm covers thee.⁹ There's the mats and the carpets that lie under, and there's the state and the canopy,¹ that hangs over the greatest of the sons of men. Even those bodies that were the temple of the Holy Ghost, come to this dilapidation, to ruin, to rubbish, to dust: even the Israel of the Lord, and Jacob himself hath no other specification, no other denomination, but that *vermis Jacob*, thou worm of Jacob.² Truly the consideration of this posthume death, this death after burial, that after God (with whom are the issues of death) hath delivered me from the death of the womb, by bringing me into the world, and from the manifold deaths of the world, by laying me in the grave, I must die again in an incineration of this flesh, and in a dispersion of that dust. * * *

There we leave you in that blessed dependency, to hang upon him that hangs upon the Cross, there bathe in his tears, there suck at his wounds, and lie down in peace in his grave, till he vouchsafe you a resurrection, and an ascension into that Kingdom, which he hath purchased for you, with the inestimable price of his incorruptible blood. Amen.

1632

5. The placenta.

6. Paraphrases Job 17.14.

7. Echoes Job 24.20.

8. Echoes Job 21.23-26.

9. Echoes Isaiah 14.11.

1. Cloth of state, a canopy erected over a king's throne.

2. That epithet is used in Isaiah 41.14.

IZAAK WALTON
1593-1683

Walton's *Life of Donne*, first published in 1640 as a biographical introduction to Donne's collected sermons, was the most artistic and accurate English biography to date. Walton drew on his personal knowledge of and friendship with Donne in his later years, talked with others who knew him, and looked over his poems, letters, and papers; but he enlivens his narrative with anecdotes that are often questionably accurate, and he quotes conversations that he could not have heard. While Walton made an effort to research his facts, his is not a scholarly biography, written in accord with the canons of evidence that have evolved since Walton's time. Rather, it is shaped by the great models of life-writing to which everyone in that age looked: Plutarch's *Lives*, portraying subjects as examples of virtue and vice; and hagiography or saints' lives exemplified by Augustine's autobiographical *Confessions* (ca. 400) and by Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. The influence of hagiography on Walton is evident as he explicitly reads Donne's life against that of St. Augustine: rakish in youth and saintly in age. It is especially evident in the passage below, on Donne's remarkable preparations for death. It is no accident that this biography, published just as religious tensions were growing acute and civil war loomed on the horizon, represented Donne as a "saint" of Anglicanism. The other lives Walton wrote—of George Herbert, Richard Hooker, Henry Wotton, and Bishop Robert Sanderson—presented them as exemplary Anglican worthies to the triumphant Anglican church after the Restoration.

A prosperous merchant in the clothing trade, Walton lived for several years in the parish of St. Dunstons in the west, where Donne was vicar. He was a staunch royalist, credited with smuggling one of Prince Charles's jewels out of the country, but his life was otherwise unremarkable, save for his wildly popular book on fishing, *The Complete Angler* (1653). Written during the Cromwellian ascendancy, this series of dialogues between a fisherman and a hunter (and briefly a falconer) creates for Walton a fascinating surrogate self, Piscator, the angler. Setting the representative values of fishermen—moderation, peacefulness, generosity, thankfulness, contemplation—over against the contrasting values assigned to hunters and falconers, Walton makes "angling" stand in for the ceremonious, peaceful, ordered life of royalist Anglicans, now so violently disrupted. As a stylist Walton writes prose that is easy and colloquial but graceful and polished.

*From The Life of Dr. John Donne*¹

[donne on his deathbed]

It is observed that a desire of glory or commendation is rooted in the very nature of man; and that those of the severest and most mortified² lives, though they may become so humble as to banish self-flattery, and such weeds as naturally grow there; yet they have not been able to kill this desire of glory, but that like our radical heat,³ it will both live and die with us; and many think it should do so; and we want not sacred examples to justify the desire of having our memory to outlive our lives; which I mention, because Dr. Donne, by the persuasion of Dr. Fox,⁴ easily yielded at this very time to have a monument

1. See Donne's sermon, "Death's Duel" (p. 1307), preached on February 25, 1631; he died on March 31 and was buried in St. Paul's on April 3.

2. Self-denying.

3. Bodily warmth.

4. His physician, Dr. Simeon Fox.

made for him; but Dr. Fox undertook not to persuade him how, or what monument it should be; that was left to Dr. Donne himself.

A monument being resolved upon, Dr. Donne sent for a carver to make for him in wood the figure of an urn, giving him directions for the compass and height of it; and to bring with it a board, of the just⁵ height of his body. These being got, then without delay a choice painter was got to be in readiness to draw his picture, which was taken as followeth. Several charcoal fires being first made in his large study, he brought with him into that place his winding-sheet in his hand, and having put off all his clothes, had this sheet put on him, and so tied with knots at his head and feet, and his hands so placed, as dead bodies are usually fitted to be shrouded and put into their coffin or grave. Upon this urn he thus stood with his eyes shut and with so much of the sheet turned aside as might show his lean, pale, and deathlike face, which was purposely turned toward the east, from whence he expected the second coming of his and our savior Jesus. In this posture he was drawn at his just height; and when the picture was fully finished, he caused it to be set by his bedside, where it continued and became his hourly object till his death, and was then given to his dearest friend and executor Dr. Henry King,⁶ then chief residentiary of St. Paul's, who caused him to be thus carved in one entire piece of white marble, as it now stands in that church;⁷ and by Dr. Donne's own appointment, these words were to be affixed to it as his epitaph:

JOHANNES DONNE
Sac. Theol. Profess.

*Post varia studia quibus ab annis tenerrimis
fideliter, nec infeliciter incubuit,
instinctu et impulsu Sp. Sancti, monitu
et hortatu*

REGIS JACOBI, *ordines sacros*
amplexus, anno sui Jesu, 1614, et suae aetatis 42,
decanatu huius ecclesiae indutus 11
Novembris, 1621,

exutus morte ultimo die Martii, 1631,
hie licet in occiduo cinere aspicit eum
cuius nomen est Oriens.⁸

And now, having brought him through the many labyrinths and perplexities of a various life, even to the gates of death and the grave, my desire is he may rest till I have told my reader that I have seen many pictures of him in several habits and at several ages and in several postures; and I now mention this because I have seen one picture of him, drawn by a curious⁹ hand, at his age

5. Exact.

6. Poet, canon ("residentiary") of St. Paul's, and later bishop of Chichester. "Object": of meditation.

7. The statue on Donne's tomb, executed by the well-known sculptor Nicholas Stone, survived the great fire and may still be seen in St. Paul's.

8. "John Donne, Professor of Sacred Theology. After various studies, which he plied from his tenderest youth faithfully and not unsuccessfully,

moved by the instinct and impulse of the Holy Spirit and the admonition and encouragement of King James, he took holy orders in the year of his Jesus 1614 and the year of his age forty-two. On the 27th of November 1621, he was invested as dean of this church, and divested by death, the last day of March 1631. Here in the decline of ashes he looks to One whose name is the Rising Sun."

9. Skillful. "Habits": garbs.

of eighteen, with his sword and what other adornments might then suit with the present fashions of youth and the giddy gaieties of that age;¹ and his motto then was—

How much shall I be changed,
Before I am changed!

And if that young and his now dying picture were at this time set together, every beholder might say, "Lord! how much is Dr. Donne already changed, before he is changed!" And the view of them might give my reader occasion to ask himself with some amazement, "Lord! how much may I also, that am now in health, be changed before I am changed; before this vile, this changeable body shall put off mortality!" and therefore to prepare for it. But this is not writ so much for my reader's memento² as to tell him that Dr. Donne would often in his private discourses, and often publicly in his sermons, mention the many changes both of his body and mind; especially of his mind from a vertiginous giddiness; and would as often say, "his great and most blessed change was from a temporal to a spiritual employment"; in which he was so happy, that he accounted the former part of his life to be lost; and the beginning of it to be from his first entering into sacred orders and serving his most merciful God at his altar.

Upon Monday after the drawing this picture, he took his last leave of his beloved study; and being sensible of his hourly decay, retired himself to his bedchamber; and that week sent at several³ times for many of his most considerable friends, with whom he took a solemn and deliberate farewell, commending to their considerations some sentences useful for the regulation of their lives; and then dismissed them, as good Jacob did his sons, with a spiritual benediction. The Sunday following, he appointed his servants, that if there were any business yet undone that concerned him or themselves, it should be prepared against Saturday next; for after that day he would not mix his thoughts with anything that concerned this world; nor ever did; but, as Job, so he "waited for the appointed day of his dissolution."⁴

And now he was so happy as to have nothing to do but to die, to do which he stood in need of no longer time; for he had studied it long and to so happy a perfection that in a former sickness he called God to witness, "he was that minute ready to deliver his soul into his hands, if that minute God would determine his dissolution."⁵ In that sickness he begged of God the constancy to be preserved in that estate forever; and his patient expectation to have his immortal soul disrobed from her garment of mortality makes me confident he now had a modest assurance that his prayers were then heard and his petition granted. He lay fifteen days earnestly expecting his hourly change; and in the last hour of his last day, as his body melted away and vaped into spirit, his soul having, I verily believe, some revelation of the beatifical vision, he said, "I were miserable if I might not die"; and after those words, closed many periods of his faint breath by saying often, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done." His speech, which had long been his ready and faithful servant, left

1. The picture is reproduced as the frontispiece to the second edition (1635) of Donne's *Poems*. It bears the Spanish motto *Antes tuerto que mudado* (Rather dead than changed, i.e., constant until death), which Walton mistranslates below.

2. Memento mori, remembrance of death.

3. Separate.

4. Job 14.14.

5. Walton paraphrases from Donne's *Devotions upon Emergent Occasions*, Prayer 23.

him not till the last minute of his life, and then forsook him, not to serve another master (for who speaks like him), but died before him; for that it was then become useless to him that now conversed with God on earth as angels are said to do in heaven, only by thoughts and looks. Being speechless, and seeing heaven by that illumination by which he saw it, he did, as St. Stephen, "look steadfastly into it, till he saw the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God his Father";⁶ and being satisfied with this blessed sight, as his soul ascended and his last breath departed from him, he closed his own eyes; and then disposed his hands and body into such a posture as required not the least alteration by those that came to shroud him.

Thus variable, thus virtuous was the life; thus excellent, thus exemplary was the death of this memorable man.

He was buried in that place of St. Paul's Church which he had appointed for that use some years before his death; and by which he passed daily to pay his public devotions to almighty God (who was then served twice a day by a public form of prayer and praises in that place): but he was not buried privately, though he desired it; for, beside an unnumbered number of others, many persons of nobility, and of eminency for learning, who did love and honor him in his life, did show it at his death by a voluntary and sad attendance of his body to the grave, where nothing was so remarkable as a public sorrow.

To which place of his burial some mournful friends repaired, and, as Alexander the Great did to the grave of the famous Achilles,⁷ so they strewed his with an abundance of curious and costly flowers; which course they (who were never yet known) continued morning and evening for many days, not ceasing till the stones that were taken up in that church to give his body admission into the cold earth (now his bed of rest) were again by the mason's art so leveled and firmed as they had been formerly, and his place of burial undistinguishable to common view.

The next day after his burial, some unknown friend, some one of the many lovers and admirers of his virtue and learning, wrote this epitaph with a coal on the wall over his grave:

Reader! I am to let thee know,
 Donne's body only lies below;
 For, could the grave his soul comprise,
 Earth would be richer than the skies!

Nor was this all the honor done to his reverend ashes; for, as there be some persons that will not receive a reward for that for which God accounts himself a debtor, persons that dare trust God with their charity and without a witness; so there was by some grateful unknown friend that thought Dr. Donne's memory ought to be perpetuated, an hundred marks sent to his two faithful friends and executors,⁸ towards the making of his monument. It was not for many years known by whom; but after the death of Dr. Fox, it was known that it was he that sent it; and he lived to see as lively a representation of his dead friend as marble can express: a statue indeed so like Dr. Donne, that (as his friend Sir Henry Wotton hath expressed himself) "it seems to breathe faintly, and posterity shall look upon it as a kind of artificial miracle."

6. Acts 7.55.

7. Plutarch, "Alexander," sec. 15.

8. Henry King and Dr. John Monfort.

He was of stature moderately tall; of a straight and equally proportioned body, to which all his words and actions gave an unexpressible addition of comeliness.

The melancholy and pleasant humor were in him so contempered that each gave advantage to the other, and made his company one of the delights of mankind.

His fancy was unimitably high, equaled only by his great wit;⁹ both being made useful by a commanding judgment.

His aspect was cheerful, and such as gave a silent testimony of a clear knowing soul, and of a conscience at peace with itself.

His melting eye showed that he had a soft heart, full of noble compassion; of too brave a soul to offer injuries and too much a Christian not to pardon them in others.

He did much contemplate (especially after he entered into his sacred calling) the mercies of almighty God, the immortality of the soul, and the joys of heaven; and would often say, in a kind of sacred ecstasy, "Blessed be God that he is God, only and divinely like himself."

He was by nature highly passionate, but more apt to reluct at¹ the excesses of it. A great lover of the offices of humanity, and of so merciful a spirit that he never beheld the miseries of mankind without pity and relief.

He was earnest and unwearied in the search of knowledge, with which his vigorous soul is now satisfied, and employed in a continual praise of that God that first breathed it into his active body: that body, which once was a temple of the Holy Ghost and is now become a small quantity of Christian dust:

But I shall see it reanimated.

Feb. 15, 1640

i.w.

1640, 1675

9. Mental acuity. "Fancy": imagination.

1. Struggle against.

AEMILIA LANYER

1569-1645

Aemilia Lanyer was the first Englishwoman to publish a substantial volume of original poems and the first to make an overt bid for patronage. She was the daughter to an Italian family of court musicians who came to England in the reign of Henry VIII; they may have been Christianized Jews or, alternatively, Protestants forced to flee Catholic persecution in their native land. Some information about Lanyer's life has come down to us from the notebooks of the astrologer and fortune-teller Simon Forman, whom Lanyer consulted in 1597. Educated in the aristocratic household of the Countess of Kent, in her late teens and early twenties Lanyer was the mistress of Queen Elizabeth's lord chamberlain, Henry Carey, Lord Hunsdon. The wealthy Hunsdon, forty-five years her senior, was a notable patron of the arts—Shakespeare's company performed under his auspices in the 1590s—and he maintained his mistress in luxury. Yet when she became pregnant by Hunsdon at age twenty-three, she was married off to Alfonso Lanyer, one of another family of gentleman musicians attached

to the courts of Elizabeth I and James I. Lanyer's fortunes declined after her marriage. Lanyer's poetry suggests that she resided for some time in the bookish and cultivated household of Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland, and Margaret's young daughter Anne. Lanyer reports receiving there encouragement in learning, piety, and poetry, as well as, perhaps, some support in the unusual venture of offering her poems for publication. Yet her efforts to find some niche at the Jacobean court came to nothing.

Lanyer's single volume of poems, *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* (1611) has a decided feminist thrust. A series of dedicatory poems to former and would-be patronesses praises them as a community of contemporary good women. The title poem, a meditation on Christ's Passion that at times invites comparison with Donne and Crashaw, contrasts the good women in the Passion story with the weak, evil men portrayed there. It also incorporates a defense of Eve and all women. That defense and Lanyer's prose epistle, "To the Virtuous Reader," are spirited contributions to the so-called *querelle des femmes*, or "debate about women," a massive body of writings in several genres and languages: some examples include Chaucer's Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale, Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*, Joseph Swetnam's attack on "lewd, idle, froward, and unconstant women" and Rachel Speght's reply. The final poem in Lanyer's volume, "The Description of Cookham," celebrates in elegiac mode the Crown estate occasionally occupied by the Countess of Cumberland, portraying it as an Edenic paradise of women, now lost. The poem may or may not have been written before Ben Jonson's "To Penshurst"—commonly thought to have inaugurated the "country-house" genre in English literature—but Lanyer's poem can claim priority in publication. The poems' different conceptions of the role of women in the ideal social order make an instructive comparison.

*From Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*¹

*To the Doubtful Reader*²

Gentle Reader, if thou desire to be resolved, why I give this title, *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*, know for certain, that it was delivered unto me in sleep many years before I had any intent to write in this manner, and was quite out of my memory, until I had written the Passion of Christ, when immediately it came into my remembrance, what I had dreamed long before. And thinking it a significant token³ that I was appointed to perform this work, I gave the very same words I received in sleep as the fittest title I could devise for this book.

*To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty*⁴

Renowned empress, and Great Britain's queen,
 Most gracious mother of succeeding kings;
 Vouchsafe⁰ to view that which is seldom seen, *be willing*
 A woman's writing of divinest things:

1. "Hail God, King of the Jews," a variant of the inscription affixed to Christ's cross.

2. Lanyer placed this explanation at the end of her volume, not the beginning, as a further authorizing gesture. Invoking the familiar genre of the dream vision, she lays claim to poetic, even divine, inspiration. "Doubtful": doubting.

3. Sign.

4. The first of eight poems addressed to court ladies whom Lanyer sought to attract as patrons;

such poems commonly preface literary works by male courtier-poets, though usually not in such numbers. These poems are followed by a prose address to her actual patron, the Countess of Cumberland, and then by the prose epistle included here, "To the Virtuous Reader." This first poem addresses Anne of Denmark, James I's queen, patron of writers such as Ben Jonson and Samuel Daniel, and mother of Prince Henry, Princess Elizabeth, and the future Charles I.

5 Read it fair queen, though it defective be,
Your excellence can grace both it and me.

Behold, great queen, fair Eve's apology,⁰ *defense*
Which I have writ in honor of your sex,
75 And do refer unto your majesty
To judge if it agree not with the text:⁵
And if it do, why are poor women blamed,
Or by more faulty men so much defamed.

My weak distempered brain and feeble spirits,
HO Which all unlearned have adventured, this
To write of Christ, and of his sacred merits,
Desiring that this book her^o hands may kiss: *the queen's*
And though I be unworthy of that grace,
Yet let her blessed thoughts this book embrace.

And pardon me, fair queen, though I presume
To do that which so many better can;
Not that I learning to myself assume,
Or that I would compare with any man:
But as they are scholars, and by art do write,
So Nature yields my soul a sad^o delight. *solemn, serious*

And since all arts at first from Nature came,
That goodly creature, mother of perfection
Whom Jove's⁶ almighty hand at first did frame,
Taking both her and hers⁷ in his protection:
155 Why should not she now grace my barren muse,
And in a woman all defects excuse.

So peerless princess humbly I desire,
That your great wisdom would vouchsafe t'omit⁰ *overlook*
All faults; and pardon if my spirits retire,
160 Leaving⁰ to aim at what they cannot hit: *declining*
To write your worth, which no pen can express,
Were but t' eclipse your fame, and make it less.⁸

To the Virtuous Reader

Often have I heard, that it is the property of some women, not only to emulate the virtues and perfections of the rest, but also by all their powers of ill speaking, to eclipse the brightness of their deserved fame: now contrary to their custom, which men I hope unjustly lay to their charge, I have written this small volume, or little book, for the general use of all virtuous ladies and gentlewomen of this kingdom; and in commendation of some particular per-

5. The biblical text (Genesis 1-3).

6. God as creator of Nature.

7. Nature and those (especially women) under Nature's protection.

8. As her poetry of praise cannot possibly do justice to the queen, she abandons an attempt that would obscure rather than promote the queen's fame.

sons of our own sex, such as for the most part, are so well known to myself, and others, that I dare undertake Fame dares not to call any better. And this have I done, to make known to the world, that all women deserve not to be blamed though some forgetting they are women themselves, and in danger to be condemned by the words of their own mouths, fall into so great an error, as to speak unadvisedly against the rest of their sex; which if it be true, I am persuaded they can show their own imperfection in nothing more: and therefore could wish (for their own ease, modesties, and credit) they would refer such points of folly, to be practiced by evil-disposed men, who forgetting they were born of women, nourished of women, and that if it were not by the means of women, they would be quite extinguished out of the world, and a final end of them all, do like vipers deface the wombs wherein they were bred, only to give way and utterance to their want of discretion and goodness. Such as these, were they that dishonored Christ's his apostles and prophets, putting them to shameful deaths. Therefore we are not to regard any imputations, that they undeservedly lay upon us, no otherwise than to make use of them to our own benefits, as spur to virtue, making us fly all occasions that may color their unjust speeches to pass current. Especially considering that they have tempted even the patience of God himself, who gave power to wise and virtuous women, to bring down their pride and arrogancy. As was cruel Cesarus by the discreet counsel of noble Deborah, judge and prophetess of Israel: and resolution of Jael wife of Heber the Kenite:⁹ wicked Haman, by the divine prayers and prudent proceedings of beautiful Hester:¹ blasphemous Holofernes, by the invincible courage, rare wisdom, and confident carriage of Judith: and the unjust Judges, by the innocency of chaste Susanna:² with infinite others, which for brevity sake I will omit. As also in respect it pleased our lord and savior Jesus Christ, without the assistance of man, being free from original and all other sins, from the time of his conception, till the hour of his death, to be begotten of a woman, born of a woman, nourished of a woman, obedient to a woman; and that he healed women, pardoned women, comforted women: yea, even when he was in his greatest agony and bloody sweat, going to be crucified, and also in the last hour of his death, took care to dispose of a woman:³ after his resurrection, appeared first to a woman, sent a woman⁴ to declare his most glorious resurrection to the rest of his disciples. Many other examples I could allege of divers faithful and virtuous women, who have in all ages not only been confessors but also endured most cruel martyrdom for their faith in Jesus Christ. All which is sufficient to enforce all good Christians and honorable-minded men to speak reverently of our sex, and especially of all virtuous and good women. To the modest censures of both which, I refer these my imperfect

9. Sisera (Canaanite leader, hence "Cesarus," i.e., "Caesar") was a Canaanite military commander (12th century B.C.E.) routed in battle by the Israelites under the leadership of the prophetess Deborah. Sisera was subsequently killed by the Kenite woman Jael, who enticed him to her tent and then drove a tent spike through his temples while he slept (Judges 4).

1. Esther, the Jewish wife (5th century B.C.E.) of the Persian King Ahasuerus (Xerxes I), who by her wit and courage subverted the plot of the king's minister, Haman, to annihilate the Jews (Esther 1—7).

2. Jewish wife and example of chastity (6th cen-

tury B.C.E.). She was falsely accused of adultery by two Jewish elders, in revenge for refusing their sexual advances, and condemned to death. The wise judge Daniel saved her by uncovering the elders' perjury (Apocrypha, Book of Susanna). Judith in the 5th century B.C.E. delivered her Judean countrymen from the Assyrians by captivating their leader, Holofernes, with her charms and then decapitating him while he was drunk (Apocrypha, Book of Judith).

3. Christ asked his apostle John to care for his mother Mary (John 19.25—27). "Dispose of": provide for.

4. Mary Magdalen (John 20.1-18).

endeavors, knowing that according to their own excellent dispositions they will rather cherish, nourish, and increase the least spark of virtue where they find it, by their favorable and best interpretations, than quench it by wrong constructions. To whom I wish all increase of virtue, and desire their best opinions.

*Eve's Apology in Defense of Women*⁵

Now Pontius Pilate is to judge the cause⁰ case
 Of faultless Jesus, who before him stands,
 Who neither hath offended prince, nor laws,
 Although he now be brought in woeful bands.
 5 O noble governor, make thou yet a pause,
 Do not in innocent blood inbrue⁰ thy hands; stain
 But hear the words of thy most worthy wife,
 Who sends to thee, to beg her Savior's life.⁶

Let barb'rous cruelty far depart from thee,
 10 And in true justice take affliction's part;
 Open thine eyes, that thou the truth may'st see.
 Do not the thing that goes against thy heart,
 Condemn not him that must thy Savior be;
 But view his holy life, his good desert.
 15 Let not us women glory in men's fall,⁷
 Who had power given to overrule us all.

Till now your indiscretion sets us free.
 And makes our former fault much less appear;
 Our mother Eve, who tasted of the tree,
 20 Giving to Adam what she held most dear,
 Was simply good, and had no power to see;⁸
 The after-coming harm did not appear:
 The subtle serpent that our sex betrayed
 Before our fall so sure a plot had laid.

25 That undiscerning ignorance perceived
 No guile or craft that was by him intended;
 For had she known of what we were bereaved,⁹
 To his request she had not condescended.⁰ consented
 But she, poor soul, by cunning was deceived;

5. Lanyer supplies the title for this subsection of the *Salve Deus* on her title page. Eve is not, however, the speaker; rather, the narrator presents Eve's "Apology" (defense of her actions), which is also a defense of all women. She does so by means of an apostrophe (impassioned address) to Pilate, the Roman official who authorized the crucifixion of Jesus. Lanyer makes Pilate and Adam representatives of the male gender, whereas Eve and Pilate's wife represent womankind.

6. Pilate's wife wrote her husband a letter urging Pilate to spare Jesus, about whom she had a warning dream (Matthew 27:19).

7. The fall of Adam, and the prospective fall of

Pilate.

8. In Eden, Eve ate the forbidden fruit first, at the serpent's bidding. Genesis commentary usually emphasized Eve's full knowledge that God had forbidden them on pain of death and banishment from Eden to eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Her action was usually ascribed to intemperance, pride, and ambition.

9. Deprived, specifically of eternal life. In Genesis 3, Eve was enticed by the serpent to eat the forbidden fruit; she in turn enticed her husband. God expelled them from Eden, condemning Adam to hard labor, Eve to pain in childbirth and subjection to her husband, and both to suffering and death.

30 No hurt therein her harmless heart intended:
 For she alleged⁰ God's word, which he^o denies, *asserted /serpent*
 That they should die, but even as gods be wise.

But surely Adam cannot be excused;
 Her fault though great, yet he was most to blame;
 35 What weakness offered, strength might have refused,
 Being lord of all, the greater was his shame.
 Although the serpent's craft had her abused,
 God's holy word ought all his actions frame,⁰ *determine*
 For he was lord and king of all the earth,
 40 Before poor Eve had either life or breath,

Who being framed⁰ by God's eternal hand *fashioned*
 The perfectest man that ever breathed on earth;
 And from God's mouth received that strait⁰ command, *strict*
 The breach whereof he knew was present death;
 45 Yea, having power to rule both sea and land,
 Yet with one apple won to lose that breath¹
 Which God had breathed in his beauteous face,
 Bringing us all in danger and disgrace.

And then to lay the fault on Patience' back,
 50 That we (poor women) must endure it all.
 We know right well he did discretion lack,
 Being not persuaded thereunto at all.
 If Eve did err, it was for knowledge sake;
 The fruit being fair persuaded him to fall:
 55 No subtle serpent's falsehood did betray him;
 If he would eat it, who had power to stay⁰ him? *prevent*

Not Eve, whose fault was only too much love,
 Which made her give this present to her dear,
 That what she tasted he likewise might prove,⁰ *experience*
 60 Whereby his knowledge might become more clear;
 He never sought her weakness to reprove
 With those sharp words which he of God did hear;
 Yet men will boast of knowledge, which he took
 From Eve's fair hand, as from a learned book.

65 If any evil did in her remain,
 Being made of him,² he was the ground of all.
 If one of many worlds³ could lay a stain
 Upon our sex, and work so great a fall
 To wretched man by Satan's subtle train,⁴
 70 What will so foul a fault amongst you all?
 Her weakness did the serpent's words obey,
 But you in malice God's dear Son betray,

1. The breath of life, which would have been eternal.

2. Genesis 2.21—22 reports God's creation of Eve from Adam's rib.

3. May allude to the commonplace that man is a

little world, applying it here to woman.

4. Tradition identifies Satan with the serpent, although that identification is not made in Genesis.

- Whom, if unjustly you condemn to die,
 Her sin was small to what you do commit;
 75 All mortal sins⁵ that do for vengeance cry
 Are not to be compared unto it.
 If many worlds would altogether try
 By all their sins the wrath of God to get,
 This sin of yours surmounts them all as far
 • so As doth the sun another little star.⁶
- Then let us have our liberty again,
 And challenge⁰ to yourselves no sovereignty. *claim*
 You came not in the world without our pain,
 Make that a bar against your cruelty;
 85 Your fault being greater, why should you disdain
 Our being your equals, free from tyranny?
 If one weak woman simply did offend,
 This sin of yours hath no excuse nor end,
- To which, poor souls, we never gave consent.
 90 Witness, thy wife, O Pilate, speaks for all,
 Who did but dream, and yet a message sent
 That thou shouldest have nothing to do at all
 With that just man" which, if thy heart relent, *Christ*
 Why wilt thou be a reprobate⁰ with Saul⁷ *danned*
 95 To seek the death of him that is so good,
 For thy soul's health to shed his dearest blood?

1611

The Description of Cookham¹

- Farewell, sweet Cookham, where I first obtained
 Grace² from that grace where perfect grace remained;
 And where the muses gave their full consent,
 I should have power the virtuous to content;
 5 Where princely palace willed me to indite,⁰ *write*
 The sacred story of the soul's delight.³
 Farewell, sweet place, where virtue then did rest,
 And all delights did harbor in her breast;
 Never shall my sad eyes again behold

5. Sins punishable by damnation.

6. In the Ptolemaic system, the sun was larger than the other planets and the fixed stars.

7. King of Israel who sought the death of God's anointed prophet-king, David. The parallel is with Pilate, who sought Christ's death.

1. The poem was written in honor of Margaret Clifford, Countess of Cumberland, and celebrates a royal estate leased to her brother, at which the countess occasionally resided. The poem should be compared with Jonson's "To Penshurst" (p. 1434). Lanyer's poem is based on a familiarclassical topic, the "farewell to a place," which had its most famous development in Virgil's *Eclogue* 1. Lanyer

makes extensive use of the common pastoral motif of nature's active sympathy with and response to human emotion—which later came to be called the "pathetic fallacy."

2. Here, both God's grace and the favor of Her Grace, the Countess of Cumberland. Lanyer attributes both her religious conversion and her vocation as poet to a period of residence at Cookham in the countess's household. We do not know how long or under what circumstances Lanyer resided there.

3. Apparently a reference to the countess as her patron, commissioning her *Passion* poem.

Those pleasures which my thoughts did then unfold.
 Yet you, great lady, mistress of that place,
 From whose desires did spring this work of grace;
 Vouchsafe⁰ to think upon those pleasures past, *be willing*
 As fleeting worldly joys that could not last,
 Or, as dim shadows of celestial pleasures,
 Which are desired above all earthly treasures.
 Oh how, methought, against⁰ you thither came, *in -preparation for*
 Each part did seem some new delight to frame!
 The house received all ornaments to grace it,
 And would endure no foulness to deface it.
 And walks put on their summer liveries,⁴
 And all things else did hold like similes:⁵
 The trees with leaves, with fruits, with flowers clad,
 Embraced each other, seeming to be glad,
 Turning themselves to beauteous canopies,
 To shade the bright sun from your brighter eyes;
 The crystal streams with silver spangles graced,
 While by the glorious sun they were embraced;
 The little birds in chirping notes did sing,
 To entertain both you and that sweet spring.
 And Philomela⁶ with her sundry lays,
 Both you and that delightful place did praise.
 Oh how me thought each plant, each flower, each tree
 Set forth their beauties then to welcome thee!
 The very hills right humbly did descend,
 When you to tread on them did intend.
 And as you set your feet, they still did rise,
 Glad that they could receive so rich a prize.
 The gentle winds did take delight to be
 Among those woods that were so graced by thee,
 And in sad murmur uttered pleasing sound,
 That pleasure in that place might more abound.
 The swelling banks delivered all their pride
 When such a phoenix⁷ once they had espied.
 Each arbor, bank, each seat, each stately tree,
 Thought themselves honored in supporting thee.
 The pretty birds would oft come to attend thee,
 Yet fly away for fear they should offend thee;
 The little creatures in the burrow by
 Would come abroad to sport them in your eye,
 Yet fearful of the bow in your fair hand,
 Would run away when you did make a stand.
 Now let me come unto that stately tree,
 Wherein such goodly prospects you did see;
 That oak that did in height his fellows pass,

4. Distinctive garments worn by persons in the service of great families, to indicate whose servants they were.

5. Behaved in similar fashion.

6. In myth, Philomela was raped by her brother-in-law Tereus, who also tore out her tongue; the gods transformed her into a nightingale. Here the bird's song is joyous but later mournful (line 189),

associating her own woes with those of Cookham at the women's departure.

7. Mythical bird that lived alone of its kind for five hundred years, then was consumed in flame and reborn from its own ashes; metaphorically, a person of rare excellence. "All their pride": fish (cf. To Penshurst, lines 31—36).

As much as lofty trees, low growing grass,
 Much like a comely cedar straight and tall,
 Whose beauteous stature far exceeded all.
 How often did you visit this fair tree,
 60 Which seeming joyful in receiving thee,
 Would like a palm tree spread his arms abroad,
 Desirous that you there should make abode;
 Whose fair green leaves much like a comely veil,
 Defended Phoebus⁰ when he would assail; *resisted the sun*
 65 Whose pleasing boughs did yield a cool fresh air,
 Joying⁰ his happiness when you were there. *enjoying*
 Where being seated, you might plainly see
 Hills, vales, and woods, as if on bended knee
 They had appeared, your honor to salute,
 70 Or to prefer some strange unlooked-for suit;⁸
 All interlaced with brooks and crystal springs,
 A prospect fit to please the eyes of kings.
 And thirteen shires appeared all in your sight,
 Europe could not afford much more delight.
 75 What was there then but gave you all content,
 While you the time in meditation spent
 Of their Creator's power, which there you saw,
 In all his creatures held a perfect law;
 And in their beauties did you plain descry⁰ *perceive*
 80 His beauty, wisdom, grace, love, majesty.
 In these sweet woods how often did you walk,
 With Christ and his apostles there to talk;
 Placing his holy writ in some fair tree
 To meditate what you therein did see.
 85 With Moses you did mount his holy hill
 To know his pleasure, and perform his will.⁹
 With lowly David you did often sing
 His holy hymns to heaven's eternal King.¹
 And in sweet music did your soul delight
 90 To sound his praises, morning, noon, and night.
 With blessed Joseph you did often feed
 Your pined brethren, when they stood in need.²
 And that sweet lady sprung from Clifford's race,
 Of noble Bedford's blood, fair stem of grace,³
 95 To honorable Dorset now espoused,⁴
 In whose fair breast true virtue then was housed,
 Oh what delight did my weak spirits find
 In those pure parts⁰ of her well framed mind. *qualities*
 And yet it grieves me that I cannot be
 ☩ Near unto her, whose virtues did agree

8. To urge some unexpected petition, as to a monarch.

9. You sought out and followed God's law, like Moses, who received the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai.

1. You often sang David's psalms.

2. Like Joseph, who fed the starving Israelites in Egypt, you fed the hungry.

3. Main line of the family tree. Anne Clifford, only

surviving child of the seaman-adventurer George Clifford, third Earl of Cumberland, and the countess, a Russell (of "Bedford's blood"). She was tutored by Samuel Daniel and her *Diary* offers interesting insights into this period.

4. Anne Clifford was married to Richard Sackville, third Earl of Dorset, on February 25, 1609; the reference helps date Lanyer's poem.

With those fair ornaments of outward beauty,
 Which did enforce from all both love and duty.
 Unconstant Fortune, thou art most to blame,
 Who casts us down into so low a frame
 105 Where our great friends we cannot daily see,
 So great a difference is there in degree.⁵
 Many are placed in those orbs of state,
 Parters⁶ in honor, so ordained by Fate,
 Nearer in show, yet farther off in love,
 110 In which, the lowest always are above.⁷
 But whither am I carried in conceit,⁰
 My wit too weak to conster⁰ of the great. *thought, fancy*
 Why not? Although we are but born of earth, *construe*
 We may behold the heavens, despising death;
 115 And loving heaven that is so far above,
 May in the end vouchsafe us entire love.⁸
 Therefore sweet memory do thou retain
 Those pleasures past, which will not turn again:
 Remember beauteous Dorset's⁹ former sports,
 120 So far from being touched by ill reports,
 Wherein myself did always bear a part,
 While reverend love presented my true heart.
 Those recreations let me bear in mind,
 Which her sweet youth and noble thoughts did find,
 125 Whereof deprived, I evermore must grieve,
 Hating blind Fortune, careless to relieve.
 And you sweet Cookham, whom these ladies leave,
 I now must tell the grief you did conceive
 At their departure, when they went away,
 130 How everything retained a sad dismay.
 Nay long before, when once an inkling came,
 Methought each thing did unto sorrow frame:
 The trees that were so glorious in our view,
 Forsook both flowers and fruit, when once they knew
 135 Of your depart, their very leaves did wither,
 Changing their colors as they grew together.
 But when they saw this had no power to stay you,
 They often wept, though, speechless, could not pray you,
 Letting their tears in your fair bosoms fall,
 140 As if they said, Why will ye leave us all?
 This being vain, they cast their leaves away
 Hoping that pity would have made you stay:
 Their frozen tops, like age's hoary hairs,
 Shows their disasters, languishing in fears.
 145 A swarthy riveled rind^o all over spread, *hark*
 Their dying bodies half alive, half dead.

5. These lines and lines 117–25 probably exaggerate Lanyer's former familiarity with Anne Clifford.

6. Separators, i.e., the various honorific ranks ("orbs of state") act to separate person from person.

7. An egalitarian sentiment playing on the Chris-

tian notion that in spiritual things—love and charity—the poor and lowly surpass the great ones.

8. I.e., we (lowly) may also love God and enjoy God's love, and hence are equal to anyone.

9. As was common, Anne Clifford is here referred to by her husband's title.

But your occasions called you so away¹
 That nothing there had power to make you stay.
 Yet did I see a noble grateful mind
 150 Requiting each according to their kind,
 Forgetting not to turn and take your leave
 Of these sad creatures, powerless to receive
 Your favor, when with grief you did depart,
 Placing their former pleasures in your heart,
 155 Giving great charge to noble memory
 There to preserve their love continually.
 But specially the love of that fair tree,
 That first and last you did vouchsafe to see,
 In which it pleased you oft to take the air
 160 With noble Dorset, then a virgin fair,
 Where many a learned book was read and scanned,
 To this fair tree, taking me by the hand,
 You did repeat the pleasures which had passed,
 Seeming to grieve they could no longer last.
 165 And with a chaste, yet loving kiss took leave,
 Of which sweet kiss I did it soon bereave,⁰ *soon take from it*
 Scorning a senseless creature should possess
 So rare a favor, so great happiness.
 No other kiss it could receive from me,
 no For fear to give back what it took of thee,
 So I ungrateful creature did deceive it
 Of that which you in love vouchsafed to leave it.
 And though it oft had given me much content,
 Yet this great wrong I never could repent;
 175 But of the happiest made it most forlorn,
 To show that nothing's free from Fortune's scorn,
 While all the rest with this most beauteous tree
 Made their sad comfort sorrow's harmony.
 The flowers that on the banks and walks did grow,
 180 Crept in the ground, the grass did weep for woe.
 The winds and waters seemed to chide together
 Because you went away they knew not whither;
 And those sweet brooks that ran so fair and clear,
 With grief and trouble wrinkled did appear.
 185 Those pretty birds that wonted⁰ were to sing, *accustomed*
 Now neither sing, nor chirp, nor use their wing,
 But with their tender feet on some bare spray,
 Warble forth sorrow, and their own dismay.
 Fair Philomela leaves her mournful ditty,
 190 Drowned in deep sleep, yet can procure no pity.
 Each arbor, bank, each seat, each stately tree
 Looks bare and desolate now for want of thee,
 Turning green tresses into frosty gray,
 While in cold grief they wither all away.
 195 The sun grew weak, his beams no comfort gave,
 While all green things did make the earth their grave.

1. After her husband's death (1605) Margaret Clifford chiefly resided in her dower properties in the north; Anne Clifford was married in 1609.

Each briar, each bramble, when you went away
 Caught fast your clothes, thinking to make you stay;
 Delightful Echo wanted to reply
 To our last words, did now for sorrow die;
 The house cast off each garment that might grace it,
 Putting on dust and cobwebs to deface it.
 All desolation then there did appear,
 When you were going whom they held so dear.
 This last farewell to Cookham here I give,
 When I am dead thy name in this may live,
 Wherein I have performed her noble hest^o *commission*
 Whose virtues lodge in my unworthy breast,
 And ever shall, so long as life remains,
 Tying my life to her by those rich chains.^o *her virtues*

1611

BEN JONSON

1572-1637

In 1616 Ben Jonson published his *Works*, to the derision of those astounded to see mere plays and poems collected under the same title the king gave to his political treatises. Many of Jonson's contemporaries shied away from publication, either because, like Donne, they wrote for small coterie audiences or because, like Shakespeare, they wrote for theater companies that preferred not to let go of the scripts. Jonson knew and admired both Donne and Shakespeare and more than any Jacobean belonged to both of their very different worlds, but in publishing his *Works* he laid claim to an altogether higher literary status. He had risen from very humble beginnings to become England's unofficial poet laureate, with a pension from the king and honorary degrees from both Oxford and Cambridge. If he was not the first professional author in England, he was the first to invest that role with dignity and respectability. His published *Works*, over which he labored with painstaking care, testify to an extraordinary feat of self-transformation.

Jonson's early life was tough and turbulent. The posthumous son of a London clergyman, he was educated at Westminster School under the great antiquarian scholar William Camden. There he developed his love of classical learning, but lacking the resources to continue his education, Jonson was forced to turn to his stepfather's trade of bricklaying, a life he "could not endure." He escaped by joining the English forces in Flanders, where, as he later boasted, he killed a man in single combat before the eyes of two armies. Back in London, his attempt to make a living as an actor and playwright almost ended in early disaster. He was imprisoned in 1597 for collaborating with Thomas Nashe on the scandalous play *The Isle of Dogs* (now lost), and shortly after his release he killed one of his fellow actors in a duel. Jonson escaped the gallows by pleading benefit of clergy (a medieval privilege exempting felons who could read Latin from the death penalty). His learning had saved his life, but he emerged from captivity branded on the thumb, and with another mark against him as well. Under the influence of a priest imprisoned with him, he had converted to Catholicism (around the time that John Donne was abandoning that faith). Jonson was now more than ever a marginal figure, distrusted by the society that he satirized brilliantly in his early plays.

Jonson's fortunes improved with the accession of James I, though not at once. In 1603 he was called before the Privy Council to answer charges of "popery and treason" found in his play *Sejanus*. Little more than a year later he was in jail again for his part in the play *Eastward Ho*, which openly mocked the king's Scots accent and propensity for selling knighthoods. Yet Jonson was now on the way to establishing himself at the new court. In 1605 he received the commission to organize the Twelfth Night entertainment; *The Masque of Blackness* was the first of twenty-four masques he would produce for the court, most of them in collaboration with the architect and scene designer Inigo Jones. In the same years that he was writing the masques he produced his greatest works for the public theater. His first successful play, *Every Man in His Humor* (1598), had inaugurated the so-called comedy of humors, which ridicules the eccentricities or passions of the characters (thought to be caused by physiological imbalance). He capitalized on this success with the comedies *Volpone* (1606), *Epicene* (1609), *The Alchemist* (1610), and *Bartholomew Fair* (1614). Jonson preserved the detached, satiric perspective of an outsider, but he was rising in society and making accommodations where necessary. In 1605, when suspicion fell upon him as a Catholic following the exposure of the Gunpowder Plot, he showed his loyalty by agreeing to serve as a spy for the Privy Council. Five years later he would return to the Church of England.

Although he rose to a position of eminent respectability, Jonson seems to have been possessed all his life by a quarrelsome spirit. Much of his best work emerged out of fierce tensions with collaborators and contemporaries. At the turn of the century he became embroiled in the so-called War of the Theaters, in which he satirized and was satirized by his fellow playwrights John Marston and Thomas Dekker. Later, his long partnership with Inigo Jones was marked by ever more bitter rivalry over the relative importance of words and scenery in the masques. Jonson also poured invective on the theater audiences when they failed, in his view, to appreciate his plays. The failure of his play *The New Inn* elicited his "Ode to Himself" (1629), a disgusted farewell to the "loathed stage." Yet even after a stroke in 1629 left him partially paralyzed and confined to his home, Jonson continued to write for the stage, and was at work on a new play when he died in 1637.

In spite of his antagonistic nature, Jonson had a great capacity for friendship. His friends included Shakespeare, Donne, Francis Bacon, and John Selden. In later years he gathered about himself a group of admiring younger men known as the "Sons of Ben," whose numbers included Robert Herrick, Thomas Carew, and Sir John Suckling. He was a fascinating and inexhaustible conversationalist, as recorded by his friend William Drummond of Hawthornden, who carefully noted down Jonson's remarks on a wide variety of subjects, ranging from his fellow poets to his sexual predilections. Jonson also moved easily among the great of the land. His patrons included Lady Mary Wroth and other members of the Sidney and Herbert families. In "To Penshurst," a celebration of Robert Sidney's country estate, Jonson offers an ideal image of a social order in which a virtuous patriarchal governor offers ready hospitality to guests of all stations, from poets to kings.

"To Penshurst," together with Aemilia Lanyer's "Description of Cookham," inaugurated the small genre of the "country-house poem" in England. Jonson tried his hand, usually with success, at a wide range of poetic genres, including epitaph and epigram, love and funeral elegy, verse satire and verse letter, song and ode. More often than not he looked back to classical precedents. From the Roman poets Horace and Martial he derived not only generic models but an ideal vision of the artist and society against which he measured himself and the court he served. In many poems he adopted the persona of a witty, keenly perceptive, and scrupulously honest judge of men and women. The classical values Jonson most admired are enumerated in "Inviting a Friend to Supper," which describes a dinner party characterized by moderation, civility, graciousness, and pleasure that delights without enslaving—all contrasting sharply with the excess and licentiousness that marked the banquets and

entertainments of imperial Rome and Stuart England. Yet the poet who produced this image of moderation was a man of immense appetites, which found expression in his art as well as in his life. His best works seethe with an almost uncontrollable imaginative energy and lust for abundance. Even his profound classical learning manifests this impulse. The notes and references to learned authorities that spill across the margins of his *Works* can be seen as the literary equivalent of food and drink piled high on the poet's table. Years of hardship had taught Jonson to seek his feasts in his imagination, and he could make the most mundane object the basis for flights of high fancy. As he told Drummond, he once "consumed a whole night in lying looking to his great toe, about which he had seen Tartars and Turks, Romans and Carthaginians fight in his imagination." In Drummond's view, Jonson was "oppressed with fantasy." Perhaps it was so—but Jonson's capacity for fantasy also produced a wide variety of plays, masques, and poems, in styles ranging from witty comedy to delicate lyricism.

The Masque of Blackness After James I and Queen Anne ascended the English throne in 1603, they presided over the development of the court masque as political entertainment, idealizing the Stuart court as the embodiment of all perfections. *Blackness* established Jonson and Inigo Jones as the chief makers of court masques for more than two decades. Jonson provided the words and Jones the spectacle; over the years their rivalry grew ever more intense. For the first decade the queen took an active role in planning and performing court masques, which were usually performed only once—most often on Twelfth Night, as in this case, or sometimes for a wedding or other special occasion. *Blackness* also began the tradition of prodigiously expensive masques: the queen's bills for it came to around £5,000 (more than five hundred times what the young Jonson would have made in a year as an apprentice bricklayer). These entertainments were customarily followed by an elaborate feast and all-night dancing (the revels). On this occasion, as on many that followed, the evening was chaotic. The banquet table was overturned by the crush of diners before the meal began; guests were beaten by the palace guards; light-fingered revelers stole jewels, chains, and purses; and sexual liaisons went on in dark corners.

Court masques differed from performances in the public theater in most respects. Essentially an elaborate dance form, the masque was a multimedia event combining songs, speech, richly ornamented costumes and masks, shifting scene panels depicting elaborate architecture and landscapes, and intricate machines in which gods and goddesses descended from the heavens. They were presented to King James, who occupied the Chair of State, which was placed in the ideal viewing position. While the speaking parts were taken by professionals, the dancers were members of the court, including—to the horror of English Puritans—women. In the reign of Charles I, William Prynne lost his ears for attacking masques and comparing the women who danced in them (including the queen) to whores.

On the surface, *Blackness* asserts the cultural superiority of the English over non-European peoples and celebrates the patriarchal power of James, the "Sun King" of Britain, who can turn black skin to white. But in this and other queen's masques a subversive current is evident. Jonson tells us it was "her Majesty's will" that the ladies appear as black African beauties. Their costumes designed by Inigo Jones conjoin exotic beauty and wildness, associating them with the feared and desired "others" discovered (or imagined) by contemporary explorers. The power of the supposed Sun King is undercut by Niger's lengthy praise of black beauty and by the fact that the promised transformation of the ladies' skin is not staged (though they have become white in the sequel, *The Masque of Beauty*, performed three years later). Some viewers found the work unsettling, one deeming the ladies' apparel "too light and courtesan-like" and their black faces and hands "a very loathsome sight."

In many later Jacobean masques the glorification of the monarch seems less conflicted. Jonson developed a kind of prologue known as the antimasque, in which

wicked, disruptive, or rustic characters played by professional actors invade the court, only to be banished by the aristocratic masquers whose dancing transforms the court into a golden world. They then enact the mixture of the ideal and the real as they unmask, revealing themselves as court personages, and proceed to dance the revels with the other members of the court. Caroline court masques, in which Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria regularly danced, tended to be longer, more elaborate, more dialogic, more spectacular, and even more hyperbolic. But early to late, many masques contain features that subtly resist the politics of Stuart absolutism.

The Masque of Blackness

*The Queen's Masques: the first
Of Blackness
Personated at the Court at Whitehall,
on the Twelfth Night, 1605.*

Pliny, Solinus, Ptolemy, and of late Leo the African,¹ remember unto us a river in Ethiopia famous by the name of Niger,² of which the people were called *Nigritae*, now Negroes, and are the blackest nation of the world. This river taketh spring out of a certain lake,³ eastward, and after a long race, falleth into the western ocean. Hence (because it was her Majesty's will to have them blackamoors at first) the invention was derived by me, and presented thus.

First, for the scene, xvas drawn a Landscape⁴ consisting of small woods, and here and there a void place filled with huntings; which falling, an artificial sea was seen to shoot forth, as if it flowed to the land, raised with waves which seemed to move, and in some places the hillow to break,⁵ as imitating that orderly disorder, which is common in nature. In front of this sea were placed six tritons,⁶ in moving and sprightly actions; their upper parts human, save that their hairs were blue, as partaking of the sea color; their desinent⁷ parts fish, mounted above their heads, and all varied in disposition. From their backs were borne out certain light pieces of taffeta, as if carried by the wind, and their music made out of wreathed shells. Behind these, a pair of sea maids, for song, were as conspicuously seated; between which two great sea horses, as big as the life, put forth themselves; the one mounting aloft, and writhing his head from the other, which seemed to sink forwards; so intended for variation, and that the figure behind might come off better. Upon their backs Qceanus⁸ and Niger were advanced.

Oceanus, presented in a human form, the color of his flesh blue, and shadowed with a robe of sea green; his head gray and horned, as he is described by the ancients; his beard of the like mixed color. He was garlanded with algae or sea-grass, and in his hand a trident.

Niger, inform and color of an Ethiop, his hair and rare beard curled, shadowed with a blue and bright mantle; his front, neck, and wrists adorned with pearl; and crowned with an artificial wreath of cane and paper-rush.

These induced the masquers, which were twelve nymphs, negroes, and the daughters of Niger, attended by so many of the Oceaniae,⁹ which were their light-bearers.

1. This long introductory note is Jonson's. Leo wrote the *Description of Africa* (1526); the other three are classical authorities on geography.

2. Some, though not Pliny, identified it as the Nile. "Niger" means "black."

3. Lake Chad.

4. Painted on the front curtain.

5. Effects created by a series of painted cloths

raised and lowered by a machine.

6. Sea gods.

7. Back.

8. The Atlantic Ocean, father of the river Niger. Both ride on the backs of hippocamps ("sea horses"), mythological creatures with horses' heads and sea serpents' tails.

9. Sea nymphs, daughters of Oceanus and Tethys.

The masquers were placed in a great concave shell, like mother of pearl, curiously made to move on those waters, and rise with the billow; the top thereof was stuck with a chevron of lights which, indented to the proportion of the shell, struck a glorious beam upon them as they were seated one above another; so that they were all seen, but in an extravagant order.¹

On sides of the shell did swim six huge sea monsters, varied in their shapes and dispositions, bearing on their backs the twelve torchbearers, who were planted there in several greces,² so as the backs of some were seen, some in purple³ (or side), others in face, and all having their lights burning out of whelks or murex shells.

The attire of the masquers was alike in all, without difference; the colors azure and silver, their hair thick, and curled upright in tresses, like pyramids, but returned on the top with a scroll and antique dressing of feathers, and jewels interlaced with ropes of pearl. And for the front, ear, neck and wrists, the ornament was of the most choice and orient pearl, best setting off from the black.

For the light-bearers, sea green, waved about the skirts with gold and silver; their hair loose and flowing, garlanded with sea grass, and that stuck with branches of coral.

These thus presented, the scene behind seemed a vast sea (and united with this that flowed forth)⁴ from the termination or horizon of which (being the level of the state,⁵ which was placed in the upper end of the hall) was drawn, by the lines of perspective, the whole work, shooting downwards from the eye; which decorum made it more conspicuous, and caught the eye afar off with a wandering beauty. To which was added an obscure and cloudy night piece,⁶ that made the whole set off. So much for the bodily part, which was of Master Inigo Jones his design and act.

By this, one of the tritons, with the two sea maids, began to sing to the others' loud music, their voices being a tenor and two trebles.

SONG

Sound, sound aloud
 The welcome of the orient flood
 Into the west;
 Fair Niger, son to great Oceanus,
 Now honored thus
 With all his beauteous race,
 Who though but black in face,
 Yet are they bright,
 And full of life and light,
 To prove that beauty best
 Which not the color, but the feature
 Assures unto the creature.

OCEANUS Be silent, now the ceremony's done,
 And Niger, say, how comes it, lovely son,
 That thou, the Ethiop's river, so far east,
 Art seen to fall into th'extremest west
 Of me, the king of floods, Oceanus,

1. Spread out (inside the shell).

2. Steps.

3. Profile. "Whelks" (following): mollusks; "murex": a kind of shellfish.

4. The painted backdrop and the wave machine.

5. The king's throne, placed at the ideal viewing position, the vanishing point of the perspective.

6. The upper part of the scenery, through which the moon later descends.

And in mine empire's heart salute me thus?
 My ceaseless current now amazed stands
 To see thy labor through so many lands
 Mix thy fresh billow with my brackish stream,
 And in thy sweetness, stretch thy diademe⁰ *realm, rule*
 To these far distant and unequaled skies,
 This squared circle of celestial bodies.⁷

NIGER Divine Oceanus, 'tis not strange at all
 That, since the immortal souls of creatures mortal
 Mix with their bodies, yet reserve forever
 A power of separation, I should sever
 My fresh streams from thy brackish, like things fixed,
 Though with thy powerful saltness thus far mixed.
 "Virtue though chained to earth, will still live free;
 And hell itself must yield to industry."⁸

OCEANUS But what's the end of thy Herculean labors,
 Extended to these calm and blessed shores?

NIGER To do a kind and careful father's part,
 In satisfying every pensive⁰ heart *anxious*
 Of these my daughters, my most loved birth;
 Who, though they were the first formed dames of earth,⁹
 And in whose sparkling and refulgent⁰ eyes *radiant*
 The glorious sun did still⁰ delight to rise, *always*
 Though he (the best judge, and most formal cause¹
 Of all dames' beauties) in their firm hues draws
 Signs of his fervent'st love, and thereby shows
 That in their black the perfect'st beauty grows,
 Since the fixed color of their curled hair
 (Which is the highest grace of dames most fair)
 No cares, no age can change, or there display
 The fearful tincture of abhorred gray,
 Since Death herself (herself being pale and blue)
 Can never alter their most faithful hue;
 All which are arguments to prove how far
 Their beauties conquer in great beauty's war;
 And more, how near divinity they be,
 That stand from passion or decay so free.
 Yet, since the fabulous voices of some few
 Poor brainsick men, styled poets² here with you,
 Have, with such envy of their graces, sung
 The painted beauties other empires sprung,
 Letting their loose and winged fictions fly
 To infect all climates, yea, our purity;
 As of one Phaeton, that fired the world,³
 And that before his heedless flames were hurled

7. The squared circle is an image of perfection, a hyperbolic compliment to Britain.

8. Alludes to Horace, *Odes* 1.3.36.

9. The Ethiopian civilization was reputed to be the oldest.

1. Aristotle's formal cause produces the form or essence of anything.

2. English Petrarchan poets, whose ideal of beauty involved fair skin, blonde hair, and blue eyes. See, e.g., the sonnets of Sidney and Spenser.

3. Son of Apollo the sun god, whose ill-fated attempt to drive the sun's chariot scorched the earth and, reportedly, turned the skin of the daughters of Niger black.

About the globe, the Ethiops were as fair
 As other dames, now black with black despair,
 And in respect of their complexions changed,
 Are eachwhere, since, for luckless creatures ranged.
 Which when my daughters heard (as women are
 Most jealous of their beauties) fear and care
 Possessed them whole; yea, and believing them,⁴
 They wept such ceaseless tears into my stream
 That it hath thus far overflowed his shore
 To seek them patience; who have since e'ermore
 As the sun riseth, charged his burning throne
 With volleys of revilings, 'cause he shone
 On their scorched cheeks with such intemperate fires,
 And other dames made queens of all desires.
 To frustrate which strange error oft I sought,
 Though most in vain against a settled thought
 As women's are, till they confirmed at length
 By miracle what I wish so much strength
 Of argument resisted; else they feigned:
 For in the lake where their first spring they gained,
 As they sat cooling their soft limbs one night,
 Appeared a face all circumfused with light;
 (And sure they saw't, for Ethiops never dream)⁵
 Wherein they might decipher through the stream
 These words:

That they a land must forthwith seek,
 Whose termination (of the Greek)
 Sounds *-tania*; where bright Sol, that heat
 Their bloods, doth never rise or set,
 But in his journey passeth by,
 And leaves that climate of the sky
 To comfort of a greater light,⁶
 Who forms all beauty with his sight.

In search of this have we three pryncedoms passed
 That speak out *-tania* in their accents last:
 Black Mauritania⁷ first, and secondly
 Swarth Lusitania,⁰ next we did descry⁰
 Rich Aquitania,⁰ and yet cannot find
 The place unto these longing nymphs designed.⁰
 Instruct and aid me, great Oceanus:
 What land is this that now appears to us?
 OCEANUS This land, that lifts into the temperate air
 His snowy cliff, is Albion the fair,
 So called of Neptune's son,⁸ who ruleth here;
 For whose dear guard, myself four thousand year,
 Since old Deucalion's⁹ days, have walked the round

*Portugal / perceive
 southwest France
 appointed*

4. The poets (line 56).

5. Jonson cites Pliny for this saying.

6. The allusion is to James, the "Sun-King" of Britain.

7. Land of the Moors in North Africa.

8. King James, regularly so styled because of Brit-

ain's close relationship to the sea. Albion (previous line): ancient name for England meaning "white land".

9. A Greek analogue to Noah, as the survivor of a great flood.

About his empire, proud to see him crowned
Above my waves.

At this, the moon was discovered in the upper part of the house, triumphant in a silver throne, made in figure of a pyramis.¹ Her garments white and silver, the dressing of her head antique, and crowned with a luminary or sphere of light, which striking on the clouds, and heightened with silver, reflected as natural clouds do by the splendor of the moon. The heaven about her was vaulted with blue silk, and set with stars of silver which had in them their several lights burning. The sudden sight of which made Niger to interrupt Oceanus with this present passion.²

NIGER —O see, our silver star!

Whose pure auspicious light greets us thus far!
Great /Ethiopia, goddess of our shore,³
Since with particular worship we adore
Thy general brightness, let particular grace
Shine on my zealous daughters. Show the place
Which long their longings urged their eyes to see.
Beautify them, which long have deified thee.

AETHIOPIA Niger, be glad; resume thy native cheer.

Thy daughters' labors have their period here,
And so thy errors. I was that bright face
Reflected by the lake, in which thy race
Read mystic lines (which skill Pythagoras⁴
First taught to men by a reverberate⁰ glass).
This blessed isle doth with that-*tania* end
Which there they saw inscribed, and shall extend
Wished satisfaction to their best desires.
Britannia, which the triple world admires,⁵
This isle hath now recovered for her name;
Where reign those beauties that with so much fame
The sacred Muses' sons have honored,
And from bright Hesperus to Eos spread.⁶
With that great name, Britannia, this blest isle
Hath won her ancient dignity and style,⁰
A *world divided from the world*,⁷ and tried
The abstract of it in his general pride.
For were the world, with all his wealth, a ring,
Britannia (whose new name makes all tongues sing)
Might be a diamond worthy to enchase it,
Ruled by a sun, that to this height doth grace it.
Whose beams shine day and night, and are of force
To blanch an Ethiop and revive a corpse.⁸
His light sciential⁰ is and (past mere nature)
Can salve the rude defects of every creature.

reflecting

title, name

endowed with knowledge

1. Pyramid.

2. Instant outburst.

3. Jonson identifies her as the moon, worshipped by the Ethiopians.

4. Mystical Greek philosopher who taught men how to read writing on the moon.

5. The triple realms of heaven, earth, and underworld, admiring the three kingdoms of England,

Scotland, and Wales united under James. James reintroduced the name "Britain" in 1604, to refer to the united island.

6. West to east.

7. Britain as a separate world, divided from Europe by the English Channel.

8. Corpse. Both are proverbial impossibilities.

Call forth thy honored daughters, then,
 And let them 'fore the Britain men
 Indent the land with those pure traces⁹
 They flow with in their native graces.
 Invite them boldly to the shore,
 Their beauties shall be scorched no more;
 This sun is temperate, and refines
 All things on which his radiance shines.

Here the tritons sounded, and they danced on shore, every couple as they advanced severally presenting their fans, in one of which were inscribed their mixed names, in the other a mute hieroglyphic, expressing their mixed qualities.¹ Which manner of symbol I rather chose than imprese,² as well for strangeness, as relishing of antiquity, and more applying to that original doctrine of sculpture which the Egyptians are said first to have brought from the Ethiopians.

	The Names ³	The Symbols
<i>The Queen Countess of Bedford</i>	<i>Euphoris Aglaia</i>	<i>A golden tree, laden with fruit</i>
<i>Lady Herbert Countess of Derby</i>	<i>Diaphane Eucampse</i>	<i>The figure icosahedron⁴ of crystal</i>
<i>Lady Rich Countess of Suffolk</i>	<i>Ocyte Kathare</i>	<i>A pair of naked feet in a river</i>
<i>Lady Bevill Lady Effingham</i>	<i>Notis Ppsychrote</i>	<i>The salamander simple⁰ unadorned</i>
<i>Lady Elizabeth Howard Lady Susan Vere</i>	<i>Glycyte Malacia</i>	<i>A cloud full of rain dropping</i>
<i>Lady Wroth Lady Walsingham</i>	<i>Baryte Periphere</i>	<i>An urn, sphered with wine</i>

The names of the Oceaniae were

<i>Doris</i>	<i>Cydippe</i>	<i>Beroe</i>	<i>Ianthe</i>
<i>Petrae</i>	<i>Glauce</i>	<i>Acaste</i>	<i>Lycoris</i>
<i>Ocyrhoe</i>	<i>Tyche</i>	<i>Clytia</i>	<i>Plexaure</i>

Their own single dance ended, as they were about to make choice of their men, one from the sea was heard to call 'em with this charm, sung by a tenor voice.

SONG

Come away, come away,
 We grow jealous of your stay.
 If you do not stop your ear,

9. Imprint the land with their dancing feet. This is the call for the main masque dances.

1. The women advanced in pairs holding fans to the audience: on one appeared both names; on the other, an allegorical symbol of their conjoined qualities.

2. Emblems with mottoes.

3. The meaning of the pairs' names and symbols, in order: abundance and splendor, fertility symbol; transparent and flexibility, a twenty-sided water symbol; swiftness and spotless, symbol of purity;

moisture and coldness, symbol, the salamander who lives in fire unharmed; sweetness and delicacy, symbol of education; weight and revolving, symbol, the earth's globe. The women are members of Queen Anne's court, two of them notable in literary circles: Donne and Jonson wrote poems about Lucy, countess of Bedford (see Jonson, p. 1430); Lady Mary Wroth wrote poems and a romance (p. 1453), and see Jonson's poem on Wroth, p. 1438.

4. A solid with twenty plane faces.

We shall have more cause to fear
 Sirens of the land, than they⁵
 To doubt⁰ the sirens of the sea. *fear*

Here they danced with their men several measures and corantos.⁶ All which ended, they were again accited⁷ to sea, with a song of two trebles, whose cadences were iterated by a double echo from several parts of the land.

SONG

160 1st ECHO Daughters of the subtle flood,
 2nd ECHO Do not let earth longer entertain you;
 Let earth longer entertain you
 Longer entertain you

1st ECHO Tis to them enough of good
 2nd ECHO That you give this little hope to gain you.
 Give this little hope to gain you.
 Little hope to gain you.

170 1st ECHO If they love
 2nd ECHO You shall quickly see;
 For when to flight you move,
 They'll follow you, the more you flee.
 Follow you, the more you flee.
 The more you flee.

1st ECHO If not, impute it each to other's matter;
 2nd ECHO They are but earth—
 But earth,
 Earth—
 And what you vowed was water.
 1st ECHO And what you vowed was water
 2nd ECHO You vowed was water.

AETHIOPIA Enough, bright nymphs, the night grows old,
 And we are grieved we cannot hold
 You longer light; but comfort take.
 Your father only to the lake
 Shall make return; yourselves, with feasts,
 Must here remain the Ocean's guests.
 Nor shall this veil the sun hath cast
 Above your blood, more summers last.
 For which, you shall observe these rites:
 Thirteen times thrice, on thirteen nights
 (So often as I fill my sphere
 With glorious light, throughout the year)
 You shall, when all things else do sleep
 Save your chaste thoughts, with reverence steep

5. In Greek mythology the sirens lured seafarers to destruction.

6. Slow and fast dances,
 7. Summoned.

Your bodies in that purer brine
 And wholesome dew, called rosmarine;
 195 Then with that soft and gentler foam,
 Of which the ocean yet yields some,
 Whereof bright Venus, beauty's queen,
 Is said to have begotten been,
 You shall your gentler limbs o'er-lave,
 200 And for your pains, perfection have.
 So that, this night, the year gone round,
 You do again salute this ground;⁸
 And in the beams of yond' bright sun
 Your faces dry, and all is done.

At which, in a dance they returned to the sea, where they took their shell, and with this full song, went out.

Now Dian, ^o with her burning face,	<i>the moon</i>
Declines apace:	
By which our waters know	
To ebb, that late ^o did flow.	<i>recently</i>
Back seas, back nymphs, but with a forward grace	
Keep still your reverence to the place,	
And shout with joy of favor you have won,	
In sight of Albion, Neptune's son.	

1605

Volpone This dark satire on human rapacity is set in Venice, but its true target is the city of London, or the city that Jonson feared. London was about to become. It is a place devoted to commerce and mired in corruption, populated by greedy fools and conniving rascals. Like Shakespeare, Donne, and Thomas More before him, Jonson was deeply disturbed by the rise of a protocapitalist economic order that seemed to emphasize competition and the acquisition of material goods over reciprocal goodwill and mutual obligation. On the other hand, Jonson was also fascinated by the entrepreneurial potential liberated by the new economic order. His protagonists, Volpone and Mosca, may be morally bankrupt, but they are also the most intelligent, adaptable characters in the play. Moreover, although Jonson was a strong advocate for the educational and morally improving potential of the theater—his theater in particular—the talents of his main characters are essentially those of theatrical performance and improvisation. In fact, as Jonson was well aware, he was himself deeply implicated in what he satirized. The lowborn, unscrupulous, brilliantly inventive Mosca, a flattering aristocratic hanger-on who aspires to high status himself, at times seems to be the author's evil twin. Perhaps his very resemblances to Jonson required Jonson so energetically to repudiate his motives and punish his presumption at the end of the play.

Volpone combines elements from several sources. The classical satirist Lucian provided the theme of the rich old man playing with moneygrubbing scoundrels who

8. Jonson had probably already planned the *Masque of Beauty*, in which the women's black skins are turned white, but intervening masques prevented its production until 1608.

hope to inherit his wealth. Roman comedy provided prototypes for some characters: the wily parasite, the unscrupulous lawyer, the avaricious dotard, the voluble woman. Some scenes, such as that in which Volpone disguised as a mountebank woos Celia at her window, are drawn from the Italian commedia dell'arte. Jonson draws as well upon ancient and medieval beast fables: stories about the crafty antihero Reynard the fox, as well as a fable about a fox that plays dead in order to catch greedy birds. But *Volpone* is much more than the sum of its borrowings. It is a work of enormous comic energy, full of black humor, which holds its loathsome characters up for appalled but gleeful inspection.

Volpone was first performed by the King's Men (Shakespeare's company) in the spring of 1606, at the Globe Theater. (See the illustration, in the appendices to this volume, of a contemporary popular theater constructed on similar lines.) The Globe seated some two thousand persons—aristocrats and prosperous citizens in the tiered galleries, lower-class "groundlings" in the pit in the front of the stage. The play was also performed to great applause before learned audiences at Oxford and Cambridge, to whom Jonson dedicated the printed edition of *Volpone*. It was first published in quarto form in 1607 and republished with a few changes in the 1616 *Works*, the basis for the present text.

Volpone

or
The Fox

THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY¹

VOLPONE, a <i>magnifico</i> ^o	Venetian	nobleman
MOSCA, his <i>parasite</i> ^o		
NANO, a <i>dwarf</i>		
ANDROGYNO, a <i>hermaphrodite</i>		
CASTRONE, an <i>eunuch</i>		
VOLTORE, an <i>advocate</i> ^o		lawyer
CORBACCIO, an <i>old gentleman</i>		
BONARIO, a <i>young gentleman</i> [CORBACCIO's son]		
CORVINO, a <i>merchant</i>		
CELIA, <i>the merchant's wife</i>		
<i>Servitore</i> , a SERVANT [to CORVINO]		
[Sir] POLITIC <i>Would-be</i> , a <i>knight</i>		
<i>Fine Madame</i> [LADY] WOULD-BE, <i>the knight's wife</i>		
[Two] WOMEN [<i>servants to</i> LADY WOULD-BE]		
PEREGRINE, a <i>gentleman traveler</i>		
AVOCATORI, ^o <i>four magistrates</i>	public	prosecutors
<i>Notario</i> [NOTARY], <i>the register</i> ^o		court recorder
COMMENDATORI, ^o <i>officers</i>		court deputies
[<i>Other court officials, litter-bearers</i>]		
<i>Mercatori</i> , <i>three</i> MERCHANTS		
<i>Grege</i> [<i>members of a</i> CROWD]		

The Persons of the Play

1. Many of the characters have allegorically apt names. "Volpone" is defined in John Florio's 1598 Italian-English dictionary as "an old fox . . . a sneaking, lurking, wily deceiver." "Mosca" means "fly." "Nano" means "dwarf." "Voltore" means "vulture."

"Corbaccio" means "raven." "Bonario" is derived from *bono*, meaning "good." "Corvino" means "crow." "Celia" means "heaven." "Politic" means "worldly-wise" or "temporizing." "Peregrine" means "traveler" or "small hawk." In many performances the symbolism of the animal names is reinforced by costuming.

SCENE. Venice

The Argument¹

V olpone, childless, rich, feigns sick, despairs, ⁰	<i>is despaired of</i>
O ffers his state ⁰ to hopes of several heirs,	<i>estate</i>
L ies languishing; his parasite receives	
P resents of all, assures, deludes, then weaves	
O ther cross-plots, which ope themselves, ⁰ are told. ⁰	<i>unfold/exposed</i>
N ew tricks for safety are sought; they thrive—when, bold,	
E ach tempts th'other again, and all are sold. ⁰	<i>betrayed</i>

Prologue

Now, luck yet send us, and a little wit	
Will serve to make our play hit	
According to the palates of the season. ⁰	<i>fashionable taste</i>
Here is rhyme not empty of reason.	
This we were bid to credit ⁰ from our poet,	<i>asked to believe</i>
Whose true scope, ⁰ if you would know it,	<i>aim</i>
In all his poems still hath been this measure,	
To mix profit with your pleasure; ¹	
And not as some—whose throats their envy failing ⁰ —	<i>not fully expressing</i>
Cry hoarsely, "all he writes is railing," ⁰	<i>personal insult</i>
And when his plays come forth think they can flout them	
With saying he was a year about them. ²	
To these there needs no lie ⁰ but this his creature, ⁰	<i>denial / creation</i>
Which was, two months since, no feature; ⁰	<i>nonexistent</i>
And, though he dares give them ⁰ five lives to mend it,	<i>his detractors</i>
'Tis known five weeks fully penned it	
From his own hand, without a coadjutor, ⁰	<i>collaborator</i>
Novice, journeyman, ⁰ or tutor.	<i>apprentice</i>
Yet thus much I can give you, as a token	
Of his play's worth: no eggs are broken,	
Nor quaking custards with fierce teeth affrighted, ³	
Wherewith your rout ⁰ are so delighted;	<i>mob</i>
Nor hailes he in a gull, ⁰ old ends ⁰ reciting,	<i>fool/saws</i>
To stop gaps in his loose writing,	
With such a deal of monstrous and forced action	
As might make Bethlehem a faction. ⁴	
Nor made he his play for jests stol'n from each table, ⁰	<i>plagiarized jokes</i>
But makes jests to fit his fable,	
And so presents quick ⁰ comedy, refined	<i>lively</i>
As best critics have designed.	
The laws of time, place, persons he observeth; ⁵	

The Argument

1. Plot summary. Jonson imitates the acrostic "arguments" of the Latin playwright Plautus.

Prologue

1. Rule, as laid down by Horace, that the poet ought both to please his audience and teach it something useful.

2. Thomas Dekker ridiculed the slow pace at which Jonson produced new work in *Satiromastix, or The Untrussing of the Humorous Poet* (1602), and John

Marston did the same in *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605).

3. The satirist John Marston, in a line Jonson had previously ridiculed, boasted: "let custards [cowards] quake, my rage must freely run." Huge custards were a staple feature of city feasts.

4. As might win approval from lunatics (who inhabited Bethlehem hospital in London).

5. He observes the unities of time and place and the consistency of character.

From no needful rule he swerveth.
 All gall and copperas⁶ from his ink he draineth;
 Only a little salt⁷ remaineth
 Wherewith he'll rub your cheeks, till, red with laughter,
 They shall look fresh a week after.

Act 1

SCENE 1. VOLPONE'S house.

[Enter] VOLPONE [and] MOSCA.¹

VOLPONE Good morning to the day, and, next, my gold!

Open the shrine that I may see my saint.

[Mosca reveals the treasure.]²

Hail the world's soul,^o and mine! More glad than is *animating principle*

The teeming earth to see the longed-for sun
 Peep through the horns of the celestial Ram³

Am I to view thy splendor darkening his,^o *outshining the sun's*

That, lying here amongst my other hoards,
 Show'st like a flame by night, or like the day

Struck out of chaos, when all darkness fled
 Unto the center.^o O thou son of Sol⁴— *center of the earth*

But brighter than thy father—let me kiss

With adoration thee and every relic

Of sacred treasure in this blessed room.

Well did wise poets by thy glorious name

Title that age which they would have the best,⁵

Thou being the best of things, and far transcending

All style of joy in children, parents, friends,

Or any other waking dream on earth.

Thy looks when they to Venus did ascribe,

They should have giv'n her twenty thousand Cupids,⁶

Such are thy beauties and our loves.^o Dear saint, *our love of thee*

Riches, the dumb god, that giv'st all men tongues,

That canst do naught and yet mak'st men do all things,
 The price of souls; even hell, with thee to boot,^o *in the bargain*

Is made worth heaven! Thou art virtue, fame,

Honor, and all things else. Who^o can get thee, *Whoever*

He shall be noble, valiant, honest, wise—

MOSCA And what he will, sir. Riches are in fortune

A greater good than wisdom is in nature.

VOLPONE True, my beloved Mosca. Yet I glory

More in the cunning purchase^o of my wealth *acquisition*

Than in the glad possession, since I gain

6. Ferrous sulfate, like gall a corrosive substance used in ink.

7. A traditional metaphor for satiric wit.

1.1

1. Alternatively, the play may begin with Volpone rising from his onstage bed.

2. The treasure is probably hidden behind a curtain in the alcove at the back of the stage.

3. Aries, the constellation ascendant in early spring.

4. Alchemists believed gold to have issued from the

sun ("Sol"). Volpone blasphemously applies this metaphor to God's creation of the world in Genesis.

5. The mythical Golden Age (when, ironically, gold was not yet in use) was influentially described by Ovid in *The Metamorphoses*.

6. In Latin poetry, Venus was commonly described as *aurea*, meaning "golden." The throng of Cupids Volpone imagines around her suggests gold's irresistible, and for him highly sexual, appeal.

No common way. I use no trade, no venture;⁰ *risky commerce*
 I wound no earth with plowshares; fat no beasts
 To feed the shambles;⁰ have no mills for iron, *slaughterhouse*
 Oil, corn, or men, to grind 'em into powder;
 I blow no subtle⁷ glass; expose no ships
 To threat'nings of the furrow-faced sea;
 I turn⁰ no moneys in the public bank, *exchange*
 Nor usure⁰ private— *lend money at interest*

MOSCA No, sir, nor devour
 Soft prodigals. You shall ha' some will swallow
 A melting⁰ heir as glibly as your Dutch *financially dwindling*
 Will pills⁰ of butter, and ne'er purge for't;⁸ *morsels*
 Tear forth the fathers of poor families
 Out of their beds and coffin them alive
 In some kind, clasping⁰ prison, where their bones *manacling*
 May be forthcoming⁰ when the flesh is rotten. *protruding; carted away*
 But your sweet nature doth abhor these courses;
 You loathe the widow's or the orphan's tears
 Should wash your pavements, or their piteous cries
 Ring in your roofs and beat the air for vengeance.

VOLPONE Right, Mosca, I do loathe it.

MOSCA And besides, sir,
 You are not like the thresher that doth stand
 With a huge flail, watching a heap of corn,
 And, hungry, dares not taste the smallest grain,
 But feeds on mallows⁰ and such bitter herbs; *unpalatable weeds*
 Nor like the merchant who hath filled his vaults
 With Romagna and rich Candian wines,
 Yet drinks the lees of Lombard's vinegar.⁹
 You will not lie in straw whilst moths and worms
 Feed on your sumptuous hangings⁰ and soft beds. *bed curtains*
 You know the use of riches, and dare give now
 From that bright heap to me, your poor observer,⁰ *folllmver*
 Or to your dwarf, or your hermaphrodite,
 Your eunuch, or what other household⁰ trifle *menial*
 Your pleasure allows maint'nance⁰—

VOLPONE [*giving money*] Hold thee, Mosca, *You're pleased to support*
 Take of my hand; thou strik'st on truth in all,
 And they are envious term⁰ thee parasite.
 Call forth my dwarf, my eunuch, and my fool,
 And let 'em make me sport. [*Exit MOSCA.*] *ivho term*

What should I do
 But cocker up my genius,⁰ and live free *indulge my appetite*
 To all delights my fortune calls me to?
 I have no wife, no parent, child, ally
 To give my substance to, but whom I make⁰ *he whom I designate*
 Must be my heir, and this makes men observe⁰ me. *flatter*

7. (1) Delicate; (2) artful. (Venice was and is renowned for its art glass.)

8. Never use a remedy for gastric distress. (The Dutch were notoriously fond of butter.)

9. Romagna and rich Candian wines are expensive wines from Greece and Crete. The lees of Lombard's vinegar are the dregs of cheap Italian wine.

This draws new clients⁰ daily to my house, *petitioners*
 Women and men of every sex and age,
 That bring me presents, send me plate,⁰ coin, jewels, *gold or silver plate*
 With hope that when I die—which they expect
 Each greedy minute—it shall then return
 Tenfold upon them; whilst some, covetous
 Above the rest, seek to engross⁰ me whole, *swallow; monopolize*
 And counterwork,⁰ the one unto the other, *compete; undermine*
 Contend in gifts as they would seem in love;
 All which I suffer, playing with their hopes,
 And am content to coin 'em into profit,
 And look upon their kindness and take more,
 And look on that, still bearing them in hand,⁰ *leading them on*
 Letting the cherry knock against their lips,
 And draw it by their mouths and back again.¹—
 How now!

SCENE 2. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] MOSCA, NANO, ANDROGYNO, [and] CASTRONE.

NANO Now, room for fresh gamesters,⁰ who do will you to know *entertainers*
 They do bring you neither play nor university show,¹
 And therefore do entreat you that whatsoever they rehearse
 May not fare a whit the worse for the false pace of the verse.²
 If you wonder at this, you will wonder more ere we pass,
 For know here [indicating ANDROGYNO] is enclosed the soul of
 Pythagoras,³
 That juggler⁰ divine, as hereafter shall follow; *trickster*
 Which soul (fast and loose, sir) came first from Apollo,
 And was breathed into Aethalides,⁴ Mercurius his⁰ son, *Mercury's*
 Where it had the gift to remember all that ever was done.
 From thence it fled forth and made quick transmigration
 To goldilocked Euphorbus,⁵ who was killed in good fashion
 At the siege of old Troy, by the cuckold of Sparta.⁶
 Hermotimus⁷ was next—I find it in my *charta*⁰— *record*
 To whom it did pass, where no sooner it was missing
 But with one Pyrrhus of Delos⁰ it learned to go a-fishing; *another philosopher*
 And thence did it enter the Sophist of Greece.⁰ *Pythagoras*
 From Pythagore she went into a beautiful piece⁰ *slut*
 Hight⁰ Aspasia the meretrix,⁸ and the next toss of her *named*

]. In the game of chop-cherry, one player dangles a cherry in front of another, who tries to bite it.

1.2

1. University students performed classical plays or their imitations to hone their abilities in Latin oratory.

2. The four-stress meter of the skit Nano, Androgyno, and Castrone here perform was common in medieval drama but old-fashioned by Jonson's time.

3. Ancient Greek philosopher, mathematician, and music theorist who believed in the transmigration of souls and in the mystical properties of geometrical relationships (especially triangles [triangles = trigon]). His followers observed strict dietary restrictions and took five-year vows of silence. His thigh was rumored to be made of gold. Jonson adapts much of the career

of Pythagoras's soul from *The Dialogue of the Cobbler and the Cock*, by the Greek satirist Lucian.

4. The herald of the Greek Argonauts and son of the god Mercury, who inherited his father's divine gift of memory. Thus, unlike other souls, which forget their previous lives, Aethalides' soul can recall its transmigrations.

5. Trojan youth who injured Achilles' beloved friend, Patroclus, in the *Iliad*.

6. Menelaus, the Spartan king whose wife, Helen, was stolen by the Trojan prince Paris.

7. Greek philosopher of about 500 B.C.E.

8. Whore. Aspasia was the mistress of the Athenian statesman Pericles.

Was again of a whore; she became a philosopher,
Crates the Cynic,⁹ as itself doth relate it.

Since,⁰ kings, knights, and beggars, knaves, lords, and fools
gat^o it,

since then

received

badger

Besides ox and ass, camel, mule, goat, and brock,⁰
In all which it hath spoke as in the cobbler's cock.¹

But I come not here to discourse of that matter,

Or his one, two, or three, or his great oath, "By quater,"²

His musics, his trigon, his golden thigh,⁰

see n. 3, p. 1339

Or his telling how elements⁰ shift; but I

earth, air, fire, water

Would ask how of late thou hast suffered translation,⁰

metamorphosis

And shifted thy coat in these days of reformation?⁰

religious change

ANDROGYNO Like one of the reformed, a fool,³ as you see,

Counting all old doctrine heresy.

NANO But not on thine own forbid meats hast thou ventured?

ANDROGYNO On fish, when first a Carthusian I entered.⁴

NANO Why, then thy dogmatical silence⁰ hath left thee?

vow of silence

ANDROGYNO Of that an obstreperous lawyer bereft me.

NANO Oh, wonderful change! When Sir Lawyer forsook thee,

For Pythagore's sake, what body then took thee?

ANDROGYNO A good dull mule.

NANO

And how, by that means,

Thou wert brought to allow of the eating of beans?

ANDROGYNO Yes.

NANO But from the mule into whom didst thou pass?

ANDROGYNO Into a very strange beast, by some writers called an

By others a precise, pure, illuminate brother⁵

Of those devour flesh and sometimes one another,⁰

prey on each other

And will drop you forth a libel⁰ or a sanctified lie

polemic

Betwixt every spoonful of a Nativity pie.⁶

NANO Now quit thee, for heaven, of that profane nation,⁰

And gently report thy next transmigration.

ANDROGYNO TO the same that I am."

what I am now

NANO

A creature of delight?

And—what is more than a fool—an hermaphrodite?

Now pray thee, sweet soul, in all thy variation⁰

of all your shapes

Which body wouldst thou choose to take up thy station?

ANDROGYNO Troth, this I am in, even here would I tarry.

NANO 'Cause here the delight of each sex thou canst vary?

ANDROGYNO Alas, those pleasures be stale and forsaken.

No, 'tis your fool wherewith I am so taken,

The only one creature that I can call blessed,

For all other forms I have proved⁰ most distressed.

found to be

9. Student of Diogenes, founder of the Cynic philosophy.

1. The speaker in Lucian's dialogue (see note 3 above).

2. A quater is an equilateral triangle the sides of which are evenly divisible by four.

3. The "reformed" are Protestants in general, but more specifically the Puritan wing of the Church of England. Jonson was a Catholic when he wrote

Volpone.

4. Pythagoreans abstained from fish, but Carthusians, an order of Catholic monks, ate fish on fast days.

5. Puritan who claimed immediate, visionary knowledge of religious truth. Puritans did not observe the traditional fasting days (hence "devour flesh" in the following line).

6. Puritans substituted the term "Nativity" for "Christmas," to avoid reference to the Mass.

NANO Spoke true, as thou wert in Pythagoras still.
 This learned opinion we celebrate will,
 Fellow eunuch, as behooves us, with all our wit and art,
 To dignify that⁰ whereof ourselves are so great and special a part. *folly*

VOLPONE [*applauding*] Now, very, very pretty! Mosca, this
 Was thy invention?

MOSCA If it please my patron,
 Not else.

VOLPONE It doth, good Mosca.

MOSCA Then it was, sir.

SONG

NANO and CASTRONE [*sing*]
 Fools, they are the only nation⁰ *group*
 Worth men's envy or admiration,
 Free from care or sorrow-taking,
 Selves⁰ and others merry making; *Themselves*
 All they speak or do is sterling.
 Your fool, he is your great man's darling,
 And your lady's sport and pleasure;
 Tongue and bauble⁰ are his treasure. *fool's staff; penis*
 E'en his face begetteth laughter,
 And he speaks truth free from slaughter.⁰ *with impunity*
 He's the grace of every feast,
 And sometimes the chiefest guest,
 Hath his trencher⁰ and his stool, *platter*
 When wit waits upon the fool.
 Oh, who would not be
 He, he, he? *One knocks without.*

VOLPONE Who's that? Away!

[*Exeunt* NANO and CASTRONE.]

Look, Mosca.

MOSCA Fool, begone!
 [*Exit* ANDROGYNO.]

'Tis Signor Voltore, the advocate;
 I know him by his knock.

VOLPONE Fetch me my gown,
 My furs, and nightcaps; say my couch is changing,⁷
 And let him entertain himself awhile
 Without i'th'gallery. [*Exit* MOSCA.]

Now, now, my clients
 Begin their visitation! Vulture, kite,
 Raven, and gorcrow,⁰ all my birds of prey *carrion crow*
 That think me turning carcass, now they come.
 I am not for 'em^o yet. *ready to die*
 [*Enter* MOSCA.]

How now? The news?

MOSCA A piece of plate,⁰ sir. *gold platter*

VOLPONE Of what bigness?

7. My bedsheets are being changed.

MOSCA Huge,
 Massy, and antique, with your name inscribed
 And arms⁰ engraven. *coat of arms*

VOLPONE Good! And not a fox
 Stretched on the earth, with fine delusive sleights⁰ *deceptive tricks*
 Mocking a gaping crow?⁸ Ha, Mosca?

MOSCA *[laughing]* Sharp, sir.

VOLPONE Give me my furs. Why dost thou laugh so, man?

MOSCA I cannot choose, sir, when I apprehend
 What thoughts he has, without,⁰ now, as he walks: *outside*
 That this might be the last gift he should⁰ give; *would have to*
 That this would fetch you;⁰ if you died today *bring you around*
 And gave him all, what he should be tomorrow;
 What large return would come of all his ventures;
 How he should worshipped be and revered;
 Ride with his furs and footcloths,⁹ waited on
 By herds of fools and clients; have clear way
 Made for his mule, as lettered⁰ as himself; *educated*
 Be called the great and learned advocate;
 And then concludes there's naught impossible.

VOLPONE Yes, to be learned, Mosca.

MOSCA Oh, no, rich
 Implies it.⁰ Hood an ass with reverend purple,¹ *wealth implies learning*
 So you can hide his two ambitious⁰ ears, *aspiring; upraised*
 And he shall pass for a cathedral doctor.⁰ *Doctor of Divinity*

VOLPONE My caps, my caps, good Mosca. Fetch him in.

MOSCA Stay, sir, your ointment for your eyes.
[MOSCA helps VOLPONE with his disguise.]

VOLPONE That's true.
 Dispatch, dispatch! I long to have possession
 Of my new present.

MOSCA That, and thousands more
 I hope to see you lord of.

VOLPONE Thanks, land Mosca.

MOSCA And that, when I am lost in blended dust,
 And hundred such as I am in succession—

VOLPONE Nay, that were too much, Mosca.

MOSCA —you shall live
 Still, to delude these Harpies.²

VOLPONE Loving Mosca!
 'Tis well. My pillow now, and let him enter.
[Exit MOSCA. VOLPONE lies down.]

Now, my feigned cough, my phthisic,⁰ and my gout, *consumption; asthma*
 My apoplexy, palsy, and catarrhs,⁰ *mucus discharges*
 Help with your forced functions this my posture,⁰ *imposture*

8. In one of Aesop's *Fables*, the fox tricks the crow into dropping its cheese.

9. Ornamental cloths for the back of a horse.

1. Doctors of Divinity wore purple academic hoods.

2. Mythological ravenous monsters with women's heads and the bodies and claws of birds.

Wherein this three year I have milked their hopes.
He comes, I hear him. [*Coughing*] Uh, uh, uh, uh! Oh—

SCENE 3. *The scene continues.*

[*Enter*] VOLTORE [*with a platter, ushered by*] MOSCA.

MOSCA [*to* VOLTORE] YOU still are what you were, sir. Only you,
Of all the rest, are he commands^o his love; *the one who possesses*
And you do wisely to preserve it thus
With early visitation and kind notes^o *tokens*
Of your good meaning to^o him, which, I know, *intentions toward*
Cannot but come most grateful. [*Loudly, to* VOLPONE] Patron, sir!
Here's Signor Voltore is come—

VOLPONE [*weakly*] What say you?

MOSCA Sir, Signor Voltore is come this morning
To visit you.

VOLPONE I thank him.

MOSCA And hath brought
A piece of antique plate bought of Saint Mark,¹
With which he here presents you.

VOLPONE He is welcome.

Pray him to come more often.

MOSCA Yes.

VOLPONE [*straining to hear*] What says he?

MOSCA He thanks you, and desires you see him often.

VOLPONE Mosca.

MOSCA My patron?

VOLPONE [*groping*] Bring him near. Where is he?

I long to feel his hand.

MOSCA [*guiding* VOLPONE *s hands toward the platter*] The plate is here, sir.

VOLTORE HOW fare you, sir?

VOLPONE I thank you, Signor Voltore.

Where is the plate? Mine eyes are bad.

VOLTORE [*relinquishing the platter*] I'm sorry

To see you still thus weak.

MOSCA [*aside*] That he is not weaker.

VOLPONE YOU are too munificent.

VOLTORE NO, sir, would to heaven

I could as well give health to you as that plate.

VOLPONE You give, sir, what you can. I thank you. Your love

Hath taste in^o this, and shall not be unanswered.

is suggested by

I pray you see me often.

VOLTORE Yes, I shall, sir.

VOLPONE Be not far from me.

MOSCA [*aside to* VOLTORE] DO you observe that, sir?

VOLPONE Hearken unto me still. It will concern you.

MOSCA [*aside to* VOLTORE] YOU are a happy man, sir. Know your good.

VOLPONE I cannot now last long—

1.3

1. Goldsmiths kept shop in the square of Saint Mark's Basilica.

And loud withal,⁰ that would not wag nor scarce *besides*
 Lie still without a fee, when every word
 Your Worship but lets fall is a *cecchine!*⁰ *Another knocks.* *gold coin*
 Who's that? One knocks; I would not have you seen, sir.
 And yet—pretend you came and went in haste;
 I'll fashion an excuse. And, gentle sir,
 When you do come to swim in golden lard,
 Up to the arms in honey, that your chin
 Is born up stiff with fatness of the flood,
 Think on your vassal; but^o remember me. *only*
 I ha' not been your worst of clients.

VOLTRE Mosca—

MOSCA When will you have your inventory brought, sir?

Or see a copy of the will? *[More knocking.]* Anon!^o—

Just a minute!

I'll bring em to you, sir. Away, begone,

Put business i'your face.⁵ *[Exit VOLTRE.]*

VOLPONE Excellent, Mosca!

Come hither, let me kiss thee.

MOSCA Keep you still, sir.

Here is Corbaccio.

VOLHONE Set the plate away.

The vulture's gone, and the old raven's come.

SCENE 4. *The scene continues.*

MOSCA *[to VOLPONE]* Betake you to your silence and your sleep;

[He puts up the plate.]

Stand there and multiply.⁰—Now shall we see *beget more booty*

A wretch who is indeed more impotent

Than this⁰ can feign to be, yet hopes to hop

Volpone

Over his grave.

[Enter] CORBACCIO.

Signor Corbaccio!

You're very welcome, sir.

CORBACCIO How does your patron?

MOSCA Troth, as he did, sir: no amends.

CORBACCIO What? Mends he?

MOSCA NO, sir, he is rather worse.

CORBACCIO That's well. Where is he?

MOSCA Upon his couch, sir, newly fall'n asleep.

CORBACCIO Does he sleep well?

MOSCA NO wink, sir, all this night,

Nor yesterday, but slumbers.⁰

dozes fitfully

CORBACCIO Good! He should take

Some counsel of physicians. I have brought him

An opiate here, from mine own doctor—

MOSCA He will not hear of drugs.

CORBACCIO Why, I myself

Stood by while't was made, saw all th'ingredients,

5. Look as if you were here on business.

And know it cannot but most gently work.
 My life for his, 'tis but to make him sleep.
 VOLPONE [*aside*] Ay, his last sleep, if he would take it.
 MOSCA Sir,
 He has no faith in physic.⁰ *medicine*
 CORBACCIO 'Say you? 'Say you?
 MOSCA He has no faith in physic. He does think
 Most of your doctors¹ are the greater danger
 And worse disease t'escape. I often have
 Heard him protest that your physician
 Should never be his heir.
 CORBACCIO Not I his heir?
 MOSCA Not your physician, sir.
 CORBACCIO Oh, no, no, no,
 I do not mean it.
 MOSCA NO, sir, nor their fees
 He cannot brook.⁰ He says they flay^o a man *tolerate / skin*
 Before they kill him.
 CORBACCIO Bight, I do conceive⁰ you. *understand*
 MOSCA And then, they do it by experiment,²
 For which the law not only doth absolve 'em,
 But gives them great reward; and he is loath
 To hire his death so.
 CORBACCIO It is true, they kill
 With as much license as a judge.
 MOSCA Nay, more:
 For he^o but kills, sir, where the law condemns, *the judge*
 And these^o can kill him,⁰ too. *the doctors / the judge*
 CORBACCIO Ay, or me
 Or any man. How does his apoplex?⁰ *apoplexy, stroke*
 Is that strong on him still?
 MOSCA Most violent.³
 His speech is broken and his eyes are set,^o *fixed*
 His face drawn longer than 'twas wont—
 CORBACCIO HOW? HOW?
 Stronger than he was wont?
 MOSCA NO, sir: his face
 Drawn longer than 'twas wont.
 CORBACCIO Oh, good.
 MOSCA His mouth
 Is ever gaping, and his eyelids hang.
 CORBACCIO Good.
 MOSCA A freezing numbness stiffens all his joints,
 And makes the color of his flesh like lead.
 CORBACCIO 'Tis good.
 MOSCA His pulse beats slow and dull.
 CORBACCIO Good symptoms still.

1.4

1. Not Corbaccio's doctors, but doctors generally.
(Also in line 23.)

2. By testing possible remedies on their patients.

3. In the following lines, Mosca attributes to Volpone
a wide variety of symptoms that were, even occurring
singly, considered sure signs of impending death.

MOSCA And from his brain—
CORBACCIO Ha? How? Not from his brain?
MOSCA Yes, sir, and from his brain—
CORBACCIO I conceive you, good.
MOSCA —Flows a cold sweat with a continual rheum"
mucus discharge
Forth the resolved⁰ corners of his eyes.
ivatory; limp
CORBACCIO Is't possible? Yet I am better, ha!
How does he with the swimming of his head?
MOSCA Oh, sir, 'tis past the scotomy;⁴ he now
Hath lost his feeling, and hath left to snort;⁰
stopped snoring
You hardly can perceive him that he breathes.
CORBACCIO Excellent, excellent. Sure I shall outlast him!
This makes me young again a score of years.
MOSCA I was a-coming for you, sir,
CORBACCIO Has he made his will?
What has he giv'n me?
MOSCA NO, sir.
CORBACCIO Nothing? Ha?
MOSCA He has not made his will, sir.
CORBACCIO Oh, oh, oh.
What then did Voltore, the lawyer, here?
MOSCA He smelt a carcass, sir, when he but heard
My master was about his testament⁰—
making his will
As I did urge him to it, for your good—
CORBACCIO He came unto him, did he? I thought so.
MOSCA Yes, and presented him this piece of plate.
CORBACCIO To be his heir?
MOSCA I do not know, sir.
CORBACCIO True,
I know it too.
MOSCA [*aside*] By your own scale,⁰ sir.
scale of values
CORBACCIO [*showing a hag of gold*] Well,
I shall prevent⁰ him yet. See, Mosca, look,
forestall
Here I have brought a bag of bright *cecchines*,
Will quite weigh down his plate.
MOSCA Yea, marry, sir!
This is true physic, this your sacred medicine;
No talk of opiates to^o this great elixir.⁵
compared to
CORBACCIO Tis *aurum palpabile*, if not *potabile*.⁶
MOSCA It shall be ministered to him in his bowl?
CORBACCIO Ay, do, do, do.
MOSCA Most blessed cordial!⁰
heart medicine
This will recover him.
CORBACCIO Yes, do, do, do.
MOSCA I think it were not best, sir.
CORBACCIO What?
MOSCA TO recover him.

4. Dizziness, accompanied by partial blindness.

5. In alchemy, a liquid thought to be capable of prolonging life indefinitely or changing base metal into

gold.

6. It is gold that can be felt, if not drunk. (Latin.) Dissolved gold was used as a medicine.

CORBACCIO Oh, no, no, no; by no means.

MOSCA Why, sir, this
Will work some strange effect, if he but feel it.

CORBACCIO 'Tis true, therefore forbear, I'll take my venture.⁰ *investment*
Give me't again. *[He snatches for the hag.]*

MOSCA *[keeping it out of his reach]* At no hand.⁰ Pardon me, *By no means*
You shall not do yourself that wrong, sir. I
Will so advise you, you shall have it all.

CORBACCIO HOW?

MOSCA All, sir, 'tis your right, your own; no man
Can claim a part. 'Tis yours without a rival,
Decreed by destiny.

CORBACCIO HOW? HOW, good Mosca?

MOSCA I'll tell you, sir. This fit he shall recover—

CORBACCIO I do conceive you.

MOSCA —and, on first advantage⁰ *opportunity*
Of his gained sense, will I re-importune him
Unto the making of his testament,
And show him this.

CORBACCIO Good, good.

MOSCA 'Tis better yet,
If you will hear, sir.

CORBACCIO Yes, with all my heart.

MOSCA NOW, would I counsel you, make home with speed;
There frame a will, whereto you shall inscribe
My master your sole heir.

CORBACCIO And disinherit
My son?

MOSCA Oh, sir, the better, for that color⁰ *appearance, fiction*
Shall make it much more taking.⁰ *plausible; attractive*

CORBACCIO Oh, but color?⁰ *it's only a ruse?*

MOSCA This will, sir, you shall send it unto me.
Now, when I come to enforce⁰—as I will do— *urge*
Your cares, your watchings, and your many prayers,
Your more than many gifts, your this day's present,
And last produce your will, where—without thought
Or least regard unto your proper issue,⁰ *own offspring*
A son so brave⁰ and highly meriting— *splendid*
The stream of your diverted love hath thrown you
Upon my master, and made him your heir,
He cannot be so stupid or stone dead
But out of conscience and mere gratitude—

CORBACCIO He must pronounce me his?

MOSCA 'Tis true.

CORBACCIO This plot
Did I think on before.

MOSCA I do believe it.

CORBACCIO DO you not believe it?

MOSCA Yes, sir.

CORBACCIO Mine own project.

MOSCA Which when he hath done, sir—

CORBACCIO Published me his heir?
MOSCA And you so certain to survive him—
CORBACCIO Ay.
MOSCA Being so lusty a man—
CORBACCIO 'Tis true.
MOSCA Yes, sir—
CORBACCIO I thought on that too. See how he^o should be *Mosca*
The very organ to express my thoughts!
MOSCA YOU have not only done yourself a good—
CORBACCIO But multiplied it on my son?
MOSCA 'Tis right, sir.
CORBACCIO Still my invention.
MOSCA 'Las, sir, heaven knows,
It hath been all my study, all my care,
(I e'en grow gray withal) how to work things—
CORBACCIO I do conceive, sweet Mosca.
MOSCA YOU are he
For whom I labor here.
CORBACCIO Ay, do, do, do.
I'll straight about it. [CORBACCIO starts to leave.]
MOSCA Rook go with you,⁷ raven!
CORBACCIO I know thee honest.
MOSCA YOU do lie, sir—
CORBACCIO And—
MOSCA Your knowledge is no better than your ears, sir.
CORBACCIO I do not doubt to be a father to thee.
MOSCA Nor I to gull my brother of his blessing.⁸
CORBACCIO I may ha' my youth restored to me, why not?
MOSCA Your Worship is a precious ass—
CORBACCIO What say'st thou?
MOSCA I do desire Your Worship to make haste, sir.
CORBACCIO 'Tis done, 'tis done, I go. [Exit.]
VOLPONE [leaping from the bed] Oh, I shall burst!
Let out my sides,^o let out my sides— *Loosen my clothes*
MOSCA Contain
Your flux of laughter, sir. You know this hope
Is such a bait it covers any hook.
VOLPONE Oh, but thy working and thy placing it!
I cannot hold;^o good rascal, let me kiss thee. *contain my delight*
I never knew thee in so rare a humor.^o *so excellently witty*
MOSCA Alas, sir, I but do as I am taught:
Follow your grave instructions, give 'em words,
Pour oil into their ears,^o and send them hence. *Flatter them*
VOLPONE 'Tis true, 'tis true. What a rare punishment
Is avarice to itself!⁹

7. May you be swindled ("rooked"). Playing on "rook" meaning "crow," "raven." This speech and Mosca's following lines, through line 130, could be considered asides since Corbaccio cannot hear them; but they need not be delivered sotto voce.

8. If Corbaccio were Mosca's father, then Bonario would be his brother. A reference to Genesis 25, in

which Jacob tricks his elder brother, Esau, into resigning his birthright, and Genesis 27, in which Jacob tricks their dying father, Isaac, into giving him the paternal blessing and property.

9. Quoting the Stoic philosopher Seneca's *Moral Epistles*, no. 115.

MOSCA Ay, with our help, sir.
 VOLPONE SO many cares, so many maladies,
 So many fears attending on old age,
 Yea, death so often called on,^o as no wish *invoked*
 Can be more frequent with 'em, their limbs faint,
 Their senses dull, their seeing, hearing, going,^o *ability to walk*
 All dead before them; yea, their very teeth,
 Their instruments of eating, failing them—
 Yet this is reckoned life! Nay, here was one
 Is now gone home that wishes to live longer!
 Feels not his gout nor palsy, feigns himself
 Younger by scores of years, flatters his age
 With confident belying it,¹ hopes he may
 With charms, like Aeson,² have his youth restored,
 And with these thoughts so battens,^o as if fate *gluts himself*
 Would be as easily cheated on as he,
 And all turns air!^o *Another knocks.* *is illusory*
 Who's that there, now? A third?
 MOSCA Close,^o to your couch again. I hear his voice. *Hide yourself*
 It is Corvino, our spruce^o merchant. *dapper*
 VOLPONE [*lying down again*] Dead.^o *I'll play dead*
 MOSCA Another bout, sir, with your eyes.
 [*He applies ointment.*]
 Who's there?

SCENE 5. *The scene continues.*

[*Enter*] CORVINO.
 Signor Corvino! Come^o most wished for! Oh, *You come*
 How happy were you if you knew it now!
 CORVINO Why? What? Wherein?
 MOSCA The tardy hour is come, sir.
 CORVINO He is not dead?
 MOSCA Not dead, sir, but as good;
 He knows no man.
 CORVINO HOW shall I do, then?
 MOSCA Why, sir?
 CORVINO I have brought him here a pearl.
 MOSCA Perhaps he has
 So much remembrance left as to know you, sir;
 He still calls on you; nothing but your name
 Is in his mouth. Is your pearl orient,¹ sir?
 CORVINO Venice was never owner of the like.
 VOLPONE [*weakly*] Signor Corvino—
 MOSCA Hark.
 VOLPONE —Signor Corvino—
 MOSCA He calls you. Step and give it him.—He's here, sir,
 And he has brought you a rich pearl.

1. Deceives himself, and attempts to deceive others, about his age by vigorously refusing to admit the truth.
 2. Father of the Greek hero Jason; his youth was restored by Medea, his sorceress daughter-in-law.

1.5
 1. Especially brilliant. (The most beautiful pearls came from the Indian Ocean.)

CORVINO [to VOLPONE] HOW do you, sir?
 [To MOSCA] Tell him it doubles the twelfth carat.²
 [He gives VOLPONE the pearl.]

MOSCA [to CORVINO] Sir,
 He cannot understand. His hearing's gone;
 And yet it comforts him to see you—

CORVINO Say
 I have a diamond for him too.

MOSCA Best show't, sir.
 Put it into his hand; 'tis only there
 He apprehends; he has his feeling yet.
 [CORVINO gives VOLPONE the diamond.]
 See how he grasps it!

CORVINO Las, good gentleman!
 How pitiful the sight is!

MOSCA Tut, forget, sir.
 The weeping of an heir should still⁰ be laughter
 Under a **Visor**. *always*
mask

CORVINO Why, am I his heir?

MOSCA Sir, I am sworn; I may not show the will
 Till he be dead. But here has been Corbaccio,
 Here has been Voltore, here were others too,
 I cannot number 'em they were so many,
 All gaping here for legacies; but I,
 Taking the vantage⁰ of his naming you— *opportunity*
 "Signor Corvino! Signor Corvino!"—took
 Paper and pen and ink, and there I asked him
 Whom he would have his heir? "Corvino." Who
 Should be executor? "Corvino." And
 To any question he was silent to,
 I still interpreted the nods he made
 Through weakness for consent, and sent home th'others,
 Nothing bequeathed them but to cry and curse.

CORVINO Oh, my dear Mosca! (*They embrace.*) Does he not perceive us?

MOSCA NO more than a blind harper.³ He knows no man,
 No face of friend, nor name of any servant,
 Who 'twas that fed him last or gave him drink;
 Not those he hath begotten or brought up
 Can he remember.

CORVINO Has he children?

MOSCA Bastards,⁴
 Some dozen or more, that he begot on beggars,
 Gypsies and Jews and blackmoors,⁰ when he was drunk. *black Africans*
 Knew you not that, sir? 'Tis the common fable.⁰ *rumor*
 The dwarf, the fool, the eunuch are all his;
 He's the true father of his family
 In all save⁰ me, but he has given em nothing. *except*

2. In the seventeenth century, a carat was between 1/144 and 1/150 of an ounce. A twenty-four-carat pearl was therefore very large, weighing roughly 1/6 of an ounce.

3. Harp players were often blind.

4. By law, ordinarily barred from the line of inheritance.

CORVINO That's well, that's well. Art sure he does not hear us?

MOSCA Sure, sir? Why, look you, credit your own sense.⁰ *believe your senses*
[Shouting at VOLPONE] The pox^o approach and add to your diseases *s)>philis*
 If it would send you hence the sooner, sir.
 For your incontinence, it hath deserved it
 Thoroughly⁰ and throughly, and the plague to boot. *thoroughly*
[To CORVINO] YOU may come near, sir. *[Shouting at VOLPONE again]*
 Would you would once close
 Those filthy eyes of yours, that flow with slime
 Like two frog-pits,^o and those same hanging cheeks, *mudpuddles*
 Covered with hide instead of skin—nay, help, sir—
 That look like frozen dishclouts⁰ set on end! *dishrags*

CORVINO *[shouting at VOLPONE]* Or like an old smoked wall on
 which the rain
 Ran down in streaks!

MOSCA Excellent, sir! Speak out;
 You may be louder yet; a culverin⁰ *firearm*
 Discharged in his ear would hardly bore it.

CORVINO *[shouting]* His nose is like a common sewer, still⁰ *continually*
 running.

MOSCA 'Tis good! And what his mouth?

CORVINO *[shouting]* A very draught!⁰ *cesspool*

MOSCA Oh, stop it up—

CORVINO By no means.

MOSCA Pray you let me.
 Faith, I could stifle him rarely with a pillow
 As well as any woman that should keep⁰ him. *take care of*

CORVINO DO as you will, but I'll be gone.

MOSCA Be so;
 It is your presence makes him last so long.

CORVINO I pray you, use no violence.

MOSCA No, sir? Why?
 Why should you be thus scrupulous? Pray you, sir.

CORVINO Nay, at your discretion.

MOSCA Well, good sir, begone.

CORVINO I will not trouble him now to take my pearl?

MOSCA Pooh! Nor your diamond. What a needless care
 Is this afflicts you? Is not all here yours?
 Am not I here, whom you have made your creature?
 That owe my being to you?

CORVINO Grateful Mosca!
 Thou art my friend, my fellow, my companion,
 My partner, and shalt share in all my fortunes.

MOSCA Excepting one.

CORVINO What's that?

MOSCA Your gallant⁰ wife, sir. *splendid*
[Exit CORVINO.]

Now is he gone. We had no other means
 To shoot him hence but this.

VOLPONE My divine Mosca!
 Thou hast today outgone thyself. *Another knocks.*
 Who's there?

I will be troubled with no more. Prepare
 Me music, dances, banquets, all delights.
 The Turk⁵ is not more sensual in his pleasures
 Than will Volpone. [Exit MOSCA.]

Let me see, a pearl?
 A diamond? Plate? *Cecchines?* Good morning's purchase.⁰ *haul*
 Why, this is better than rob churches, yet,
 Or fat by eating, once a month, a man." *i.e., taking monthly interest*
[Enter MOSCA.]

Who is't?
 MOSCA The beauteous Lady Would-be, sir,
 Wife to the English knight, Sir Politic Would-be—
 This is the style, sir, is directed me⁶—
 Hath sent to know how you have slept tonight,⁰ *last night*
 And if you would be visited.

VOLPONE Not now.
 Some three hours hence—

MOSCA I told the squire⁰ so much. *messenger*

VOLPONE When I am high with mirth and wine: then, then.
 'Fore heaven, I wonder at the desperate⁰ valor *reckless*
 Of the bold English, that they dare let loose
 Their wives to all encounters!⁷

MOSCA Sir, this knight
 Had not his name for nothing. He is politic,⁰ *canny*
 And knows, howe'er his wife affect strange⁰ airs, *foreign; bizarre*
 She hath not yet the face⁸ to be dishonest.⁰ *unchaste*
 But had she Signor Corvino's wife's face—

VOLPONE Has she so rare a face?

MOSCA Oh, sir, the wonder,
 The blazing star⁹ of Italy! A wench
 O'the first year!⁰ A beauty ripe as harvest! *unflawed and in her prime*
 Whose skin is whiter than a swan, all over,
 Than silver, snow, or lilies! A soft lip,
 Would⁰ tempt you to eternity of kissing! *That would*
 And flesh that melteth in the touch to blood!¹
 Bright as your gold, and lovely as your gold!

VOLPONE Why had not I known this before?

MOSCA Alas, sir,
 Myself but yesterday discovered it.

VOLPONE HOW might I see her?

MOSCA Oh, not possible.
 She's kept as warily as is your gold:
 Never does come abroad,⁰ never takes air *outside*
 But at a window. All her looks are sweet
 As the first⁰ grapes or cherries, and are watched *of the season*

5. Stereotyped as given to decadent luxuries.

6. This is the mode of address I've been told to use.

7. Married Englishwomen were reputed to enjoy more personal freedom than their southern European counterparts; Venetian wives in particular were much restricted, though Celia's situation is obviously

extreme (see below, lines 118—26).

8. (1) Beauty; (2) shamelessness.

9. Comet. (Rare and beautiful.)

1. (1) Blushes; (2) sexual responsiveness. (Mosca is evidently conjecturing here.)

As near⁰ as they are. *closely*
 VOLPONE I must see her—
 MOSCA Sir,
 There is a guard of ten spies thick upon her—
 All his whole household—each of which is set
 Upon his fellow, and have all their charge
 When he goes out; when he comes in, examined.²
 VOLPONE I will go see her, though but at her window.
 MOSCA In some disguise, then.
 VOLPONE That is true. I must
 Maintain mine own shape still the same.³ We'll think.
[Exeunt.]

Act 2

SCENE 1. *Saint Mark's Square.*

[Enter] POLITIC WOULD-BE [and] PEREGRINE,
 POLITIC Sir, to a wise man all the world's his soil.¹
 It is not Italy, nor France, nor Europe
 That must bound me if my fates call me forth.
 Yet I protest it is no salt⁰ desire *inordinate*
 Of seeing countries, shifting a religion,²
 Nor any disaffection to the state
 Where I was bred—and unto which I owe
 My dearest plots⁰—hath brought me out;⁰ much less *projects/abroad*
 That idle, antique, stale, gray-headed project
 Of knowing men's minds and manners with Ulysses;³
 But a peculiar humor⁰ of my wife's *whim*
 Laid for this height⁰ of Venice, to observe, *latitude*
 To quote,⁰ to learn the language, and so forth.— *jot things down*
 I hope you travel, sir, with license?⁴
 PEREGRINE Yes.
 POLITIC I dare the safelier converse. How long, sir,
 Since you left England?
 PEREGRINE Seven weeks.
 POLITIC SO lately!
 You ha' not been with my Lord Ambassador?
 PEREGRINE Not yet, sir.
 POLITIC Pray you, what news, sir, vents our climate?⁵
 I heard last night a most strange thing reported
 By some of my lord's⁰ followers, and I long *the ambassador's*
 To hear how't will be seconded.⁰ *confirmed*
 PEREGRINE What was't, sir?
 POLITIC Marry, sir, of a raven that should build⁰ *reportedly built*
 In a ship royal of the King's.

2. Each member of the household spies on all the others; each gets his instructions when Corvino departs and is interrogated when he returns.

3. I must, in my own person, continue to pretend to be near death.

2.1

1. Proverbial, like most of Sir Pol's "original" advice. "Soil": native land.

2. Throughout the 16th and 17th centuries, members of religious minorities throughout Europe sought refuge in lands more hospitable to their faiths.

3. The hero of the *Odyssey*, an archetype of the wise traveler.

4. A passport. (English people could not travel abroad without permission.)

5. Comes from our part of the world?

PEREGRINE *[aside]* This fellow,
 Does he gulf me, trow?⁶ Or is gulled?—Your name, sir? *trick / do you suppose?*

POLITIC My name is Politic Would-be.

PEREGRINE *[aside]* Oh, that speaks⁰ him,— *characterizes*
 A knight, sir?

POLITIC A poor knight, sir.⁶

PEREGRINE Your lady
 Lies⁰ here in Venice for intelligence⁰ *stays / news*
 Of tires⁰ and fashions and behavior *apparel*
 Among the courtesans?⁷ The fine Lady Would-be?

POLITIC Yes, sir, the spider and the bee ofttimes
 Suck from one flower.

PEREGRINE Good Sir Politic,
 I cry you mercy!⁰ I have heard much of you. *heg your pardon*
 'Tis true, sir, of your raven.

POLITIC On your knowledge?

PEREGRINE Yes, and your lion's whelping in the Tower.⁸

POLITIC Another whelp!

PEREGRINE Another, sir.

POLITIC NOW, heaven!
 What prodigies⁰ be these? The fires at Berwick! *strange occurrences*
 And the new star!⁹ These things concurring,⁰ strange! *happening together*
 And full of omen! Saw you those meteors?

PEREGRINE I did, sir.

POLITIC Fearful! Pray you sir, confirm me:
 Were there three porpoises seen above the bridge,¹
 As they give out?⁰ *people report*

PEREGRINE Six, and a sturgeon, sir.

POLITIC I am astonished!

PEREGRINE Nay, sir, be not so.
 I'll tell you a greater prodigy than these—

POLITIC What should these things portend!

PEREGRINE The very day—
 Let me be sure—that I put forth from London,
 There was a whale discovered in the river
 As high⁰ as Woolwich,² that had waited there— *far upstream*
 Few know how many months—for the subversion
 Of the Stode Fleet.³

POLITIC Is't possible? Believe it,
 'Twas either sent from Spain or the Archdukes.⁴
 Spinola's⁵ whale, upon my life, my credit!⁰ *honor*
 Will they not leave these projects? Worthy sir,
 Some other news.

6. In the first decade of the 17th century. King James I raised badly needed money by selling knighthoods to many whose birth, attainments, or wealth would not have previously merited a title.

7. Venice was famous for its elegant prostitutes.

8. A lioness kept at the Tower of London gave birth in 1604 and 1605.

9. The fires at Berwick were aurora borealis visible above Berwick, Northumberland, in 1605, said to resemble battling armies. The new star, a supernova, was described by the astronomer Johannes Kepler in 1604.

1. A porpoise was found upstream of London Bridge in the Thames River the January before *Volpone* was first performed.

2. A town on the Thames, a bit to the east of London.

3. The English merchant adventurers' ships, which were harboring at Stade, in the mouth of the Elbe River.

4. The Archduke Albert of Austria and his wife, Isabella, the Infanta of Spain, ruled the Netherlands in the name of Spain.

5. Ambrosio de Spinola was general of the Spanish army in the Netherlands.

- PEREGRINE Faith, Stone the fool is dead;
And they do lack a tavern-fool extremely.
- POLITIC Is Mas' Stone dead?⁶
- PEREGRINE He's dead, sir. Why, I hope
You thought him not immortal? [*Aside*] Oh, this knight,
Were he well known, would be a precious thing
To fit our English stage. He that should write
But such a fellow should be thought to feign
Extremely, if not maliciously.
- POLITIC Stone dead!
- PEREGRINE Dead. Lord, how deeply, sir, you apprehend it!
He was no kinsman to you?
- POLITIC That⁰ I know of. *Not that*
Well, that same fellow was an unknown fool.⁷
- PEREGRINE And yet you knew him, it seems?
- POLITIC I did so. Sir,
I knew him one of the most dangerous heads
Living within the state, and so I held⁰ him. *considered*
- PEREGRINE Indeed, sir?
- POLITIC While he lived, in action,⁰ *subversive activities*
He has received weekly intelligence,
Upon my knowledge, out of the Low Countries,
For all parts of the world, in cabbages,⁰ *a Dutch import*
And those dispensed again to ambassadors
In oranges, muskmelons, apricots,
Lemons, pome-citrons,^o and suchlike—sometimes *grapefruitlike fruits*
In Colchester oysters, and your Selsey cockles.⁸
- PEREGRINE YOU make me wonder!
- POLITIC Sir, upon my knowledge.
Nay, I have observed him at your public ordinary⁰ *tavern*
Take his advertisement⁰ from a traveler— *information*
A concealed statesman—in a trencher⁰ of meat, *xwooden plate*
And instantly before the meal was done
Convey an answer in a toothpick.⁹
- PEREGRINE Strange!
How could this be, sir?
- POLITIC Why, the meat was cut
So like his character,⁰ and so laid as he *code letters*
Must easily read the cipher.
- PEREGRINE I have heard
He could not read, sir.
- POLITIC SO 'twas given out,
In polity,⁰ by those that did employ him. *craftily*
But he could read, and had your languages,⁰ *knew foreign languages*
And to't^o as sound a noddle⁰— *in addition / head*
- PEREGRINE I have heard, sir,

6. "Mas'" means "master," a term of address for boys and fools. Stone, KingJames's outspoken courtjester, was a well-known urban character. He was whipped the year before *Volpone's* first performance for slandering the Lord Admiral. Politic is evidently unaware of the play on words in "Stone dead."

7. The person who said this was not commonly recognized as a spy; he used foolery as his cover.

8. Expensive delicacies, unlikely tavern fare.

9. Presumably by inserting a tiny note into a toothpick hollowed out for espionage use.

That your baboons were spies, and that they were
 A kind of subtle nation near to China.

POLITIC Ay, ay, your *Mamuluchi*.¹ Faith, they had
 Their hand in a French plot or two, but they
 Were so extremely given to women as
 They made discovery of all. Yet I
 Had my advices⁰ here, on Wednesday last,
 From one of their own coat;^o they were returned,
 Made their relations,^o as the fashion is,
 And now stand fair^o for fresh employment.

PEREGRINE [*aside*] Heart,
 This Sir Pol will be^o ignorant of nothing.
 [*To* POLITIC] It seems, sir, you know all?

POLITIC Not all, sir. But
 I have some general notions; I do love
 To note and to observe. Though I live out,^o
 Free from the active torrent, yet I'd mark
 The currents and the passages of things
 For mine own private use, and know the ebbs
 And flows of state.

PEREGRINE Believe it, sir, I hold
 Myself in no small tie unto my fortunes^o
 For casting me thus lucidly upon you,
 Whose knowledge—if your bounty equal it—
 May do me great assistance in instruction
 For my behavior and my bearing, which
 Is yet so rude and raw—

POLITIC Why, came you forth
 Empty of rules for travel?

PEREGRINE Faith, I had
 Some common ones from out that vulgar grammar,²
 Which he that cried^o Italian to me taught me.

POLITIC Why, this it is that spoils all our brave bloods,^o
 Trusting our hopeful^o gentry unto pedants,
 Fellows of outside and mere bark.³ You seem
 To be a gentleman of ingenuous race^o—
 I not profess it,^o but my fate hath been
 To be where I have been consulted with
 In this high kind,^o touching some great men's sons,
 Persons of blood^o and honor—

PEREGRINE Who be these, sir?

SCENE 2. *The scene continues.*

[*Enter*] MOSCA [*and*] NANO [*disguised as a mounte-
 bank's assistants*].

MOSCA Under that window, there't must be. The same.

[*MOSCA and NANO set up a platform.*]

1. Mamluks, a class of warriors originally from Asia
 Minor, who ruled Egypt from 1250 to 1517.
 2. Modern language textbook, which sometimes

included travelers' tips.
 3. Superficial accomplishments.

POLITIC Fellows to mount a bank!⁰ Did your instructor *platform*
 In the dear tongues¹ never discourse to you
 Of the Italian mountebanks?

PEREGRINE Yes, sir.

POLITIC Why,
 Here shall you see one.

PEREGRINE They are quacksalvers,
 Fellows that live by venting⁰ oils and drugs. *selling*

POLITIC Was that the character he gave you of them?

PEREGRINE AS I remember.

POLITIC Pity his ignorance.
 They are the only knowing men of Europe!
 Great general scholars, excellent physicians,
 Most admired statesmen, professed favorites
 And cabinet counselors⁰ to the greatest princes! *close advisers*
 The only languaged⁰ men of all the world! *most eloquent*

PEREGRINE And I have heard they are most lewd⁰ impostors,
 Made all of terms⁰ and shreds, no less beliers *ignorant*
 Of great men's favors than their own vile med'cines, *jargon*
 Which they will utter⁰ upon monstrous oaths, *advertise for sale*
 Selling that drug for twopence ere they part
 Which they have valued at twelve crowns⁰ before. *silver or gold coins*

POLITIC Sir, calumnies are answered best with silence.
 Yourself shall judge. [To MOSCA and NANO] Who is it mounts, my friends?

MOSCA Scoto of Mantua,² sir.

POLITIC Is't he? [To PEREGRINE] Nay, then,
 I'll proudly promise, sir, you shall behold
 Another man than has been fancied⁰ to you. *presented in imagination*
 I wonder yet that he should mount his bank
 Here in this nook, that has been wont t'appear
 In face oP the piazza! Here he comes. *Facing*
 [Enter] VOLPONE [disguised as a mountebank, followed
 by] a crowd.

VOLPONE [to NANO] Mount, zany.^o *clown; performer*
 [VOLPONE and NANO climb onto the platform.]

CROWD Follow, follow, follow, follow, follow!

POLITIC See how the people follow him! He's a man
 May write ten thousand crowns in bank here. Note,
 Mark but his gesture. I do use⁰ to observe *make it my practice*
 The state⁰ he keeps, in getting up. *stateliness*

PEREGRINE 'Tis worth it, sir.

VOLPONE Most noble gentlemen and my worthy patrons, it
 may seem strange that I, your Scoto Mantuano, who was
 ever wont to fix my bank in face of the public piazza near
 the shelter of the portico to the *procuratia*,³ should now,
 after eight months' absence from this illustrious city of Ven-

2.2

1. Italian was called the "cara lingua," a phrase Sir Politic translates.
 2. An Italian juggler and magician who visited

England and performed before Elizabeth I in the 1570s.
 3. Arcade on the north side of the Piazza di San Marco.

- ice, humbly retire myself into an obscure nook of the piazza.
- POLITIC [to PEREGRINE] Did not I now object the same?⁰ *ask the same question*
- PEREGRINE Peace, sir.
- VOLPONE Let me tell you: I am not, as your Lombard proverb saith, cold on my feet,^o or content to part with my commodities at a cheaper rate than I accustomed; look not for it. Nor that the calumnious reports of that impudent detractor and shame to our profession (Alessandro Buttone,⁰ I mean) who gave out in public I was condemned a '*sforzato*⁰ to the galleys for poisoning the Cardinal Bembo's—cook,⁴ hath at all attached,⁰ much less dejected me. No, no, worthy gentlemen. To tell you true, I cannot endure to see the rabble of these ground *ciarlitani*,⁵ that spread their cloaks on the pavement as if they meant to do feats of activity⁰ and then come in lamely with their moldy tales out of Boccaccio, like stale Tabarine,⁶ the fabulist: some of them discoursing their travels and of their tedious captivity in the Turks' galleys, when indeed, were the truth known, they were the Christians' galleys, where very temperately they ate bread and drunk water as a wholesome penance, enjoined them by their confessors, for base pilferies.
- POLITIC [to PEREGRINE] Note but his bearing and contempt of these.
- VOLPONE These turdy-facy-nasty-paty-lousy-fartical rogues, with one poor groatsworth⁰ of unprepared antimony,⁷ finely wrapped up in several *scartoccios*^o are able very well to kill their twenty a week, and play;^o yet these meager starved spirits, who have half stopped the organs of their minds with earthy oppilations,⁰ want not their favorers among your shriveled, salad-eating artisans, who are overjoyed that they may have their ha'p'orth⁰ of physic; though it purge 'em into another world, 't makes no matter.
- POLITIC Excellent! Ha' you heard better language, sir?
- VOLPONE Well, let 'em go.^o And, gentlemen, honorable gentlemen, know that for this time, our bank, being thus removed from the clamors of the *canaglia*^o shall be the scene of pleasure and delight. For I have nothing to sell, little or nothing to sell.
- POLITIC I told you, sir, his end.
- PEREGRINE You did so, sir.
- VOLPONE I protest, I and my six servants are not able to make of this precious liquor so fast as it is fetched away from my lodging by gentlemen of your city, strangers of the *terra firma*,⁸ worshipful merchants, ay, and senators too, who ever since my arrival have detained me to their uses by their
- in desperate straits*
- a rival mountebank prisoner*
- stuck to*
- acrobatics*
- fourpenceworth paper envelopes as if it were a game*
- obstructions / lack*
- halfpennyworth*
- say no more about them*
- mob*

4. Pietro Bembo (1470-1547) was a famous humanist, featured as a speaker in Castiglione's *Courtier* (1528). "Cook" is a teasing substitution for "whore."
5. Charlatans too poor to afford a "bank," or platform. "Activity" (following): acrobatics.

6. Boccaccio's *Decameron* is a storehouse of tales. Tabarine was a member of an Italian comic troupe that played in France and perhaps in England.
7. White metal used as an emetic and poison.
8. Mainland territory of Venice.

splendidous liberalities. And worthily. For what avails your rich man to have his magazines⁰ stuffed with *moscadelli*, or oP the purest grape, when his physicians prescribe him (on pain of death) to drink nothing but water cocted⁰ with anise seeds? Oh, health, health! The blessing of the rich! The riches of the poor! Who can buy thee at too dear a rate, since there is no enjoying this world without thee? Be not then so sparing of your purses, honorable gentlemen, as to abridge the natural course of life—

storehouses / wine
wine of
boiled

PEREGRINE You see his end?

POLITIC Ay, is't not good?

VOLPONE For when a humid flux^o or catarrh, by the mutability of air, falls from your head into an arm or shoulder or any other part, take you a ducat or your *cecchine* of gold and apply to the place affected; see what good effect it can work. No, no, 'tis this blessed *unguento*,^o this rare extraction, that hath only power to disperse all malignant humors that proceed either of hot, cold, moist, or windy causes⁹—

runny discharge

PEREGRINE I would he had put in "dry," too.

POLITIC Pray you, observe.

VOLPONE TO fortify the most indigest and crude^o stomach, ay, were it of one that, through extreme weakness, vomited blood, applying only a warm napl'dn to the place after the unction and fricace,^o for the *vertigine*^o in the head putting but a drop into your nostrils, likewise behind the ears, a most sovereign^o and approved remedy; the *mal caduco*, cramps, convulsions, paralyses, epilepsies, *tremor cordia*, retired nerves, ill vapors of the spleen, stoppings of the liver, the stone, the strangury, *hernia ventosa*, *iliaca passio*; stops a *dysenteria* immediately; easeth the torsion of the small guts; and cures *melancholia hypochondriacal* being taken and applied according to my printed receipt.^o (*Pointing to his hill and his glass*).^o For this is the physician, this the medicine; this counsels, this cures; this gives the direction, this works the effect; and in sum, both together may be termed an abstract of the theoric and practic in the Aesculapian² art. Twill cost you eight crowns. And, Zan Frittata,³ pray thee sing a verse extempore in honor of it.

upset

massage / dizziness

potent

direction
paper and flagon

POLITIC How do you like him, sir?

PEREGRINE Most strangely, I!

POLITIC IS not his language rare?^o

unrivaled

PEREGRINE But^o alchemy

except for

I never heard the like, or Broughton's books.⁴

9. Renaissance medicine was based on the theory of the humors, four bodily fluids whose balance within the body determined both physical and mental health. Their qualities, in various combinations, were hot, cold, moist, and dry; hence Peregrine's comment in the next line.

1. Volpone's list of diseases includes "*mal caduco*," epilepsy; "*tremor cordia*," palpitations; "retired nerves," withered sinews; "ill vapors of the spleen," short temper; "stone," kidney stones; "strangury," painful urination; "*hernia ventosa*," a hernia contain-

ing air; "*iliaca passio*," intestinal cramps; "*dysenteria*," diarrhea; "torsion of the small guts," spasmodic bowel pain; and "*melancholia hypochondriacal* depression.

2. Medical. Aesculapius was the classical god of medicine.

3. Italian dialect for "Jack Omelet," the name of the zany (see line 28), here referring to Nano.

4. Hugh Broughton was a Puritan rabbinical scholar who wrote impenetrable treatises on scriptural matters.

SONG

NANO [*sings*] Had old Hippocrates or Galen,⁵
 That to their books put med'cines all in,
 But known this secret, they had never
 (Of which they will be guilty ever)
 Been murderers of so much paper,⁰ *written so much*
 Or wasted many a hurtless taper,⁰ *candle (working at night)*
 No Indian drug had e'er been famed,
 Tobacco, sassafras⁶ not named,
 Ne° yet of *guacum*⁷ one small stick, sir, *Nor*
 Nor Raymond Lully's great elixir.
 Ne had been known the Danish Gonswart
 Or Paracelsus with his long sword.⁸

PEREGRINE All this yet will not do; eight crowns is high.

VOLPONE [*to* NANO] No more.—Gentlemen, if I had but time
 to discourse to you the miraculous effects of this my oil,
 surnamed *oglio del Scoto*, with the countless catalogue of
 those I have cured of th'aforsaid and many more diseases,
 the patents and privileges of all the princes and common-
 wealths of Christendom, or but the depositions of those that
 appeared on my part before the signory of the *Sanitd*,⁹ and
 most learned College of Physicians, where I was authorized,
 upon notice taken of the admirable virtues of my medica-
 ments and mine own excellency in matter of rare and
 unknown secrets, not only to disperse them publicly in this
 famous city but in all the territories that happily joy under
 the government of the most pious and magnificent states of
 Italy. But may some other gallant fellow say, "Oh, there be
 divers that make profession⁰ to have as good and as exper-
 imented receipts as yours." Indeed, very many have assayed
 like apes in imitation of that which is really and essentially
 in me, to make oP this oil; bestowed great cost in furnaces,
 stills, alembics,¹ continual fires, and preparation of the
 ingredients (as indeed there goes to it six hundred several
 simples,⁰ besides some quantity of human fat for the con-
 glutination,⁰ which we buy of the anatomists); but, when
 these practitioners come to the last decoction,⁰ blow, blow,
 puff, puff, and all flies *infumo*° Ha, ha, ha! Poor wretches!
 I rather pity their folly and indiscretion⁰ than their loss of
 time and money; for those may be recovered by industry,
 but to be a fool born is a disease incurable. For myself, I
 always from my youth have endeavored to get the rarest
 secrets and book⁰ them, either in exchange or for money; I
 spared nor° cost nor labor where anything was worthy to
 be learned. And, gentlemen, honorable gentlemen, I will

that claim

some of

different ingredients
to glue it together
boiling down
up in smoke
lack of discernment

record
neither

5. Greek physicians (ca. 460—377 B.C.E. and 129—ca. 199 C.E., respectively) who developed the theory of humors.

6. New World plants, used medicinally.

7. The bark of a tropical tree, used medicinally.

8. Raymond Lully was a medieval astrologer rumored to have discovered the elixir of life. "Danish Gonswart"

has not been positively identified. Paracelsus was an early 16th-century alchemist who developed an alternative to Galenic medicine; he carried his medicines in his sword pommel.

9. Venetian medical licensing board.

1. Vessels for purifying liquids.

undertake, by virtue of chemical art, out of the honorable hat that covers your head to extract the four elements—that is to say, the fire, air, water, and earth—and return you your felt^o without burn or stain. For, whilst others have been at the balloo^o I have been at my book, and am now past the craggy paths of study and come to the flow'ry plains of honor and reputation.

felt hat
Venetian hall game

POLITIC. I do assure you, sir, that is his aim.

VOLPONE But to our price.

PEREGRINE And that withal,^o Sir Pol.

; well

VOLPONE YOU all know, honorable gentlemen, I never valued this *ampulla*, or vial, at less than eight crowns, but for this time I am content to be deprived of it for six; six crowns is the price, and less, in courtesy, I know you cannot offer me. Take it or leave it howsoever, both it and I am at your service. I ask you not as the value of the thing, for then I should demand^o of you a thousand crowns; so the Cardinals Montalto, Fernese, the great Duke of Tuscany, my gossip,^o with divers other princes, have given me. But I despise money. Only to show my affection to you, honorable gentlemen, and your illustrious state here, I have neglected the messages of these princes, mine own offices,^o framed^o my journey hither only to present you with the fruits of my travels. [To NANO and MOSCA] Tune your voices once more to the touch of your instruments, and give the honorable assembly some delightful recreation.

ask
buddy

duties / devised

PEREGRINE What monstrous and most painful circumstance^o

beating around the bush
small Venetian coins

Is here, to get some three or four *gazets*^F

Some threepence, i'th'whole, for that 'twill come to.

SONG

[During the song, CELIA appears at her window, above.]

NANO *[sings]*^o You that would last long, list to my song,

accompanied by Mosca

Make no more coil,^o but buy of this oil.

fuss

Would you be ever fair and young?

Stout of teeth and strong of tongue?

Tart^o of palate? Quick of ear?

Keen

Sharp of sight? Of nostril clear?

Moist of hand² and light of foot?

Or (I will come nearer to't)^o

get to the point

Would you live free from all diseases,

Do the act your mistress pleases,

Yet fright all aches^o from your bones?

venereal disease

Here's a med'cine for the nones.^o

VOLPONE Well, I am in a humor at this time to make a present of the small quantity my coffer contains: to the rich in courtesy, and to the poor for God's sake.^o Wherefore, now mark; I asked you six crowns, and six crowns at other

charity

2. Associated with youth and sexual vigor.

times you have paid me. You shall not give me six crowns,
 nor five, nor four, nor three, nor two, nor one, nor half a
 ducat, no, nor a *noccenigo*.³ Six—pence it will cost you, or
 six hundred pound—expect no lower price, for by the ban-
 ner of my front,⁴ I will not bate a *bagatinethat* I will have
 only a pledge of your loves, to carry something from
 amongst you to show I am not contemned⁰ by you.
 Therefore now, toss your handkerchiefs cheerfully, cheer-
 fully, and be advertised⁰ that the first heroic spirit that
 deigns to grace me with a handkerchief, I will give it a little
 remembrance of something beside, shall please⁰ it better
 than if I had presented it with a double *pistolet*.⁴

PEREGRINE Will you be that heroic spark,⁰ Sir Pol?
 CELIA *at the window throws down her handkerchief*
[with a coin tied inside it].
 Oh, see! The window has prevented you.⁰

VOLPONE Lady, I kiss your bounty, and, for this timely grace
 you have done your poor Scoto of Mantua, I will return you,
 over and above my oil, a secret of that high and inestimable
 nature shall⁰ make you forever enamored on that minute
 wherein your eye first descended on so mean,⁰ yet not alto-
 gether to be despised, an object. Here is a powder concealed
 in this paper of which, if I should speak to the worth, nine
 thousand volumes were but as one page, that page as a line,
 that line as a word—so short is this pilgrimage of man,
 which some call life, to^o the expressing of it. Would I reflect
 on the price, why, the whole world were but as an empire,
 that empire as a province, that province as a bank, that bank
 as a private purse, to the purchase of it. I will only tell you
 it is the powder that made Venus a goddess, given her by
 Apollo,⁵ that kept her perpetually young, cleared her wrinkles,
 firmed her gums, filled⁰ her skin, colored her hair; from
 her derived to Helen, and at the sack of Troy unfortunately
 lost; till now in this our age it was as happily⁰ recovered by
 a studious antiquary out of some ruins of Asia, who sent a
 moiety⁰ of it to the court of France (but much sophisti-
 cated)⁰ wherewith the ladies there now color their hair. The
 rest, at this present, remains with me, extracted to a quin-
 tessence,⁰ so that wherever it but touches, in youth it per-
 petually preserves, in age restores the complexion; seats
 your teeth, did^o they dance like virginaljacks,⁶ firm as a wall;
 makes them white as ivory that were black as—

SCENE 3. *The scene continues.*[Enter] CORVINO. *He beats away the mountebank, etc.*

CORVINO Spite o'the devil, and my shame! Come down here,
 Come down! No house but mine to make your scene?⁰

3. I won't reduce the price by even a tiny coin.
 4. Spanish gold coin worth about one English pound.
 5. In his capacity as the god of health.

6. The virginal is a type of harpsichord; its "jacks" are
 quills that pluck strings when the keys are played, but
 the term was also sometimes used for the keys.

Signor Flaminio, will you down, sir? Down!
 What, is my wife your Franciscina, sir?¹
 No windows on the whole piazza here
 To make your properties⁰ but mine? But mine? *stage props*
 Heart! Ere tomorrow I shall be new christened
 And called the *pantalone di bisogniosi*²
 About the town. *[Exeunt VOLPONE, NANO, and MOSCA,*
followed by CORVINO and the crowd.]

PEREGRINE What should this mean, Sir Pol?
 POLITIC Some trick of state, believe it. I will home.
 PEREGRINE It may be some design on you.
 POLITIC I know not.
 I'll stand upon my guard.
 PEREGRINE It is your best,⁰ sir. *best course of action*
 POLITIC This three weeks, all my advices, all my letters,
 They have been intercepted,
 PEREGRINE Indeed, sir?
 Best have a care.
 POLITIC Nay, so I will. *[Exit.]*
 PEREGRINE This knight,
 I may not lose him,⁰ for my mirth, till night. *[Exit.] I won't leave him*

SCENE 4. VOLPONE'S house.

[Enter] VOLPONE [and] MOSCA.

VOLPONE Oh, I am wounded!
 MOSCA Where, sir?
 VOLPONE Not without;⁰ *externally*
 Those blows were nothing; I could bear them ever,
 But angry Cupid, bolting⁰ from her⁰ eyes, *shooting darts / Celia's*
 Hath shot himself into me like a flame,
 Where now he flings about his burning heat,
 As in a furnace an ambitious⁰ fire *rising*
 Whose vent is stopped. The fight is all within me.
 I cannot live except thou help me, Mosca;
 My liver¹ melts, and I, without the hope
 Of some soft air from her refreshing breath,
 Am but a heap of cinders.

MOSCA 'Las, good sir!
 Would you had never seen her.
 VOLPONE Nay, would thou
 Hadst never told me of her.
 MOSCA Sir, 'tis true;
 I do confess I was unfortunate,
 And you unhappy; but I'm bound in conscience
 No less than duty to effect my best
 To your release of torment, and I will, sir.

2.3

1. Corvino imagines the scene in terms of a stock episode from the Italian commedia dell'arte, in which the young lover, conventionally named Flaminio after the famous actor Flaminio Scala, seduces Franciscina, the easygoing serving wench.

2. The *pantalone* is another stock figure in the commedia dell'arte, a decrepit old man suspicious of his desirable young wife. *Di bisogniosi* is his jocular surname, meaning "descended from poor people."

2.4

1. Supposed to be the seat of lust.

VOLPONE Dear Mosca, shall I hope?
MOSCA Sir, more than dear,
I will not bid you to despair of aught
Within a human compass. *that's humanly possible*

VOLPONE Oh, there spoke
My better angel. Mosca, take my keys.
Gold, plate, and jewels, all's at thy devotion;⁰ *disposal*
Employ them how thou wilt; nay, coin me too,²
So° thou in this but crown my longings. Mosca? *provided that*

MOSCA Use but your patience.
VOLPONE SO I have.³
MOSCA I doubt not
To bring success to your desires.

VOLPONE Nay, then,
I not repent me of my late disguise.
MOSCA If you can horn him,⁴ sir, you need not.
VOLPONE True;
Besides, I never meant him for my heir.
Is not the color o' my beard and eyebrows⁵
To make me known?

MOSCA NO jot.
VOLPONE I did it well.
MOSCA SO well, would I could follow you in mine
With half the happiness!⁰ And yet I would *success*
Escape your epilogue.⁰ *the beating*

VOLPONE But were they gulled⁰ *fooled*
With a belief that I was Scoto?

MOSCA Sir,
Scoto himself could hardly have distinguished!
I have not time to flatter you now. We'll part,
And, as I prosper, so applaud my art. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE 5. CORVINO S house.

[Enter] CORVINO [and] CELIA.

CORVINO Death of mine honor, with the city's fool?
A juggling, tooth-drawing,¹ prating⁰ mountebank? *chattering*
And at a public window? Where, whilst he
With his strained action⁰ and his dole of faces² *overacting*
To his drug lecture draws your itching ears,
A crew of old, unmarried, noted lechers
Stood leering up like satyrs;⁰ and you smile *lustfid goat-men*
Most graciously! And fan your favors forth
To give your hot spectators satisfaction!
What, was your mountebank their call? Their whistle?³
Or were you enamored on his copper rings?

2. Use my coins as well. (But also with the implication "make coins out of me," i.e., "turn my body into money.")

3. Punning on the original meaning of "patience," "enduring blows."

4. Cuckold him. (The husbands of adulterous wives were traditionally supposed to sprout horns.)

5. Red, because he is a fox.

2.5

1. Mountebanks, like barbers, performed dental work.

2. Small repertory of facial expressions.

3. Used to lure trained falcons.

His saffron jewel with the toadstone⁰ in't?
 Or his embroidered suit with the cope-stitch,⁵
 Made of a hearse-cloth? Or his old tilt-feather?⁴
 Or his starched beard? Well! You shall have him, yes.
 He shall come home and minister unto you
 The fricace for the mother.⁵ Or, let me see,
 I think you'd rather mount?⁶ Would you not mount?
 Why, if you'll mount, you may; yes truly, you may—
 And so you may be seen down to th'foot.
 Get you a cittern, Lady Vanity,⁷
 And be a dealer with the virtuous man;
 Make one.⁸ I'll but protest⁰ myself a cuckold
 And save your dowry.⁹ I am a Dutchman, I!
 For if you thought me an Italian,
 You would be damned ere you did this, you whore.¹
 Thou'dst tremble to imagine that the murder
 Of father, mother, brother, all thy race,
 Should follow as the subject of my justice!
 CELIA Good sir, have patience!
 CORVINO [*drawing a weapon*] What couldst thou propose
 Less to thyselP than, in this heat of wrath
 And stung with my dishonor, I should strike
 This steel unto thee, with as many stabs
 As thou wert gazed upon with goatish⁰ eyes?
 CELIA Alas, sir, be appeased! I could not think
 My being at the window should more now
 Move your impatience than at other times.
 CORVINO NO? Not to seek and entertain a parley⁰
 With a known knave? Before a multitude?
 You were an actor with your handkerchief!
 Which he most sweetly kissed in the receipt,
 And might, no doubt, return it with a letter,
 And point the place where you might meet—your sister's,
 Your mother's, or your aunt's might serve the turn.⁰
 CELIA Why, dear sir, when do I make these excuses?
 Or ever stir abroad but to the church?
 And that, so seldom—
 CORVINO Well, it shall be less;
 And thy restraint before was liberty
 To what I now decree: and therefore, mark me.
 [*Pointing to the window*] First, I will have this bawdy light dammed up,
 And, till't be done, some two or three yards off
 I'll chalk a line, o'er which if thou but chance

agate-like stone
gaudy needlework

-proclaim

as your punishment

lustful

have a conversation

occasion; sexual act

4. The feather from a tilting (jousting) helmet. A hearse-cloth is a heavy cloth for draping over a coffin.
 5. Womb massage; with obvious sexual innuendo. "The mother" was a term for the uterus, but also for a variety of ailments, from cramps to depression, that were supposed to originate there.
 6. (1) Climb up on the mountebank's stage yourself; (2) take the top sexual position.
 7. Allegorical character of a morality play represent-

ing pride and worldly pleasure. A cittern is a guitarlike instrument that conventionally was played by whores.
 8. Join up with him. (With sexual innuendo.)
 9. The husbands of proven adultresses could divorce them and keep their dowry.
 1. The Dutch were proverbially phlegmatic, in contrast to Italians, who were stereotypically impetuous and vengeful.

To set thy desp'rate foot, more hell, more horror,
 More wild, remorseless rage shall seize on thee
 Than on a conjurer that had heedless left
 His circle's safety ere his devil was laid.²
 Then here's a lock which I will hang upon thee.

[He shows a chastity belt.]

And now I think on't, I will keep thee backwards;³
 Thy lodging shall be backwards, thy walks backwards,
 Thy prospect⁰—all be backwards; and no pleasure
 That thou shalt know but backwards. Nay, since you force
 My honest nature, know it is your own
 Being too open makes me use you thus,
 Since you will not contain your subtle⁰ nostrils
 In a sweet⁰ room, but they must snuff the air
 Of rank and sweaty passengers⁰—

view (see n. 3)

*delicate; crafty
 sweet-smelling
 passersby*

Knock within.

One knocks.

Away, and be not seen, pain of thy life!
 Not look toward the window. If thou dost—

[CELIA begins to exit.]

Nay stay, hear this—let me not prosper, whore,
 But I will make thee an anatomy,⁴
 Dissect thee mine own self, and read a lecture
 Upon thee to the city, and in public.
 Away!

[Exit CELIA.]

Who's there?

[Enter] Servitore [a SERVANT],

SERVANT 'Tis Signor Mosca, sir.

SCENE 6. *The scene continues.*

CORVINO Let him come in. *[Exit SERVANT.]*

His master's dead! There's yet
 Some good to help the bad.

[Enter] MOSCA.

My Mosca, welcome!

I guess your news.

MOSCA I fear you cannot, sir.

CORVINO Is't not his death?

MOSCA Rather the contrary.

CORVINO Not his recovery?

MOSCA Yes, sir.

CORVINO I am cursed, I am cursed,

I am bewitched! My crosses⁰ meet to vex me!

misfortunes

How? How? How? How?

MOSCA Why, sir, with Scoto's oil.

Corbaccio and Voltore brought of it
 Whilst I was busy in an inner room—

2. Conjurers protected themselves from the devils who served them by staying inside a magical circle.

3. In the back part of the house, lacking a view out onto the piazza; but with the suggestion of anal intercourse, supposedly favored by Italians.

4. Use you for anatomical research. (In the early modern period, physicians obtained the bodies of executed criminals upon which to perform dissections, often before large crowds.)

- CORVINO Death! That damned mountebank! But for the law,
 Now, I could kill the rascal. T cannot be
 His oil should have that virtue. Ha' not I
 Known him a common rogue, come fiddling in
 To th'*osteria*^o with a tumbling whore, *tavern (Italian)*
 And, when he has done all his forced tricks, been glad
 Of a poor spoonful of dead wine with flies in't?
 It cannot be. All his ingredients
 Are a sheep's gall, a roasted bitch's marrow,
 Some few *sod*^o earwigs, pounded caterpillars, *boiled*
 A little capon's grease, and fasting spittle:¹
 I know 'em to a dram.^o *tiny amount*
- MOSCA I know not, sir,
 But some on't there they poured into his ears,
 Some in his nostrils, and recovered him,
 Applying but the *fricace*.^o *massage*
- CORVINO Pox o'that *fricace*!
- MOSCA And since, to seem the more officious^o *zealous*
 And flatt'ring of his health, there they have had—
 At extreme fees—the College of Physicians
 Consulting on him how they might restore him;
 Where one would have a *cataplastm*² of spices,
 Another a flayed ape clapped to his breast,
 A third would ha' it a dog, a fourth an oil
 With wildcats' skins. At last, they all resolved
 That to preserve him was no other means
 But some young woman must be straight sought out,
 Lusty and full of juice, to sleep by him;
 And to this service—most unhappily
 And most unwillingly—am I now employed,
 Which here I thought to preacquaint you with,
 For your advice, since it concerns you most,
 Because I would not do that thing might cross
 Your ends,³ on whom I have my whole dependence, sir.
 Yet if I do it not, they may delate⁴
 My slackness to my patron, work me out
 Of his opinion;^o and there all your hopes, *favor*
 Ventures, or whatsoever, are all frustrate.
 I do but tell you, sir. Besides, they are all
 Now striving who shall first present him. Therefore,
 I could entreat you briefly, conclude somewhat;^o *decide something*
 Prevent 'em if you can.
- CORVINO Death to my hopes!
 This is my villainous fortune! Best to hire
 Some common courtesan.
- MOSCO Ay, I thought on that, sir.

2.6

1. Saliva of a fasting person (Scoto cannot afford anything to eat).
 2. Poultice. (The substances described in the following lines were believed to work by absorbing the

patient's infection, which bodes ill for the young woman prescribed for Volpone in lines 34–35.)

3. Do anything that might frustrate your purposes.

4. Report. (A legal term for making an accusation.)

But they are all so subtle,⁰ full of art,^o *cunning / deceit*
 And age again⁰ doting and flexible, *old people moreover*
 So as—I cannot tell—we may perchance
 Light on a quean⁰ may cheat us all. *whore (who)*

CORVINO 'Tis true.

MOSCA No, no; it must be one that has no tricks, sir,
 Some simple thing, a creature made unto⁰ it; *suited to; forced into*
 Some wench you may command. Ha' you no kinswoman?
 Godso⁰—think, think, think, think, think, think, think, sir. *an oath*
 One o'the doctors offered there his daughter.

CORVINO How!

MOSCA Yes, Signor Lupo,⁰ the physician. *Wolf (Italian)*

CORVINO His daughter?

MOSCA And a virgin, sir. Why, alas,
 He knows the state of's body, what it is,
 That naught can warm his blood, sir, but a fever,
 Nor any incantation raise his spirit.⁰ *vigor; semen*
 A long forgetfulness hath seized that part.⁰ *his penis*
 Besides, sir, who shall know it? Some one or two—

CORVINO I pray thee give me leave.⁰ [*He wallz apart.*] If any *give me a minute*
 man
 But I had had this luck—The thing in 'tself,
 I know, is nothing.—Wherefore should not I
 As well command my blood and my affections
 As this dull doctor? In the point of honor
 The cases are all one, of wife and daughter.

MOSCA [*aside*] I hear him coming.⁰ *coming around*

CORVINO [*aside*] She shall do't. 'Tis done. *by God's light (an oath)*
 'Slight,⁰ if this doctor, who is not engaged,
 Unless't be for his counsel (which is nothing),⁵
 Offer his daughter, what should I, that am
 So deeply in? I will prevent him. Wretch!
 Covetous wretch!—Mosca, I have determined.

MOSCA How, sir?

CORVINO We'll make all sure. The party you wot^o of *know (a circumlocution)*
 Shall be mine own wife, Mosca.

MOSCA Sir, the thing
 (But that I would not seem to counsel you)
 I should have motioned⁰ to you at the *first.* *proposed*
 And, make your count,⁰ you have cut all their throats. *rest assured*
 Why, 'tis directly taking a possession!⁶
 And in his next fit we may let him go.
 'Tis but to pull the pillow from his head
 And he is throttled; t had been done before,
 But for your scrupulous doubts,

CORVINO Ay, a plague on't!
 My conscience fools my wit.^o Well, I'll be brief, *common sense*
 And so be thou, lest they should be before us.

5. Who is not financially involved, except for whatever slight fee he could expect for his advice.

6. A legal term for the heir's formal assumption of inherited property.

Go home, prepare him, tell him with what zeal
 And willingness I do it; swear it was
 On the first hearing (as thou mayst do, truly)
 Mine own free motion.⁰ *initiative*

95 MOSCA Sir, I warrant you,
 I'll so possess⁰ him with it that the rest *impress*
 Of his starved clients shall be banished all,
 And only you received. But come not, sir,
 Until I send, for I have something else

100 To ripen for your good; you must not know't.
 CORVINO But do not you forget to send, now.
 MOSCO Fear not.
[Exit.]

SCENE 7. *The scene continues.*

CORVINO Where are you, wife? My Celia? Wife?
[Enter] CELIA [weeping.]

What, blubbering?
 Come, dry those tears. I think thou thought'st me in earnest?
 Ha! By this light, I talked so but to try^o thee. *test*
 Methinks the lightness^o of the occasion *triviality*

5 Should ha' confirmed thee.¹ Come, I am not jealous.
 CELIA No?
 CORVINO
 Faith, I am not, I, nor never² was;
 It is a poor, unprofitable humor.
 Do not I know if women have a will
 They'll do 'gainst all the watches^o o'the world? *despite the vigilance*

10 And that the fiercest spies are tamed with gold?
 Tut, I am confident in thee, thou shalt see't;
 And see, I'll give thee cause too, to believe it.
 Come, kiss me. Go and make thee ready straight
 In all thy best attire, thy choicest jewels;

15 Put em all on, and, with em thy best looks.
 We are invited to a solemn feast
 At old Volpone's, where it shall appear
 How far I am free from jealousy or fear. *[Exeunt.]*

Act 3

SCENE 1. *The piazza.*

[Enter] MOSCA.

MOSCA I fear I shall begin to grow in love
 With my dear self and my most prosp'rous parts,⁰ *talents*
 They do so spring and burgeon.⁰ I can feel *swell; thrive*
 A whimsy^o i'my blood. I know not how, *giddiness*

5 Success hath made me wanton. I could skip

2.7

1. Convinced you that I was not serious.

2. Double negatives are grammatical in Jacobean English.

Out of my skin now like a subtle snake,
 I am so limber. Oh, your parasite
 Is a most precious thing, dropped from above,⁰ *sent from heaven*
 Not bred mongst clods and clodpolls here on earth.
 I muse the mystery was not made a science,
 It is so liberally professed!¹ Almost
 All the wise world is little else in nature
 But parasites or subparasites. And yet
 I mean not those that have your bare town-art,²
 To know who's fit to feed em; have no house,
 No family, no care, and therefore mold
 Tales for men's ears,⁰ to bait⁰ that sense; or get *tell juicy rumors I entice*
 Kitchen-invention, and some stale receipts⁰ *recipes*
 To please the belly and the groin;⁰ nor those, *as aphrodisiacs*
 With their court-dog tricks, that can fawn and fleer,⁰ *smile insincerely*
 Make their revenue out of legs and faces,
 Echo my lord, and lick away a moth;³
 But your fine, elegant rascal, that can rise
 And stoop almost together, like an arrow,
 Shoot through the air as nimbly as a star,⁰ *meteor*
 Turn short as doth a swallow, and be here
 And there and here and yonder all at once,
 Present to any humor, all occasion,⁴
 And change a visor⁰ swifter than a thought! *mask; expression*
 This is the creature had the art born with him,
 Toils not to learn it, but doth practice it
 Out of most excellent nature, and such sparks
 Are the true parasites, others but their zanies.⁰ *clownish imitators*

SCENE 2. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] BONARIO.

[Aside] Who's this? Bonario? Old Corbaccio's son?
 The person I was bound⁰ to seek.—Fair sir, *on my way*
 You are happ'ly met.

BONARIO That cannot be by thee.

MOSCA Why, sir?

BONARIO Nay, pray thee know thy way and leave me

I would be loath to interchange discourse

With such a mate⁰ as thou art. *fellow (contemptuous)*

MOSCA Courteous sir,

Scorn not my poverty.

BONARIO Not I, by heaven,

But thou shalt give me leave to hate thy baseness.

MOSCA Baseness?

BONARIO Ay. Answer me, is not thy sloth

Sufficient argument? Thy flattery?

3.1

1. I wonder why the craft was not made a subject for academic study, it is so frequently practiced! (Punning on the "liberal professions.")

2. Crude skills of ingratiation, sufficient only for get-

ting free meals in taverns.

3. Make a living from bows and sycophantic looks, repeat anything a nobleman says, and fawn over him, fussing over every detail of his appearance.

4. Ready to respond to any mood or opportunity.

- Thy means of feeding?
 MOSCA Heaven, be good to me!
 These imputations are too common, sir,
 And eas'ly stuck on virtue when she's poor.
 You are unequal⁰ to me, and howe'er *superior; unfair*
 Your sentence⁰ may be righteous, yet you are not, *verdict*
 That, ere you know me, thus proceed in censure.
 Saint Mark bear witness 'gainst you, 'tis inhuman. *[He weeps.]*
 BONARIO *[aside]* What? Does he weep? The sign is soft and good.
 I do repent me that I was so harsh.
 MOSCA 'Tis true that, swayed by strong necessity,
 I am enforced to eat my careful bread
 With too much obsequy;⁰ 'tis true, beside, *obsequiousness*
 That I am fain^o to spin mine own poor raiment *obliged*
 Out of my mere observance,⁰ being not born *deferential service*
 To a free fortune. But that I have done
 Base offices in rending friends asunder,
 Dividing families, betraying counsels,
 Whispering false lies, or mining⁰ men with praises, *undermining*
 Trained⁰ their credulity with perjuries, *lured on*
 Corrupted chastity, or am in love
 With mine own tender ease, but would not rather
 Prove⁰ the most rugged and laborious course *undergo*
 That might redeem my present estimation,¹
 Let me here perish in all hope of goodness.
 BONARIO *[aside]* This cannot be a personated passion!—
 I was to blame, so to mistake thy nature;
 Pray thee forgive me, and speak out thy business.
 MOSCA Sir, it concerns you; and though I may seem *great*
 At first to make a main^o offense in manners
 And in my gratitude unto my master,
 Yet for the pure love which I bear all right
 And hatred of the wrong, I must reveal it.
 This very hour your father is in purpose
 To disinherit you—
 BONARIO How!
 MOSCA And thrust you forth
 As a mere stranger to his blood. 'Tis true, sir.
 The work no way engageth⁰ me but as *concerns*
 I claim an interest in the general state
 Of goodness and true virtue, which I hear
 T'abound in you, and for which mere respect,⁰ *for which reason alone*
 Without a second aim, sir, I have done it.
 BONARIO This tale hath lost thee much of the late^o trust *recent*
 Thou hadst with me. It is impossible.
 I know not how to lend it any thought⁰ *believe that*
 My father should be so unnatural.
 MOSCA It is a confidence that well becomes

Your piety;⁰ and formed, no doubt, it is *filial loyalty*
 From your own simple innocence, which makes
 Your wrong more monstrous and abhorred. But, sir,
 I now will tell you more. This very minute
 60 It is or will be doing; and if you
 Shall be but pleased to go with me, I'll bring you,
 I dare not say where you shall see, but where
 Your ear shall be a witness of the deed:
 Hear yourself written bastard, and professed
 The common issue of the earth.²

65 BONARIO I'm mazed!
 MOSCA Sir, if I do it not, draw your just sword
 And score your vengeance on my front⁰ and face; *brow*
 Mark me your villain. You have too much wrong,
 And I do suffer for you, sir. My heart
 Weeps blood in anguish—

70 BONARIO Lead. I follow thee. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE 3. VOLPONE'S *house*.

[Enter] VOLPONE, NANO, ANDROGYNO, [and] CASTRONE.

VOLPONE Mosca stays long, methinks. Bring forth your sports
 And help to make the wretched time more sweet.

NANO Dwarf, fool, and eunuch, well met here we be.
 A question it were now, whether⁰ of us three, *which*
 5 Being all the known delicates⁰ of a rich man, *playthings*
 In pleasing him, claim the precedency can?

CASTRONE I claim for myself.

ANDROGYNO And so doth the fool.

NANO 'Tis foolish indeed; let me set you both to school.
 First, for your dwarf: he's little and witty,
 10 And everything, as it is little, is pretty;
 Else why do men say to a creature of my shape,
 So soon as they see him, "It's a pretty little ape"?
 And why a pretty ape? But for pleasing imitation
 Of greater men's action in a ridiculous fashion.

15 Beside, this feat⁰ body of mine doth not crave *neat, trim*
 Half the meat, drink, and cloth one of your bulks will have.
 Admit your fool's face be the mother of laughter,
 Yet for his brain, it must always come after;⁰ *he lesser*
 And though that do feed him,⁰ it's a pitiful case,¹ *earns his keep*

20 His body is beholding⁰ to such a bad face. *One knocks.*
 VOLPONE Who's there? My couch. *[He lies doxvn.]* Away,
 look, Nano, see!
 Give me my caps, first—go, inquire.
[Exeunt NANO, ANDROGYNO, and CASTRONE.]
 Now, Cupid
 Send⁰ it be Mosca, and with fair return!⁰ *grant / good results*

2. A bastard was called *Jiiiis terrae*, "son of the earth." 3.3
 1. With a pun on "container."

[Enter NANO.]

NANO It is the beauteous Madam—

VOLPONE Would-be—is it?

NANO The same

VOLPONE NOW, torment on me! Squire her in,

For she will enter or dwell here forever.

Nay, quickly, that my fit were past! [Exit NANO.]

I fear

A second hell, too, that my loathing this

Will quite expel my appetite to the other.⁰

Celia

Would she were taking, now, her tedious leave.

Lord, how it threatens me what I am to suffer!

SCENE 4. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] LADY [WOULD-BE and] NANO.

LADY WOULD-BE [to NANO] I thank you, good sir. Pray you signify

Unto your patron I am here.¹ [Regarding herself in a mirror] This band⁰ *ruff*

Shows not my neck enough. I trouble you, sir.

Let me request you, bid one of my women

Come hither to me. [Exit NANO.]

In good faith, I am dressed

Most favorably today!⁰ It is no matter;

sarcastic

Tis well enough.

[Enter NANO and FIRST] WOMAN.

Look, see, these petulant things!⁰

her women; her curls

How they have done this!

VOLPONE [aside] I do feel the fever

Ent'ring in at mine ears. Oh, for a charm

To fright it hence!

LADY WOULD-BE [to FIRST WOMAN] Come nearer. Is this curl

In his^o right place? Or this? Why is this higher

its

Than all the rest? You ha' not washed your eyes yet?

Or do they not stand even^o i' your head?

level

Where's your fellow? Call her. [Exit FIRST WOMAN.]

NANO [aside] Now Saint Mark

Deliver us! Anon she'll beat her women

Because her nose is red.

[Enter FIRST and SECOND WOMEN.]

LADY WOULD-BE I pray you, view

This tire,⁰ forsooth. Are all things apt or no?

headdress

SECOND WOMAN One hair a little here sticks out, forsooth.

LADY WOULD-BE Does't so, forsooth? [To FIRST WOMAN] And

where was your dear sight

When it did so, forsooth? What now? Bird-eyed?^o

startled (?); asquint (?)

[To SECOND WOMAN]

And you, too? Pray you both approach and mend it.

[They tend to her.]

Now, by that light,⁰ I muse you're not ashamed!

i.e., by heaven

3.4

1. Much of Lady Would-be's dialogue in the following

scene is adapted from Libanius of Antioch's *On Talkative Women*.

I, that have preached these things so oft unto you,
 Read you the principles, argued all the grounds,
 Disputed every fitness, every grace,
 Called you to counsel of so frequent dressings—
 NANO (*aside*) More carefully than of your fame⁰ or honor. *reputation*
 LADY WOULD-BE Made you acquainted what an ample dowry
 The knowledge of these things would be unto you,
 Able alone to get you noble husbands
 At your return,⁰ and you thus to neglect it? *to England*
 Besides, you seeing what a curious⁰ nation *fastidious*
 Th'Italians are, what will they say of me?
 "The English lady cannot dress herself."
 Here's a fine imputation to our country!
 Well, go your ways, and stay i'the next room.
 This fucus⁰ was too coarse, too; it's no matter. *makeup*
 [To NANO] Good sir, you'll give 'em entertainment?⁰ *look after them*
 [*Exeunt NANO and WOMEN.*]

VOLPONE [*aside*] The storm comes toward me.
 LADY WOULD-BE [*approaching the bed*] How does my Volp?
 VOLPONE Troubled with noise. I cannot sleep; I dreamt
 That a strange Fury entered now my house,
 And with the dreadful tempest of her breath
 Did cleave my roof asunder.
 LADY WOULD-BE Believe me, and I
 Had the most fearful dream, could I remember't—
 VOLPONE [*aside*] Out on^o my fate! I ha' giv'n her the occasion *curses on*
 How to torment me: she will tell me hers.
 LADY WOULD-BE Methought the golden mediocrity,⁰ *golden mean*
 Polite and delicate—
 VOLPONE Oh, if you do love me,
 No more! I sweat and suffer at the mention
 Of any dream. Feel how I tremble yet.
 LADY WOULD-BE Alas, good soul! The passion of the heart.⁰ *heartburn*
 Seed pearl were good now, boiled with syrup of apples,
 Tincture of gold and coral, citron pills,
 Your elecampane⁰ root, myrobalans²— *perennial herb*
 VOLPONE [*aside*] Ay me, I have ta'en a grasshopper by the wing!
 LADY WOULD-BE Burnt silk and amber; you have muscadel
 Good i'the house—
 VOLPONE YOU will not drink and part?
 LADY WOULD-BE NO, fear not that. I doubt we shall not get
 Some English saffron—half a dram would serve—
 Your sixteen cloves, a little musk, dried mints,
 Bugloss,⁰ and barley-meal— *an herb*
 VOLPONE [*aside*] She's in again.
 Before I feigned diseases; now I have one.
 LADY WOULD-BE And these applied with a right scarlet cloth—
 VOLPONE [*aside*] Another flood of words! A very torrent!
 LADY WOULD-BE Shall I, sir, make you a poultice?

2. Dried tropical fruits.

VOLPONE
 I'm very well; you need prescribe no more.
 LADY WOULD-BE I have a little studied physic, but now
 I'm all for music, save i'the forenoons
 An hour or two for painting. I would have
 A lady indeed t' have all letters and arts,
 Be able to discourse, to write, to paint,
 But principal, as Plato holds,⁰ your music *in The Republic*
 (And so does wise Pythagoras, I take it)
 Is your true rapture, when there is concent⁰ *harmony*
 In face, in voice, and clothes, and is indeed
 Our sex's chiefest ornament.

VOLPONE The poet^o *Sophocles, in Ajax*
 As old in time as Plato, and as knowing,
 Says that your highest female grace is silence.

LADY WOULD-BE Which o' your poets? Petrarch? Or Tasso? Or Dante?
 Guarini? Ariosto? Aretine?
 Cieco di Hadria?³ I have read them all.

VOLPONE [*aside*] Is everything a cause to my destruction?
 LADY WOULD-BE [*searching her garments*] I think I ha' two or three of 'em
 about me.

VOLPONE [*aside*] The sun, the sea will sooner both stand still
 Than her eternal tongue! Nothing can scape it.

LADY WOULD-BE Here's *Pastor Fido*⁴—

VOLPONE [*aside*] Profess obstinate silence,
 That's now my safest.

LADY WOULD-BE All our English writers,
 I mean such as are happy in th'Italian,
 Will deign to steal out of this author mainly,
 Almost as much as from Montaignie,⁰ *French essayist*
 He has so modern and facile⁰ a vein, *graceful*
 Fitting the time, and catching the court ear.
 Your Petrarch is more passionate, yet he,
 In days of sonneting, trusted em with much.⁵
 Dante is hard, and few can understand him.
 But for a desperate⁰ wit, there's Aretine! *outrageous*
 Only his pictures are a little obscene⁶—
 You mark me not?

VOLPONE Alas, my mind's perturbed.

LADY WOULD-BE Why, in such cases we must cure ourselves,
 Make use of our philosophy—

VOLPONE Ay me!

LADY WOULD-BE And, as we find our passions do rebel,
 Encounter em with reason, or divert em
 By giving scope unto some other humor
 Of lesser danger—as in politic bodies⁰ *political councils*

3. Lady Would-be juxtaposes major Italian writers with the minor di Hadria and the obscene Aretine.

4. A pastoral by Giovanni Guarini, translated into English in 1602.

5. When sonnet writing was popular, gave poets

plenty to imitate.

6. The libertine poems of Aretine (Pietro Aretine 1492—1556) were published with pornographic illustrations by Giulio Romano.

There's nothing more doth overwhelm the judgment
 And clouds the understanding than too much
 Settling and fixing and (as 'twere) subsiding⁰ *alchemical jargon*
 Upon one object. For the incorporating
 Of these same outward things into that part
 Which we call mental leaves some certain feces⁰ *dregs*
 That stop the organs and, as Plato says,
 Assassinate our knowledge.

VOLPONE *[aside]* Now, the spirit
 Of patience help me!

LADY WOULD-BE Come, in faith, I must
 Visit you more o'days and make you well.
 Laugh and be lusty.⁰ *merry*

VOLPONE *[aside]* My good angel save me!

LADY WOULD-BE There was but one sole man in all the world
 With whom I e'er could sympathize, and he
 Would lie you⁰ often three, four hours together *lie*
 To hear me speak, and be sometime so rapt
 As he would answer me quite from the purpose,
 Like you—and you are like him, just. I'll discourse—
 An't^o be but only, sir, to bring you asleep— *if it*
 How we did spend our time and loves together
 For some six years.

VOLPONE Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh!

LADY WOULD-BE For we were *coaetani*⁰ and brought up— *the same age*

VOLPONE *[aside]* Some power, some fate, some fortune rescue me!

SCENE 5. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] MOSCA.

MOSCA God save you, madam.

LADY WOULD-BE Good sir.

VOLPONE *[aside to MOSCA]* Mosca? Welcome,
 Welcome to my redemption.

MOSCA *[to VOLPONE]* Why, sir?

VOLPONE *[aside to MOSCA]* Oh,
 Rid me of this my torture quickly, there,
 My madam with the everlasting voice!

5 The bells in time of pestilence ne'er made
 Like noise, or were in that perpetual motion;¹
 The cockpit⁰ comes not near it. All my house *cockfighting arena*
 But now steamed like a bath with her thick breath.
 A lawyer could not have been heard, nor scarce

10 Another woman, such a hail of words
 She has let fall. For hell's sake, rid her hence.

MOSCA *[aside to VOLPONE]* Has she presented?⁰ *given a gift*

VOLPONE *[aside to MOSCA]* Oh, I do not care.
 I'll take her absence upon any price,
 With any loss.

3.5

1. Church bells marked the deaths of parishioners; in times of plague they therefore rang almost constantly.

Cannot my thought imagine this a truth.

[He conceals himself.]

SCENE 7. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] CORVINO [and] CELIA. MOSCA [crosses the stage to intercept them],

MOSCA Death on me! You are come too soon. What meant you?

Did not I say I would send?

CORVINO Yes, but I feared
You might forget it, and then they prevent us.

MOSCA *[aside]* Prevent? Did e'er man haste so for his horns?⁰ *cuckold's horns*

A courtier would not ply it so for a place.¹

[To CORVINO] Well, now there's no helping it, stay here;
I'll presently return. *[He crosses the stage to BONARIO.]*

CORVINO Where are you, Celia?

You know not wherefore I have brought you hither?

CELIA Not well, except you told me.

CORVINO Now I will.

Hark hither. *[CORVINO and CELIA talk apart.]*

MOSCA (to BONARIO) Sir, your father hath sent word

It will be half an hour ere he come;

And therefore, if you please to walk the while

Into that gallery, at the upper end

There are some books to entertain the time;

And I'll take care no man shall come unto you, sir.

BONARIO Yes, I will stay there, *[aside]* I do doubt this fellow.

[He retires.]

MOSCA There, he is far enough; he can hear nothing.

And for^o his father, I can keep him off.

as for

[MOSCA joins VOLPONE and opens his bed curtains.]

CORVINO *[to CELIA]* Nay, now, there is no starting back, and therefore

Resolve upon it; I have so decreed.

It must be done. Nor would I move^t afore,

suggest it

Because I would avoid all shifts^o and tricks

evasions

That might deny me.

CELIA Sir, let me beseech you,

Affect^o not these strange trials. If you doubt

undertake

My chastity, why, lock me up forever;

Make me the heir of darkness. Let me live

Where I may please^o your fears, if not your trust.

satisfy

CORVINO Believe it, I have no such humor, I.

All that I speak, I mean; yet I am not mad,

Not horn-mad,^o see you? Go to, show yourself

*crazy with jealous}*¹

Obedient, and a wife.

CELIA O heaven!

CORVINO I say it,

Do so.

CELIA Was this the train?^o

scheme

3.7

1. Work so hard for a position at court.

- CORVINO I have told you reasons:
 What the physicians have set down; how much
 It may concern me; what my engagements are;
 My means, and the necessity of those means
 For my recovery. Wherefore, if you be
 Loyal and mine, be won, respect my venture.⁰ *su-ppon my endeavor*
- CELIA Before your honor?
- CORVINO Honor? Tut, a breath.
 There's no such thing in nature; a mere term
 Invented to awe fools. What is my gold
 The worse for touching? Clothes for being looked on?
 Why, this's no more. An old, decrepit wretch,
 That has no sense,⁰ no sinew; takes his meat *sensoiy perception*
 With others' fingers; only knows to gape
 When you do scald his gums; a voice, a shadow.
 And what can this man hurt you?
- CELIA Lord! What spirit
 Is this hath entered him?
- CORVINO And for your fame,⁰ *reputation*
 That's such a jig;^o as if I would go tell it, *joke*
 Cry^o it on the piazza! Who shall know it *advertise*
 But he that cannot speak it,^o and this fellow⁰ *Volpone/Mosca*
 Whose lips are i'my pocket, save yourself?
 If you'll proclaim't, you may. I know no other
 Should come to know it.
- CELIA Are heaven and saints then nothing?
 Will they be blind or stupid?
- CORVINO HOW?⁰ *What's this?*
- CELIA Good sir,
 Be jealous still, emulate them, and think
 What hate they burn with toward every sin.
- CORVINO I grant you, if I thought it were a sin
 I would not urge you. Should I offer this
 To some young Frenchman, or hot Tuscan blood
 That had read Aretine, conned⁰ all his prints, *learned hy heart*
 Knew every quirk within lust's labyrinth,
 And were professed critic⁰ in lechery, *connoisseur*
 And I would look upon him and applaud him,
 This were a sin. But here 'tis contrary,
 A pious work, mere charity, for physic,
 And honest polity⁰ to assure mine own. *prudence*
- CELIA O heaven! Canst thou suffer such a change?
- VOLPONE [*aside to MOSCA*] Thou art mine honor, Mosca, and my pride,
 My joy, my tickling, my delight! Go, bring 'em.
- MOSCA [to CORVINO] Please you draw near, sir.
- CORVINO [*dragging CELIA toward VOLPONE*] Come on, what—
 You will not be rebellious? By that light—
- MOSCA [to VOLPONE] Sir, Signor Corvino here is come to see you.
- VOLPONE Oh!
- MOSCA And, hearing of the consultation had
 So lately for your health, is come to offer,
 Or rather, sir, to prostitute—

CORVINO Thanks, sweet Mosca.
MOSCA Freely, unasked or unentreated—
CORVINO Well.
MOSCA AS the true, fervent instance of his love,
His own most fair and proper wife, the beauty
Only of price⁰ in Venice— *beyond comparison*
CORVINO Tis well urged.
MOSCA To be your comfortress and to preserve you.
VOLPONE Alas, I am past already! Pray you, thank him
For his good care and promptness. But for^o that, *as for*
'Tis a vain labor e'en to fight 'gainst heaven,
Applying fire to a stone (uh! uh! uh! uh!),
Making a dead leaf grow again. I take
His wishes gently, though; and you may tell him
What I have done for him. Marry, my state is hopeless!
Will him to pray for me, and t' use his fortune
With reverence when he comes to't.
MOSCA [to CORVINO] DO you hear, sir?
Go to him with your wife.
CORVINO [to CELIA] Heart of my father!⁰ *an oath*
Wilt thou persist thus? Come, I pray thee, come.
Thou see'st 'tis nothing. [*He threatens to strike her.*] Celia! By this hand,
I shall grow violent. Come, do't, I say.
CELIA Sir, kill me, rather. I will take down poison,
Eat burning coals, do anything—
CORVINO Be damned!
Heart! I will drag thee hence, home, by the hair,
Cry thee a strumpet through the streets, rip up
Thy mouth unto thine ears, and slit thy nose
Like a raw rochet!⁰—Do not tempt me. Come, *a fish, the red gurnard*
Yield! I am loath—Death!⁰ I will buy some slave *God's death! (an oath)*
Whom I will kill,² and bind thee to him alive,
And at my window hang you forth, devising
Some monstrous crime, which I in capital letters
Will eat into thy flesh with *aquafortis*⁰ *nitric acid*
And burning cor'sives⁰ on this stubborn breast. *corrosives*
Now, by the blood thou hast incensed, I'll do t.
CELIA Sir, what you please, you may; I am your martyr.
CORVINO Be not thus obstinate. I ha' not deserved it.
Think who it is entreats you. Pray thee, sweet!
Good faith, thou shalt have jewels, gowns, attires,
What⁰ thou wilt think and ask. Do but go kiss him. *whatever*
Or touch him but. For my sake. At my suit.
This once. No? Not? I shall remember this.
Will you disgrace me thus? Do you thirst my undoing?
MOSCA Nay, gentle lady, be advised.
CORVINO NO, no.
She has watched her time.³ God's precious,⁴ this is scurvy;

2. In the following lines, Corvino elaborates luridly upon the fate that the notorious rapist Tarquin promised the chaste Roman matron Lucretia if she did not

capitulate; unlike Celia, Lucretia yielded to threats.

3. Waited for her chance (to ruin me).

4. God's precious blood. (An oath.)

Tis very scurvy, and you are—
 MOSCA Nay, good, sir.
 CORVINO An arrant locust,⁰ by heaven, a locust. Whore, *destroyer*
 Crocodile,⁵ that hast thy tears prepared,
 Expecting⁰ how thou'lt bid 'em flow! *anticipating*
 MOSCA Nay, pray you, sir,
 She will consider.
 CELIA Would my life would serve
 To satisfy—
 CORVINO 'Sdeath, if she would but speak to him
 And save my reputation, 'twere somewhat—
 But spitefully to effect my utter ruin!
 MOSCA Ay, now you've put your fortune in her hands.
 Why, i'faith, it is her modesty; I must quit⁰ her. *absolve*
 If you were absent she would be more coming,⁰ *compliant*
 I know it, and dare undertake for her.
 What woman can before her husband? Pray you,
 Let us depart and leave her here.
 CORVINO Sweet Celia,
 Thou mayst redeem all yet; I'll say no more.
 If not, esteem yourself as lost.—Nay, stay there.
 [Exeunt CORVINO and MOSCA.]
 CELIA O God and his good angels! Whither, whither
 Is shame fled human breasts, that with such ease
 Men dare put off your⁰ honors and their own? *God's and the angels'*
 Is that which ever was a cause of life⁰ *sex and wedlock*
 Now placed beneath the basest circumstance,⁰ *lowest of concerns*
 And modesty an exile made for money?
 He [VOLPONE] leaps off from his couch.
 VOLPONE Ay, in Corvino, and such earth-fed minds
 That never tasted the true heav'n of love.
 Assure thee, Celia, he that would sell thee
 Only for hope of gain, and that uncertain,
 He would have sold his part of paradise
 For ready money, had he met a copeman." *buyer*
 Why art thou mazed to see me thus revived?
 Rather applaud thy beauty's miracle;
 Tis thy great work, that hath, not now alone⁰ *not only just now*
 But sundry times raised me in several shapes,
 And but this morning like a mountebank
 To see thee at thy window. Ay, before
 I would have left my practice⁰ for thy love, *scheming*
 In varying figures I would have contended
 With the blue Proteus or the horned flood.⁶
 Now art thou welcome.
 CELIA Sir!
 VOLPONE Nay, fly me not,

5. Which was supposed to weep while preying upon its victims.

6. Proteus is a shape-changing sea god with whom

Menelaus wrestles in the *Odyssey*.¹ The "horned flood" is the river god Achelous, defeated by Hercules despite changing into an ox.

Nor let thy false imagination
 That I was bedrid make thee think I am so.
 Thou shalt not find it. I am now as fresh,
 As hot, as high, and in as jovial plight⁰ *robust condition*
 As when—in that so celebrated scene,
 At recitation of our comedy
 For entertainment of the great Valois⁷—
 I acted young Antinoiis,⁸ and attracted
 The eyes and ears of all the ladies present,
 T'admire each graceful gesture, note, and footing.⁰ *dance step*

SONG

[*He sings.*] Come, my Celia, let us prove,⁹
 While we can, the sports of love.
 Time will not be ours forever;
 He at length our good will sever.
 Spend not then his gifts in vain.
 Suns that set may rise again,
 But if once we lose this light
 Tis with us perpetual night.
 Why should we defer our joys?
 Fame and rumor are but toys.⁰ *trifles*
 Cannot we delude the eyes
 Of a few poor household spies?
 Or his⁰ easier ears beguile, *Corvino's*
 Thus removed by our wile?
 Tis no sin love's fruits to steal,
 But the sweet thefts to reveal.
 To be taken,⁰ to be seen, *caught*
 These have crimes accounted been.
 CELIA Some serene⁰ blast me, or dire lightning strike *poisonous mist*
 This my offending face!
 VOLPONE Why droops my Celia?
 Thou hast in place of a base husband found
 A worthy lover. Use thy fortune well,
 With secrecy and pleasure. See, behold
 What thou art queen of, not in expectation,⁰ *merely in hope*
 As I feed others, but possessed and crowned.
 [*He reveals his treasures.*]
 See here a rope of pearl, and each more orient⁰ *brilliant*
 Than that the brave Egyptian queen caroused;¹
 Dissolve and drink em. See, a carbuncle²
 May put out both the eyes of our Saint Mark;³
 A diamond would have bought Lollia Paulina⁴

7. Henry of Valois, Duke of Anjou, and later King Henry III of France (1574—89), was sumptuously entertained at Venice in 1574. His sexual taste for men was widely remarked.

8. The beautiful homosexual favorite of the Roman emperor Hadrian.

9. Try out. (The song is an adaptation of the Roman poet Catullus's fifth ode.)

1. Cleopatra dissolved and drank a pearl during a banquet with her lover, Marc Antony. "Brave": magnificent.

2. Ruby, thought to emit light.

3. Patron saint of Venice, whose statue stood in the basilica.

4. Third wife of the Roman emperor Caligula.

When she came in like starlight, hid with jewels
 That were the spoils of provinces. Take these,
 And wear, and lose 'em; yet remains an earring
 To purchase them again, and this whole state.
 A gem but worth a private patrimony
 Is nothing; we will eat such at a meal.
 The heads of parrots, tongues of nightingales,
 The brains of peacocks and of ostriches
 Shall be our food, and, could we get the phoenix,⁵
 Though nature lost her kind,⁰ she were our dish.

it became extinct

CELIA Good sir, these things might move a mind affected
 With such delights; but I, whose innocence
 Is all I can think wealthy⁰ or worth th'enjoying,
 And which once lost, I have naught to lose beyond it,
 Cannot be taken with these sensual baits.
 If you have conscience—

valuable

VOLPONE 'Tis the beggar's virtue.

If thou hast wisdom, hear me, Celia.
 Thy baths shall be the juice of July flowers,⁰
 Spirit⁰ of roses, and of violets,
 The milk of unicorns, and panthers' breath⁶
 Gathered in bags, and mixed with Cretan wines.
 Our drink shall be prepared gold and amber,
 Which we will take until my roof whirl round
 With the vertigo; and my dwarf shall dance,
 My eunuch sing, my fool make up the antic,⁷
 Whilst we, in changed shapes, act Ovid's tales:
 Thou like Europa now and I like Jove,
 Then I like Mars and thou like Erycine,⁸
 So of the rest, till we have quite run through
 And wearied all the fables of the gods.
 Then will I have thee in more modern forms,
 Attired like some sprightly dame of France,
 Brave Tuscan lady, or proud Spanish beauty;
 Sometimes unto the Persian Sophy's⁰ wife,
 Or the Grand Signor's⁰ mistress; and for change,
 To one of our most artful courtesans,
 Or some quick⁰ Negro, or cold Russian.
 And I will meet thee in as many shapes,
 Where we may so transfuse⁰ our wand'ring souls
 Out at our lips, and score up sums of pleasures,
 [*He sings.*] That the curious shall not know
 How to tell^o them as they flow;
 And the envious, when they find
 What their number is, be pined.⁰

*clove pinks
extract**Shah of Persia's
Sultan of Turkey's**energetic**pour into each other**count**tormented*

5. Mythical bird, of which it was supposed that only one existed at a time; it died in flames and was reborn from its own ashes.

6. Panthers were believed to use their sweet-smelling breath to lure prey.

7. Grotesque dance or pageant.

8. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* retells the pagan myths of transformation. Jove, king of the gods, became a bull to seduce the lovely Europa. The adulterous couple Mars, god of war, and Erycine (Venus), goddess of sexual love, were caught in a net by Vulcan, her husband.

CELIA If you have ears that will be pierced, or eyes
 That can be opened, a heart may be touched,
 Or any part that yet sounds man⁹ about you;
 If you have touch of holy saints or heaven,
 Do me the grace to let me scape. If not,
 Be bountiful and kill me. You do know
 I am a creature hither ill betrayed
 By one whose shame I would forget it were.
 If you will deign me neither of these graces,
 Yet feed your wrath, sir, rather than your lust—
 It is a vice comes nearer manliness—
 And punish that unhappy crime of nature
 Which you miscall my beauty. Flay my face
 Or poison it with ointments for seducing
 Your blood to this rebellion.⁰ Rub these hands
 With what may cause an eating leprosy
 E'en to my bones and marrow—anything
 That may disfavor me,^o save in my honor—
 And I will kneel to you, pray for you, pay down
 A thousand hourly vows, sir, for your health,
 Report and think you virtuous—

sexual mutiny

make me ugly

VOLPONE Think me cold,
 Frozen, and impotent, and so report me?
 That I had Nestor's¹ hernia, thou wouldst think.
 I do degenerate, and abuse my nation²
 To play with opportunity thus long.
 I should have done the act and then have parleyed.
 Yield, or I'll force thee.

CELIA O just God!

VOLPONE [*seizing CELIA*] In vain—

He [BONARIO] leaps out from where MOSCA had placed him.

BONARIO Forbear, foul ravisher, libidinous swine!
 Free the forced lady or thou diest, impostor.
 But that I am loath to snatch thy punishment
 Out of the hand of justice, thou shouldst yet
 Be made the timely sacrifice of vengeance
 Before this altar and this dross,⁰ thy idol.—
 Lady, let's quit the place. It is the den
 Of villainy. Fear naught; you have a guard;
 And he^o ere long shall meet his just reward.

the treasure

Volpone

[*Exeunt BONARIO and CELIA.*]

VOLPONE Fall on me, roof, and bury me in ruin!
 Become my grave, that wert my shelter! Oh!
 I am unmasked, unspirited, undone,
 Betrayed to beggary, to infamy—

9. That has a hint of manliness.

1. Nestor was the oldest of the Greek leaders in the Trojan War.

2. I fall away from my ancestors' virtues and abuse the Italian reputation for virility.

SCENE 8. *The scene continues.*[Enter] MOSCA [bloody].¹

MOSCA Where shall I run, most wretched shame of men,
To beat out my unlucky brains?

VOLPONE Here, here.

What! Dost thou bleed?

MOSCA Oh, that his well-driv'n sword
Had been so courteous to have cleft me down
Unto the navel, ere I lived to see
My life, my hopes, my spirits, my patron, all
Thus desperately engaged⁰ by my error!

placed at risk

VOLPONE Woe on thy fortune!

MOSCA And my follies, sir.

VOLPONE Th'hast made me miserable.

MOSCA And myself, sir.

Who would have thought he would have hearkened⁰ SO?

eavesdropped

VOLPONE What shall we do?

MOSCA I know not. If my heart
Could expiate the mischance, I'd pluck it out.
Will you be pleased to hang me, or cut my throat?
And I'll requite you, sir. Let's die like Romans,
Since we have lived like Grecians.² *They knock without.*

VOLPONE Hark, who's there?

I hear some footing: officers, the *Saffi*,⁰
Come to apprehend us! I do feel the brand
Hissing already at my forehead; now
Mine ears are boring.³

arresting officers

MOSCA To your couch, sir; you
Make that place good, however.⁴ [VOLPONE *gets into bed.*]

Guilty men

Suspect⁰ what they deserve still.⁰ [*He opens the door.*]

dread/always

Signor Corbaccio!

SCENE 9. *The scene continues.*[Enter] CORBACCIO [*and converses with*] MOSCA;VOLTRE [*enters unnoticed by them.*]

CORBACCIO Why, how now, Mosca!

MOSCA Oh, undone, amazed, sir.

Your son—I know not by what accident—
Acquainted with your purpose to my patron
Touching⁰ your will and making him your heir,
Entered our house with violence, his sword drawn,

concerning

3.8

1. Bonario apparently remembered Mosca's invitation, in 3.2.66—68, to punish him if he turns out to be lying: "draw your just sword / And score your vengeance on my front and face; / Mark me your villain."

2. Romans often committed suicide in adversity; Greeks were thought to be pleasure-loving.

3. Branding was a common criminal punishment; ear-boring is described as an Italian torture in Thomas Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveler* (1594).

4. (1) Defend that place, whatever happens; (2) maintain your invalid's role at all costs, since that role suits you.

Sought for you, called you wretch, unnatural,
Vowed he would kill you.

CORBACCIO Me?

MOSCA Yes, and my patron.

CORBACCIO This act shall disinherit him indeed.

Here is the will.

MOSCA [*taking it from him*] Tis well, sir.

CORBACCIO Right and well.

Be you as careful now for me.

MOSCA My life, sir,

Is not more tendered;⁰ I am only yours. *cherished.*

CORBACCIO How does he? Will he die shortly, think'st thou?

MOSCA I fear

He'll outlast May.

CORBACCIO Today?

MOSCA NO, last out May, sir.

CORBACCIO Couldst thou not gi' him a dram?^o *dose (of poison)*

MOSCA Oh, by no means, sir.

CORBACCIO Nay, I'll not bid you.

VOLTRE [*aside*] This is a knave, I see.

[VOLTRE *comes forward to speak privately with MOSCA.*]

MOSCA [*aside*] How, Signor Voltre! Did he hear me?

VOLTRE Parasite!

MOSCA Who's that? Oh, sir, most timely welcome—

VOLTRE Scarce⁰ *only just in time*

To the discovery of your tricks, I fear.

You are his only? And mine also? Are you not?

MOSCA Who, I, sir? [*They speak out of CORBACCIO S hearing.*]

VOLTRE YOU, sir. What device⁰ is this *ruse*

About a will?

MOSCA A plot for you, sir.

VOLTRE Come,

Put not your foists⁰ upon me. I shall scent 'em. *tricks; stences*

MOSCA Did you not hear it?

VOLTRE Yes, I hear Corbaccio

Hath made your patron there his heir.

MOSCA 'Tis true,

By my device, drawn to it by my plot,

With hope—

VOLTRE Your patron should reciprocate?

And you have promised?

MOSCA For your good I did, sir.

Nay, more, I told his son, brought, hid him here

Where he might hear his father pass the deed,

Being persuaded to it by this thought, sir,

That the unnaturalness, first, of the act,

And then, his father's oft disclaiming in^o him

disowning

(Which I did mean t' help on) would sure enrage him

To do some violence upon his parent,

On which the law should take sufficient hold,

And you be stated⁰ in a double hope. *installed*
 Truth be my comfort and my conscience,
 My only aim was to dig you a fortune
 Out of these two old rotten sepulchres—
 VOLTORE I cry thee mercy, Mosca.
 MOSCA Worth your patience
 And your great merit, sir. And see the change!
 VOLTORE Why? What success?⁰ *outcome*
 MOSCA Most hapless!⁰ You must help, sir. *unfortunate*
 Whilst we expected th'old raven, in comes
 Corvino's wife, sent hither by her husband—
 VOLTORE What, with a present?
 MOSCA No, sir, on visitation—
 I'll tell you how, anon—and, staying long,
 The youth, he grows impatient, rushes forth,
 Seizeth the lady, wounds me, makes her swear—
 Or he would murder her, that was his vow—
 T'affirm my patron to have done her rape,
 Which how unlike⁰ it is, you see! And hence, *unlikely*
 With that pretext, he's gone t'accuse his father,
 Defame my patron, defeat you—
 VOLTORE Where's her husband?
 Let him be sent for straight.
 MOSCA Sir, I'll go fetch him.
 VOLTORE Bring him to the *Scrutino*.⁰ *Venetian law court*
 MOSCA Sir, I will.
 VOLTORE This must be stopped.
 MOSCA Oh, you do nobly, sir.
 Alas, 'twas labored all, sir, for your good;
 Nor was there want of counsel⁰ in the plot. *lack of wisdom*
 But fortune can at any time o'erthrow
 The projects of a hundred learned clerks,⁰ sir. *scholars*
 CORBACCIO [*striving to hear*] What's that?
 VOLTORE [*to CORBACCIO*] Will't please you, sir, to go along?
 [*Exeunt CORBACCIO and VOLTORE.*]
 MOSCA Patron, go in and pray for our success.
 VOLPONE [*rising*] Need makes devotion. Heaven your labor bless!

Act 4

SCENE 1. *The piazza.*

[*Enter*] POLITIC [*and*] PEREGRINE,
 POLITIC I told you, sir, it^o was a plot. You see *the mountebank episode*
 What observation is! You mentioned me
 For⁰ some instructions; I will tell you, sir, *as one who could give*
 Since we are met here, in this height⁰ of Venice, *latitude*
 Some few particulars I have set down
 Only for this meridian, fit to be known
 Of your crude⁰ traveler, and they are these. *inexperienced*

I will not touch, sir, at your phrase or clothes,
For they are old.¹

PEREGRINE Sir, I have better.

POLITIC Pardon,
I meant as they are themes.⁰ *topics for advice*

PEREGRINE Oh, sir, proceed.
I'll slander⁰ you no more of wit, good sir. *accuse*

POLITIC First, for your garb,² it must be grave and serious,
Very reserved and locked;⁰ not^o tell a secret *guarded / do not*
On any terms, not to your father; scarce
A fable³ but with caution. Make sure choice
Both of your company and discourse. Beware
You never speak a truth—

PEREGRINE HOW!

POLITIC Not to strangers,⁰ *foreigners*
For those be they you must converse with most;
Others⁰ I would not know, sir, but at distance, *fellow countrymen*
So as I still might be a saver⁴ in em.
You shall have tricks else passed upon you hourly.
And then, for your religion, profess none,
But wonder at the diversity of all,
And, for your part, protest, were there no other
But simply the laws o'th'land, you could content you.
Nick Machiavel and Monsieur Bodin both
Were of this mind.⁵ Then must you learn the use
And handling of your silver fork⁰ at meals, *an Italian novelty*
The metal⁰ of your glass—these are main matters *composition*
With your Italian—and to know the hour
When you must eat your melons and your figs.

PEREGRINE IS that a point of state,⁰ too? *statecraft*

POLITIC Here it is.
For your Venetian, if he see a man
Preposterous in the least, he has⁰ him straight; *sees through*
He has, he strips⁰ him. I'll acquaint you, sir. *ridicules; defrauds*
I now have lived here—'tis some fourteen months;
Within the first week of my landing here,
All took me for a citizen of Venice,
I knew the forms so well—

PEREGRINE [*aside*] And nothing else.

POLITIC I had read Contarine,⁶ took me a house,
Dealt with my Jews⁷ to furnish it with movables⁰— *household goods*
Well, if I could but find one man, one man
To mine own heart, whom I durst trust, I would—

4.1

1. I will not discuss those familiar ("old") topics: the language one ought to use or the clothes one ought to wear. In the next line, in an attempt at a joke, Peregrine deliberately misconstrues "your clothes" to refer to his own apparel, but Politic does not get it.

2. As for a traveler's bearing.

3. An apparently trivial story subject to political allegorization.

4. So that I might not be imposed upon. ("Be a saver"

is a gambling term, meaning "to escape loss.")

5. Political theorists Niccolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) and Jean Bodin (1530-1596) argued that religious zeal was often politically inexpedient or divisive; as a result both were popularly thought to be atheists.

6. An English translation of Gasparo Contarini's important book, *The Commonwealth and Government of Venice*, was published in 1599.

7. The usual Jews. (In Venice Jews served as money-lenders and pawnbrokers.)

- PEREGRINE What? What, sir?
 POLITIC Make him rich, make him a fortune.
 He should not think⁰ again. I would command it. *have to think*
- PEREGRINE AS how?
 POLITIC With certain projects⁰ that I have— *entrepreneurial schemes*
 Which I may not discover.⁰ *reveal*
- PEREGRINE [*aside*] If I had
 But one⁰ to wager with, I would lay odds, now, *Someone*
 He tells me instantly.
- POLITIC One is—and that
 I care not greatly who knows—to serve the state
 Of Venice with red herrings for three years,
 And at a certain rate, from Rotterdam,⁸
 Where I have correspondence. [*He shows PEREGRINE a paper.*]
 There's a letter
 Sent me from one o'th'States,⁰ and to that purpose; *Dutch provinces*
 He cannot write his name, but that's his mark.
- PEREGRINE [*examining the paper*] He is a chandler?⁹
 POLITIC NO, a cheesemonger.
 There are some other⁰ too, with whom I treat⁰ *others / deal*
 About the same negotiation;
 And I will undertake it, for 'tis thus
 I'll do't with ease; I've cast it all.⁰ Your hoy¹ *figured* *it all out*
 Carries but three men in her and a boy,
 And she shall make me three returns⁰ a year. *round trips*
 So if there come but one of three, I save;⁰ *break even*
 If two, I can defalk.⁰ But this is, now, *pay off loans*
 If my main project fail.
- PEREGRINE Then you have others?
 POLITIC I should be loath to draw⁰ the subtle air *breathe*
 Of such a place without my thousand aims.
 I'll not dissemble, sir: where'er I come,
 I love to be considerative;⁰ and 'tis true *analytic*
 I have at my free hours thought upon
 Some certain goods⁰ unto the state of Venice, *benefits*
 Which I do call my cautions,⁰ and, sir, which *precautions*
 I mean, in hope of pension,⁰ to propound *financial* *reward*
 To the Great Council, then unto the Forty,
 So to the Ten.² My means⁰ are made already— *contacts*
- PEREGRINE By whom?
 POLITIC Sir, one that though his place b'obscure,
 Yet he can sway and they will hear him. He's
 A *commendatore*.
- PEREGRINE What, a common sergeant?

8. Venice, on the Adriatic Sea, had little need to import pickled fish from afar.

9. Candlemaker. (Evidently the paper is grease-stained.)

1. Small vessel, not suitable for long voyages. Sir Pol's scheme is thus obviously impractical.

2. The Great Council was a large legislative group made up of wealthy Venetians; the Councils of Forty were much smaller groups that oversaw judicial affairs; the Council of Ten consisted of the elected Doge and his cabinet.

POLITIC Sir, such as they are put it in their mouths
 What they should say, sometimes, as well as greater.³
 I think I have my notes to show you—
[He searches in his garments.]

PEREGRINE Good, sir.

POLITIC But you shall swear unto me on your gentry⁰ *gentleman's honor*
 Not to anticipate—

PEREGRINE I, sir?

POLITIC Nor reveal
 A circumstance—My paper is not with me.

PEREGRINE Oh, but you can remember, sir.

POLITIC My first is
 Concerning tinderboxes.⁰ You must know *for lighting fires*
 No family is here without its box.
 Now, sir, it being so portable a thing,
 Put case⁰ that you or I were ill affected⁰ *suppose/disposed*
 Unto the state; sir, with it in our pockets
 Might not I go into the Arsenale?⁴
 Of you? Come out again? And none the wiser?

PEREGRINE Except yourself, sir.

POLITIC GO TO,^o then. I therefore *impatient expression*
 Advertise to^o the state how fit it were *warn*
 That none but such as were known patriots,
 Sound lovers of their country, should be suffered
 T'enjoy them⁰ in their houses, and even those *tinderboxes*
 Sealed⁰ at some office, and at such a bigness *licensed; sealed shut*
 As might not lurk in pockets.

PEREGRINE Admirable!

POLITIC My next is, how t'inquire and be resolved⁰ *satisfied*
 By present⁰ demonstration whether a ship *immediate*
 Newly arrived from Syria, or from
 Any suspected part of all the Levant,⁰ *Middle East*
 Be guilty of the plague. And where they use⁰ *are accustomed*
 To lie out^o forty, fifty days sometimes *at anchor*
 About the Lazaretto,⁵ for their trial,
 I'll save that charge and loss unto the merchant,
 And in an hour clear the doubt.

PEREGRINE Indeed, sir?

POLITIC Or—I will lose my labor.

PEREGRINE My faith, that's much.

POLITIC Nay, sir, conceive⁰ me. 'Twill cost me in onions⁶ *understand*
 Some thirty livres⁰— *French coins*

PEREGRINE Which is one pound sterling.

POLITIC Beside my waterworks. For this I do, sir.
 First I bring in your ship⁰ 'twixt two brick walls— *a ship in question*
 But those the state shall venture.⁰ On the one *pay for*

3. Common men, as well as those of higher status, may sometimes make suggestions to the government.
 4. Shipyard where Venice built and repaired its naval vessels.

5. Quarantine hospital on an outlying island.
 6. Onions were popularly supposed to absorb plague infection.

I strain⁰ me a fair tarpaulin, and in that *stretch*
 I stick my onions cut in halves; the other
 Is full of loopholes out at which I thrust
 The noses of my bellows, and those bellows
 I keep with⁰ waterworks in perpetual motion⁷— *by means of*
 Which is the easiest matter of a hundred.⁰ *as easy as can be*
 Now, sir, your onion, which doth naturally
 Attract th'infection, and your bellows, blowing
 The air upon him,⁰ will show instantly *it (the onion)*
 By his changed color if there be contagion,
 Or else remain as fair as at the first.
 Now 'tis known, 'tis nothing.⁰ *there's nothing to it*

PEREGRINE You are right, sir.

POLITIC I would I had my note.
[He searches again in his garments.]

PEREGRINE Faith, so would I;
 But, you ha' done well for once, sir.

POLITIC Were I false,⁰ *traitorous*
 Or would be made so, I could show you reasons
 How I could sell this state now to the Turk,⁸
 Spite of their galleys⁰ or their— *warships*

PEREGRINE Pray you, Sir Pol.

POLITIC I have 'em^o not about me. *the notes*

PEREGRINE That I feared.
 They are there, sir? *[He indicates a hook POLITIC is holding.]*

POLITIC NO, this is my diary,
 Wherein I note my actions of the day.⁹

PEREGRINE Pray you, let's see, sir. What is here? *[Reading]*
"Notandum *Be it noted*
 A rat had gnawn my spur leathers;⁰ notwithstanding *laces*
 I put on new and did go forth, but first
 I threw three beans over the threshold.⁰ *Item,* *for good luck*
 I went and bought two toothpicks, whereof one
 I burst immediately in a discourse
 With a Dutch merchant, bout *ragion' del stato.*^o *political expediency*
 From him I went, and paid a *moccinigo*⁰ *small coin*
 For piecing⁰ my silk stockings; by the way *mending*
 I cheapened sprats,¹ and at Saint Mark's I urined."
 Faith, these are politic notes!

POLITIC Sir, I do slip⁰ *let pass*
 No action of my life thus but I quote⁰ it. *without noting*

PEREGRINE Believe me, it is wise!

POLITIC Nay, sir, read forth.

7. Perpetual-motion machines were popular attractions in early modern England, but Jonson regarded them contemptuously. Since Venice is in flat marshland, there are no waterfalls to harness there, as Sir Pol proposes.

8. The Ottoman Turks, southeast of Venice along the

Adriatic Sea, were maritime and religious rivals and a long-standing military threat.

9. Many Renaissance travel writers recommended that travelers keep a written record of their journeys.

1. Bargained over some small fish.

SCENE 2. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] LADY [WOULD-BE], NANO, [and the two] WOMEN.

[They do not see POLITIC and PEREGRINE at first.]

LADY WOULD-BE Where should this loose knight be, trow?^o *do you suppose?*
Sure he's housed.^o *in a brothel*

NANO Why, then he's fast.^o *fast-moving; secure*
LADY WOULD-BE Ay, he plays both^o with me. *both fast and loose*

I pray you, stay. This heat will do more harm
To my complexion than his heart is worth.
I do not care to hinder, but to take^o him. *catch*

[*She rubs her cheeks.*]

How it^o comes off! *the makeup*

FIRST WOMAN [*pointing*] My master's yonder.

LADY WOULD-BE Where?

FIRST WOMAN With a young gentleman.

LADY WOULD-BE That same's the party,

In man's apparel!¹ [*To NANO*] Pray you, sir, jog my knight.

I will be tender to his reputation,
However he demerit.^o *deserves blame*

POLITIC [*seeing her*] My lady!

PEREGRINE Where?

POLITIC 'Tis she indeed, sir; you shall know her. She is,

Were she not mine,² a lady of that merit

For fashion and behavior; and for beauty

I durst compare—

PEREGRINE It seems you are not jealous,

That dare commend her.

POLITIC Nay, and for discourse—

PEREGRINE Being your wife, she cannot miss^o that. *lack (sarcastic)*

POLITIC [*introducing PEREGRINE*] Madam,

Here is a gentleman; pray you use him fairly.

He seems a youth, but he is—

LADY WOULD-BE None?

POLITIC Yes, one

Has^o put his face as soon^o into the world— *who has / so young*

LADY WOULD-BE YOU mean, as early? But today

POLITIC HOW'S this!

LADY WOULD-BE Why, in this habit,^o sir; you apprehend^o me. *apparel / understand*

Well, Master Would-be, this doth not become you;

I had thought the odor, sir, of your good name

Had been more precious to you, that you would not

Have done this dire massacre on your honor—

One of your gravity and rank besides!

But knights, I see, care little for the oath

They make to ladies, chiefly their own ladies.

POLITIC Now, by my spurs—the symbol of my knighthood—

4.2

1. Lady Would-be believes that Peregrine is the whore

Mosca mentioned, in transvestite attire.

2. Even though I, her husband, say so.

PEREGRINE <i>{aside}</i>	Lord, how his brain is humbled ³ for an oath!	
POLITIC	—I reach ⁰ you not.	<i>comprehend</i>
LADY WOULD-BE	Right, sir, your polity ⁰	<i>cunning</i>
	May bear ⁰ it through thus. [To PEREGRINE] Sir, a word with you.	<i>bluff</i>
	I would be loath to contest publicly	
	With any gentlewoman, or to seem	
	Froward ⁰ or violent; as <i>The Courtier</i> ⁴ says,	<i>bad-tempered</i>
	It comes too near rusticity ⁰ in a lady,	<i>ill breeding</i>
	Which I would shun by all means. And however	
	I may deserve from Master Would-be, yet	
	T' have one fair gentlewoman ⁰ thus be made	<i>i.e., Peregrine</i>
	Th'unkind instrument to wrong another,	
	And one she knows not, ay, and to persevere,	
	In my poor judgment is not warranted	
	From being a solecism ⁰ in our sex,	<i>impropriety</i>
	If not in manners.	
PEREGRINE	HOW is this?	
POLITIC	Sweet madam,	
	Come nearer to your aim. ⁰	<i>speak more clearly</i>
LADY WOULD-BE	Marry, and will, sir.	
	Since you provoke me with your impudence	
	And laughter of your light land-siren ⁵ here,	
	Your Sporus, ⁶ your hermaphrodite—	
PEREGRINE	What's here?	
	Poetic fury and historic storms! ⁷	
POLITIC	The gentleman, believe it, is of worth,	
	And of our nation.	
LADY WOULD-BE	Ay, your Whitefriars ⁰ nation!	<i>London brothel district</i>
	Come, I blush for you, Master Would-be, I,	
	And am ashamed you should ha' no more forehead ⁰	<i>shame</i>
	Than thus to be the patron, or Saint George, ⁸	
	To a lewd harlot, a base fricatrice, ⁰	<i>whore</i>
	A female devil in a male outside.	
POLITIC <i>[to PEREGRINE]</i>	Nay,	
	An ^o you be such a one, I must bid adieu	<i>If</i>
	To your delights. The case appears too liquid. ⁹	
	[POLITIC <i>starts to leave.</i>]	
LADY WOULD-BE	Ay, you may carry't clear, with your state-	
	face! ⁰	<i>dignified expression</i>
	But for your carnival concupiscence, ⁰	<i>lecherous strumpet</i>
	Who here is fled for liberty of conscience ⁰	<i>licentious conduct</i>
	From furious persecution of the marshal, ¹	
	Her will I disc'ple. ⁰	<i>discipline</i>

3. Literally, "brought down" to his feet—where spurs, the appurtenances of a knight, are worn.

4. Baldassare Castiglione's famous handbook of gentility.

5. The Sirens were mythical sea creatures who lured sailors to their deaths by sitting on dangerous rocks and singing irresistibly. (Lady Would-be refers to Peregrine.)

6. A eunuch whom the emperor Nero dressed in drag and married.

7. Peregrine notes that even Lady Would-be's tantrums include literary allusions.

8. Patron saint of England, often pictured rescuing a damsel from a dragon.

9. Obvious. (Politic has become convinced that his wife is right in believing that Peregrine is a transvestite whore.)

1. Official charged with punishing prostitutes. Lady Would-be thinks that Peregrine has dressed as a man to flee prosecution.

[Exit POLITIC, LADY POLITIC UCCOSIS PEREGRINE.]

PEREGRINE This is fine, i'faith!
 And do you use this⁰ often? Is this part *act this way*
 Of your wit's exercise, 'gainst you have occasion?²
 Madam—

LADY WOULD-BE GO tO,^o sir. *impatient expression*

PEREGRINE Do you hear me, lady?
 Why, if your knight have set you to beg shirts,³
 Or to invite me home, you might have done it
 A nearer^o way by far. *more direct*

LADY WOULD-BE This cannot work you
 Out of my snare.

PEREGRINE Why, am I in it, then?
 Indeed, your husband told me you were fair,
 And so you are; only your nose inclines—
 That side that's next the sun—to the queen-apple.⁴

LADY WOULD-BE This cannot be endured by any patience.

SCENE 3. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] MOSCA.

MOSCA What's the matter, madam?

LADY WOULD-RE If the Senate^o *Venetian government*
 Right not my quest^o in this, I will protest 'em *petition*
 To all the world no aristocracy.

MOSCA What is the injury, lady?

LADY WOULD-BE Why, the callet^o *prostitute*
 You told me of, here I have ta'en disguised.

MOSCA Who, this? What means Your Ladyship? The creature
 I mentioned to you is apprehended now
 Before the Senate. You shall see her—

LADY WOULD-BE Where?

MOSCA I'll bring you to her. This young gentleman,
 I saw him land this morning at the port.

LADY WOULD-BE Is't possible! How has my judgment wandered!
 [Releasing PEREGRINE] Sir, I must, blushing, say to you I have erred,
 And plead your pardon.

PEREGRINE What, more changes yet?

LADY WOULD-BE I hope you ha' not the malice to remember
 A gentlewoman's passion. If you stay
 In Venice here, please you to use me,¹ sir—

MOSCA Will you go, madam?

LADY WOULD-BE Pray you, sir, use me. In faith,
 The more you see me, the more I shall conceive
 You have forgot our quarrel.

[Exeunt MOSCA, LADY WOULD-BE, NANO, and WOMEN.]

2. To keep it ready for when it is really needed?

3. Peregrine pretends to believe that Lady Would-be is tearing off his shirt in order to give it to her husband. Probably she is just trying to prevent his leaving.

4. A bright red apple. See 3.4.15–16, where we learn that Lady Would-be is sensitive about her red nose.

4.3

1. Make use of my services. (With a sexual innuendo continued in "The more you see me, the more I shall conceive" [line 18], where "conceive" means both "understand" and "conceive a child.")

[*Aside to CORVINO*] But much more yours,⁰ sir. *your adversaries*
 VOLTORE Here they come. Ha' done.⁰ *shut up*
 MOSCA I have another witness⁰ if you need, sir, *Lady Would-be*
 I can produce.
 VOLTORE Who is it?
 MOSCA Sir, I have her.

SCENE 5. *The scene continues.*

[*Enter*] four AVOCATORI, BONARIO, CELIA. *Notario*
 [NOTARY], COMMENDATORI⁰ [*and other court officials*]. *laiv court deputies*
 FIRST AVOCATORE The like of this the Senate never heard of.
 SECOND AVOCATORE 'Twill come most strange to them when we report it.
 FOURTH AVOCATORE The gentlewoman has been ever held
 Of unproved name.
 THIRD AVOCATORE SO, the young man.
 FOURTH AVOCATORE The more unnatural part that of his father.
 SECOND AVOCATORE More of the husband.
 FIRST AVOCATORE I not know to give
 His act a name, it is so monstrous!
 FOURTH AVOCATORE But the impostor,⁰ he is a thing created *Volpone*
 T'exceed example!⁰ *precedent*
 FIRST AVOCATORE And all aftertimes!⁰ *later eras*
 SECOND AVOCATORE I never heard a true voluptuary
 Described but him.
 THIRD AVOCATORE Appear yet those were cited?
 NOTARY All but the old magnifico, Volpone.
 FIRST AVOCATORE Why is not he here?
 MOSCA Please Your Fatherhoods,
 Here is his advocate. Himself's so weak,
 So feeble—
 FOURTH AVOCATORE What are you?
 BONARIO His parasite,
 His knave, his pander! I beseech the court
 He may be forced to come, that your grave eyes
 May bear strong witness of his strange impostures.
 VOLTORE Upon my faith and credit with your virtues,
 He is not able to endure the air.
 SECOND AVOCATORE Bring him, however.
 THIRD AVOCATORE We will see him.
 FOURTH AVOCATORE Fetch him.
 [*Exit officers.*]
 VOLTORE Your Fatherhoods' fit pleasures be obeyed,
 But sure the sight will rather move your pities
 Than indignation. May it please the court,
 In the meantime he may be heard in me.
 I know this place most void of prejudice,
 And therefore crave it, since we have no reason
 To fear our truth should hurt our cause.
 THIRD AVOCATORE Speak free.
 VOLTORE Then know, most honored fathers, I must now

Discover⁰ to your strangely abused ears *reveal*
 The most prodigious and most frontless⁰ piece *shameless*
 Of solid⁰ impudence and treachery *complete*
 That ever vicious nature yet brought forth
 To shame the state of Venice. [*Indicating* CECLIA] This lewd woman,
 That wants⁰ no artificial looks or tears *who lacks*
 To help the visor⁰ she has now put on, *(weeping) mask*
 Hath long been known a close⁰ adulteress *secret; intimate*
 To that lascivious youth there [*indicating* BONARIO]; not suspected,
 I say, but known, and taken in the act
 With him; and by this man, the easy⁰ husband, *lenient*
 Pardoned; whose timeless⁰ bounty makes him now *unseasonable; endless*
 Stand here, the most unhappy, innocent person
 That ever man's own goodness made accused.¹
 For these, not knowing how to owe" a gift *acknowledge*
 Of that dear grace but⁰ with their shame, being placed *other than*
 So above all powers of their gratitude,²
 Began to hate the benefit, and in place
 Of thanks devise t'extirp⁰ the memory *to extirpate, wipe out*
 Of such an act. Wherein I pray Your Fatherhoods
 To observe the malice, yea, the rage of creatures
 Discovered in their evils, and what heart⁰ *audacity*
 Such take even from their crimes. But that anon
 Will more appear. This gentleman, the father,
 [*indicating* CORBACCIO]
 Hearing of this foul fact,⁰ with many others *deed*
 Which daily struck at his too tender ears,
 And grieved in nothing more than that he could not
 Preserve himself a parent—his son's ills⁰ *evil deeds*
 Growing to that strange flood—at last decreed
 To disinherit him.
 FIRST AVOCATORE These be strange turns!
 SECOND AVOCATORE The young man's fame⁰ was ever fair *reputation*
 and honest.
 VOLTORE So much more full of danger is his vice,
 That can beguile so under shade of virtue.
 But, as I said, my honored sires, his father
 Having this settled purpose, by what means
 To him^o betrayed we know not, and this day *Bonario*
 Appointed for the deed, that parricide—
 I cannot style him better⁰—by confederacy *give him a better name*
 Preparing this his paramour to be there,
 Entered Volpone's house—who was the man,
 Your Fatherhoods must understand, designed
 For the inheritance—there sought his father.
 But with what purpose sought he him, my lords?
 I tremble to pronounce it, that a son

4.5

1. That ever had his own goodness turned against him.

2. Since the rare value of Corvino's forgiveness was so far beyond their powers of gratitude.

Unto a father, and to such a father,
 Should have so foul, felonious intent:
 It was to murder him. When, being prevented
 By his more happy^o absence, what then did he? *Corbaccio's fortunate*
 Not check his wicked thoughts; no, now new deeds—
 Mischief doth ever end where it begins³—
 An act of horror, fathers! He dragged forth
 The aged gentleman, that had there lain bedrid
 Three years and more, out of his innocent couch;
 Naked upon the floor there left him; wounded
 His servant in the face, and with this strumpet,
 The stale^o to his forged practice,^o who was glad *decoy/plot*
 To be so active—I shall here desire
 Your Fatherhoods to note but my collections^o *deductions*
 As most remarkable—thought at once to stop
 His father's ends,^o discredit his free choice *aims*
 In the old gentleman,^o redeem themselves *Volpone*
 By laying infamy upon this man^o *Corvino*
 To whom with blushing they should owe their lives.
 FIRST AVOCATORE What proofs have you of this?
 BONARIO Most honored fathers,
 I humbly crave there be no credit given
 To this man's mercenary tongue.
 SECOND AVOCATORE Forbear.
 BONARIO His soul moves in his fee.
 THIRD AVOCATORE Oh, sir!
 BONARIO This fellow,
 For six sols^o more, would plead against his Maker. *halfpennies*
 FIRST AVOCATORE You do forget yourself.
 VOLTRE Nay, nay, grave fathers,
 Let him have scope. Can any man imagine
 That he will spare 's^o accuser, that would not *spare his*
 Have spared his parent?
 FIRST AVOCATORE Well, produce your proofs.
 CELIA I would I could forget I were a creature!^o *living being*
 VOLTRE [*calling a ivitness*] Signor Corbaccio!
 FOURTH AVOCATORE What is he?
 VOLTRE The father.
 SECOND AVOCATORE Has he had an oath?
 NOTARY Yes.
 CORBACCIO What must I do now?
 NOTARY Your testimony's craved.
 CORBACCIO [*mis-hearing*] Speak to the knave?
 I'll ha' my mouth first stopped with earth! My heart
 Abhors his knowledge;^o I disclaim in^o him. *knowing him/disavow*
 FIRST AVOCATORE But for what cause?
 CORBACCIO The mere portent of nature.⁴
 He is an utter stranger to my loins.

3. Wickedness is always persistent.

4. A completely monstrous birth. (A deformed child was often considered to be a portent, or evil omen.)

BONARIO Have they made you to this?
CORBACCIO I will not hear thee,
Monster of men, swine, goat, wolf, parricide!
Speak not, thou viper.
BONARIO Sir, I will sit down,
And rather wish my innocence should suffer
Than I resist the authority of a father.
VOLTORE [*calling a witness*] Signor Corvino!
SECOND AVOCATORE This is strange!
FIRST AVOCATORE Who's this?
NOTARY The husband.
FOURTH AVOCATORE Is he sworn?
NOTARY He is.
THIRD AVOCATORE Speak, then.
CORVINO This woman, please Your Fatherhoods, is a whore
Of most hot exercise, more than a partridge,⁵
Upon record⁰— *as is well attested*
FIRST AVOCATORE No more.
CORVINO Neighs like a jennet.⁰ *mare (in heat)*
NOTARY Preserve the honor of the court.
CORVINO I shall,
And modesty of your most reverend ears.
And yet I hope that I may say these eyes
Have seen her glued unto that piece of cedar,
That fine well-timbered gallant;⁶ and that here
[*Pointing to his forehead*] The letters may be read, thorough the horn,⁷
That make the story perfect.⁰ *complete*
MOSCA [*aside to CORVINO*] Excellent, sir!
CORVINO [*aside to MOSCA*] There is no shame in this, now, is there?
MOSCA [*aside to CORVINO*] None.
CORVINO [*to the court*] Or if I said I hoped that she were
onward⁰ *well on her way*
To her damnation, if there be a hell
Greater than whore and woman—a good Catholic
May make the doubt⁰— *may wonder*
THIRD AVOCATORE His grief hath made him frantic.
FIRST AVOCATORE Remove him hence. *She [CELIA] swoons.*
SECOND AVOCATORE Look to the woman!
CORVINO [*taunting her*] Rare!
Prettily feigned! Again!
FOURTH AVOCATORE Stand from about her.
FIRST AVOCATORE Give her the air.
THIRD AVOCATORE [*to MOSCA*] What can you say?
MOSCA My wound,
May't please Your Wisdoms, speaks for me, received
In aid of my good patron when he^o missed *Bonario*

5. A bird capable of numerous consecutive sexual acts and so a byword for lechery.

6. Corvino sarcastically compliments Bonario as a strapping fellow to whom Celia no doubt wishes to cling. The cedars of the Middle East are tall and

stately.

7. Children learned to read the alphabet from pages protected by transparent sheets of horn. (With an allusion to the cuckold's horn.)

His sought-for father, when that well-taught dame
 Had her cue given her to cry out a rape.

BONARIO Oh, most laid⁰ impudence! Fathers— *•premeditated*

THIRD AVOCATORE Sir, be silent.

You had your hearing free,⁰ so must they theirs. *uninterrupted*

SECOND AVOCATORE I do begin to doubt th'imposture here.

FOURTH AVOCATORE This woman has too many moods.

VOLTRE Grave fathers,
 She is a creature of a most professed
 And prostituted lewdness.

CORVINO Most impetuous!
 Unsatisfied,⁰ grave fathers! *insatiable*

VOLTRE May her feignings
 Not take⁰ Your Wisdoms! But⁰ this day she baited *take in I only*
 A stranger, a grave knight, with her loose eyes
 And more lascivious kisses. This man⁰ saw 'em *Mosca*
 Together on the water in a gondola.

MOSCA Here is the lady herself that saw 'em too,
 Without;⁰ who then had in the open streets *waiting outside*
 Pursued them, but for saving her knight's honor.

FIRST AVOCATORE Produce that lady.

SECOND AVOCATORE Let her come.

[Exit MOSCA.]

FOURTH AVOCATORE These things,
 They strike with wonder!

THIRD AVOCATORE I am turned a stone!

SCENE 6. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] MOSCA [and] LADY [WOULD-BE],

MOSCA Be resolute, madam.

LADY WOULD-BE Ay, this same is she.
 [To CELIA] Out, thou chameleon⁰ harlot! Now thine eyes *deceitfully changeable*
 Vie tears with the hyena.¹ Dar'st thou look
 Upon my wronged face? [To *the* AVOCATORI] I cry^o your pardons. *beg*
 I fear I have forgettingly transgressed
 Against the dignity of the court—

SECOND AVOCATORE NO, madam.

LADY WOULD-BE And been exorbitant⁰— *excessive*

SECOND AVOCATORE You have not, lady.

FOURTH AVOCATORE These proofs are strong.

LADY WOULD-BE Surely, I had no purpose
 To scandalize your honors, or my sex's.

THIRD AVOCATORE We do believe it.

LADY WOULD-BE Surely, you may believe it.

SECOND AVOCATORE Madam, we do.

LADY WOULD-BE Indeed, you may. My breeding
 Is not so coarse—

FOURTH AVOCATORE We know it.

4.6

1. A symbol of treachery, the hyena was supposed to

be able to change its sex and the color of its eyes at will and to imitate human voices.

LADY WOULD-BE —to offend
 With pertinacy⁰— *stubborn resolution*

THIRD AVOCATORE Lady—

LADY WOULD-BE —such a presence;
 No, surely.

FIRST AVOCATORE We well think it.

LADY WOULD-BE YOU may think it.

FIRST AVOCATORE [*to the other AVOCATORL*] Let her o'ercome." *have the last word*
 [*To CELIA and BONARIO*] What witnesses have you
 To make good your report?

BONARIO Our consciences.

CELIA And heaven, that never fails the innocent.

FOURTH AVOCATORE These are no testimonies.

BONARIO Not in your courts,
 Where multitude and clamor overcomes.

FIRST AVOCATORE Nay, then, you do wax insolent.
 VOLPONE *is brought in [on a litter], as impotent.*⁰ *disabled*
 [LADY WOULD-BE *embraces him.*]^o *see 5.2.97*

VOLTORE Here, here
 The testimony comes that will convince
 And put to utter dumbness their bold tongues.
 See here, grave fathers, here's the ravisher,
 The rider on men's wives, the great impostor,
 The grand voluptuary! Do you not think
 These limbs should affect venery?² Or these eyes
 Covet a concubine? Pray you, mark these hands:
 Are they not fit to stroke a lady's breasts?
 Perhaps he doth dissemble?

BONARIO So he does.

VOLTORE Would you ha' him tortured?

BONARIO I would have him proved.³

VOLTORE Best try him, then, with goads or burning irons;
 Put him to the strappado.⁴ I have heard
 The rack⁵ hath cured the gout; faith, give it him
 And help him of a malady; be courteous.
 I'll undertake, before these honored fathers,
 He shall have yet as many left⁰ diseases *remaining*
 As she has known adulterers, or thou strumpets.
 O my most equal⁰ hearers, if these deeds, *impartial*
 Acts of this bold and most exorbitant strain,
 May pass with sufferance,⁰ what one citizen *be permitted*
 But owes the forfeit of his life, yea, fame
 To him that dares traduce him?⁶ Which of you
 Are safe, my honored fathers? I would ask,
 With leave of Your grave Fatherhoods, if their plot

2. Delight in sexual activity.

3. Tested for impotence, a regular court procedure in some divorce and rape cases. (Torture was another method sometimes used to extract confessions.)

4. Torture in which the victim's arms were tied behind his back; he was then hoisted up by the wrists and

dropped.

5. Torture instrument that stretched the victim to the point of dislocating his joints.

6. What citizen is there whose life and reputation might not be forfeit to a slanderer?

Have any face or color like to truth?
 Or if unto the dullest nostril here
 It smell not rank and most abhorred slander?
 I crave your care of this good gentleman,
 Whose life is much endangered by their fable;
 And as for them, I will conclude with this:
 That vicious persons, when they are hot, and fleshed⁷
 In impious acts, their constancy⁰ abounds. *resoluteness*
 Damned deeds are done with greatest confidence.
 FIRST AVOCATORE Take 'em to custody, and sever them.
 SECOND AVOCATORE 'Tis pity two such prodigies⁰ should live. *monsters*
[Exeunt CELIA and BONARIO, guarded.]
 FIRST AVOCATORE Let the old gentleman be returned with care.
 I'm sorry our credulity wronged him.
[Exeunt litter-bearers with VOLPONE.]
 FOURTH AVOCATORE These are two creatures!⁰ *monsters*
 THIRD AVOCATORE I have an earthquake in me!
 SECOND AVOCATORE Their shame, even in their cradles, fled their faces.
 FOURTH AVOCATORE *[to VOLTORE]* You've done a worthy service to the
 state, sir,
 In their discovery.
 FIRST AVOCATORE You shall hear ere night
 What punishment the court decrees upon 'em.
 VOLTORE We thank Your Fatherhoods.
[Exeunt AVOCATORI, NOTARY, COMMENDATORI.]
[To MOSCA] HOW like you it?
 MOSCA Rare!
 I'd ha' your tongue, sir, tipped with gold for this;
 I'd ha' you be the heir to the whole city;
 The earth I'd have want men ere you want living.⁰ *lack income*
 They're bound to erect your statue in Saint Mark's.—
 Signor Corvino, I would have you go
 And show yourself,⁸ that you have conquered
 CORVINO Yes.
 MOSCA *[aside to CORVINO]* It was much better that you should profess
 Yourself a cuckold thus, than that the other⁹
 Should have been proved.
 CORVINO Nay, I considered that.
 Now it is her fault.
 MOSCA Then it had been yours.
 CORVINO True. I do doubt this advocate still.
 MOSCA I'faith,
 You need not; I dare ease you of that care.
 CORVINO I trust thee, Mosca.
 MOSCA As your own soul, sir.
[Exit CORVINO.]
 CORBACCIO Mosca!
 MOSCA Now for your business, sir.

7. Excited by the taste of blood, like hunting hounds.

8. Appear in public. (To indicate that he is not

ashamed of having admitted to being a cuckold.)

9. The attempt to prostitute Celia to Volpone.

CORBACCIO How? Ha' you business?
MOSCA Yes, yours, sir.
CORBACCIO Oh, none else?
MOSCA None else, not I.
CORBACCIO Be careful, then.
MOSCA Best you with both your eyes,⁰ sir. *rest assured*
CORBACCIO Dispatch it.¹
MOSCA Instantly.
CORBACCIO And look that all
Whatever be put in: jewels, plate, moneys,
Household stuff, bedding, curtains.
MOSCA Curtain rings, sir.
Only the advocate's fee must be deducted.
CORBACCIO I'll pay him, now; you'll be too prodigal.
MOSCA Sir, I must tender⁰ it. *present*
CORBACCIO TWO *cecchines* is well?
MOSCA No, six, sir.
CORBACCIO 'Tis too much.
MOSCA He talked a great while,
You must consider that, sir.
CORBACCIO [*giving money*] Well, there's three—
MOSCA I'll give it him.
CORBACCIO DO SO, and [*he tips MOSCA*] there's for thee.
[*Exit CORBACCIO.*]
MOSCA [*aside*] Bountiful bones! What horrid strange offense
Did he commit 'gainst nature in his youth
Worthy this age?^o [*To VOLTORE*] YOU see, sir, how I work *to deserve this old age*
Unto your ends; take you no notice.⁰ *leave it to me*
VOLTORE No,
I'll leave you.
MOSCA All is yours, [*Exit VOLTORE.*]
[*aside*] the devil and all,
Good advocate! [*To LADY WOULD-BE*] Madam, I'll bring you home
LADY WOULD-BE NO, I'll go see your patron.
MOSCA That you shall not.
I'll tell you why. My purpose is to urge
My patron to reform⁰ his will; and, for
The zeal you've shown today, whereas before
You were but third or fourth, you shall be now
Put in the first, which would appear as begged
If you were present. Therefore—
LADY WOULD-BE You shall sway me.
[*Exeunt.*]

Act 5

SCENE 1. VOLPONE'S *house*.[*Enter*] VOLPONE [*attended*].VOLPONE Well, I am here, and all this brunt⁰ is past.

1. I.e., Hurry to make Volpone's will, since Corbaccio has already delivered on his half of the promise.

I ne'er was in dislike with my disguise
 Till this fled^o moment; here 'twas good, in private, *past*
 But, in your public—*cave*^o whilst I breathe. *watch out*
 Fore God, my left leg 'gan to have the cramp,
 And I apprehended straight^o some power had struck me *thought at once*
 With a dead palsy.^o Well, I must be merry *paralysis*
 And shake it off. A many of these fears
 Would put me into some villainous disease,
 Should they come thick upon me. I'll prevent 'em.
 Give me a bowl of lusty wine to fright
 This humor from my heart.¹—Hum, hum, hum! *He drinks.*
 'Tis almost gone already; I shall conquer,^o *overcome my fears*
 Any device, now, of rare ingenious knavery,
 That would possess me with a violent laughter,
 Would make me up^o again. So, so, so, so. *Drinks again.* *restore me*
 This heat is life; 'tis blood by this time. [*Calling*] Mosca!

SCENE 2. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] MOSCA

MOSCA How now, sir? Does the day look clear again?
 Are we recovered and wrought out of error
 Into our way, to see our path before us?
 Is our trade free once more?

VOLPONE Exquisite Mosca!

MOSCA Was it not carried learnedly?

VOLPONE And stoutly.^o *resolutely*

Good wits are greatest in extremities.

MOSCA It were a folly beyond thought to trust
 Any grand act unto a cowardly spirit.

You are not taken with it enough, methinks?

VOLPONE Oh, more than if I had enjoyed the wench!

The pleasure of all womankind's not like it.

MOSCA Why, now you speak, sir. We must here be fixed;
 Here we must rest. This is our masterpiece.
 We cannot think to go beyond this.

VOLPONE True,

Th'hast played thy prize,¹ my precious Mosca.

MOSCA Nay, sir,

To gull^o the court— *hoodwink*

VOLPONE And quite divert the torrent

Upon the innocent.

MOSCA Yes, and to make

So rare a music out of discords²—

VOLPONE Right.

That yet to me's the strangest, how th'ast borne it!^o *brought it ojf*That these,^o being so divided 'mongst themselves, *these men*Should not scent^o somewhat, or^o in me or thee, *suspect I either*

5.1

1. Wine was supposed to convert quickly to blood (see line 17), thus giving courage to the drinker.

5.2

1. Professional fencers "played the prize," i.e., com-

peted for purses and titles, in virtuoso displays of swordsmanship.

2. To bring harmony out of various discordant elements was thought to be the highest achievement of art.

Or doubt their own side." *position*

MOSCA True, they will not see't.
 Too much light blinds em, I think. Each of 'em
 Is so possessed and stuffed with his own hopes
 That anything unto the contrary,
 Never so true or never so apparent,
 Never so palpable, they will resist it—

VOLPONE Like a temptation of the devil.

MOSCA Bight, sir.
 Merchants may talk of trade, and your great signors
 Of land that yields well; but if Italy
 Have any glebe⁰ more fruitful than these fellows, *soil*
 I am deceived. Did not your advocate rare?⁰ *do brilliantly*

VOLPONE Oh!—"My most honored fathers, my grave fathers,
 Under correction of Your Fatherhoods,
 What face of truth is here? If these strange deeds
 May pass, most honored fathers"—I had much ado
 To forbear laughing.

MOSCA 'T seemed to me you sweat,⁰ sir. *sweated (with fear)*

VOLPONE In troth, I did a little.

MOSCA But confess, sir,
 Were you not daunted?

VOLPONE In good faith, I was
 A little in a mist,⁰ but not dejected;⁰ *uncertain / overwhelmed*
 Never but still myself.

MOSCA I think⁰ it, sir. *believe*
 Now, so truth help me, I must needs say this, sir,
 And out of conscience for your advocate:
 He's taken pains, in faith, sir, and deserved,
 In my poor judgment—I speak it under favor,⁰ *with your permission*
 Not to contrary⁰ you, sir—very richly— *contradict*
 Well—to be cozened.⁰ *cheated*

VOLPONE Troth, and I think so too,
 By that⁰ I heard him^o in the latter end. *what / him say*

MOSCA Oh, but before, sir! Had you heard him first
 Draw it to certain heads, then aggravate,³
 Then use his vehement figures⁰—I looked still *figiies* *of speech*
 When he would shift⁴ a shirt; and doing this
 Out of pure love, no hope of gain—

VOLPONE Tis right.
 I cannot answer⁰ him, Mosca, as I would, *repay*
 Not vet; but for thy sake, at thy entreaty
 I will begin ev'n now to vex 'em all,
 This very instant.

MOSCA Good, sir.

VOLPONE Call the dwarf
 And eunuch forth.

MOSCA [*calling*] Castrone, Nano!

3. Arrange his material under various headings, then bring charges.

4. Change (because his efforts made him sweat),

[Enter] NANO [and] CASTRONE.

NANO Here.

VOLPONE Shall we have a jig, now?

MOSCA What you please, sir.

VOLPONE [to CASTRONE and NANO] GO,
 Straight give out about the streets, you two,
 That I am dead. Do it with constancy,⁰ conviction
 Sadly, do you hear? Impute it to the grief
 Of this late slander. [Exeunt CASTRONE and NANO.]

MOSCA What do you mean, sir?

VOLPONE Oh,
 I shall have instantly my vulture, crow,
 Raven come flying hither on the news
 To peck for carrion, my she-wolf and all, Lady Would-be
 Greedy and full of expectation—

MOSCA And then to have it ravished from their mouths?

VOLPONE 'Tis true. I will ha' thee put on a gown⁵
 And take upon thee as ° thou wert mine heir; act as though
 Show 'em a will. Open that chest and reach
 Forth one of those that has the blanks.⁰ I'll straight blank spaces
 Put in thy name.

MOSCA [fetching a blank will] It will be rare, sir.

VOLPONE Ay,
 When they e'en gape, and find themselves deluded—

MOSCA Yes.

VOLPONE And thou use them scurvily. Dispatch,
 Get on thy gown.
 [VOLPONE signs the will MOSCA has given him.
 MOSCA puts on a mourning garment.]

MOSCA But, what, sir, if they ask
 After the body?

VOLPONE Say it was corrupted.

MOSCA I'll say it stunk, sir, and was fain° t'have it I was obliged
 Coffined up instantly and sent away.

VOLPONE Anything; what thou wilt. Hold, here's my will.
 Get thee a cap, a count-book, pen and ink,
 Papers afore thee; sit as thou wert taking
 An inventory of parcels.⁰ I'll get up
 Behind the curtain on a stool, and hearken;
 Sometime peep over, see how they do look,
 With what degrees their blood doth leave their faces.
 Oh, 'twill afford me a rare meal of laughter!

MOSCA Your advocate will turn stark dull⁰ upon it. gloomy

VOLPONE It will take off his oratory's edge.

MOSCA But your *clarissimo*,⁰ old round-back, he aristocrat (Corbaccio)
 Will crump you⁰ like a hog-louse with the touch. curl up on you

VOLPONE And what Corvino?

5. This must be the long black gown ordinarily worn by chief mourners, not the *clarissimo's* (aristocrat's) garment, which Mosca dons later in the scene and

which constitutes a different kind of insult to Voltore, Corbaccio, and Corvino.

MOSCA Oh, sir, look for him
 Tomorrow morning with a rope and a dagger⁶
 To visit all the streets; he must run mad.
 My lady, too, that came into the court
 To bear false witness for Your Worship—

VOLPONE Yes,
 And kissed me 'fore the fathers, when my face
 Flowed all with oils.⁰ *see 4.6.20.1-2*

MOSCA And sweat, sir. Why, your gold
 Is such another⁰ med'cine, it dries up *so effective a*
 All those offensive savors! It transforms
 The most deformed, and restores 'em lovely,
 As 'twere the strange poetical girdle.⁷ Jove
 Could not invent t'himself a shroud more subtle
 To pass Acrisius' guards.⁸ It is the thing
 Makes all the world her grace, her youth, her beauty.

VOLPONE I think she loves me.

MOSCA Who? The lady, sir?
 She's jealous of you.⁹

VOLPONE Dost thou say so?
[Knocking offstage.]

MOSCA Hark,
 There's some already.

VOLPONE Look.

MOSCA *[peeping out the door]* It is the vulture.
 He has the quickest scent.

VOLPONE I'll to my place,
 Thou to thy posture.⁰ *pose*

MOSCA I am set.

VOLPONE But, Mosca,
 Play the artificer⁰ now; torture em rarely. *artist*
[VOLPONE conceals himself]

SCENE 3. *The scene continties.*

[Enter] VOLTORE.

VOLTORE How now, my Mosca?

MOSCA *[pretending not to notice him, and reading from an inventory]* "Turkey carpets,⁰ nine"— *Oriental rugs*

VOLTORE Taking an inventory? That is well.

MOSCA "TWO suits of bedding, tissue"¹—

VOLTORE Where's the will?
 Let me read that the while.⁰ *while you're busy*

[Enter] CORBACCIO *[on a litter]*.

CORBACCIO *[to the litter-heaters]* So, set me down

6. Traditional equipment of suicidal madmen, borne by the allegorical figure of Despair in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* 1.9, and by the revenger Hieronimo in *The Spanish Tragedy*.

7. The girdle of Venus, the goddess of love, made its wearer irresistible.

8. King Acrisius shut his daughter Danae in a tower,

but the god Jove came to her in a shower of gold.

9. (1) Devoted to you; (2) covetous of your wealth.

5.3

1. Sets of bedcovers and hangings, made of cloth with gold or silver threads interwoven. The fancy textiles Mosca mentions in this scene were extremely expensive to produce in the days before automation.

And get you home. *[Exeunt litter-bearers.]*
VOLTRE Is he come now to trouble us?
MOSCA "Of cloth-of-gold,² two more"—
CORBACCIO Is it done, Mosca?
MOSCA "Of several velvets,⁰ eight"— *separate velvet hangings*
VOLTRE *[aside]* I like his care.
CORBACCIO *[to MOSCA]* Dost thou not hear?
[Enter] CORVINO.
CORVINO Ha! Is the hour come, Mosca?
VOLPONE *peeps from behind a traverse.*⁰ *expose*
VOLPONE *[aside]* Ay, now they muster.⁰ *assemble*
CORVINO What does the advocate here?
Or this Corbaccio?
CORBACCIO What do these here?
[Enter] LADY [WOULD-BE].
LADY WOULD-BE MOSCA,
Is his thread spun?³
MOSCA "Eight chests of linen"—
VOLPONE *[aside]* Oh,
My fine Dame Would-be, too!
CORVINO Mosca, the will,
That I may show it these, and rid 'em hence.
MOSCA "Six chests of diaper, four of damask"⁴—there.
[He gives them the will.]
CORBACCIO Is that the will?
MOSCA "Down beds and bolsters"—
VOLPONE *[aside]* Rare!
Be busy still. Now they begin to flutter;
They never think of me. Look, see, see, see!
How their swift eyes run over the long deed
Unto the name, and to the legacies,
What is bequeathed them there—
MOSCA "Ten suits of hangings"⁰— *sets of tapestries*
VOLPONE *[aside]* Ay, i' their garters,⁵ Mosca. Now their hopes
Are at the gasp.⁶ *last gasp*
VOLTRE Mosca the heir!
CORBACCIO What's that?
VOLPONE *[aside]* My advocate is dumb. Look to my merchant;
He has heard of some strange storm, a ship is lost,
He faints. My lady will swoon. Old glazen-eyes,⁶
He hath not reached his despair yet.
CORBACCIO All these
Are out of hope; I'm sure the man.
CORVINO But, Mosca—
MOSCA "Two cabinets"—

2. Cloth made of gold threads.

3. Is he dead? (In Greek mythology, the Fates spin out the thread of a human being's life and cut it at the time of death.)

4. Two kinds of costly textile with interwoven motifs. Diaper was linen with a diamond pattern; damask

could be linen or silk with floral or other designs.

5. "Go hang yourself in your own garters" was a common phrase of ridicule.

6. Corbaccio wears spectacles (see also line 63 below).

CORVINO Is this in earnest?
 MOSCA "One
 Of ebony"—
 CORVINO Or do you but delude me?
 MOSCA "The other, mother-of-pearl"—I am very busy.
 Good faith, it is a fortune thrown upon me—
 "Item, one salt⁰ of agate"—not my seeking. *saltcellar*
 LADY WOULD-BE Do you hear, sir?
 MOSCA "A perfumed box"—pray you, forbear;
 You see I am troubled⁰—"made of an onyx"— *busy*
 LADY WOULD-BE HOW!
 MOSCA Tomorrow or next day I shall be at leisure
 To talk with you all.
 CORVINO Is this my large hope's issue?⁰
 LADY WOULD-BE Sir, I must have a fairer answer.
 MOSCA Madam!
 Marry, and shall: pray you, fairly⁰ quit my house. *positively*
 Nay, raise no tempest with your looks, but hark you,
 Remember what Your Ladyship offered me' *implicitly, sexual favors*
 To put you in^o an heir; go to, think on't, *your name in as*
 And what you said e'en your best madams did
 For maintenance,⁰ and why not you? Enough. *financial support*
 Go home and use the poor Sir Pol, your knight, well,
 For fear I tell some riddles.⁰ Go, be melancholic. *secrets*
[Exit LADY WOULD-BE.]
 VOLPONE *[aside]* Oh, my fine devil!
 CORVINO Mosca, pray you a word.
 MOSCA Lord! Will not you take your dispatch hence yet?
 Methinks of all you should have been th'example.⁰ *led the way*
 Why should you stay here? With what thought? What promise?
 Hear you, do not you know I know you an ass?
 And that you would most fain have been a wittoP *'tiling cuckold*
 If fortune would have let you? That you are
 A declared cuckold, on good terms?⁰ This pearl, *good standing*
 You'll say, was yours? Bight. This diamond?
 I'll not deny't, but thank you. Much here else?
 It may be so. Why, think that these good works
 May help to hide your bad. I'll not betray you.
 Although you be but extraordinary⁰ *in name only*
 And have it^o only in title, it sufficeth. *the name of cuckold*
 Go home. Be melancholic too, or mad. *[Exit CORVINO.]*
 VOLPONE *[aside]* Bare, Mosca! How his villainy becomes him!
 VOLTRE *[aside]* Certain he doth delude all these for me.
 CORBACCIO *[finally making out the will]* Mosca the heir?
 VOLPONE *[aside]* Oh, his four eyes have found it!
 CORBACCIO I'm cozened, cheated by a parasite-slave!
 Harlot,⁷ th'ast gulled me.
 MOSCA Yes, sir. Stop your mouth,
 Or I shall draw the only tooth is left.

7. A word used of wicked men as well as women.

Are not you he, that filthy covetous wretch
 With the three legs,⁰ that here, in hope of prey, *including his cane*
 Have, any time this three year, snuffed about
 With your most grov'ling nose, and would have hired
 Me to the pois'ning of my patron? Sir?
 Are not you he that have today in court
 Professed the disinheriting of your son?
 Perjured yourself? Go home, and die, and stink.
 If you but croak a syllable, all comes out.
 Away and call your porters. Go, go stink! *[Exit CORBACCIO.]*
 VOLPONE *[aside]* Excellent varlet!⁰ *servant; rascal*
 VOLTORE Now, my faithful Mosca,
 I find thy constancy—
 MOSCA Sir?
 VOLTORE Sincere.
 MOSCA "A table
 Of porphyry"—I mar I^o you'll be thus troublesome. *marvel*
 VOLTORE Nay, leave off now, they are gone.
 MOSCA Why, who are you?
 What? Who did send for you? Oh, cry you mercy,⁰ *beg your pardon*
 Reverend sir! Good faith, I am grieved for you,
 That any chance of mine should thus defeat
 Your—I must needs say—most deserving travails.
 But I protest, sir, it was cast upon me,
 And I could almost wish to be without it,
 But that the will o'th'dead must be observed.
 Marry, my joy is that you need it not;
 You have a gift, sir—thank your education—
 Will never let you want, while there are men
 And malice to bleed causes.⁰ Would I had *lawsuits*
 But half the like, for all my fortune, sir!
 If I have any suits—as I do hope,
 Things being so easy and direct,⁸ I shall not—
 I will make bold with your obstreperous⁰ aid, *vociferous*
 Conceive me, for your fee,⁹ sir. In meantime
 You, that have so much law, I know, ha' the conscience
 Not to be covetous of what is mine.
 Good sir, I thank you for my plate;⁰ 'twill help *see 1.3.1-20*
 To set up a young mail." Good faith, you look *set up my household*
 As you were costive;⁰ best go home and purge, sir.
[Exit VOLTORE.]
 VOLPONE *[coming from behind the traverse]* Bid him eat
 lettuce⁰ well. My witty mischief, *used as a laxative*
 Let me embrace thee! *[He hugs MOSCA.]* Oh, that I could now
 Transform thee to a Venus!⁰ Mosca, go, *for Volpone's sexual use*
 Straight take my habit of *clarissimo*¹
 And walk the streets; be seen, torment em more.

8. The situation being so straightforward.

9. It being understood that I will pay you, of course.

1. Aristocrat. (By obeying this order, Mosca violates

the sumptuary laws that restricted the wearing of distinctive high-status garments, such as the *clarissimo's* robe, to persons of the appropriate rank.)

We must pursue as well as plot. Who would
Have lost⁰ this feast? *missed*
MOSCA I doubt⁰ it will lose them.⁰ *fear/as dupes*
VOLPONE Oh, my recovery shall recover all.²
That I could now but think on some disguise
To meet 'em in, and ask em questions.
How I would vex 'em still at every turn!
MOSCA Sir, I can fit you.
VOLPONE Canst thou?
MOSCA Yes, I know
One o'the *commendatori*, sir, so like you,
Him will I straight make drunk, and bring you his habit.
VOLPONE A rare disguise, and answering thy brain!⁰ *suiting your wit*
Oh, I will be a sharp disease unto 'em.
MOSCA Sir, you must look for curses—
VOLPONE Till they burst!
The fox fares ever best when he is curst.⁰ *[Exeunt.]* *proverbial wisdom*

SCENE 4. *The WOULD-BES' house.*

[Enter] PEREGRINE [in disguise, and] three MERCATORI
[MERCHANTS],
PEREGRINE Am I enough disguised?
FIRST MERCHANT I warrant you.
PEREGRINE All my ambition is to fright him only.
SECOND MERCHANT If you could ship him away, 'twere excellent.
THIRD MERCHANT TO Zante, or to Aleppo?¹
PEREGRINE Yes, and ha' his
Adventures put i'th'book of voyages,²
And his gulled⁰ story registered for truth? *erroneous*
Well, gentlemen, when I am in awhile,
And that you think us warm in our discourse,
Know⁰ your approaches. *make*
FIRST MERCHANT Trust it to our care.
[Exeunt MERCHANTS.]
[PEREGRINE knocks. A] WOMAN [servant answers the
door].
PEREGRINE Save you, fair lady. Is Sir Pol within?
WOMAN I do not know, sir.
PEREGRINE Pray you, say unto him
Here is a merchant upon earnest business
Desires to speak with him.
WOMAN I will see, sir.
PEREGRINE Pray you.
[Exit WOMAN.]
I see the family is all female here.
[Enter WOMAN.]

2. Volpone believes that by "undoing" his death, he will be able to resuscitate his scam.
5.4

1. Zante is an island off Greece under Venetian con-

trol; Aleppo, a big trading center, is in Syria.

2. An enlarged edition of Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffics, and Discoveries of the English Nation* was published in 1598-1600.

WOMAN He says, sir, he has weighty affairs of state
 That now require him whole;⁰ some other time *demand all his attention*
 You may possess⁰ him. *gain audience with*

PEREGRINE Pray you say again,
 If those require him whole, these will exact him^o *force him out*
 Whereof I bring him tidings. *[Exit WOMAN.]*

What might be
 His grave affair of state, now? How to make
 Bolognian sausages here in Venice, sparing
 One o'th'ingredients?
[Enter WOMAN.]

WOMAN Sir, he says he knows
 By your word "tidings" that you are no statesman,³
 And therefore wills you stay.⁰ *wishes you to wait*

PEREGRINE Sweet, pray you return⁰ him *reply to*
 I have not read so many proclamations
 And studied them for words as he has done,
 But—here he deigns to come.
[Enter] POLITIC.

[Exit WOMAN.]

POLITIC Sir, I must crave
 Your courteous pardon. There hath chanced today
 Unkind disaster 'twixt my lady and me,
 And I was penning my apology
 To give her satisfaction, as you came now.

PEREGRINE Sir, I am grieved I bring you worse disaster.
 The gentleman you met at th'port today,
 That told you he was newly arrived—

POLITIC Ay, was
 A fugitive punk?^o *prostitute*

PEREGRINE NO, sir, a spy set on you;
 And he has made relation to the Senate
 That you professed to him to have a plot
 To sell the state of Venice to the Turk.⁰ *see 4.1.128-30*

POLITIC Oh, me!

PEREGRINE For which warrants are signed by this time
 To apprehend you, and to search your study
 For papers—

POLITIC Alas, sir, I have none but notes
 Drawn out of playbooks⁰— *printed plays*

PEREGRINE All the better, sir.

POLITIC And some essays. What shall I do?

PEREGRINE Sir, best
 Convey yourself into a sugar-chest;
 Or, if you could lie round, a frail were rare,⁴
 And I could send you aboard.

POLITIC Sir, I but talked so,
 For discourse sake merely.⁰ *They knock without. Just to be conversing*

3. Government agent. (Sir Politic believes that a spy would use the word "intelligence.")

4. If you could curl up, a fruit basket would be excellent.

PEREGRINE Hark, they are there!

POLITIC I am a wretch, a wretch!

PEREGRINE What will you do, sir?
Ha' you ne'er a currant-butt^o to leap into? *casket for currants*

They'll put you to the rack; you must be sudden.

POLITIC Sir, I have an engine^o— *contrivance*

THIRD MERCHANT *[without]* Sir Politic Would-be!

SECOND MERCHANT *[without]* Where is he?

POLITIC That I have thought upon beforetime.

PEREGRINE What is it?

POLITIC I shall ne'er endure the torture!
Marry, it is, sir, of a tortoiseshell, *[producing the shell]*
Fitted for these extremities. Pray you sir, help me.
Here I have a place, sir, to put back my legs—
Please you to lay it on, sir—with this cap
And my black gloves. I'll lie, sir, like a tortoise
Till they are gone.

PEREGRINE *[laying the shell on POLITIC'S back]* And call you this an
engine?

POLITIC Mine own device—good sir, bid my wife's women
To burn my papers. *[Exit PEREGRINE.]*
They [the MERCHANTS] rush in.

FIRST MERCHANT Where's he hid?

THIRD MERCHANT We must
And will, sure, find him.

SECOND MERCHANT Which is his study?
[Enter PEREGRINE.]

FIRST MERCHANT What
Are you, sir?

PEREGRINE I'm a merchant, that came here
To look upon this tortoise.

THIRD MERCHANT How?

FIRST MERCHANT Saint Mark!
What beast is this?

PEREGRINE It is a fish.

SECOND MERCHANT *[to POLITIC]* Come out here!

PEREGRINE Nay, you may strike him, sir, and tread upon him.
He'll bear a cart.

FIRST MERCHANT What, to run over him?

PEREGRINE Yes.

THIRD MERCHANT Let's jump upon him.

SECOND MERCHANT Can he not go?^o *walk*

PEREGRINE He creeps, sir.

FIRST MERCHANT *[poking POLITIC]* Let's see him creep.

PEREGRINE No, good sir, you will hurt
him.

SECOND MERCHANT Heart! I'll see him creep, or prick his guts.

THIRD MERCHANT *[to POLITIC]* Come out here!

PEREGRINE *[aside to POLITIC]* Pray you, sir, creep a little.
[POLITIC creeps.]

FIRST MERCHANT Forth!

SECOND MERCHANT Yet further.
 PEREGRINE [*aside to* POLITIC] Good sir, creep.
 SECOND MERCHANT We'll see his legs.
They pull off the shell and discover⁰ him. *expose*
 THIRD MERCHANT Godso, he has garters!
 FIRST MERCHANT Ay, and gloves!
 SECOND MERCHANT Is this
 Your fearful tortoise?
 PEREGRINE [*revealing himself*] Now, Sir Pol, we are even.
 For your next project I shall be prepared.
 I am sorry for the funeral of your notes, sir. •
 FIRST MERCHANT Twere a rare motion to be seen in Fleet Street!⁵
 SECOND MERCHANT Ay, i'the term.
 FIRST MERCHANT Or Smithfield, in the fair.⁶
 THIRD MERCHANT Methinks 'tis but a melancholic sight!
 PEREGRINE Farewell, most politic tortoise.
 [*Exeunt* PEREGRINE and MERCHANTS.]
 [*Enter* WOMAN.]
 POLITIC Where's my lady?
 Knows she of this?
 WOMAN I know not, sir.
 POLITIC Inquire.
 [*Exit* WOMAN.]
 Oh, I shall be the fable of all feasts,⁰ *talk of the town*
 The freight of the *gazetti*, ship boys' tale,⁷
 And, which is worst, even talk for ordinaries.⁰
 [*Enter* WOMAN.]
 WOMAN My lady's come most melancholic home,
 And says, sir, she will straight to sea for physic.
 POLITIC And I, to shun this place and clime forever,
 Creeping with house on back, and think it well
 To shrink my poor head in my politic shell. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE 5. VOLPONE's house.

[*Enter*] VOLPONE [*and*] MOSCA, *the first in the habit of a commendatore, the other, of a clarissimo.*⁰ *see 5.3.104-15*

VOLPONE Am I then like him?
 MOSCA Oh, sir, you are he.
 No man can sever⁰ you. *distinguish*
 VOLPONE Good.
 MOSCA But what am I?
 VOLPONE 'Fore heav'n, a brave⁰ *clarissimo*; thou becom'st it! *splendid*
 Pity thou wert not born one.
 MOSCA If I hold
 My made one, 'twill be well.
 VOLPONE I'll go and see

5. Puppet shows, called "motions," were frequently performed on London's Fleet Street, adjacent to the Inns of Court, where attorneys were trained and cases were argued during the three law terms.

6. Smithfield, just northwest of London, was the site

every August of Bartholomew Fair; puppet shows were a prime entertainment there.

7. Topic of the newspapers and the gossip of boys serving on board ships.

You are not overleavened⁰ with your fortune. *too puffed up*
 You should ha' some would swell now like a wine-vat
 With such an autumn.⁰ Did he gi' you all, sir? *harvest*
 CORVINO Avoid,⁰ you rascal! *Go away*
 VOLPONE Troth, your wife has shown
 Herself a very⁰ woman. But you are well; *typical*
 You need not care; you have a good estate
 To bear it out, sir, better by this chance—
 Except Corbaccio have a share?
 CORBACCIO Hence, varlet!
 VOLPONE You will not be aknownd,² sir; why, 'tis wise.
 Thus do all gamesters at all games dissemble.
 No man will seem to win.⁰ *admit he's winning*
 [Exeunt CORBACCIO and CORVINO.]
 Here comes my vulture,
 Heaving his beak up i'the air and snuffing.

SCENE 7. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] VOLTORE.
 VOLTORE [to himself] Outstripped thus by a parasite? A slave
 Would run on errands, and make legs⁰ for crumbs? *curtsies*
 Well, what I'll do—
 VOLPONE The court stays for⁰ Your Worship. *awaits*
 I e'en rejoice, sir, at Your Worship's happiness,
 And that it fell into so learned hands
 That understand the fingering¹—
 VOLTORE What do you mean?
 VOLPONE I mean to be a suitor to Your Worship
 For the small tenement, out of reparations²—
 That at the end of your long row of houses
 By the *piscaria*.⁰ It was in Volpone's time, *fish market*
 Your predecessor, ere he grew diseased,
 A handsome, pretty, customed⁰ bawdy house *much-patronized*
 As any was in Venice—none dispraised³—
 But fell with him; his body and that house
 Decayed together.
 VOLTORE Come, sir, leave your prating.⁰ *chattering*
 VOLPONE Why, if Your Worship give me but your hand,
 That I may ha' the refusal,⁰ I have done. *right of first refusal*
 'Tis a mere toy to you, sir, candle-rents,⁴
 As Your learned Worship knows—
 VOLTORE What do I know?
 VOLPONE Marry, no end of your wealth, sir, God decrease⁰ it. *instead of "increase"*
 VOLTORE Mistaking knave! What, mock'st thou my misfortune?
 VOLPONE His⁰ blessing on your heart, sir! Would 'twere more. *God's*
 [Exit VOLTORE.]
 Now, to my first⁵ again, at the next corner.

2. You prefer not to be recognized (as heir).

5.7

1. That understand how to handle money.

2. For the rental house in bad repair.

3. Not to disparage the others.

4. (1) Revenue from deteriorating property; (2) "pin money," money for incidentals.

5. The ones I was taunting earlier, Corvino and Corbaccio.

SCENE 8. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] CORBACCIO [and] CORVINO. [Enter] MOSCA,
*passant*⁰ [over the stage in clarissimo's attire, and exit]. *passing*

CORBACCIO See, in our habit! See the impudent varlet!

CORVINO That I could shoot mine eyes at him, like gunstones!⁰ *cannonballs*

VOLPONE But, is this true, sir, of the parasite?

CORBACCIO Again t'afflict us? Monster!

VOLPONE In good faith, sir,
 I'm heartily grieved a beard of your grave length⁰ *so wise an old man*
 Should be so overreached. I never brooked⁰ *could stand*
 That parasite's hair; methought his nose should cozen.⁰ *he had a cheating nose*
 There still⁰ was somewhat in his look did promise. *always*
 The bane⁰ of a *clarissimo*. *ruin*

CORBACCIO Knave—

VOLPONE [to CORVINO] Methinks
 Yet you that are so traded⁰ i'the world, *experienced*
 A witty merchant, the fine bird Corvino,
 That have such moral emblems¹ on your name,
 Should not have sung your shame and dropped your cheese,
 To let the fox laugh at your emptiness.²

CORVINO Sirrah, you think the privilege of the place,³
 And your red saucy cap, that seems to me
 Nailed to your jolt-head with those two *cecchines*,⁴
 Can warrant⁰ your abuses. Come you hither. *sanction*

You shall perceive, sir, I dare beat you. Approach!

VOLPONE No haste, sir, I do know your valor well,
 Since you durst publish⁰ what you are, sir. *make public*

[VOLPONE makes as if to leave.]

CORVINO Tarry!
 I'd speak with you.

VOLPONE Sir, sir, another time—

CORVINO Nay, now.

VOLPONE Oh, God, sir! I were a wise man
 Would stand⁰ the fury of a distracted cuckold. *to withstand*

MOSCA [enters and] walks by 'em.

CORBACCIO What! Come again?

VOLPONE [aside to MOSCA] Upon 'em, Mosca; save me.

CORBACCIO The air's infected where he breathes.

CORVINO Let's fly him.

[Exeunt CORVINO and CORBACCIO.]

VOLPONE Excellent basilisk!⁵ Turn upon the vulture.

SCENE 9. *The scene continues.*

[Enter] VOLTORE.
 VOLTORE [to Mosca] Well, flesh fly, it is summer with you now;

5.8

1. Mottoes accompanying symbolic engravings.

2. As in Aesop's fable; see 1.2.95-97 and note.

3. Violence was forbidden near the court.

4. The *commendatore's* cap is decorated with gold buttons.

5. A legendary monster whose breath and glance were deadly.

Your winter will come on.

MOSCA Good advocate,
Pray thee not rail, nor threaten out of place⁰ thus; *unsuitably*
Thou'lt make a solecism,⁰ as madam says. *see 4.2.43*
Get you a biggin¹ more; your brain breaks loose.

VOLTORE Well, sir. *[Exit MOSCA.]*

VOLPONE Would you ha' me beat the insolent slave?
Throw dirt upon his first good clothes?

VOLTORE This same⁰ *the disguised Volpone*
Is doubtless some familiar!⁰ *attendant devil*

VOLPONE Sir, the court,
In troth, stays for you. I am mad^o a mule *furious that*
That never read Justinian² should get up
And ride an advocate. Had you no quirk⁰ *trick*
To avoid gullage,⁰ sir, by such a creature? *deception*
I hope you do but jest; he has not done't.
This's but confederacy to blind the rest.⁰ *Corvino and Corbaccio*
You are the heir?

VOLTORE A strange, officious,
Troublesome knave! Thou dost torment me.

VOLPONE I know—
It cannot be, sir, that you should be cozened;
Tis not within the wit of man to do it.
You are so wise, so prudent, and 'tis fit
That wealth and wisdom still should go together.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE 10. *The law court.*

[Enter] four AVOCATORI, NOTARIO [NOTARY], COMMEN-
DATORI, BONARIO *[and]* CELIA *[under guard]*, CORBAC-
CIO, *[and]* CORVINO.

FIRST AVOCATORE Are all the parties here?

NOTARY All but the advocate.

SECOND AVOCATORE And here he comes.

FIRST AVOCATORE Then bring 'em forth to sentence.

[Enter] VOLTORE, [and] VOLPONE [still disguised as a
commendatore].

VOLTORE O my most honored fathers, let your mercy
Once win upon⁰ your justice, to forgive— *prevail over*
I am distracted—

VOLPONE *(aside)* What will he do now?

VOLTORE O h,

I know not which t'address myself to first,
Whether Your Fatherhoods or these innocents⁰— *Celia and Bonario*

CORVINO *[aside]* Will he betray himself?

VOLTORE Whom equally
I have abused, out of most covetous ends—

5.9

1. A larger skullcap (worn by lawyers).

2. The Roman law, codified under Emperor Justinian

and still influential on the Continent. Lawyers tradi-
tionally rode mules to the courts; here the image is
comically inverted.

CORVINO [*aside to CORBACCIO*] The man is mad!
CORBACCIO What's that?
CORVINO He is possessed.
VOLTORE For which, now struck in conscience, here I prostrate
Myself at your offended feet for pardon.
[*He throws himself down.*]
FIRST AND SECOND AVOCATORI Arise!
CELIA O heav'n, how just thou art!
VOLPONE [*aside*] I'm caught
I' mine own noose—
CORVINO [*aside to CORBACCIO*] Be constant, sir; naught now
Can help but impudence. [VOLTORE rises.]
FIRST AVOCATORE [*to VOLTORE*] Speak forward.⁰ *continue*
COMMENDATORI [*to the courtroom*] Silence!
VOLTORE It is not passion⁰ in me, reverend fathers, *madness*
But only conscience, conscience, my good sires,
That makes me now tell truth. That parasite,
That knave hath been the instrument of all.
SECOND AVOCATORE Where is that knave? Fetch him.
VOLPONE [*as commendatore*] I go. [*Exit.*]
CORVINO Grave fathers,
This man's distracted; he confessed it now;⁰ *just now*
For, hoping to be old Volpone's heir,
Who now is dead—
THIRD AVOCATORE How?
SECOND AVOCATORE Is Volpone dead?
CORVINO Dead since,⁰ grave fathers— *since his appearance here*
BONARIO O sure vengeance!
FIRST AVOCATORE Stay.
Then he was no deceiver?
VOLTORE Oh, no, none.
The parasite, grave fathers.
CORVINO He does speak
Out of mere envy, 'cause the servant's made
The thing he gaped⁰ for. Please Your Fatherhoods, *Voltore yearned*
This is the truth; though I'll not justify
The other,⁰ but he may be somedeap faulty. *Mosca / somewhat*
VOLTORE Ay, to your hopes as well as mine, Corvino;
But I'll use modesty.⁰ Pleaseth Your Wisdoms *self-control*
To view these certain notes, and but confer⁰ them. *compare*
As I hope favor, they shall speak clear truth.
[*He gives documents to the AVOCATORI.*]
CORVINO The devil has entered him!
BONARIO Or bides in you.
FOURTH AVOCATORE We have done ill, by a public officer
To send for him, if he be heir.
SECOND AVOCATORE For whom?
FOURTH AVOCATORE Him that they call the parasite.
THIRD AVOCATORE 'Tis true;
He is a man of great estate now left.⁰ *bequeathed to him*

FOURTH AVOCATORE [to NOTARY.] Go you and learn his name,
 and say the court
 Entreats his presence here but to the clearing
 Of some few doubts. [Exit NOTARY]

SECOND AVOCATORE This same's a labyrinth!

FIRST AVOCATORE [to CORVINO] Stand you unto^o your first report? *Do you stand by*
 CORVINO My state,^o *estate*
 My life, my fame^o— *reputation*

BONARIO Where is't?¹

CORVINO —are at the stake.

FIRST AVOCATORE [to CORBACCIO] Is yours so too?

CORBACCIO The advocate's a knave,
 And has a forked tongue—

SECOND AVOCATORE Speak to the point.

CORBACCIO so is the parasite, too.

FIRST AVOCATORE This is confusion.

VOLTORE I do beseech Your Fatherhoods, read but those.

CORVINO And credit nothing the false spirit hath writ.
 It cannot be but he is possessed, grave fathers.
 [The AVOCATORI examine VOLTORE S papers.]

SCENE 11. A street.¹

[Enter] VOLPONE [on a separate part of the stage].

VOLPONE To make a snare for mine own neck! And run
 My head into it willfully! With laughter!
 When I had newly scaped, was free and clear!
 Out of mere wantonness!^o Oh, the dull devil *caprice*
 Was in this brain of mine when I devised it,
 And Mosca gave it second. He must now
 Help to sear up^o this vein, or we bleed dead.
 [Enter] NANO, ANDROGYNO, [and] CASTRONE.

How now, who let you loose? Whither go you now?
 What, to buy gingerbread? Or to drown kitlings?^o *kittens*

NANO Sir, Master Mosca called us out of doors,
 And bid us all go play, and took the keys.

ANDROGYNO Yes.

VOLPONE Did Master Mosca take the keys? Why, so!
 I am farther in.^o These are my fine conceits!^o *in trouble / notions*
 I must be merry, with a mischief to me!
 What a vile wretch was I, that could not bear
 My fortune soberly! I must ha' my crotchets^o *perverse whims*
 And my conundrums! Well, go you and seek him.
 His meaning may be truer than my fear.²
 Bid him he straight come to me, to the court.
 Thither will I, and, if't be possible,

5.10

1. Implying that Corvino has nothing of worth to lose.

5.11

1. The courtroom characters remain visible onstage,

perhaps in silent tableau, while Volpone is understood to be outside.

2. Mosca's intentions may be truer (more my fear is true (accurate)).

Unscrew⁰ my advocate upon⁰ new hopes. *dissuade/by means of*
 When I provoked him, then I lost myself.
[Exeunt VOLPONE and his entourage.
The AVOCATORI and parties to the
courtroom proceedings remain onstage.]

SCENE 12. 77ZE *courtroom.*

FIRST AVOCATORE *[with VOLTORE'S notes]* These things can ne'er be
 reconciled. He here *Bonario*
 Professeth that the gentleman⁰ was wronged,
 And that the gentlewoman was brought thither,
 Forced by her husband, and there left.
 VOLTORE Most true.
 CELIA How ready is heav'n to those that pray!
 FIRST AVOCATORE But that
 Volpone would have ravished her, he holds
 Utterly false, knowing his impotence.
 CORVINO Grave fathers, he is possessed; again I say,
 Possessed. Nay, if there be possession
 And obsession, he has both.
 THIRD AVOCATORE Here comes our officer.
[Enter VOLPONE, still disguised.]
 VOLPONE The parasite will straight be here, grave fathers.
 FOURTH AVOCATORE YOU might invent some other name, sir varlet.
 THIRD AVOCATORE Did not the notary meet him?
 VOLPONE Not that I know.
 FOURTH AVOCATORE His coming will clear all.
 SECOND AVOCATORE Yet it is misty.
 VOLTORE May't please Your Fatherhoods—
 VOLPONE *(-whispers [to] the advocate)* Sir, the parasite
 Willed me to tell you that his master lives,
 That you are still the man, your hopes the same;
 And this was only a jest—
 VOLTORE *[aside to VOLPONE]* HOW?
 VOLPONE *[aside to VOLTORE]* Sir, to try
 If you were firm, and how you stood affected.⁰ *how loyal you were*
 VOLTORE Art sure he lives?
 VOLPONE DO I live,⁰ sir? *he's as alive as I am*
 VOLTORE Oh, me!
 I was too violent.
 VOLPONE Sir, you may redeem it.
 They said you were possessed; fall down, and seem so.
 I'll help to make it good. VOLTORE falls.
[Aloud] God bless the man!
[Aside to VOLTORE] Stop your wind hard, and swell.¹ *[Aloud]*
 See, see, see, see!

5.12

1. The details of Voltore's dispossession in the following lines resemble the fake exorcisms described in

Samuel Harsnett's lively expose, *A Discovery of the Fraudulent Practices of John Darrell* (1599). "Stop your wind": hold your breath.

He vomits crooked pins! His eyes are set
 Like a dead hare's hung in a poulter's² shop!
 His mouth's running away!^o [To CORVINO] DO you see, *twitching spasmodically*
 signor?
 Now 'tis in his belly.
 CORVINO Ay, the devil!
 VOLPONE Now in his throat.
 CORVINO Ay, I perceive it plain.
 VOLPONE Twill out, 'twill out! Stand clear. See where it flies,
 In shape of a blue toad with a bat's wings!
 [To CORBACCIO] DO not you see it, sir?
 CORBACCIO What? I think I do.
 CORVINO 'Tis too manifest.
 VOLPONE Look! He comes t' himself!
 VOLTRE Where am I?
 VOLPONE Take good heart; the worst is past, sir.
 You are dispossessed.
 FIRST AVOCATORE What accident^o is this? *unforeseen event*
 SECOND AVOCATORE Sudden, and full of wonder!
 THIRD AVOCATORE If he were
 Possessed, as it appears, all this^o is nothing. *Voltore's written statement*
 CORVINO He has been often subject to these fits.
 FIRST AVOCATORE Show him that writing. [To VOLTRE] DO
 you know it, sir?
 VOLPONE [*aside to VOLTRE*] Deny it, sir; forswear it; know it not.
 VOLTRE Yes, I do know it well, it is my hand;
 But all that it contains is false.
 BONARIO Oh, practice!^o *deception*
 SECOND AVOCATORE What maze is this!
 FIRST AVOCATORE is he not guilty, then,
 Whom you there name the parasite?
 VOLTRE Grave fathers,
 No more than his good patron, old Volpone.
 FOURTH AVOCATORE Why, he is dead!
 VOLTRE Oh, no, my honored fathers.
 He lives—
 FIRST AVOCATORE HOW! Lives?
 VOLTRE Lives.
 SECOND AVOCATORE This is subtler yet!
 THIRD AVOCATORE [*to VOLTRE*] YOU said he was dead?
 VOLTRE Never.
 THIRD AVOCATORE [*to CORVINO*] YOU said so?
 CORVINO I heard so.
 FOURTH AVOCATORE Here comes the gentleman; make him way.
 [*Enter MOSCA.*]
 THIRD AVOCATORE A stool!
 FOURTH AVOCATORE [*aside*] A proper^o man! And, were Volpone dead, *handsome*
 A fit match for my daughter.

2. Seller of poultry and small game.

THIRD AVOCATORE Give him way.
VOLPONE [*aside to MOSCA*] iMosca, I was almost lost; the advocate
Had betrayed all; but now it is recovered.
All's o'the hinge⁰ again. Say I am living. *running smoothly*

MOSCA [*aloud*] What busy⁰ knave is this? Most reverend fathers, *troublesome*
I sooner had attended your grave pleasures,
But that my order for the funeral
Of my dear patron did require me—

VOLPONE [*aside*] Mosca!
MOSCA Whom I intend to bury like a gentleman.
VOLPONE [*aside*] Ay, quick,⁰ and cozen me of all.³ *alive*

SECOND AVOCATORE Still stranger!
More intricate!

FIRST AVOCATORE And come about⁰ again! *reversing direction*
FOURTH AVOCATORE [*aside*] It is a match; my daughter is bestowed.
MOSCA [*aside to VOLPONE*] Will you gi' me half?
VOLPONE [*aside to MOSCA*] First, I'll be hanged.
MOSCA [*aside to VOLPONE*]

I know

Your voice is good. Cry not so loud.
FIRST AVOCATORE Demand⁰ *question*
The advocate. [*To VOLTORE*] Sir, did not you affirm
Volpone was alive?

VOLPONE Yes, and he is;
This gent'man told me so. (*Aside to MOSCA*) Thou shalt have half.
MOSCA Whose drunkard is this same? Speak, some that know him;
I never saw his face. (*Aside to VOLPONE*) I cannot now
Afford it you so cheap.

VOLPONE (*aside to MOSCA*) No?
FIRST AVOCATORE [*to VOLTORE*] What say you?
VOLTORE The officer told me.
VOLPONE I did, grave fathers,
And will maintain he lives with mine own life,
And that this creature⁰ told me. (*Aside*) I was born *Mosca*
With all good stars my enemies.

MOSCA Most grave fathers,
If such an insolence as this must pass⁰ *be permitted*
Upon me, I am silent. 'Twas not this
For which you sent, I hope.

SECOND AVOCATORE [*pointing to VOLPONE*] Take him away.
VOLPONE (*aside to MOSCA*) Mosca!
THIRD AVOCATORE Let him be whipped.
VOLPONE (*aside to MOSCA*) Wilt thou betray me?
Cozen me?

THIRD AVOCATORE And taught to bear himself
Toward a person of his⁰ rank. *Mosca's*
FOURTH AVOCATORE Away!
[*Officers seize VOLPONE.*]

3. Volpone sees that Mosca's pious pretense of burying the "dead" Volpone will mean an end to all of Volpone's hopes; he'll be cheated out of everything.

MOSCA I humbly thank Your Fatherhoods.

VOLPONE Soft, soft. *[Aside]* Whipped?
 And lose all that I have? If I confess,
 It cannot be much more.

FOURTH AVOCATORE *[to MOSCA]* Sir, are you married?

VOLPONE *[aside]* They'll be allied⁰ anon; I must be resolute. *linked, by marriage*
 The fox shall here uncase.⁰ *He puts off his disguise.* *reveal himself*

MOSCA- *(aside)* Patron!

VOLPONE Nay, now
 My ruins shall not come alone. Your match
 I'll hinder sure; my substance shall not glue you
 Nor screw you into a family.

MOSCA *(aside)* Why, patron!

VOLPONE I am Volpone, and *[pointing to MOSCA]* this is my knave;
[Pointing to VOLTORE] This his own knave; *[pointing to CORBACCIO]* this,
 avarice's fool;
[Pointing to CORVINO] This, a chimera⁰ of wittol, fool, *monstrous combination*
 and knave;
 And, reverend fathers, since we all can hope
 Naught but a sentence, let's not now despair it.⁰ *be disappointed (ironic)*
 You hear me brief.⁰ *That's all I have to say*

CORVINO May it please Your Fatherhoods—

COMMENDATORE⁴ Silence!

FIRST AVOCATORE The knot is now undone by miracle!

SECOND AVOCATORE Nothing can be more clear.

THIRD AVOCATORE Or can more prove
 These innocent.

FIRST AVOCATORE Give 'em their liberty.
[BONARIO and CELIA are released.]

BONARIO Heaven could not long let such gross crimes be hid.

SECOND AVOCATORE If this be held the highway to get riches,
 May I be poor!

THIRD AVOCATORE This's not the gain, but torment.

FIRST AVOCATORE These possess wealth as sick men possess fevers,
 Which trulier may be said to possess them.

SECOND AVOCATORE Disrobe that parasite.
[MOSCA is stripped of his clarissimo's robe.]

CORVINO *[and]* MOSCA Most honored fathers!

FIRST AVOCATORE Can you plead aught to stay the course of justice?
 If you can, speak.

CORVINO *[and]* VOLTORE We beg favor—

CELIA And mercy.

FIRST AVOCATORE *[to CELIA]* YOU hurt your innocence, suing⁰ for *pleading*
 the guilty.
[To the others] Stand forth; and, first, the parasite. You appear
 T'have been the chiefest minister,⁰ if not plotter, *agent*
 In all these lewd⁰ impostures, and now, lastly, *vile, obscene*
 Have with your impudence abused the court

4. Not Volpone, of course, but one of the genuine Commendatori. They are probably the officers who strip Mosca at line 103.

And habit⁰ of a gentleman of Venice, *garb*
 Being a fellow of no birth or blood;
 For which our sentence is, first thou be whipped,
 Then live perpetual prisoner in our galleys.

VOLPONE I thank you for him.

MOSCA Bane to^o thy wolfish nature! *curses on*
 FIRST AVOCATORE Deliver him to the *saffi*.^o [MOSCA is placed *bailiffs*
under guard.] Thou, Volpone,
 By blood and rank a gentleman, canst not fall
 Under like censure;⁰ but our judgment on thee *the same sentence*
 Is that thy substance⁰ all be straight confiscate *wealth*
 To the hospital of the *Incurabili*;⁵
 And since the most was gotten by imposture,
 By feigning lame, gout, palsy, and such diseases,
 Thou art to lie in prison, cramped with irons,
 Till thou be'st sick and lame indeed.—Bemove him.

[VOLPONE is placed under guard.]

VOLPONE This is called mortifying⁶ of a fox.

FIRST AVOCATORE Thou, Voltore, to take away the scandal
 Thou hast giv'n all worthy men of thy profession,
 Art banished from their fellowship and our state.⁰ *Venice*

[VOLTORE is placed under guard.]

Corbaccio—bring him near.—We here possess
 Thy son of all thy state,⁰ and confine thee *estate*
 To the monastery of San' Spirito,⁰ *the Holy Spirit*
 Where, since thou knew'st not how to live well here,
 Thou shalt be learned⁰ to die well. *taught*

CORBACCIO Ha! What said he?

COMMENDATORE You shall know anon,^o sir. *soon enough*

[CORBACCIO is placed under guard.]

FIRST AVOCATORE Thou, Corvino, shalt
 Be straight embarked from thine own house and rowed
 Bound about Venice, through the Grand Canal,
 Wearing a cap with fair⁰ long ass's ears *handsome; clearly visible*
 Instead of horns, and so to mount, a paper
 Pinned on thy breast, to the *berlino*⁷—

CORVINO Yes,
 And have mine eyes beat out with stinking fish,
 Bruised fruit, and rotten eggs—Tis well. I'm glad
 I shall not see my shame yet.

FIRST AVOCATORE And to expiate
 Thy wrongs done to thy wife, thou art to send her
 Home to her father with her dowry trebled.⁸
 And these are all your judgments—

5. The Hospital of the Incurables was founded in Venice in 1522 to care for people terminally ill with syphilis.

6. (1) Hanging of meat to make it tender; (2) disciplining spiritually; (3) killing. (Volpone's sentence is almost certain to bring about his death.)

7. Pillory. Versions of such shaming punishments were commonly imposed for sexual and marital infractions. The offender typically had to wear a placard specifying his crimes; hence the paper pinned on Cor-

vino's breast.

8. The judges grant Celia "separation from bed and board." Such legal separations could be permitted to the innocent party in a case of adultery or, as here, to a victim of gross spousal abuse. Because legal separation entailed the finding of serious fault, the guilty spouse could also, as here, be forced to pay financial damages. Legal separation did not bring with it, however, the right of remarriage for either party.

145 ALL Honored fathers!
 FIRST AVOCATORE Which may not be revoked. Now you begin,
 When crimes are done and past and to be punished,
 To think what your crimes are.—Away with them!
 [MOSCA, VOLPONE, VOLTORE, CORBACCIO, and CORVINO
retire to the hack of the stage, guarded.]⁹
 Let all that see these vices thus rewarded
 150 Take heart,⁰ and love to study 'em. Mischiefs feed *take them to heart*
 Like beasts, till they be fat, and then they bleed.
 [The AVOCATORI step hack.]
 [VOLPONE comes forward.]
 VOLPONE The seasoning of a play is the applause
 Now, though the fox be punished by the laws,
 He yet doth hope there is no suffering due
 155 Nor any fact⁰ which he hath done 'gainst you. *crime*
 If there be, censure him; here he, doubtful,⁰ stands. *apprehensive*
 If not, fare jovially, and clap your hands. [Exeunt.]
performed 1606 *published* 1616

FROM EPIGRAMS¹

To My Book

It will be looked for, book, when some but see
 Thy title, *Epigrams*, and named of me,
 Thou should'st be bold, licentious, full of gall,
 Wormwood⁰ and sulphur, sharp and toothed² withal, *bitter-tasting plant*
 5 Become a petulant thing, hurl ink and wit
 As madmen stones, not caring whom they hit.
 Deceive their malice who could wish it so,
 And by thy wiser temper let men know
 Thou art not covetous of least self-fame
 10 Made from the hazard of another's shame³—
 Much less with lewd, profane, and beastly phrase
 To catch the world's loose laughter or vain gaze.
 He that departs⁰ with his own honesty *parts*
 For vulgar praise, doth it too dearly buy.

1616

9. Alternatively, the prisoners, and later the Avocatori and the others, could exit, and Volpone could return to speak the epilogue. The advantage of the staging preferred here is that almost all the players are onstage to receive the audience's applause.

1. Epigrams are commonly thought of as brief, witty, incisive poems of personal invective, often with a surprise turn at the end. But Jonson uses the word in a more liberal sense. His "Epigrams,"

a separate section in his collected *Works* of 1616, include not only sharp, satiric poems but many complimentary ones to friends and patrons, as well as memorial epitaphs and a verse letter, "Inviting a Friend to Supper."

2. The distinction between toothed (biting) and toothless (general) satires was a commonplace.

3. Here, as often elsewhere, Jonson echoes the greatest Roman epigrammatist, Martial.

On Something, That Walks Somewhere

At court I met it, in clothes brave⁰ enough *fine*
 To be a courtier, and looks grave enough
 To seem a statesman: as I near it came,
 It made me a great face. I asked the name.
 5 "A lord," it cried, "buried in flesh and blood,
 And such from whom let no man hope least good,
 For I will do none; and as little ill,
 For I will dare none." Good lord, walk dead still.

1616

To William Camden¹

Camden, most reverend head, to whom I owe
 All that I am in arts, all that I know
 (How nothing's that!), to whom my country owes
 The great renown and name wherewith she goes;²
 5 Than thee the age sees not that thing more grave,
 More high, more holy, that she more would crave.
 What name, what skill, what faith hast thou in things!
 What sight in searching the most antique springs!
 What weight and what authority in thy speech!
 10 Man scarce can make that doubt, but³ thou canst teach.
 Pardon free truth and let thy modesty,
 Which conquers all, be once o'ercome by thee.
 Many of thine⁰ this better could than I; *your pupils*
 But for^o their powers, accept my piety. *in place of*

1616

On My First Daughter¹

Here lies, to each her parents' ruth,^o *grief*
 Mary, the daughter of their youth;
 Yet all heaven's gifts being heaven's due,
 It makes the father less to rue.⁰ *regret*
 5 At six months' end she parted hence
 With safety of her innocence;
 Whose soul heaven's queen,⁰ whose name she bears, *Mary*
 In comfort of her mother's tears,
 Hath placed amongst her virgin-train:

1. Camden, a distinguished scholar and antiquary, had been Jonson's teacher at Westminster School.
 2. Camden's studies of his native land in *Britannia* (1586) and *Remains of a Greater Work Concerning Britain* (1605) ran to several editions and were

translated abroad.

3. One hardly needs wonder whether.

1. Probably written in the late 1590s, in Jonson's Roman Catholic period (ca. 1598-1610).

10 Where, while that severed doth remain
 This grave partakes the fleshly birth;⁰ *the body*
 Which cover lightly, gentle earth!²

1616

To John Donne

Donne, the delight of Phoebus⁰ and each Muse, *god of poetry*
 Who, to thy one, all other brains refuse;¹
 Whose every work, of thy most early wit,
 Came forth example² and remains so yet;
 5 Longer a-knowing than most wits do live,
 And which no affection praise enough can give.
 To it³ thy language, letters, arts, best life,
 Which might with half mankind maintain a strife.
 All which I meant to praise, and yet I would,
 10 But leave, because I cannot as I should.

1616

On Giles and Joan

Who says that Giles and Joan at discord be?
 Th' observing neighbors no such mood can see.
 Indeed, poor Giles repents he married ever,
 But that his Joan doth too. And Giles would never
 5 By his free will be in Joan's company;
 No more would Joan he should. Giles riseth early,
 And having got him out of doors is glad;
 The like is Joan. But turning home is sad,
 And so is Joan. Ofttimes, when Giles doth find
 10 Harsh sights at home, Giles wisheth he were blind:
 All this doth Joan. Or that his long-yearned¹ life
 Were quite outspun. The like wish hath his wife.
 The children that he keeps Giles swears are none
 Of his begetting; and so swears his Joan.
 15 In all affections⁰ she concurrereth still. *desires*
 If now, with man and wife, to will and nilP *not will*
 The self-same things a note of concord be,
 I know no couple better can agree.

1616

2. A common sentiment in Latin epitaphs.

1. I.e., the muses shower their favors exclusively on you.

2. A pattern for others to imitate.

3. In addition to your wit.

1. Spun from long skeins of yarn.

On My First Son

Farewell, thou child of my right hand,' and joy;
 My sin was too much hope of thee, loved boy:
 Seven years thou wert lent to me, and I thee pay,
 Exacted by thy fate, on the just day.
 5 O could I lose all father now! For why
 Will man lament the state he should envy,
 To have so soon 'scaped world's and flesh's rage,
 And, if no other misery, yet age?
 Rest in soft peace, and asked, say, "Here doth lie
 10 Ben Jonson his best piece of poetry."²
 For whose sake henceforth all his vows be such
 As what he loves may never like too much.³

1616

On Lucy, Countess of Bedford¹

This morning, timely rapt with holy fire,
 I thought to form unto my zealous muse,
 What kind of creature I could most desire,
 To honor, serve, and love; as poets use.²
 5 I meant to make her fair, and free, and wise,
 Of greatest blood, and yet more good than great;
 I meant the day-star^o should not brighter rise,
 Nor lend like influence³ from his lucent seat.
 I meant she should be courteous, facile,^o sweet,
 10 Hating that solemn vice of greatness, pride;
 I meant each softest virtue, there should meet,
 Fit in that softer bosom to reside.
 Only a learned, and a manly soul
 I purposed her; that should, with even powers,
 15 The rock, the spindle, and the shears⁴ control
 Of destiny, and spin her own free hours.
 Such when I meant to feign, and wished to see,
 My muse bad, *Bedford* write, and that was she.

*the sun**affable*

1616

1. A literal translation of the Hebrew name "Benjamin," which implies the meaning "dexterous" or "fortunate." The boy was born in 1596 and died on his birthday in 1603~

2. Poet and father, are both "makers," Jonson's favorite term for the poet.

3. The obscure grammar of the last lines allows for various readings; "like" may carry the sense of "please."

1. The Countess of Bedford was a famous patroness of the age, to whom Jonson, Donne, and many

other poets addressed poems of compliment.

2. This elegant epigram of praise plays off against the Pygmalion story, in which the sculptor molds a statue of his ideal woman and she then comes to life.

3. Stars were supposed to emit an ethereal fluid, or "influence," that affected the affairs of mortals, for good or ill.

4. Emblems of the three Fates: Clotho spun the thread of life, Lachesis decided its length, and Atropos cut the thread to end life.

To Lucy, Countess of Bedford,
with Mr. Donne's Satires¹

Lucy, you brightness² of our sphere, who are
 Life of the Muses' day, their morning star!
 If works, not th' authors, their own grace should look,⁰ *have regard to*
 Whose poems would not wish to be your book?
 5 But these, desired by you, the maker's ends
 Crown with their own. Rare poems ask rare friends.
 Yet satires, since the most of mankind be
 Their unavoi⁰ded subject, fewest see: *inevitable*
 For none e'er took that pleasure in sin's sense,⁰ *experience*
 10 But, when they heard it taxed, took more offense.
 They then that, living where the matter is bred,³
 Dare for these poems yet both ask and read
 And like them too, must needfully, though few,
 Be of the best: and 'mongst those, best are you;
 15 Lucy, you brightness of our sphere, who are
 The Muses' evening, as their morning star.⁴

1616

To Sir Thomas Roe¹

Thou hast begun well, Roe, which stand⁰ well too, *continue*
 And I know nothing more thou hast to do.
 He that is round⁰ within himself, and straight, *honest*
 Need seek no other strength, no other height;
 5 Fortune upon him breaks herself, if ill,
 And what should hurt his virtue makes it still.⁰ *constant*
 That thou at once, then, nobly may'st defend
 With thine own course the judgment of thy friend,
 Be always to thy gathered self the same,
 10 And study conscience, more than thou wouldst fame.
 Though both be good, the latter yet is worst,
 And ever is ill got without the first.

1616

Inviting a Friend to Supper

Tonight, grave sir, both my poor house and I
 Do equally desire your company:

1. With this poem, Jonson offered a manuscript collection of Donne's satires (see p. 1284), such as commonly passed from hand to hand in court circles.

2. Lucy's name derives from the Latin *lux*, meaning "light."

3. I.e., at court.

4. The planet Venus is called Lucifer ("light-bearing") when it appears before sunrise, Hesperus when it appears after sunset.

1. Knighted in 1605, Roe was sent as ambassador to the Great Mogul in 1614. His collection of coins and of Greek and Oriental manuscripts is in the Bodleian Library.

Not that we think us worthy such a guest,
 But that your worth will dignify our feast
 5 With those that come; whose grace may make that seem
 Something, which else could hope for no esteem.
 It is the fair acceptance, sir, creates
 The entertainment perfect: not the cates. *food*
 Yet shall you have, to rectify your palate,
 10 An olive, capers, or some better salad
 Ushering the mutton; with a short-legged hen,
 If we can get her, full of eggs, and then
 Lemons and wine for sauce; to^o these, a coney^o *besides/rabbit*
 Is not to be despaired of for our money;
 15 And though fowl now be scarce, yet there are clerks,^o *scholars*
 The sky not falling, think we may have larks.
 I'll tell you of more, and lie, so you will come:
 Of partridge, pheasant, woodcock, of which some
 May yet be there; and godwit if we can,
 20 Knot, rail, and ruff, too.¹ Howsoe'er, my man" *servant*
 Shall read a piece of Virgil, Tacitus,
 Livy, or of some better book to us,
 Of which we'll speak our minds amidst our meat;^o *food (of any kind)*
 And I'll profess^o no verses to repeat: *promise*
 25 To this,^o if aught appear which I not know of, *on this point*
 That will the pastry, not my paper, show of.²
 Digestive cheese and fruit there sure will be;
 But that which most doth take my muse and me
 Is a pure cup of rich canary wine,
 30 Which is the Mermaid's now, but shall be mine;
 Of which, had Horace or Anacreon³ tasted,
 Their lives, as do their lines, till now had lasted.
 Tobacco, nectar, or the Thespian spring
 Are all but Luther's beer to this I sing.⁴
 35 Of this we will sup free but moderately,
 And we will have no Pooly or Parrot⁵ by;
 Nor shall our cups make any guilty men,
 But at our parting we will be as when
 We innocently met. No simple word
 40 That shall be uttered at our mirthful board
 Shall make us sad next morning, or affright
 The liberty that we'll enjoy tonight.

1. All these are edible birds.

2. Paper-lined pans were used to keep pies from sticking; the writing sometimes rubbed off on the piecrust.

3. Horace and Anacreon (one in Latin, the other in Greek) wrote many poems in praise of wine. The Mermaid tavern was a favorite haunt of the poets; sweet wine from the Canary Islands was popular in England.

4. Tobacco was an expensive New World novelty in Jonson's time. Nectar is the drink of the gods. The Thespian spring, on Mount Helicon, is a legendary source of poetic inspiration. Compared with canary, these intoxicants are no better than inferior German beer.

5. Pooly and Parrot were government spies. As a Roman Catholic, Jonson had reason to be wary of undercover agents.

On Gut

Gut eats all day, and lechers all the night,
 So all his meat he tasteth over twice;
 And striving so to double his delight,
 He makes himself a thoroughfare of vice.
 5 Thus in his belly can he change a sin:
 Lust it comes out, that gluttony went in.

1616

Epitaph on S. P., a Child of Queen Elizabeth's Chapel¹

Weep with me, all you that read
 This little story;
 And know for whom a tear you shed,
 Death's self is sorry.
 5 'Twas a child that so did thrive
 In grace and feature,
 As Heaven and Nature seemed to strive
 Which owned the creature.
 Years he numbered scarce thirteen
 10 When Fates turned cruel,
 Yet three filled zodiacs had he been
 The stage's jewel;²
 And did act (what now we moan)
 Old men so duly,⁰ *aptly*
 15 As, sooth,⁰ the Parcae⁰ thought him one, *in truth/Fates*
 He played so truly.
 So, by error, to his fate
 They all consented;
 But, viewing him since (alas, too late),
 20 They have repented,
 And have sought (to give new birth)
 In baths³ to steep him;
 But, being so much too good for earth,
 Heaven vows to keep him.

1616

1. Salomon Pavy, a boy actor in the troupe known as the Children of Queen Elizabeth's Chapel, who had appeared in several of Jonson's plays; he died in 1602.

2. He had been on the stage for three seasons.
 3. Perhaps such magic baths as that of Medea, which restored Jason's father to his first youth (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 7).

FROM THE FOREST¹To Penshurst²

Thou art not, Penshurst, built to envious show,
 Of touch³ or marble; nor canst boast a row
 Of polished pillars, or a roof of gold;
 Thou hast no lantern⁰ whereof tales are told, *cupola*
 Or stair, or courts; but stand'st an ancient pile,⁰ *edifice*
 And, these grudged at,⁴ art revered the while.
 Thou joy'st in better marks, of soil, of air,
 Of wood, of water; therein thou art fair.
 Thou hast thy walks for health, as well as sport;
 Thy mount, to which the dryads⁰ do resort, *wood nymphs*
 Where Pan and Bacchus their high feasts have made,
 Beneath the broad beech and the chestnut shade;
 That taller tree, which of a nut was set
 At his great birth where all the Muses met.⁵
 There in the writhed bark are cut the names
 Of many a sylvan,⁰ taken with his flames; *countryman*
 And thence the ruddy satyrs oft provoke
 The lighter fauns⁶ to reach thy Lady's Oak.⁷
 Thy copse⁰ too, named of Gamage⁸ thou hast there, *little woods*
 That never fails to serve thee seasoned deer
 When thou wouldst feast or exercise thy friends.
 The lower land, that to the river bends,
 Thy sheep, thy bullocks, kine,⁰ and calves do feed; *cattle*
 The middle grounds thy mares and horses breed.
 Each bank doth yield thee conies;⁰ and the tops,⁰ *rabbits / ground*
 Fertile of wood, Ashore and Sidney's copse,
 To crown thy open table, doth provide
 The purpled pheasant with the speckled side;
 The painted partridge lies in every field,
 And for thy mess⁰ is willing to be killed. *table*
 And if the high-swollen Medway⁹ fail thy dish,
 Thou hast thy ponds, that pay thee tribute fish:
 Fat aged carps that run into thy net,
 And pikes, now weary their own kind to eat,
 As loath the second draft or cast to stay,
 Officially⁰ at first themselves betray; *dutifully*
 Bright eels that emulate them, and leap on land
 Before the fisher, or into his hand.
 Then hath thy orchard fruit, thy garden flowers,

1. In the 1616 *Works*, Jonson grouped some of his nonepigrammatic poems under the heading "The Forest," a translation of the term *Sylvae*, meaning a poetic miscellany. "To Penshurst" and the two following poems are from that group.

2. Penshurst, in Kent, was the estate of Robert Sidney, Viscount Lisle (later, Earl of Leicester), a younger brother of the poet Sir Philip Sidney. Along with Lanier's "Description of Cookham" (p. 1319), this poem inaugurated the small genre of English "country-house" poems, which includes Marvell's *Upon Appleton House* (p. 1716).

3. Touchstone, an expensive black basalt.

4. More pretentious houses attract envy.

5. Sir Philip Sidney was born at Penshurst.

6. Satyrs and fauns were woodland spirits. Satyrs had the bodies of men and the legs (and horns) of goats. "Provoke": challenge to a race.

7. Named after a lady of the house who went into labor under its branches.

8. Lady Barbara (Gamage) Sidney, wife of Sir Robert.

9. The local river.

40 Fresh as the air, and new as are the hours.
 The early cherry, with the later plum,
 Fig, grape, and quince, each in his time doth come;
 The blushing apricot and woolly peach
 Hang on thy walls, that every child may reach.

45 And though thy walls be of the country stone,
 They're reared with no man's ruin, no man's groan;
 There's none that dwell about them wish them down;
 But all come in, the farmer and the clown,⁰ *peasant*
 And no one empty-handed, to salute

50 Thy lord and lady, though they have no suit.⁰ *request to make*
 Some bring a capon, some a rural cake,
 Some nuts, some apples; some that think they make
 The better cheeses bring them, or else send
 By their ripe daughters, whom they would commend

55 This way to husbands, and whose baskets bear
 An emblem of themselves in plum or pear.
 But what can this (more than express their love)
 Add to thy free provisions, far above
 The need of such? whose liberal board doth flow

60 With all that hospitality doth know;
 Where comes no guest but is allowed to eat,
 Without his fear, and of thy lord's own meat;⁰ *food*
 Where the same beer and bread, and selfsame wine,
 That is his lordship's shall be also mine,¹

65 And I not fain to sit (as some this day
 At great men's tables), and yet dine away.
 Here no man tells⁰ my cups; nor, standing by, *counts*
 A waiter doth my gluttony envy,⁰ *resent*
 But gives me what I call, and lets me eat;

70 He knows below⁰ he shall find plenty of meat. *in the servants' quarters*
 Thy tables hoard not up for the next day;
 Nor, when I take my lodging, need I pray
 For fire, or lights, or livery;⁰ all is there, *provisions*
 As if thou then wert mine, or I reigned here:

75 There's nothing I can wish, for which I stay.⁰ *wait*
 That found King James when, hunting late this way
 With his brave son, the Prince,² they saw thy fires
 Shine bright on every hearth, as the desires
 Of thy Penates⁰ had been set on flame *Roman household gods*

80 To entertain them; or the country came
 With all their zeal to warm their welcome here.
 What (great I will not say, but) sudden cheer
 Didst thou then make 'em! And what praise was heaped
 On thy good lady then, who therein reaped

85 The just reward of her high housewifery;
 To have her linen, plate, and all things nigh,
 When she was far; and not a room but dressed
 As if it had expected such a guest!

1. Different courses might be served to different guests, depending on their social status. The lord would have the best food.

2. Prince Henry, the heir apparent, who died in November 1612.

These, Penshurst, are thy praise, and yet not all.
 90 Thy lady's noble, fruitful, chaste withal.
 His children thy great lord may call his own,
 A fortune in this age but rarely known.
 They are, and have been, taught religion; thence
 Their gentler spirits have sucked innocence.
 95 Each morn and even they are taught to pray,
 With the whole household, and may, every day,
 Read in their virtuous parents' noble parts⁰
 The mysteries of manners,⁰ arms, and arts. *attributes*
 Now, Penshurst, they that will proportion⁰ thee *moral behavior*
 100 With other edifices, when they see *corn-pare*
 Those proud, ambitious heaps, and nothing else,
 May say, their lords have built, but thy lord dwells.

1616

Song: To Celia¹

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
 And I will pledge with mine;
 Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
 And I'll not look for wine.
 5 The thirst that from the soul doth rise
 Doth ask a drink divine:
 But might I of Jove's nectar sup,
 I would not change for thine.
 I sent thee late a rosy wreath,
 10 Not so much honoring thee,
 As giving it a hope that there
 It could not withered be.
 But thou thereon didst only breathe,
 And sent'st it back to me;
 15 Since when it grows and smells, I swear,
 Not of itself, but thee.

1616

To Heaven

Good and great God, can I not think of thee
 But it must straight⁰ my melancholy be? *immediately*
 Is it interpreted in me disease
 That, laden with my sins, I seek for ease?
 5 Oh, be thou witness, that the reins¹ dost know
 And hearts of all, if I be sad for show,

1. These famous lines translate a patchwork of five separate prose passages by Philostratus, a Greek sophist (3rd century C.E.). The music that has made it a barroom favorite is by an anonymous

18th-century composer.

1. Literally, kidneys, but also the seat of the affections, with a glance at Psalm 7:9: "the righteous God trieth the hearts and reins."

And judge me after, if I dare pretend
 To aught but grace, or aim at other end.
 As thou art all, so be thou all to me,
 10 First, midst, and last, converted⁰ one and three, *interchanging*
 My faith, my hope, my love; and in this state,
 My judge, my witness, and my advocate.
 Where have I been this while exiled from thee,
 And whither rapt,^o now thou but stoop'st to me? *carried off*
 15 Dwell, dwell here still:^o Oh, being everywhere, *always*
 How can I doubt to find thee ever here?
 I know my state, both full of shame and scorn,
 Conceived in sin and unto labor born,
 Standing with fear, and must with horror fall,
 20 And destined unto judgment after all.
 I feel my griefs too, and there scarce is ground
 Upon my flesh to inflict another wound.
 Yet dare I not complain or wish for death
 With holy Paul,² lest it be thought the breath
 25 Of discontent; or that these prayers be
 For weariness of life, not love of thee.

1616

FROM UNDERWOOD¹*From A Celebration of Charis in Ten Lyric Pieces²*4. *Her Triumph³*

See the chariot at hand here of Love,
 Wherein my lady rideth!
 Each that draws is a swan or a dove,⁴
 And well the car Love guideth.
 5 As she goes, all hearts do duty
 Unto her beauty;
 And enamored do wish, so they might
 But enjoy such a sight,
 That they still^o were to run by her side, *always*
 10 Through swords, through seas, whither she would ride.

 Do but look on her eyes, they do light
 All that Love's world compriseth!
 Do but look on her hair, it is bright
 As Love's star^o when it riseth! *Venus, the morning star*
 15 Do but mark,^o her forehead's smoother *observe*

2. "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Romans 7.24).

1. Preparing a second edition of his *Works* (published posthumously in 1640–41), Jonson added a third section of poems, "Underwood," "out of the analogy they hold to *The Forest* in my former book."

2. The Greek word *charis*, from which Jonson's lady takes her name, means "grace" or "loveliness."

3. Following Petrarch, many Renaissance poets used the figure of the triumphal procession to celebrate a person or concept—time, chastity, fame, etc. Metrically, this poem is highly complex.

4. Venus's birds.

Than words that soothe her!
 And from her arched brows, such a grace
 Sheds itself through the face,
 As alone there triumphs to the life
 20 All the gain, all the good, of the elements' strife.⁵

Have you seen but a bright lily grow,
 Before rude hands have touched it?
 Have you marked but the fall o' the snow,
 Before the soil hath smutched it?
 25 Have you felt the wool o' the beaver,
 Or swan's down ever?
 Or have smelt o' the bud o' the briar,
 Or the nard⁶ i' the fire?
 Or have tasted the bag o' the bee?
 30 O so white! O so soft! O so sweet is she!

1640-41

A Sonnet, to the Noble Lady, the Lady Mary Wroth¹

I that have been a lover, and could show it,
 Though not in these,⁰ in rhymes not wholly dumb, *in sonnets*
 Since I exscribe⁰ your sonnets, am become *copy out*
 A better lover, and much better poet.
 5 Nor is my muse, or I, ashamed to owe it
 To those true numerous graces; whereof some
 But charm the senses, others overcome
 Both brains and hearts; and mine now best do know it:
 For in your verse all Cupid's armory,
 10 His flames, his shafts, his quiver, and his bow,
 His very eyes are yours to overthrow.
 But then his mother's⁰ sweets you so apply, *Venus's*
 Her joys, her smiles, her loves, as readers take
 For Venus' ceston,² every line you make.

1640-41

My Picture Left in Scotland¹

I now think Love is rather deaf than blind,
 For else it could not be

5. The four elements—earth, water, air, fire—were thought to be in perpetual conflict.

6. Spikenard, an aromatic ointment.

1. Mary Wroth, author of the sonnet sequence *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* (p. 1456) and the romance *The Countess of Montgomery's Irania* (p. 1453), was the daughter of Robert Sidney and his wife, Barbara Gamage, of Penshurst, the niece of Sir Philip Sidney and the Countess of Pembroke; she was the wife of Sir Robert Wroth, whose country estate Jonson also praised in "The Forest." The poem exhibits how poems were exchanged

within a coterie, though Jonson also writes as a client to a patron. This is Jonson's only sonnet, used here to pay tribute to Wroth's sequence, and notably to its erotic power.

2. Venus's girdle or belt, which had aphrodisiacal powers; it aroused passion in all beholders.

1. After his walking tour of Scotland in 1618-19, Jonson sent a manuscript version of this poem to William Drummond, with whom he had stayed. The woman of the poem may or may not be a real person.

That she
 Whom I adore so much should so slight me
 And cast my love behind;
 I'm sure my language to her was as sweet,
 And every close⁰ did meet *cadence*
 In sentence⁰ of as subtle feet,^o *wise sayings / rhythm*
 As hath the youngest he
 That sits in shadow of Apollo's tree.²

O, but my conscious fears
 That fly my thoughts between,
 Tell me that she hath seen
 My hundreds of gray hairs,
 Told^o seven and forty years, *counted*
 Read so much waist³ as she cannot embrace
 My mountain belly and my rocky face;
 And all these through her eyes have stopped her ears.

1619

1640-41

The Ode on Cary and Morison The ode, originally a classical form, is a lyric poem in an elevated style, celebrating a lofty theme, a noble personage, or a grand occasion. The Greek poet Pindar wrote many odes for winners of the Olympic games, known as "Great Odes" because of their exalted subject and style. Later, the Roman poet Horace wrote more restrained poems that came to be known as "Lesser Odes." Jonson's Cary-Morison ode comes closer than any other in the language to the lofty style and manner of Pindar, while his "To Penshurst" is in the Horatian style, as is, later, Marvell's "Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland".

Pindar's odes were designed to be sung by a chorus and often followed a three-part scheme: the chorus moved in one direction while chanting the strophe, reversed direction for the antistrophe, and stood still for the epode. Jonson imitates this pattern with his triple division of "turn," "counterturn," and "stand"—the terms more or less literally translated from the original Greek. His turns and counterturns rhyme in couplets, with line lengths varying in all stanzas according to a uniform scheme; the twelve-line stands follow a more complex but equally strict design. He imitates Pindar also in his moral generalizations and lofty but impersonal praise of the two noble friends. Later in the century, under the influence of Abraham Cowley and under a misapprehension about Pindar's style, odes became more extravagant, more vehement in tone, and more irregular in form.

To the Immortal Memory and Friendship of That Noble Pair, Sir Lucius Cary and Sir H. Morison¹

The Turn

Brave infant of Saguntum,² clear^o *explain*
 Thy coming forth in that great year

2. Bay laurel, the tree associated with Apollo, god of poetry.

3. With a pun on "waste," meaning "untillable ground."

1. Henry Morison died in 1629 at the age of twenty. His good friend Lucius Cary (son of Elizabeth Cary, the author of *Mariam*, p. 1536)

became the second Viscount Falkland. He was known for his learning, and he died fighting for King Charles in the first years of the civil war.

2. Pliny tells the story of an infant born while Sagunto, in Spain, was being assaulted by Hannibal; he dived back into his mother's womb (setting a record for brevity of life) and was buried there.

When the prodigious Hannibal did crown
 His rage, with razing your immortal town.
 5 Thou, looking then about
 Ere thou wert half got out,
 Wise child, didst hastily return
 And mad'st thy mother's womb thine urn. *burial vessel*
 How summed⁰ a circle³ didst thou leave mankind *com-plete*
 10 Of deepest lore, could we the center find!

The Counterturn

Did wiser nature draw thee back
 From out the horror of that sack,
 Where shame, faith, honor, and regard of right
 Lay trampled on?—the deeds of death and night
 15 Urged, hurried forth, and hurled
 Upon th' affrighted world?
 Sword, fire, and famine, with fell⁰ fury met, *fierce*
 And all on utmost ruin set:
 As, could they but life's miseries foresee,
 20 No doubt all infants would return like thee.

The Stand

For what is life if measured by the space,
 Not by the act?
 Or masked man, if valued by his face,
 Above his fact?⁰ *deeds*
 25 Here's one outlived his peers
 And told forth fourscore years:
 He vexed time, and busied the whole state,
 Troubled both foes and friends,
 But ever to no ends:
 30 What did this stirrer but die late?⁴
 How well at twenty had he fall'n or stood!
 For three of his four score, he did no good.

The Turn

He⁵ entered well, by virtuous parts,⁰ *qualities*
 Got up and thrived with honest arts:
 35 He purchased friends and fame and honors then,
 And had his noble name advanced with men;
 But, weary of that flight,
 He stooped in all men's sight
 To sordid flatteries, acts of strife,
 40 And sunk in that dead sea of life
 So deep, as he did then death's waters sup;
 But that the cork of title buoyed him up.

3. Emblem of perfection.

5. I.e., another man.

4. Punning on "dilate," meaning "talk endlessly."

The Counterturn

- Alas, but Morison fell young;—
 He never fell, thou fall'st,⁶ my tongue.
 45 He stood, a soldier, to the last right end,
 A perfect patriot and a noble friend,
 But most a virtuous son.
 All offices⁰ were done *duties of life*
 By him, so ample, full, and round
 50 In weight, in measure, number, sound,
 As, though his age imperfect might appear,
 His life was of humanity the sphere.

The Stand

- Go now, and tell out⁰ days summed up with fears,
 And make them years;
 55 Produce thy mass of miseries on the stage
 To swell thine age;
 Repeat of things a throng,
 To show thou hast been long,
 Not lived; for life doth her great actions spell,⁰ *tell over*
 60 By what was done and wrought
 In season, and so brought
 To light: her measures are, how well
 Each syllab'e⁰ answered, and was formed how fair; *syllable*
 These make the lines of life, and that's her air.⁷

The Turn

- 65 It is not growing like a tree
 In bulk, doth make man better be,
 Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
 To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere:⁰ *withered*
 A lily of a day
 70 Is fairer far in May,
 Although it fall and die that night;
 It was the plant and flower of light.
 In small proportions we just beauties see,
 And in short measures life may perfect be.

The Counterturn

- 75 Call, noble Lucius, then for wine,
 And let thy looks with gladness shine:
 Accept this garland,⁸ plant it on thy head,
 And think, nay, know, thy Morison's not dead.
 He leaped the present age,
 80 Possessed with holy rage,^o *inspiration*

6. Slip, with a latent pun on Latin *fallo*, "to make a mistake."

7. Life is a poem set to music; life's "measures"

are its metrical patterns as well as the standards by which it is judged.

8. Celebratory wreath; i.e., this poem.

To see that bright eternal day,
 Of which we priests and poets say
 Such truths as we expect for happy men,
 And there he lives with memory: and Ben

The Stand

- 85 Jonson, who sung this of him ere he went
 Himself to rest,
 Or taste a part of that full joy he meant
 To have expressed
 In this bright asterism:⁰ *constellation*
- 90 Where it were friendship's schism
 (Were not his Lucius long with us to tarry)
 To separate these twi-
 Lights, the Dioscuri,⁹
 And keep the one half from his Harry.
- 95 But fate doth so alternate the design,
 Whilst that in heaven, this light on earth must shine.

The Turn

- And shine as you exalted are,
 Two names of friendship, but one star,
 Of hearts the union. And those not by chance
- ∞ Made, or indentured,⁰ or leased out t' advance *contracted for*
 The profits for a time.
 No pleasures vain did chime
 Of rhymes or riots at your feasts,
 Orgies of drink, or feigned protests;
- 105 But simple love of greatness and of good
 That knits brave minds and manners, more than blood.

The Counterturn

- This made you first to know the why
 You liked, then after to apply
 That liking; and approach so one the tother,⁰ *other*
- no Till either grew a portion of the other;
 Each styled⁰ by his end, *called*
 The copy of his friend.
 You lived to be the great surnames
 And titles by which all made claims
- 115 Unto the virtue: nothing perfect done,
 But as a Cary or a Morison.

The Stand

And such a force the fair example had,
 As they that saw

9. The mythical Greek twins, Castor and Pollux, the Dioscuri, were said to have exchanged places regularly, after Castor's death, between earth and

the underworld. They are the principal stars of the constellation Gemini (the twins).

The good and durst not practice it, were glad
 120 That such a law
 Was left yet to mankind;
 Where they might read and find
 Friendship in deed was written, not in words.
 And with the heart, not pen,
 125 Of two so early⁰ men, *youthful*
 Whose lives her rolls were, and records,
 Who, ere the first down bloomed on the chin
 Had sowed these fruits, and got the harvest in.

1629

1640-41

Slow, Slow, Fresh Fount¹

Slow, slow, fresh fount, keep time with my salt tears;
 Yet slower, yet, O faintly, gentle springs!
 List to the heavy part the music bears:
 Woe weeps out her division,² when she sings.
 5 Droop herbs and flowers;
 Fall grief in showers;
 Our beauties are not ours.
 O, I could still,
 Like melting snow upon some craggy hill,
 10 Drop, drop, drop, drop,
 Since nature's pride is now a withered daffodil.

1600

Queen and Huntress¹

Queen and huntress, chaste and fair,
 Now the sun is laid to sleep,
 Seated in thy silver chair,
 State in wonted⁰ manner keep; *accustomed*
 5 Hesperus entreats thy light,
 Goddess excellently bright.

 Earth, let not thy envious shade
 Dare itself to interpose;²
 Cynthia's shining orb was made
 10 Heaven to clear, when day did close.
 Bless us then with wished sight,
 Goddess excellently bright.

1. From the play *Cynthia's Revels* (1.2). This lyric is a lament sung by Echo for Narcissus, who was entranced by his own reflection and who was ultimately transformed into a flower.

2. Grief at parting; also a rapid melodic passage of music.

1. Also from *Cynthia's Revels* (4.3), this song is sung by Hesperus, the evening star, to Cynthia, or Diana, goddess of chastity and the moon—with whom Queen Elizabeth was constantly compared.

2. Eclipses were thought to portend evil.

Lay thy bow of pearl apart,
 And thy crystal-shining quiver;
 15 Give unto the flying hart
 Space to breathe, how short soever.
 Thou that mak'st a day of night,
 Goddess excellently bright.

1600

Still to Be Neat¹

Still⁰ to be neat, still to be dressed *always*
 As^o you were going to a feast, *as though*
 Still to be powdered, still perfumed;
 Lady, it is to be presumed,
 5 Though art's hid causes are not found,
 All is not sweet, all is not sound.

Give me a look, give me a face
 That makes simplicity a grace;
 Robes loosely flowing, hair as free—
 10 Such sweet neglect more taketh me *adulterations*
 Than all the adulteries⁰ of art.
 They strike mine eyes, but not my heart.

1609

To the Memory of My Beloved, The Author,
 Mr. William Shakespeare, and What He Hath Left Us¹

To draw no envy, Shakespeare, on thy name,
 Am I thus ample⁰ to thy book and fame, *copious*
 While I confess thy writings to be such
 As neither man nor muse can praise too much.
 5 'Tis true, and all men's suffrage.⁰ But these ways *admission*
 Were not the paths I meant unto thy praise;
 For silliest⁰ ignorance on these may light, *simplest*
 Which, when it sounds at best, but echoes right;
 Or blind affection, which doth ne'er advance
 10 The truth, but gropes, and urgeth all by chance;
 Or crafty malice might pretend this praise,
 And think to ruin where it seemed to raise.
 These are as^o some infamous bawd or whore *as though*
 Should praise a matron. What could hurt her more?
 15 But thou art proof against them, and, indeed,
 Above th' ill fortune of them, or the need.

1. Sung in the play *Epicene*, this song concerns the art of makeup, but also art more generally. Compare Herrick's "Delight in Disorder"

(p. 1656).

1. This poem was prefixed to the first folio of Shakespeare's plays (1623).

I therefore will begin. Soul of the age!
 The applause! Delight! The wonder of our stage!
 My Shakespeare, rise; I will not lodge thee by
 Chaucer or Spenser, or bid Beaumont lie
 A little further to make thee a room:²
 Thou art a monument without a tomb,
 And art alive still while thy book doth live,
 And we have wits to read and praise to give.
 That I not mix thee so, my brain excuses,
 I mean with great, but disproportioned⁰ Muses; *not com-parable*
 For, if I thought my judgment were of years,
 I should commit thee surely with thy peers,
 And tell how far thou didst our Lyly outshine,
 Or sporting Kyd, or Marlowe's mighty line.³
 And though thou hadst small Latin and less Greek,⁴
 From thence to honor thee I would not seek⁰ *lack*
 For names, but call forth thund'ring Aeschylus,
 Euripides, and Sophocles to us,
 Pacuvius, Accius, him of Cordova dead,⁵
 To life again, to hear thy buskin⁰ tread *symbol of tragedy*
 And shake a stage; or, when thy socks⁰ were on, *symbol of comedy*
 Leave thee alone for the comparison
 Of all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome
 Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come.
 Triumph, my Britain; thou hast one to show
 To whom all scenes⁰ of Europe homage owe. *stages*
 He was not of an age, but for all time!
 And all the Muses still were in their prime
 When like Apollo⁰ he came forth to warm *god of poetry*
 Our ears, or like a Mercury⁰ to charm. *god of eloquence*
 Nature herself was proud of his designs,
 And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines,
 Which were so richly spun, and woven so fit,
 As, since, she will vouchsafe⁰ no other wit: *grant*
 The merry Greek, tart Aristophanes,
 Neat Terence, witty Plautus⁶ now not please,
 But antiquated and deserted lie,
 As they were not of Nature's family.
 Yet must I not give nature all; thy art,
 My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part.
 For though the poet's matter⁰ nature be, *subject matter*
 His art doth give the fashion;⁰ and that he *form, style*
 Who casts⁰ to write a living line must sweat *undertakes*
 (Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
 Upon the Muses' anvil; turn the same,

2. Chaucer, Spenser, and Francis Beaumont were buried in Westminster Abbey; Shakespeare, in Stratford.

3. John Lyly, Thomas Kyd, and Christopher Marlowe were Elizabethan dramatists contemporary or nearly contemporary with Shakespeare.

4. Shakespeare's Latin was pretty good, but Jonson is judging by the standard of his own remarkable scholarship.

5. Marcus Pacuvius, Lucius Accius (2nd century B.C.E.), and "him of Cordova," Seneca the Younger (1st century c.E.), were Latin tragedians. Seneca's tragedies had a large influence on Elizabethan revenge tragedy.

6. Aristophanes, an ancient Greek satirist and writer of comedy; Terence and Plautus (2nd and 3rd centuries B.C.E.), Roman writers of comedy.

And himself with it, that he thinks to frame,
 Or for^o the laurel he may gain a scorn;
 For a good poet's made as well as born,
 65 And such wert thou. Look how the father's face
 Lives in his issue;^o even so the race
 Of Shakespeare's mind and manners brightly shines
 In his well-turned and true-filed lines,
 In each of which he seems to shake a lance,⁷
 70 As brandished at the eyes of ignorance.
 Sweet swan of Avon, what a sight it were
 To see thee in our waters yet appear,
 And make those flights upon the banks of Thames
 That so did take Eliza and our James!⁸
 75 But stay; I see thee in the hemisphere
 Advanced and made a constellation there!⁹
 Shine forth, thou star of poets, and with rage
 Or influence¹ chide or cheer the drooping stage,
 Which, since thy flight from hence, hath mourned like night,
 so And despairs day, but for thy volume's light.

*instead of**offspring*

1623

Ode to Himself¹

Come, leave the loathed stage,
 And the more loathsome age,
 Where pride and impudence, in faction knit,
 Usurp the chair of wit,
 5 Indicting and arraigning every day
 Something they call a play.
 Let their fastidious, vain
 Commission of the brain
 Run on and rage, sweat, censure, and condemn:
 10 They were not made for thee, less thou for them.

 Say that thou pour'st them wheat,
 And they will acorns eat;
 'Twere simple^o fury still thyself to waste
 On such as have no taste!
 15 To offer them a surfeit of pure bread,
 Whose appetites are dead!
 No, give them grains their fill,
 Husks, draff to drink, and swill:²
 If they love lees,^o and leave the lusty wine,
 20 Envy them not; their palate's with the swine.

*foolish**dregs*

7. Pun on Shake-speare.

8. Queen Elizabeth and King James.

9. Heroes and demigods were typically exalted after death to a place among the stars.

1. "Rage" and "influence" describe the supposed effects of the planets on earthly affairs. "Rage" also

implies poetic inspiration.

1. The failure of Jonson's play *The Nevil Inn* (1629) inspired this assault on criticism and the public taste. For Carew's affectionate, mocking rebuke, see p. 1669.

2. All three items are food for pigs.

No doubt some moldy tale
 Like *Pericles*,³ and stale
 As the shrieve's⁰ crusts, and nasty as his fish— *sheriff's*
 Scraps, out of every dish
 25 Thrown forth and raked into the common tub,⁴
 May keep up the play club:
 There, sweepings do as well
 As the best-ordered meal;
 For who the relish of these guests will fit
 30 Needs set them but the alms basket of wit.

 And much good do t you then:
 Brave plush and velvet men
 Can feed on orts;⁵ and, safe in your stage clothes,⁵ *scraps*
 Dare quit,⁰ upon your oaths, *acquit*
 35 The stagers and the stage-wrights⁶ too, your peers,
 Of larding your large ears
 With their foul comic socks,⁰ *symbols of comedy*
 Wrought upon twenty blocks;⁷
 Which, if they're torn, and turned, and patched enough,
 40 The gamesters⁰ share your guilt,⁸ and you their stuff. *gamblers*

 Leave things so prostitute
 And take th' Alcaic lute;
 Or thine own Horace, or Anacreon's lyre;
 Warm thee by Pindar's fire:⁹
 45 And though thy nerves⁰ be shrunk, and blood be cold, *sinews*
 Ere years have made thee old,
 Strike that disdainful heat
 Throughout, to their defeat,
 As curious fools, and envious of thy strain,
 50 May, blushing, swear no palsy's in thy brain.¹

 But when they hear thee sing
 The glories of thy king,
 His zeal to God and his just awe o'er men,
 They may, blood-shaken then,
 55 Feel such a flesh-quake to possess their powers
 As they shall cry, "Like ours,
 In sound of peace or wars,
 No harp e'er hit the stars
 In tuning forth the acts of his sweet reign,
 60 And raising Charles his chariot 'bove his Wain."²

1629

1631, 1640-41

3. Shakespeare's play, at least in part (printed 1609).

4. The basket outside the jail to receive food for prisoners was called the sheriff's tub.

5. Actors often wore on the stage clothes cast off by the gentry; these parasites wear clothes cast off by actors.

6. Playwrights. "Stagers"; actors.

7. A pun: molds/blockheads.

8. A pun: guilt/gilt.

9. Alcaeus (ca. 600 B.C.E.), Horace, Anacreon, and Pindar were among the greatest lyric poets.

1. By 1629 Jonson was partially paralyzed.

2. Jonson's poetry will elevate the chariot of Charles I (symbol of his royal power) above Charles's Wain (Wagon)—the seven bright stars of Ursa Major.

Timber, or Discoveries Published posthumously in the *Works* (1640-41), Jonson's observations on literary matters had their origins in a commonplace book that culled extracts from Sir Philip Sidney's *Defense of Poesy*, from major classical theorists like Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, Quintilian, and Horace; and from recent Continental critics. Jonson digested all this under various topics, setting it forth in his own voice and intermixing trenchant observations on his own contemporaries. Among his major precepts are that the essence of poetry is its "fiction" or imitation; that natural talent is the major quality needed in a poet, though "art" and practice are also necessary; that one learns to become a poet by first imitating a single model, that good sense should have priority over style; and that the language of poetry should be clear, strong, and succinct. In the tradition of the Renaissance humanists, Jonson insists that the good poet is also the good man, who properly comprehends encyclopedic wisdom in himself, fitting him to be a counselor to rulers. Despite its disjointed form, *Timber* is the most important English commentary on poetics between Sidney and Thomas Hobbes.

*From Timber,*¹ or Discoveries

Poetry in this latter age hath proved but a mean mistress to such as have wholly addicted themselves to her, or given their names up to her family. They who have but saluted her on the by, and now and then tendered their visits, she hath done much for, and advanced in the way of their own professions (both the law and the gospel)² beyond all they could have hoped, or done for themselves without her favor. Wherein she doth emulate the judicious but preposterous bounty of the times' grandees,³ who accumulate all they can upon the parasite or freshman⁴ in their friendship, but think an old client or honest servant bound by his place to write and starve.

Indeed, the multitude commend writers as they do fencers or wrestlers, who, if they come in robustiously and put for it with a deal of violence, are received for the braver fellows; when many times their own rudeness is a cause of their disgrace, and a slight touch of their adversary gives all that boisterous force the foil. But in these things the unskilful are naturally deceived, and judging wholly by the bulk think rude things greater than polished, and scattered more numerous than composed.⁵ Nor think this only to be true in the sordid multitude, but the neater sort of our gallants; for all are the multitude, only they differ in clothes, not in judgment or understanding.

I remember the players have often mentioned it as an honor to Shakespeare that in his writing, whatsoever he penned, he never blotted out a line. My answer hath been, Would he had blotted a thousand: which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this, but for their ignorance who choose that circumstance to commend their friend by wherein he most faulted, and to justify mine own candor, for I loved the man and do honor his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. He was indeed honest and of an open

1. *Timber* carries on the string of woodland titles Jonson adopted from Statius's *Silvae* (Trees); he had already published two volumes of poetry under the titles *The Forest* and *Underwood*. "Timber" suggests the materials out of which the poems are crafted.

2. E.g., Sir John Davies, who prospered at the law, and John Donne, who became a clergyman, had

their careers advanced by calling attention to themselves through their poetry.

3. Patrons. The Spanish word *grandees* was just coming into English use.

4. Newcomer.

5. The paragraph up to this point is based on Quintilian.

and free nature, had an excellent fancy, brave notions, and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with that facility that sometimes it was necessary he should be stopped: *Suffiaminandus erat*, as Augustus said of Haterius.⁶ His wit was in his own power; would the rule of it had been so too. Many times he fell into those things could not escape laughter, as when he said in the person of Caesar, one speaking to him: "Caesar, thou dost me wrong," he replied: "Caesar did never wrong but with just cause," and such like, which were ridiculous.⁷ But he redeemed his vices with his virtues. There was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned.

For a man to write well, there are required three necessities: to read the best authors, observe the best speakers, and much exercise of his own style.⁸ In style, to consider what ought to be written, and after what manner. He must first think and excogitate his matter, then choose his words and examine the weight of either. Then take care, in placing and ranking both matter and words, that the composition be comely; and to do this with diligence and often. No matter how slow the style be at first, so it be labored⁹ and accurate; seek the best, and be not glad of the forward conceits¹ or first words that offer themselves to us; but judge of what we invent, and order what we approve. Repeat often what we have formerly written; which, beside that it helps the consequence and makes the juncture better, it quickens the heat of imagination, that often cools in the time of setting down, and gives it new strength, as if it grew lustier by the going back. As we see in the contention of leaping, they jump farthest that fetch their race largest; or as in throwing a dart or javelin, we force back our arms to make our loose² the stronger. Yet if we have a fair gale of wind, I forbid not the steering out of our sail, so the favor of the gale deceive us not. For all that we invent doth please us in the conception or birth, else we would never set it down. But the safest is to return to our judgment and handle over again those things the easiness of which might make them justly suspected. So did the best writers in their beginnings; they imposed upon themselves care and industry. They did nothing rashly. They obtained first to write well, and then custom made it easy and a habit. By little and little their matter showed itself to them more plentifully, their words answered, their composition followed; and all, as in a well-ordered family, presented itself in the place. So that the sum of all is: Ready writing makes not good writing, but good writing brings on ready writing.

Yet when we think we have got the faculty, it is even then good to resist it, as to give a horse a check sometimes with [his] bit, which doth not so much stop his course as stir his mettle. Again, whither a man's genius is best able to reach, thither it should more and more contend, lift, and dilate itself; as men of low stature raise themselves on their toes, and so oftentimes get even, if not eminent. Besides, as it is fit for grown and able writers to stand of themselves and work with their own strength, to trust and endeavor by their own faculties; so it is fit for the beginner and learner to study others, and the best. For the mind and memory are more sharply exercised in comprehending

6. "He needed damping." Haterius was a talky senator; the story is from Seneca, *Controversiae* 4.
7. The allusion is to *Julius Caesar* 3.1.47, but either Jonson misquotes, or someone corrected Shakespeare's line before it appeared in the Folio of 1623.

8. This unit on prose style is largely borrowed from Quintilian, with touches from Juan Luis Vives (1492—1540) and Justus Lipsius (1547-1606).

9. Careful.

1. Ideas.

2. Throw.

another man's things than our own; and such as accustom themselves and are familiar with the best authors shall ever and anon find somewhat of them in themselves; and in the expression of their minds, even when they feel it not, be able to utter something like theirs, which hath an authority above their own. Nay, sometimes it is the reward of a man's study, the praise of quoting another man fitly. And though a man be more prone and able for one kind of writing than another, yet he must exercise all. For as in an instrument, so in style, there must be a harmony and consent of parts.

« * §

Custom is the most certain mistress of language, as the public stamp makes the current money.³ But we must not be too frequent with the mint, every day coining; nor fetch words from the extreme and utmost ages, since the chief virtue of a style is perspicuity, and nothing so vicious in it as to need an interpreter. Words borrowed of antiquity do lend a kind of majesty to style, and are not without their delight sometimes. For they have the authority of years, and out of their intermission do win to themselves a kind of grace-like newness. But the eldest of the present and newest of the past language is the best. For what was the ancient language, which some men so dote upon, but the ancient custom? Yet when I name custom, I understand not the vulgar custom, for that were a precept no less dangerous to language than life, if we should speak or live after the manners of the vulgar. But that I call custom of speech which is the consent of the learned, as custom of life which is the consent of the good. Virgil was most loving of antiquity; yet how rarely doth he insert *aquai* and *pictai*!⁴ Lucretius is scabrous and rough in these; he seeks them, as some do Chaucerisms with us, which were better expunged and banished. Some words are to be culled out for ornament and color, as we gather flowers to strew houses or make garlands; but they are better when they grow to our style as in a meadow, where, though the mere grass and greenness delights, yet the variety of flowers doth heighten and beautify. Marry, we must not play or riot too much with them, as in paronomasias;⁵ nor use too swelling or ill-sounding words, *quae per salebras altaque saxa cadunt*.⁶ It is true, there is no sound but shall find some lovers, as the bitterest confections are grateful to some palates. Our composition must be more accurate in the beginning and end than in the midst, and in the end more than in the beginning; for through the midst the stream bears us. And this is attained by custom more than care or diligence. We must express readily and fully, not profusely. There is difference between a liberal and a prodigal hand. As it is a great point of art, when our matter requires it, to enlarge and veer out all sail, so to take it in and contract it is of no less praise when the argument doth ask it. Either of them hath their fitness in the place. A good man always profits by his endeavor, by his help; yea, when he is absent; nay, when he is dead, by his example and memory. So good authors in their style.

A strict and succinct style is that where you can take away nothing without loss, and that loss to be manifest. The brief style is that which expresseth much in little. The concise style, which expresseth not enough, but leaves somewhat

3. The first few sentences of this unit on language are based on Quintilian, the rest on Vives, *On the Proper Method of Speaking* (1532).

4. These are ancient forms of *aquae* and *pictae*, which do appear, once apiece, in the *Aeneid*, 7.464

and 9.26.

5. Puns, plays on words.

6. "Which fall on rough places and steep rocks." The phrase is from Martial.

to be understood. The abrupt style, which hath many breaches, and doth not seem to end but fall. The congruent and harmonious fitting of parts in a sentence hath almost the fastening and force of knitting and connection, as in stones well squared, which will rise strong a great way without mortar. Periods⁷ are beautiful when they are not too long, for so they have their strength too, as in a pike or javelin. As we must take the care that our words and sense be clear, so if the obscurity happen through the hearer's or reader's want of understanding, I am not to answer for them, no more than for their not listening or marking;⁸ I must neither find them ears nor mind. But a man cannot put a word so in sense but something about it will illustrate it, if the writer understand himself. For order helps much to perspicuity, as confusion hurts. *Rectitudo lucem adfert; obliquitas et circumductio offuscet.*⁹ We should therefore speak what we can the nearest way, so as we keep our gait, not leap; for too short may as well not be let into the memory as too long not kept in. Whatsoever loseth the grace and clearness converts into a riddle; the obscurity is marked, but not the value. That perisheth, and is passed by, like the pearl in the fable.¹ Our style should be like a skein of silk, to be carried and found by the right thread, not raveled and perplexed; then all is a knot, a heap.

1640-41

7. Periodic sentences, characterized by balanced phrases and clauses with the main clause at the end.

8. Paying attention.

9. "Directness gives light; indirect and devious

diction confuses things." The sentence is from Vives.

1. The fable is that of Phaedrus (3.12); a cock found a pearl on a dunghill, but as he was not interested in it, that is where the pearl remained.

MARY WROTH

1587—1651?

Lady Mary Wroth was the most prolific, self-conscious, and impressive female author of the Jacobean era. Her published work (1621) include two firsts for an Englishwoman: a 558-page romance, *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*, which includes more than fifty poems, and appended to it a Petrarchan lyric sequence that had circulated some years in manuscript, 103 sonnets and elegant songs titled *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*. Wroth left unpublished a very long but unfinished continuation of the *Urania* and a pastoral drama, *Love's Victory*, also a first for an Englishwoman. Her achievement was fostered by her strong sense of identity as a Sidney, heir to the literary talent and cultural role of her famous uncle Sir Philip Sidney, her famous aunt Mary Sidney Herbert, Countess of Pembroke, who may have served as mentor to her; and her father Robert Sidney, Viscount Lisle, author of a recently discovered sonnet sequence. But she used that heritage transgressively to replace heroes with heroines in genres employed by the male Sidney authors—notably Philip Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella* and *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*—transforming their gender politics and exploring the poetics and situation of women writers.

As Robert Sidney's eldest daughter, she lived and was educated at Penshurst, the Sidney country house celebrated by Ben Jonson, and was often at her aunt's "little college" at Wilton. She danced at court in *The Masque of Blackness* and perhaps in other masques; she was married (incompatibly) at age seventeen to Sir Robert Wroth

of Durrance and Loughton Manor, whose office it was to facilitate the king's hunting; and she was patron to several poets, including Jonson. He celebrated her in two epigrams and in a verse letter honoring her husband, dedicated his great comedy *The Alchemist* to her, and claimed in his only sonnet (p. 1438) that the artistry and erotic power of her sonnets had made him "a better lover, and much better poet." After her husband's death she carried on a long-standing love affair with her married first cousin, William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, himself a poet, a powerful courtier, and a patron of the theater and of literature. That relationship produced two children and occasioned some scandal.

The significant names in the title of Wroth's Petrarchan sequence, *Pamphilia* ("all-loving") to *Am-philanthus* ("lover of two"), are from characters in her romance who at times shadow Wroth and her lover Pembroke. The Petrarchan lyric sequence had long served as the major genre for analyzing a male lover's passions, frustrations, and fantasies (and sometimes his career anxieties). So although the sonnet sequence was becoming passe by Wroth's time, it was an obvious choice for a woman poet undertaking the construction of subjectivity in a female lover-speaker. Wroth does not, however, simply reverse roles. *Pamphilia* addresses very few sonnets to *Amphilanthus* and seldom assumes the Petrarchan lover's position of abject servitude to a cruel beloved. Instead, she proclaims subjection to Cupid, usually identified with the force of her own desire. This radical revision identifies female desire as the source and center of the love relationship and celebrates the woman lover-poet's movement from the bondage of chaotic passion to the freedom of self-chosen constancy.

Wroth's romance, *Urania*, breaks the romance convention of a plot centered on courtship, portraying instead married heroines and their love relationships, both inside and outside of marriage. It is in part an idealizing fantasy: the principal characters are queens, kings, and emperors, with the power and comparative freedom such positions allow. However, the landscape is not Arcadia or Fairyland but war-torn Europe and Asia. The romance fantasy, with Spenserian symbolic places and knights fighting evil tyrants and monsters, only partially overlays a rigidly patriarchal Jacobean world rife with rape, incest, arranged or forced marriages, jealous husbands, tortured women, and endangered children. Those perils, affecting all women from shepherdesses to queens, are rendered in large part through the numerous stories interpolated in romance fashion within the principal plots. The male heroes are courageous fighters and attractive lovers, but all are flawed by inconstancy. For Wroth, true heroism consists of integrity in love despite social constraints and psychological pressures. A few women are heroic in this sense: *Pamphilia*, the good queen and pattern of constancy; *Urania*, the wise counselor who wins self-knowledge and makes wise choices in love; and *Veralinda*, who weds her true lover after great trials. Almost all Wroth's female characters define themselves through storytelling and making poems. The women compose twice as many of the poems as the men do. *Pamphilia*, Wroth's surrogate, is singled out as a poet by vocation, both by the number of her poems and by their recognized excellence.

Many contemporaries assumed that the *Urania* was a scandalous roman a clef, alluding not only to Sidney-Pembroke-Wroth affairs but to notable personages of the Jacobean court. A public outcry from one of them, Lord Edward Denny, elicited a spirited satiric response from Wroth. Although she suggested to the king's minister Buckingham that she withdraw the work from circulation, there is no evidence that she actually did so. The uproar, however, may have discouraged her from publishing part 2 of the romance and her pastoral drama.

*From The Countess of Montgomery's Urania*¹From *The First Book*

When the spring began to appear like the welcome messenger of summer, one sweet (and in that more sweet) morning, after Aurora² had called all careful eyes to attend the day, forth came the fair shepherdess Urania³ (fair indeed; yet that far too mean a title for her, who for beauty deserved the highest style⁴ could be given by best-knowing judgments). Into the mead⁵ she came, where usually she drove her flocks to feed, whose leaping and wantonness showed they were proud of such a guide: but she, whose sad thoughts led her to another manner of spending her time, made her soon leave them, and follow her late-begun custom; which was (while they delighted themselves) to sit under some shade, bewailing her misfortune; while they fed, to feed upon her own sorrow and tears, which at this time she began again to summon, sitting down under the shade of a well-spread beech; the ground (then blest) and the tree, with full and fine-leaved branches, growing proud to bear and shadow such perfections. But she regarding nothing, in comparison of her woe, thus proceeded in her grief: "Alas Urania," said she (the true servant to misfortune), "of any misery that can befall woman, is not this the most and greatest which thou art fallen into? Can there be any near the unhappiness of being ignorant, and that in the highest kind, not being certain of mine own estate or birth? Why was I not still continued in the belief I was, as I appear, a shepherdess, and daughter to a shepherd? My ambition then went no higher than this estate, now flies it to a knowledge; then was I contented, now perplexed. O ignorance, can thy dullness yet procure so sharp a pain? and that such a thought as makes me now aspire unto knowledge? How did I joy in this poor life, being quiet! blessed in the love of those I took for parents, but now by them I know the contrary, and by that knowledge, now to know myself. Miserable Urania, worse art thou now than these thy lambs; for they know their dams, while thou dost live unknown of any." By this were others come into that mead with their flocks: but she, esteeming her sorrowing thoughts her best and choicest company, left that place, taking a little path which brought her to the further side of the plain, to the foot of the rocks, speaking as she went these lines, her eyes fixed upon the ground, her very soul turned into mourning.

Unseen, unknown, I here alone complain
 To rocks, to hills, to meadows, and to springs,
 Which can no help return to ease my pain,
 But back my sorrows the sad Echo⁶ brings.

5 Thus still increasing are my woes to me,

1. Wroth's title echoes *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, the romance written by her uncle Sir Philip Sidney. The countess of Montgomery was Susan (Vere) Herbert, Wroth's close friend and the sister-in-law of her lover, William Herbert. The opening of *Urania* is meant to be compared to (and contrasted with) the opening of the *Arcadia*, in which two shepherds lament the absence of their beloved, the mysterious shepherdess Urania.

2. The Greek goddess of the dawn.

3. The name has multiple associations: the Muse of astronomy, the Muse of Christian poetry, a surname for Aphrodite (Venus) designating heavenly beauty. It was also an honorific commonly

bestowed on Wroth's aunt, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke. In Wroth's romance, Urania is a founding adopted by shepherds but actually the daughter of the king of Naples: after losing one lover and gaining another, she marries, becomes a matriarch, and is throughout (as in this episode) a counselor of others.

4. Title.

5. Meadow.

6. In classical mythology Echo was a wood nymph who pined away in unrequited love for the handsome Narcissus until only her voice remained (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 3).

Doubly resounded by that moanful voice,
 Which seems to second me in misery,
 And answer gives like friend of mine own choice.
 Thus only she doth my companion prove,
 10 The others silently do offer ease.
 But those that grieve, a grieving note do love;
 Pleasures to dying eyes bring but disease:
 And such am I, who daily ending live,
 Wailing a state which can no comfort give.

In this passion she went on, till she came to the foot of a great rock, she thinking of nothing less than ease, sought how she might ascend it; hoping there to pass away her time more peaceably with loneliness, though not to find least respite from her sorrow, which so dearly she did value, as by no means she would impart it to any. The way was hard, though by some windings making the ascent pleasing. Having attained the top, she saw under some hollow trees the entry into the rock: she fearing nothing but the continuance of her ignorance, went in; where she found a pretty room, as if that stony place had yet in pity, given leave for such perfections to come into the heart as chiefest, and most beloved place, because most loving. The place was not unlike the ancient (or the descriptions of ancient) hermitages, instead of hangings, covered and lined with ivy, disdaining aught else should come there, that being in such perfection. This richness in Nature's plenty made her stay to behold it, and almost grudge the pleasant fullness of content that place might have, if sensible, while she must know to taste of torments. As she was thus in passion mixed with pain, throwing her eyes as wildly as timorous lovers do for fear of discovery, she perceived a little light, and such a one, as a chink doth oft discover to our sights. She curious to see what this was, with her delicate hands put the natural ornament aside, discerning a little door, which she putting from her, passed through it into another room, like the first in all proportion; but in the midst there was a square stone, like to a pretty table, and on it a wax candle burning; and by that a paper,⁷ which had suffered itself patiently to receive the discovering of so much of it, as presented this sonnet (as it seemed newly written) to her sight.

Here all alone in silence might I mourn:
 But how can silence be where sorrows flow?
 Sighs with complaints have poorer pains outworn;
 But broken hearts can only true grief show.
 5 Drops of my dearest blood shall let Love know
 Such tears for her I shed, yet still do burn,
 As no spring can quench least part of my woe,
 Till this live earth, again to earth do turn.
 Hateful all thought of comfort is to me,
 10 Despised day, let me still night possess;
 Let me all torments feel in their excess,
 And but this light allow my state to see.
 Which still doth waste, and wasting as this light,
 Are my sad days unto eternal night.

7. The episode alludes to an episode in Sidney's *Old Arcadia* in which one of the heroines, Cleophila, enters a darkened cave illuminated by a single candle and finds a poem on top of a stone table.

"Alas Urania!" sighed she. "How well do these words, this place, and all agree with thy fortune? Sure, poor soul, thou wert here appointed to spend thy days, and these rooms ordained to keep thy tortures in; none being assuredly so matchlessly unfortunate."

Turning from the table, she discerned in the room a bed of boughs, and on it a man lying, deprived of outward sense, as she thought, and of life, as she at first did fear, which struck her into a great amazement: yet having a brave spirit, though shadowed under a mean habit,⁸ she stepped unto him, whom she found not dead, but laid upon his back, his head a little to her wards,⁹ his arms folded on his breast, hair long, and beard disordered, manifesting all care;¹ but care itself had left him: curiousness thus far afforded him, as to be perfectly discerned the most exact piece of misery; apparel he had suitable to the habitation, which was a long gray² robe. This grieveful spectacle did much amaze the sweet and tender-hearted shepherdess; especially, when she perceived (as she might by the help of the candle) the tears which distilled from his eyes; who seeming the image of death, yet had this sign of worldly sorrow, the drops falling in that abundance, as if there were a kind strife among them, to rid their master first of that burdensome³ carriage; or else meaning to make a flood, and so drown their woeful patient in his own sorrow, who yet lay still, but then fetching a deep groan from the profoundest part of his soul, he said:

"Miserable Perissus,⁴ canst thou thus live, knowing she that gave thee life is gone? Gone, O me! and with her all my joy departed. Wilt thou (unblessed creature) lie here complaining for her death, and know she died for thee? Let truth and shame make thee do something worthy of such a love, ending thy days like thyself, and one fit to be her servant. But that I must not do: then thus remain and foster storms, still to torment thy wretched soul withall, since all are little, and too too little for such a loss. O dear Limena,⁵ loving Limena, worthy Limena, and more rare, constant Limena: perfections delicately feigned to be in women were verified in thee, was such worthiness framed only to be wondered at by the best, but given as a prey to base and unworthy jealousy? When were all worthy parts joined in one, but in thee my best Limena? Yet all these grown subject to a creature ignorant of all but ill; like unto a fool, who in a dark cave, that hath but one way to get out, having a candle, but not the understanding what good it doth him, puts it out: this ignorant wretch not being able to comprehend thy virtues, did so by thee in thy murder, putting out the world's light, and men's admiration: Limena, Limena, O my Limena."

With that he fell from complaining into such a passion, as weeping and crying were never in so woeful a perfection, as now in him; which brought as deserved a compassion from the excellent shepherdess, who already had her heart so tempered with grief, as that it was apt to take any impression that it would come to seal withal. Yet taking a brave courage to her, she stepped unto him, kneeling down by his side, and gently pulling him by the arm, she thus spoke.

"Sir," said she, "having heard some part of your sorrows, they have not only made me truly pity you, but wonder at you; since if you have lost so great a

8. Lowly garment.

9. Toward her.

1. Trouble.

2. Gray is typically associated with mourning and

despair.

3. Burdensome.

4. Perissus: "Lost one."

5. Woman of home or threshold.

treasure, you should not lie thus leaving her and your love unrevenged, suffering her murderers to live, while you lie here complaining; and if such perfections be dead in her, why make you not the phoenix⁶ of your deeds live again, as to new life raised out of the revenge you should take on them? Then were her end satisfied, and you deservedly accounted worthy of her favor, if she were so worthy as you say."

"If she were, O God," cried out Perissus, "what devilish spirit art thou, that thus dost come to torture me? But now I see you are a woman; and therefore not much to be marked, and less resisted: but if you know charity, I pray now practice it, and leave me who am afflicted sufficiently without your company; or if you will stay, discourse not to me."

"Neither of these will I do," said she.

"If you be then," said he, "some Fury⁷ of purpose sent to vex me, use your force to the uttermost in martyring me; for never was there a fitter subject, then the heart of poor Perissus is."

"I am no Fury," replied the divine Urania, "nor hither come to trouble you, but by accident lighted on this place; my cruel hap being such, as only the like can give me content, while the solitariness of this like cave might give me quiet, though not ease. Seeking for such a one, I happened hither; and this is the true cause of my being here, though now I would use it to a better end if I might: Wherefore favor me with the knowledge of your grief; which heard, it may be I shall give you some counsel, and comfort in your sorrow."

"Cursed may I be," cried he, "if ever I take comfort, having such cause of mourning: but because you are, or seem to be afflicted, I will not refuse to satisfy your demand, but tell you the saddest story that ever was rehearsed by dying man to living woman, and such a one, as I fear will fasten too much sadness in you; yet should I deny it, I were to blame, being so well known to these senseless places; as were they sensible of sorrow, they would condole, or else amazed at such cruelty stand dumb as they do, to find that man should be so inhuman."

*
SONG⁸

Love what art thou? A vain thought
 In our minds by fancy wrought.
 Idle smiles did thee beget,
 While fond wishes made the net
 5 Which so many fools have caught.

Love what art thou? Light and fair,
 Fresh as morning, clear as th' air.
 But too soon thy evening change
 Makes thy worth with coldness range;
 10 Still thy joy is mixed with care.

Love what art thou? A sweet flower
 Once full blown,⁰ dead in an hour. *in full bloom.*

6. Mythical bird said to live five hundred years, then expire in flames, out of which a new phoenix arose. Only one phoenix existed at a time.

7. Goddess of vengeance.

8. This song, one of a group of eclogues that marks the conclusion of Book 1 of the *Urania*, is sung to a shepherdess by a shepherd, "being, as it seemed, fallen out with Love."

Dust in wind as staid remains
 As thy pleasure or our gains,
 15 If thy humor⁰ change, to lour.^o *whim/frown*

Love what art thou? Childish, vain,
 Firm as bubbles made by rain,
 Wantonness thy greatest pride.
 These foul faults thy virtues hide—
 20 But babes can no staidness gain.

Love what art thou? Causeless cursed,
 Yet alas these not the worst:
 Much more of thee may be said.
 But thy law I once obeyed,
 25 Therefore say no more at first.

1621

*From Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*¹

1

When night's black mantle could most darkness prove,
 And sleep, death's image, did my senses hire
 From knowledge of myself, then thoughts did move
 Swifter than those most swiftness need require.
 5 In sleep, a chariot drawn by winged desire
 I saw, where sat bright Venus, Queen of Love,
 And at her feet, her son,^o still adding fire *Cupid*
 To burning hearts, which she did hold above.
 But one heart flaming more than all the rest
 10 The goddess held, and put it to my breast.
 "Dear son, now shut,"² said she: "thus must we win."
 He her obeyed, and martyred my poor heart.
 I, waking, hoped as dreams it would depart:
 Yet since, O me, a lover I have been.

16

Am I thus conquered? Have I lost the powers
 That to withstand, which joys to ruin me?³
 Must I be still while it my strength devours,
 And captive leads me prisoner, bound, unfree?

1. Pamphilia ("all-loving") is the protagonist of *Urania*. Her unfaithful beloved's name means "lover of two." These characters are first cousins, like Mary Wroth and William Herbert; their names adumbrate the main theme of both the romance and the appended sonnet sequence, constancy in the face of unfaithfulness.

Pamphilia to Amphilanthus is broken into several separately numbered series (the first of which includes forty-eight sonnets, with songs inserted

after every sixth sonnet except the last). In Josephine A. Roberts's edition of Wroth's poetry, the poems are numbered consecutively throughout the work; we have adopted this convenient renumbering.

2. I.e., shut the burning heart into Pamphilia's breast.

3. I.e., have I lost the power to withstand love ("That"), which takes pleasure in ruining me?

- 5 Love first shall leave men's fancies to them free,⁴
 Desire shall quench Love's flames, spring hate sweet showers,
 Love shall loose all his darts, have sight, and see
 His shame, and wishings hinder happy hours.
 Why should we not Love's purblind⁰ charms resist? *completely blind*
 10 Must we be servile, doing what he list?⁰ *what pleases him*
 No, seek some host to harbor thee: I fly
 Thy babish tricks, and freedom do profess.
 But O my hurt makes my lost heart confess
 I love, and must: So farewell liberty.

28

SONG⁵

- Sweetest love, return again,
 Make not too long stay:
 Killing mirth and forcing pain,
 Sorrow leading way.
 5 Let us not thus parted be:
 Love and absence ne'er agree.

 But since you must needs depart,
 And me hapless leave,
 In your journey take my heart,
 10 Which will not deceive.
 Yours it is, to you it flies,
 Joying in those loved eyes.

 So in part we shall not part,
 Though we absent be:
 15 Time, nor place, nor greatest smart
 Shall my bands make free.
 Tied I am, yet think it gain:
 In such knots I feel no pain.

 But can I live, having lost
 20 Chiefest part of me?
 Heart is fled, and sight is crossed,
 These my fortunes be.
 Yet dear heart go, soon return:
 As good there as here to burn.

39

- Take heed mine eyes, how you your looks do cast
 Lest they betray my heart's most secret thought,
 Be true unto yourselves, for nothing's bought
 More dear than doubt which brings a lover's fast.⁶
 5 Catch you all watching eyes, ere they be past,
 Or take yours fixed where your best love hath sought

4. I.e., this and the other impossibilities that follow will occur before I surrender to love.
 5. The poem seems to revise one of Donne's songs:

"Sweetest love, I do not go," p. 1269.

6. Lack of nourishment for love, due to jealousy ("doubt").

The pride of your desires; let them be taught
 Their faults for shame, they could no truer last.
 Then look, and look with joy for conquest won
 10 Of those that searched your hurt in double kind;⁷
 So you kept safe, let them themselves look blind,
 Watch, gaze, and mark till they to madness run,
 While you, mine eyes enjoy full sight of love
 Contented that such happinesses move.

40

False hope which feeds but to destroy, and spill⁸
 What it first breeds; unnatural to the birth
 Of thine own womb; conceiving but to kill,
 And plenty gives to make the greater dearth,⁹
 5 So tyrants do who falsely ruling earth
 Outwardly grace them,¹ and with profits fill,
 Advance those who appointed are to death,
 To make their greater fall to please their will.
 Thus shadow⁰ they their wicked vile intent, *conceal*
 10 Coloring evil with a show of good
 While in fair shows their malice so is spent;²
 Hope kills the heart, and tyrants shed the blood.
 For hope deluding brings us to the pride
 Of our desires the farther down to slide.

68

My pain, still smothered in my grieved breast,
 Seeks for some ease, yet cannot passage find
 To be discharged of this unwelcome guest:
 When most I strive, most fast his burdens bind,
 5 Like to a ship on Goodwin's³ cast by wind,
 The more she strives, more deep in sand is pressed,
 Till she be lost; so am I, in this kind,⁰ *manner*
 Sunk, and devoured, and swallowed by unrest,
 Lost, shipwrecked, spoiled, debarred of smallest hope,
 10 Nothing of pleasure left; save thoughts have scope,
 Which wander may. Go then, my thoughts, and cry
 "Hope's perished, love tempest-beaten, joy lost:
 Killing despair hath all these blessings crossed."
 Yet faith still cries, "love will not falsify."

74

SONG

Love a child is ever crying,
 Please him, and he straight is flying;

7. Those who spy and pry with their two eyes, to discover my secret love.

8. Kill. The image is of miscarriage or infanticide.

9. Gives abundance only to make scarcity more painful afterward.

1. I.e., those whom they mean to destroy (see next line).

2. Expended, employed. "Shows": appearances.

3. Goodwin Sands, a line of shoals at the entrance to the Strait of Dover.

Give him, he the more is craving,
Never satisfied with having.

5 His desires have no measure,
Endless folly is his treasure;
What he promiseth he breaketh:
Trust not one word that he speaketh.

He vows nothing but false matter,
10 And to cozen⁰ you he'll flatter. *cheat*
Let him gain the hand,⁰ he'll leave you, *the u-pper hand*
And still glory to deceive you.

He will triumph in your wailing,
And yet cause be of your failing:
15 These his virtues are, and slighter
Are his gifts, his favors lighter.

Feathers are as firm in staying,
Wolves no fiercer in their preying.
As a child then leave him crying,
20 Nor seek him, so given to flying.

From *A Crown of Sonnets Dedicated to Love*⁴

77

In this strange labyrinth how shall I turn?
Ways⁰ are on all sides, while the way I miss: *paths*
If to the right hand, there in love I burn;
Let me go forward, therein danger is;
5 If to the left, suspicion hinders bliss,
Let me^o turn back, shame cries I ought return, *if I*
Nor faint though crosses⁵ with my fortunes kiss;
Stand still is harder, although sure to mourn.⁶
Then let me take the right- or left-hand way;
10 Go forward, or stand still, or back retire;
I must these doubts endure without allay⁰ *abatement*
Or help, but travail find for my best hire.⁷
Yet that which most my troubled sense doth move
Is to leave all, and take the thread of love.⁸

4. The "crown" is a difficult poetic form (originally Italian and usually known by its Italian name, *corona*) in which the last line of each poem serves as the first line of the next, until a circle is completed by the last line of the final poem, which is the same as the first line of the first one. The number of poems varies from seven to (as in Wroth's *corona*) fourteen.

In contrast to the errant-child Cupid of the preceding part of the sequence, Love in this series is a mature and just monarch, whose true service

ennobles lovers. The crown is in part a recantation of the harsh judgment of love earlier in the sequence. But Pamphilia relapses into melancholy afterward.

5. Troubles, adversity. "Faint": lose heart.

6. I.e., certain to make me mourn.

7. I.e., I find travail (with a pun on "travel," the spelling in the 1621 edition) is my only reward.

8. Ariadne gave Theseus a thread to follow so as to find his way out of the Labyrinth, after killing the Minotaur at its center.

103

My muse now happy, lay thyself to rest,
 Sleep in the quiet of a faithful love,
 Write you no more, but let these fancies move
 Some other hearts, wake not to new unrest.
 5 But if you study, be those thoughts addressed
 To truth, which shall eternal goodness prove;
 Enjoying of true joy, the most, and best,
 The endless gain which never will remove.
 Leave the discourse of Venus and her son
 10 To young beginners,⁹ and their brains inspire
 With stories of great love, and from that fire
 Get heat to write the fortunes they have won.
 And thus leave off, what's past shows you can love,
 Now let your constancy your honor prove.¹

1621

9. In Neoplatonic love philosophy, "beginners" in love are attracted to physical beauty and sensory delights, while more advanced lovers love virtue and spiritual beauty. Writing love sonnets is traditionally the business of young lovers.

1. In a symbolic episode in the *Urania*, Pamphilia embodies the virtue of Constancy; she accepts the keys to the Throne of Love, "at which instant Constancy vanished as metamorphosing herself into her breast" (1.1.141).

JOHN WEBSTER

1580?—1625?

John Webster's fame rests on two remarkable tragedies, both set in Boman Catholic Italy and both evoking the common Jacobean stereotype of that land as a place of sophisticated corruption. Both have at their center bold and brave heroines who choose for themselves in love and refuse to submit to male authority. *The White Devil*, first performed in 1608, is based on events that took place in Italy in 1581—85; in this play Vittoria Corombona boldly defies a courtroom full of corrupt magistrates who convict her of adultery and murder. *The Duchess of Malfi*, first performed in 1614 and published in 1623, is based on an Italian novella. In this play, the spirited ruler of Malfi secretly marries her steward for love, defying her brothers, a duke and a cardinal, who demand that she remain a widow. Their dark motives include greed for her fortune, overweening pride in their noble blood, and incestuous desire. The play weds sublime poetry and gothic horror in the devious machinations set in motion against the duchess by her brothers' melancholy spy Bosola, in the macabre mental and physical torments to which they subject her, in the desperate lunatic ravings of the duke after having her strangled, and in the final scenes in which the stage is littered with the slaughtered bodies of all the principal characters. Webster's portrayal of the independent spirit and courage of the duchess invites comparison with the royal heroine of Elizabeth Cary's tragedy *Mariam*, written at about the same date.

Webster was the son of a London tailor and a member of the Merchant Tailors' Company, but we know little else about him. He wrote a tragicomedy, *The Devil's*

Law Case (1621), and collaborated on several plays with contemporary playwrights, among them Thomas Dekker in *Westward Ho* (1607) and John Marston in *The Malcontent* (1604). Of all the Stuart dramatists, Webster is the one who comes closest to Shakespeare in his power of tragic utterance and his flashes of poetic brilliance.

The Duchess of Malfi

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

FERDINAND, <i>Duke of Calabria</i>	DOCTOR
THE CARDINAL, <i>his brother</i>	<i>Several</i> MADMEN, PILGRIMS,
ANTONIO BOLOGNA, <i>steward of</i>	EXECUTIONERS, OFFICERS,
<i>the household to the</i> DUCHESS	ATTENDANTS &C.
DELIO, <i>his friend</i>	THE DUCHESS OF MALFI, <i>sister</i>
DANIEL DE BOSOLA, <i>gentleman</i>	<i>of</i> FERDINAND <i>and the</i>
<i>of the horse to the</i> DUCHESS	CARDINAL
CASTRUCCIO, <i>an old lord</i>	CARIOLA, <i>her woman</i>
MARQUIS OF PESCARA	JULIA, CASTRUCCIO'S <i>wife, and the</i>
COUNT MALATESTA	CARDINAL'S <i>mistress</i>
SILVIO, <i>a lord, of Milan</i>	OLD LADY, LADIES, <i>and</i>
RODERIGO I <i>gentlemen attending</i>	CHILDREN
GRISOLAN <i>on the</i> DUCHESS	

SCENE. *Amalfi, Rome, Loreto, and Milan*

Act 1

SCENE 1. *Amalfi; a hall in the* DUCHESS'S *palace.*

[Enter ANTONIO and DELIO.]

DELIO You are welcome to your country, dear Antonio;
You have been long in France, and you return
A very formal Frenchman in your habit.¹
How do you like the French court?

ANTONIO I admire it:

5 In seeking to reduce both state and people
To a fixed order, their judicious king
Begins at home; quits⁰ first his royal palace *rids*
Of flattering sycophants, of dissolute
And infamous persons—which he sweetly terms
10 His Master's masterpiece, the work of heaven²—
Considering duly that a prince's court
Is like a common fountain, whence should flow
Pure silver drops in general, but if't chance
Some cursed example poison't near the head,
15 Death and diseases through the whole land spread.
And what is't makes this blessed government
But a most provident council, who dare freely

i.i

1. An absolute Frenchman in your dress.

2. Alludes to Christ ridding the temple of moneychangers (John 2.13—22).

Inform him the corruption of the times?

Though some o' th' court hold it presumption
To instruct princes what they ought to do,
It is a noble duty to inform them

What they ought to foresee.—Here comes Bosola,
The only court-gall;³ yet I observe his railing
Is not for simple love of piety.
Indeed, he rails at those things which he wants;
Would be as lecherous, covetous, or proud,
Bloody, or envious, as any man,
If he had means to be so. Here's the cardinal.

[Enter the CARDINAL and BOSOLA.]

BOSOLA I do haunt you still.

CARDINAL So.

BOSOLA I have done you better service than to be slighted thus. Miserable
age, where the only reward of doing well is the doing of it!

CARDINAL You enforce your merit too much.

BOSOLA I fell into the galleys⁴ in your service; where, for two years
together, I wore two towels instead of a shirt, with a knot on the shoul-
der, after the fashion of a Roman mantle. Slighted thus? I will thrive some
way. Blackbirds fatten best in hard weather; why not I in these dog days?⁵

CARDINAL Would you could become honest!

BOSOLA With all your divinity do but direct me the way to it. I have known
many travel far for it, and yet return as arrant knaves as they went forth,
because they carried themselves always along with them. [Exit CARDINAL.]
Are you gone? Some fellows, they say, are possessed with the devil, but
this great fellow were able to possess the greatest devil, and make him
worse.

ANTONIO He hath denied thee some suit?

BOSOLA He and his brother are like plum trees that grow crooked over
standing pools;⁶ they are rich and o'erladen with fruit, but none but crows,
pies,⁷ and caterpillars feed on them. Could I be one of their flattering
panders, I would hang on their ears like a horse leech till I were full and
then drop off. I pray, leave me. Who would rely upon these miserable
dependencies, in expectation to be advanced tomorrow? What creature
ever fed worse than hoping Tantalus?⁸ Nor ever died any man more fear-
fully than he that hoped for a pardon. There are rewards for
hawks and dogs when they have done us service; but for a soldier that haz-
ards his limbs in a battle, nothing but a kind of geometry is his last
supportation.⁹

DELIO Geometry?

BOSOLA Aye, to hang in a fair pair of slings, take his latter swing in the
world upon an honorable pair of crutches, from hospital to hospital.¹ Fare
ye well, sir: and yet do not you scorn us; for places in the court are but like

3. One who frets the court, but with the overtone of a disease, a blight.

4. Forced labor at the oar of a Mediterranean galley was the last penalty this side of torture and execution, and was likely to be a death sentence.

5. The hot, sultry season of midsummer.

6. Stagnant waters.

7. Magpies, birds of evil omen like blackbirds.

8. Tantalus, in classical mythology, was "tantalized" by the constant presence of delectable food and drink that, though he was desperate, he could never reach.

9. Support.

1. In the 17th century, a place of last resort for the indigent dying.

beds in the hospital, where this man's head lies at that man's foot, and so lower and lower. [Exit.]

DELIO I knew this fellow seven years² in the galleys
For a notorious murder; and 'twas thought
The cardinal suborned it. He was released
By the French general, Gaston de Foix,
When he recovered Naples.³

ANTONIO 'Tis great pity
He should be thus neglected; I have heard
He's very valiant. This foul melancholy
Will poison all his goodness; for, I'll tell you,
If too immoderate sleep be truly said
To be an inward rust unto the soul,
It then doth follow want of action
Breeds all black malcontents; and their close rearing,
Like moths in cloth, do hurt for want of wearing.⁴

SCENE 2. *The scene continues.*

[Enter CASTRUCCIO, SILVIO, RODERIGO, and GRISOLAN.]

DELIO The presence⁰ gins to fill: you promised me audience hall
To make me the partaker of the natures
Of some of your great courtiers.

ANTONIO The Lord Cardinal's,
And other strangers' that are now in court?
I shall. Here comes the great Calabrian duke.

[Enter FERDINAND and ATTENDANTS.]

FERDINAND Who took the ring oftenest?¹

SILVIO Antonio Bologna, my lord.

FERDINAND Our sister duchess' great master of her household? Give him the
jewel. When shall we leave this sportive action, and fall to action
indeed?

CASTRUCCIO Methinks, my lord, you should not desire to go to war in person.

FERDINAND Now for some gravity. Why, my lord?

CASTRUCCIO It is fitting a soldier arise to be a prince, but not necessary
a prince descend to be a captain.

FERDINAND No?

CASTRUCCIO No, my lord, he were far better do it by a deputy.

FERDINAND Why should he not as well sleep or eat by a deputy? This might
take idle, offensive, and base office from him, whereas the other
deprives him of honor.

CASTRUCCIO Believe my experience, that realm is never long in quiet where
the ruler is a soldier.

FERDINAND Thou told'st me thy wife could not endure fighting.

CASTRUCCIO True, my lord.

2. In speaking to the cardinal himself (line 34), Bosola had mentioned only two years.

3. Gaston de Foix, French commander, was active in Italy during the early 1500s; hence, the time of the tragedy is about a hundred years before Webster wrote. Ferdinand and the cardinal are Spaniards established in Italy, like the infamous house of Borgia.

4. I.e., enforced idleness breeds discontent, as moths breed in unused clothing.

1.2

1. A common game around court, used in training for tournaments, involved catching a hanging ring on the tip of a lance. But some of Webster's audience would have caught a sexual analogy.

FERDINAND And of a jest she broke of a captain she met full of wounds.
I have forgot it.

CASTRUCCIO She told him, my lord, he was a pitiful fellow, to lie, like the children of Israel, all in tents.²

FERDINAND Why, there's a wit were able to undo all the chirurgeons³ o' the city; for although gallants should quarrel and had drawn their weapons and were ready to go to it, yet her persuasions would make them put up.

CASTRUCCIO That she would, my lord.

FERDINAND How do you like my Spanish gennet?⁴

RODERIGO He is all fire.

FERDINAND I am of Pliny's opinion, I think he was begot by the wind; he runs as if he were ballasted⁵ with quicksilver.

SILVIO True, my lord, he reels from the tilt often.⁶

RODERIGO *and* GRISOLAN Ha, ha, ha!

FERDINAND Why do you laugh? Methinks, you that are courtiers should be my touchwood, take fire when I give fire; that is, laugh but when I laugh, were the subject never so witty.

CASTRUCCIO True, my lord, I myself have heard a very good jest, and have scorned to seem to have so silly a wit as to understand it.

FERDINAND But I can laugh at your fool, my lord.

CASTRUCCIO He cannot speak, you know, but he makes faces: my lady cannot abide him.

FERDINAND No?

CASTRUCCIO Nor endure to be in merry company, for she says too much laughing and too much company fills her too full of the wrinkle.

FERDINAND I would, then, have a mathematical instrument made for her face, that she might not laugh out of compass.⁷ I shall shortly visit you at Milan, Lord Silvio.

SILVIO Your grace shall arrive most welcome.

FERDINAND You are a good horseman, Antonio. You have excellent riders in France. What do you think of good horsemanship?

ANTONIO Nobly, my lord: as out of the Grecian horse issued many famous princes,⁸ so out of brave horsemanship arise the first sparks of growing resolution that raise the mind to noble action.

FERDINAND You have bespoke it worthily.

SILVIO Your brother, the Lord Cardinal, and sister duchess.
[Reenter CARDINAL, *with* DUCHESS, CARIOLA, *and* JULIA.]

CARDINAL Are the galleys come about?

GRISOLAN They are, my lord.

FERDINAND Here's the Lord Silvio, is come to take his leave.

DELIO *[Aside to* ANTONIO] Now, sir, your promise. What's that Cardinal? I mean his temper? They say he's a brave fellow,
Will play⁹ his five thousand crowns at tennis, dance,
Court ladies, and one that hath fought single combats.

ANTONIO Some such flashes superficially hang on him for form; but observe

2. Lint bandages were called "tents."

3. Surgeons.

4. Sometimes "jennet": a small Spanish horse of Arabian stock.

5. Ballasted. Pliny in his *Natural History* tells about some Spanish horses generated by a swift wind (8.67).

6. Veers away from the target, undesirable in a war horse.

7. Excessively; with a pun on the draftsman's compass.

8. The Trojan horse, in which the Greek warriors hid, to overrun Troy.

9. Wager. "Brave": fine; ostentatious.

- his inward character: he is a melancholy churchman; the spring in his face is nothing but the engendering of toads; where he is jealous of any man, he lays worse plots for them than ever was imposed on Hercules,¹ for
- 70 he strews in his way flatterers, panders, intelligencers,² atheists, and a thousand such political monsters. He should have been Pope; but instead of coming to it by the primitive decency of the church, he did bestow bribes so largely and so impudently as if he would have carried it away without heaven's knowledge. Some good he hath done—
- 75 DELIO YOU have given too much of him. What's his brother?
ANTONIO The duke there? A most perverse and turbulent nature.
What appears in him mirth is merely outside;
If he laugh heartily, it is to laugh
All honesty out of fashion.
- DELIO Twins?
- 80 ANTONIO In quality.
He speaks with others' tongues, and hears men's suits
With others' ears; will seem to sleep o' th' bench
Only to entrap offenders in their answers;
Dooms men to death by information;⁰ *testimony of spies*
Rewards by hearsay.⁰ *random report*
- 85 DELIO Then the law to him
Is like a foul black cobweb to a spider:
He makes of it his dwelling and a prison
To entangle those shall feed him.
- ANTONIO Most true:
He ne'er pays debts unless they be shrewd turns,⁰ *hurtful acts*
- 90 And those he will confess that he doth owe.
Last, for his brother there, the Cardinal,
They that do flatter him most say oracles
Hang at his lips; and verily I believe them,
For the devil speaks in them.
- 95 But for their sister, the right noble duchess,
You never fixed your eye on three fair medals
Cast in one figure, of so different temper.
For her discourse, it is so full of rapture,
You only will begin then to be sorry
- 100 When she doth end her speech, and wish, in wonder,
She held it less vainglory⁰ to talk much, *excessive pride*
Than your penance to hear her: whilst she speaks,
She throws upon a man so sweet a look,
That it were able to raise one to a galliard⁰ *gay and lively dance*
- 105 That lay in a dead palsy, and to dote
On that sweet countenance; but in that look
There speaketh so divine a continence
As cuts off all lascivious and vain hope.
Her days are practiced in such noble virtue
- 110 That sure her nights, nay, more, her very sleeps,
Are more in heaven than other ladies' shrifts.⁰ *confessions*

1. Hercules' uncle, King Eurystheus, sent him on twelve suicide missions to get rid of him, but Her-

cules performed all these "labors" successfully,
2. Spies, "political" schemers.

Let all sweet ladies break their flattering glasses,⁰ *mirrors*
 And dress themselves in her.

DELIO Fie, Antonio,
 You play the wire-drawer³ with her commendations.

ANTONIO I'll case⁰ the picture up only thus much; *frame*
 All her particular worth grows to this sum:
 She stains⁰ the time past, lights the time to come. *darkens*

CARDINAL YOU must attend my lady in the gallery,
 Some half an hour hence.

ANTONIO I shall. *[Exeunt ANTONIO and DELIO.]*

FERDINAND Sister, I have a suit to you.

DUCHESS To me, sir?

FERDINAND A gentleman here, Daniel de Bosola,
 One that was in the galleys—

DUCHESS Yes, I know him.

FERDINAND A worthy fellow he is. Pray, let me entreat for
 The provisorship of your horse.⁴

DUCHESS Your knowledge of him
 Commends him and prefers him.

FERDINAND Call him hither. *[Exit ATTENDANT.]*
 We are now upon⁰ parting. Good Lord Silvio, *at the point of*
 Do us commend to all our noble friends
 At the leaguer.⁰ *camp*

SILVIO Sir, I shall.

DUCHESS YOU are for Milan?

SILVIO I am.

DUCHESS Bring the caroches. We'll bring you down to the haven.'
[Exeunt all but FERDINAND and the CARDINAL.]

CARDINAL Be sure you entertain⁰ that Bosola *hire*
 For your intelligence:⁰ I would not be seen in't; *spy*
 And therefore many times I have slighted him
 When he did court our furtherance, as this morning.

FERDINAND Antonio, the great master of her household,
 Had been far fitter.

CARDINAL You are deceived in him:
 His nature is too honest for such business.
 He comes: I'll leave you. *[Exit.]*
[Reenter BOSOLA.]

BOSOLA I was lured to you.

FERDINAND My brother here the cardinal could never
 Abide you.

BOSOLA Never since he was in my debt.

FERDINAND Maybe some oblique character⁰ in your face *crooked feature*
 Made him suspect you.

BOSOLA Doth he study physiognomy?
 There's no more credit to be given to th' face
 Than to a sick man's urine, which some call
 The physician's whore, because she cozens⁰ him. *tricks*

3. Draw out her praises excessively.

of your horse.

4. Let me beg (for him) the position of supervisor

5. Harbor. "Caroches": carriages.

He did suspect me wrongfully.

FERDINAND For that
You must give great men leave to take their times.
Distrust doth cause us seldom be deceived:
You see, the oft shaking of the cedar tree
Fastens it more at root.

BOSOLA Yet, take heed;
For to suspect a friend unworthily
Instructs him the next⁰ way to suspect you, *nearest*
And prompts him to deceive you.

FERDINAND [*giving him money*] There's gold.

BOSOLA SO:
What follows? Never rained such showers as these
Without thunderbolts i' th' tail of them.
Whose throat must I cut?

FERDINAND Your inclination to shed blood rides post⁰ *hurries*
Before my occasion to use you. I give you that
To live i' th' court here, and observe the duchess;
To note all the particulars of her 'havior,
What suitors do solicit her for marriage,
And whom she best affects. She's a young widow:
I would not have her marry again.

BOSOLA NO, sir?

FERDINAND Do not you ask the reason, but be satisfied
I say I would not.

BOSOLA It seems you would create me
One of your familiars.⁰ *diabolical s-pirits*

FERDINAND Familiar? What's that?

BOSOLA Why, a very quaint invisible devil in flesh,
An intelligencer.⁰ *spy*

FERDINAND Such a land of thriving thing
I would wish thee, and ere long thou may'st arrive
At a higher place by't.

BOSOLA Take your devils,
Which hell calls angels;⁵ these cursed gifts would make
You a corrupter, me an impudent traitor;
And should I take these, they'd take me to hell.

FERDINAND Sir, I'll take nothing from you that I have given:
There is a place that I procured for you
This morning, the provisorship o' th' horse;
Have you heard on't?

BOSOLA NO.

FERDINAND Tis yours. Is't not worth thanks?

BOSOLA I would have you curse yourself now, that your bounty,
Which makes men truly noble, e'er should make me
A villain. Oh, that to avoid ingratitude
For the good deed you have done me, I must do
All the ill man can invent! Thus the devil
Candies all sins o'er; and what heaven terms vile,

6. Gold coins, marked with the image of the archangel Michael.

That names he complimentary.⁰

gracious

FERDINAND Be yourself;
Keep your old garb of melancholy; 'twill express
You envy those that stand above your reach,
Yet strive not to come near 'em: this will gain
Access to private lodgings, where yourself
May, like a politic dormouse—

BOSOLA As I have seen some
Feed in a lord's dish, half asleep, not seeming
To listen to any talk; and yet these rogues
Have cut his throat in a dream. What's my place?
The provisorship o' th' horse? Say, then, my corruption
Grew out of horse dung. I am your creature.

FERDINAND Away!

BOSOLA Let good men, for good deeds, covet good fame,
Since place and riches oft are bribes of shame:
Sometimes the devil doth preach.

[Exit.]

SCENE 3. *The scene continues.*

[Enter DUCHESS, CARDINAL, and CARIOLA.]

CARDINAL We are to part from you, and your own discretion
Must now be your director.

FERDINAND You are a widow:
You know already what man is; and therefore
Let not youth, high promotion, eloquence—

CARDINAL NO, nor any thing without the addition, honor,
Sway your high blood.

FERDINAND Marry! They are most luxurious⁰
Will wed twice.

lecherous

CARDINAL Oh, fie!

FERDINAND Their livers are more spotted
Than Laban's sheep.¹

DUCHESS Diamonds are of most value,
They say, that have passed through most jewelers' hands.

FERDINAND Whores by that rule are precious.

DUCHESS Will you hear me?
I'll never marry.

CARDINAL So most widows say;
But commonly that motion⁰ lasts no longer
Than the turning of an hourglass; the funeral sermon
And it end both together.

impulse

FERDINAND Now hear me:
You live in a rank pasture, here, i' th' court;
There is a kind of honeydew² that's deadly;
'Twill poison your fame⁰ look to't; be not cunning;
For they whose faces do belie their hearts

reputation

1.3

1. Dividing his flock with Jacob, Laban took the speckled sheep (Genesis 30.31—33); the liver as seat of the passions was thought to be diseased

when discolored.

2. A sweet, sticky substance left on plants by aphids.

Are witches ere they arrive at twenty years,
Aye, and give the devil suck.

DUCHESS This is terrible good counsel.

FERDINAND Hypocrisy is woven of a fine small thread,
Subtler than Vulcan's engine:³ yet, believe't,
Your darkest actions, nay, your privatest thoughts,
Will come to light.

CARDINAL YOU may flatter yourself,
And take your own choice; privately be married
Under the eaves of night—

FERDINAND Think't the best voyage
That e'er you made; like the irregular crab,
Which, though't goes backward, thinks that it goes right
Because it goes its own way; but observe,
Such weddings may more properly be said
To be executed than celebrated.

CARDINAL The marriage night
Is the entrance into some prison.

FERDINAND And those joys,
Those lustful pleasures, are like heavy sleeps
Which do forerun man's mischief.

CARDINAL Fare you well.
Wisdom begins at the end: remember it.

[Exit.]

DUCHESS I think this speech between you both was studied,
It came so roundly⁰ off.

glibly

FERDINAND You are my sister;
This was my father's poniard,⁰ do you see?
I'd be loath to see't look rusty, 'cause 'twas his.
I would have you to give o'er these chargeable⁰ revels:
A visor⁴ and a mask are whispering rooms
That were ne'er built for goodness—fare ye well—
And women like that part which, like the lamprey,⁵
Hath never a bone in't.

expensive

DUCHESS Fie, sir!

FERDINAND Nay,

I mean the tongue; variety of courtship.
What cannot a neat knave with a smooth tale
Make a woman believe? Farewell, lusty widow.

[Exit.]

DUCHESS Shall this move me? If all my royal kindred
Lay in my way unto this marriage,
I'd make them my low footsteps; and even now,
Even in this hate, as men in some great battles,
By apprehending danger, have achieved
Almost impossible actions (I have heard soldiers say so),
So I through frights and threatenings will assay⁰
This dangerous venture. Let old wives report
I winked and chose a husband. Cariola,

attempt

3. The net in which Vulcan, Venus's husband, caught her misbehaving with Mars.

4. A half-mask, worn by ladies at carnivals, thea-

ters, and other dubious resorts.

5. Lamprey eels have a cartilaginous, not a bony, skeleton.

To thy known secrecy I have given up
More than my life—my fame.

CARIOLA Both shall be safe,
For I'll conceal this secret from the world
As warily as those that trade in poison
Keep poison from their children.

DUCHESS Thy protestation
Is ingenious⁰ and hearty:⁰ I believe it. *ingenuous/sincere*
Is Antonio come?

CARIOLA He attends you.

DUCHESS Good dear soul,
Leave me, but place thyself behind the arras,⁶
Where thou mayst overhear us. Wish me good speed,
For I am going into a wilderness
Where I shall find nor path nor friendly clue
To be my guide. [CARIOLA goes behind the arras.]

[Enter ANTONIO]

I sent for you: sit down;
Take pen and ink, and write. Are you ready?

ANTONIO Yes.

DUCHESS What did I say?

ANTONIO That I should write somewhat.

DUCHESS Oh, I remember:
After these triumphs⁰ and this large expense, *tournaments*
It's fit, like thrifty husbands,⁷ we inquire
What's laid up for tomorrow.

ANTONIO So please your beauteous excellence.

DUCHESS Beauteous?

Indeed, I thank you: I look young for your sake;
You have ta'en my cares upon you.

ANTONIO I'll fetch your grace

The particulars of your revenue and expense.

DUCHESS Oh, you are an upright treasurer: but you mistook;
For when I said I meant to make inquiry
What's laid up for tomorrow, I did mean
What's laid up yonder for me.

ANTONIO Where?

DUCHESS In heaven.

I am making my will (as 'tis fit princes should,
In perfect memory), and I pray sir, tell me,
Were not one better make it smiling thus
Than in deep groans and terrible ghastly looks,
As if the gifts we parted with procured⁰ *brought on*
That violent distraction?

ANTONIO Oh, much better.

DUCHESS If I had a husband now, this care were quit:

But I intend to make you overseer.

6. Tapestries were often hung in Renaissance palaces to moderate the chill of the bare walls.

7. Though used here in its original sense of one

who preserves and safeguards property, the word shows where the duchess's thoughts are tending.

What good deed shall we first remember? Say.
 ANTONIO Begin with that first good deed begun i' th' world
 After man's creation, the sacrament of marriage:
 I'd have you first provide for a good husband;
 Give him all.
 DUCHESS All?
 ANTONIO Yes, your excellent self.
 DUCHESS In a winding-sheet?
 ANTONIO In a couple.
 DUCHESS Saint Winfred, that were a strange will!⁸
 ANTONIO 'Twere stranger if there were no will in you
 To marry again.
 DUCHESS What do you think of marriage?
 ANTONIO I take't, as those that deny purgatory;
 It locally⁰ contains or heaven or hell; *within itself*
 There's no third place in't.
 DUCHESS How do you affect it?^o *feel about it*
 ANTONIO My banishment,^o feeding my melancholy, *solitary condition*
 Would often reason thus—
 DUCHESS Pray, let's hear it.
 ANTONIO Say a man never marry, nor have children,
 What takes that from him? Only the bare name
 Of being a father, or the weak delight
 To see the little wanton ride a-cock-horse
 Upon a painted stick, or hear him chatter
 Like a taught starling.
 DUCHESS Fie, fie, what's all this?
 One of your eyes is bloodshot; use my ring to't,
 They say 'tis very sovereign.⁹ 'Twas my wedding ring,
 And I did vow never to part with it
 But to my second husband.
 ANTONIO You have parted with it now.
 DUCHESS Yes, to help your eyesight.
 ANTONIO You have made me stark blind.
 DUCHESS How?
 ANTONIO There is a saucy and ambitious devil
 Is dancing in this circle.¹
 DUCHESS Remove him.
 ANTONIO How?
 DUCHESS There needs small conjuration, when your finger
 May do it: thus; is it fit? *[She puts the ring upon his finger; he kneels.]*
 ANTONIO What said you?
 DUCHESS Sir,
 This goodly roof of yours² is too low built;
 I cannot stand upright in't nor discourse,
 Without I raise it higher: raise yourself;

8. Saint Winifred, Welsh virgin and martyr, is an odd saint for the Duchess of Malfi to swear on. "In a couple": i.e., of sheets—but with a play on "coupling."

9. Healing, but with an overtone implying royal

power.

1. To conjure up a devil, the necromancer first draws a charmed circle on the ground—like the duchess's ring.

2. His head as he kneels.

- Or, if you please, my hand to help you: so. [Raises *him*.]
- ANTONIO Ambition, madam, is a great man's madness,
 125 That is not kept in chains and close-pent rooms,
 But in fair lightsome lodgings, and is girt
 With the wild noise of prattling visitants,
 Which makes it lunatic beyond all cure.
 Conceive not I am so stupid but I aim
 130 Whereto your favors tend; but he's a fool
 That, being a-cold, would thrust his hands i' th' fire
 To warm them.
- DUCHESS So, now the ground's broke,
 You may discover what a wealthy mine
 I make you lord of.
- ANTONIO O my unworthiness!
- 135 DUCHESS You were ill to sell⁰ yourself: *evaluate*
 This darkening of your worth is not like that
 Which tradesmen use i' th' city; their false lights
 Are to rid bad wares off:³ and I must tell you,
 If you will know where breathes a complete man
 HO (I speak it without flattery), turn your eyes,
 And progress through yourself.
- ANTONIO Were there nor heaven
 Nor hell, I should be honest: I have long served virtue,
 And ne'er ta'en wages of her.
- DUCHESS Now she pays it.
 The misery of us that are born great!
 145 We are forced to woo, because none dare woo us;
 And as a tyrant doubles⁰ with his words *speaks ambiguously*
 And fearfully equivocates, so we
 Are forced to express our violent passions
 In riddles and in dreams, and leave the path
 150 Of simple virtue, which was never made
 To seem the thing it is not. Go, go brag
 You have left me heartless;⁰ mine is in your bosom: *without a heart*
 I hope 'twill multiply love there. You do tremble:
 Make not your heart so dead a piece of flesh,
 155 To fear more than to love me. Sir, be confident:
 What is't distracts you? This is flesh and blood, sir;
 'Tis not the figure cut in alabaster
 Kneels at my husband's tomb. Awake, awake, man!
 I do here put off all vain ceremony,
 160 And only do appear to you a young widow
 That claims you for her husband, and, like a widow,
 I use but half a blush in't.
- ANTONIO Truth speak for me,
 I will remain the constant sanctuary
 Of your good name.
- DUCHESS I thank you, gentle love:
 165 And 'cause⁰ you shall not come to me in debt, *so that*

3. Tradesmen in the city display their goods in a poor light so the defects won't be seen.

Being now my steward, here upon your lips
 I sign your *Quietus est*.⁴ This you should have begged now;
 I have seen children oft eat sweetmeats thus,
 As fearful to devour them too soon.

ANTONIO But for your brothers?

DUCHESS Do not think of them.
 All discord without this circumference⁵
 Is only to be pitied, and not feared;
 Yet, should they know it, time will easily
 Scatter the tempest.

ANTONIO These words should be mine,
 And all the parts you have spoke, if some part of it
 Would not have savored flattery.

DUCHESS Kneel.
[CARIOLA comes from behind the arras.]

ANTONIO Ha!

DUCHESS Be not amazed; this woman's of my counsel:
 I have heard lawyers say, a contract in a chamber
*Per verba de present*⁶ is absolute marriage. [She and ANTONIO kneel.]
 Bless, heaven, this sacred gordian,⁰ which let violence knot
 Never untwine!

ANTONIO And may our sweet affections, like the spheres,
 Be still⁰ in motion! constantly

DUCHESS Quickening,⁰ and make giving life
 The like soft music!⁷

ANTONIO That we may imitate the loving palms,
 Best emblem of a peaceful marriage, that ne'er
 Bore fruit, divided!

DUCHESS What can the church force more?

ANTONIO That fortune may not know an accident,
 Either of joy or sorrow, to divide
 Our fixed wishes!

DUCHESS HOW can the church bind faster?⁰ tighter
 We now are man and wife, and 'tis the church
 That must but echo this. Maid, stand apart.⁸
 I now am blind.

ANTONIO What's your conceit⁰ in this? idea

DUCHESS I would have you lead your fortune by the hand
 Unto your marriage bed
 (You speak in me this, for we now are one);
 We'll only lie, and talk together, and plot
 To appease my humorous⁰ kindred; and if you please, choleric
 Like the old tale in *Alexander and Lodowick*,
 Lay a naked sword between us, keep us chaste.⁹
 Oh, let me shroud my blushes in your bosom,

4. The legal formula for marking a bill "paid" or "acquitted."

5. Outside this room, or their embrace.

6. "By words in the present tense" (i.e., not a betrothal or promise for the future). In canon law, the agreement of two parties to consider themselves married is valid with or without priest, ceremony, or witness.

7. Like the supposed music of the spheres.

8. The phrase is addressed to Cariola as the duchess shuts her eyes and rejects all support.

9. Alexander and Lodowick were look-alike friends in an old ballad. For purely virtuous reasons, one slept with the wife of the other, but with the precaution indicated.

Since 'tis the treasury of all my secrets! *[Exeunt DUCHESS and ANTONIO.]*
 CARIOLA Whether the spirit of greatness or of woman
 Reign most in her, I know not; but it shows
 A fearful madness: I owe her much of pity. *[Exit.]*

Act 2

SCENE 1. *The scene continues*

[Enter BOSOLA and CASTRUCCIO.]

BOSOLA YOU say you would fain be taken for an eminent courtier?
 CASTRUCCIO 'Tis the very main of my ambition.
 BOSOLA Let me see: you have a reasonable good face for't already, and your
 nightcap expresses your ears sufficient largely. I would have you learn
 to twirl the strings of your band¹ with a good grace, and in a set speech, at
 th' end of every sentence, to hum three or four times, or blow your nose
 till it smart again, to recover your memory. When you come to be a presi-
 dent² in criminal causes, if you smile upon a prisoner, hang him, but if
 you frown upon him and threaten him, let him be sure to 'scape the
 gallows.
 CASTRUCCIO I would be a very merry president.
 BOSOLA DO not sup o' nights; 'twill beget you an admirable wit.
 CASTRUCCIO Rather it would make me have a good stomach³ to quarrel;
 for they say, your roaring boys⁴ eat meat seldom, and that makes them
 so valiant. But how shall I know whether the people take me for an eminent
 fellow?
 BOSOLA I will teach a trick to know it: give out you lie a-dying, and if you
 hear the common people curse you, be sure you are taken for one of the
 prime nightcaps.⁵

[Enter an OLD LADY.]

You come from painting now?
 OLD LADY From what?
 BOSOLA Why, from your scurvy face-physic. To behold thee not painted
 inclines somewhat near a miracle; these in thy face here were deep ruts and
 foul sloughs the last progress.⁶ There was a lady in France that, having
 had the smallpox, flayed the skin off her face to make it more level; and
 whereas before she looked like a nutmeg grater, after she resembled an
 abortive hedgehog.
 OLD LADY DO you call this painting?
 BOSOLA NO, no, but you call it careening of an old morphewed lady, to
 make her disembogue again: there's rough-cast phrase to your plastic.⁷
 OLD LADY It seems you are well acquainted with my closet.
 BOSOLA One would suspect it for a shop of witchcraft, to find in it the fat of
 serpents, spawn of snakes, Jews' spittle, and their young children's ordure;
 and all these for the face. I would sooner eat a dead pigeon taken from

2.1

1. The elaborate ruff of the day had strings attached to it.
 2. Presiding magistrate.
 3. Disposition.
 4. London town bullies.
 5. Lawyers (who wore a white coif or skullcap; cf. line 4, above).

6. A progress was a formal royal journey of state.
 7. Scraping ("careening") of an old, scaly ("morphewed") ship ("lady") to fit her for the ocean ("making her disembogue") again. All these metaphors are applied to the model ("plastic") of the lady's condition as "rough-cast," a mixture of lime and gravel, is troweled over a base.

the soles of the feet of one sick of the plague than kiss one of you fasting.⁸
 Here are two of you, whose sin of your youth is the very patrimony of the
 physician; makes him renew his footcloth with the spring, and change his
 high-prized courtesan with the fall of the leaf.⁹ I do wonder you do not loathe
 yourselves. Observe my meditation now:
 What thing is in this outward form of man
 To be beloved? We account it ominous,
 If nature do produce a colt, or lamb,
 A fawn, or goat, in any limb resembling
 A man, and fly from't as a prodigy:⁰
 Man stands amazed to see his deformity
 In any other creature but himself.
 But in our own flesh, though we bear diseases
 Which have their true names only ta'en from beasts—
 As the most ulcerous wolf and swinish measles¹—
 Though we are eaten up of lice and worms,
 And though continually we bear about us
 A rotten and dead body, we delight
 To hide it in rich tissue: all our fear,
 Nay, all our terror, is lest our physician
 Should put us in the ground to be made sweet—
 Your wife's gone to Rome: you two couple, and get you
 To the wells at Lucca to recover your aches.²

*evil omen**[Exeunt CASTRUCCIO and OLD LADY.]*

I have other work on foot. I observe our duchess
 Is sick a-days: she pukes, her stomach seethes,
 The fins of her eyelids look most teeming blue,
 She wanes i' th' cheek, and waxes fat i' th' flank,
 And contrary to our Italian fashion,
 Wears a loose-bodied gown: there's somewhat in t.
 I have a trick may chance discover it,
 A pretty one; I have bought some apricots,
 The first our spring yields.

[Enter ANTONIO and DELIO, talking apart.]

DELIO And so long since married?

You amaze me.

ANTONIO Let me seal your lips forever:

For, did I think that anything but th' air
 Could carry these words from you, I should wish
 You had no breath at all.

[turning to BOSOLA]

Now, sir, in your contemplation? You are studying to become a great wise
 fellow?

BOSOLA Oh, sir, the opinion of wisdom is a foul tetter³ that runs all over a
 man's body. If simplicity⁴ direct us to have no evil, it directs us to a happy

8. Centuries of traditional invective about women's cosmetic practices lie behind this speech. Freshly killed pigeons were applied to the feet of plague victims to draw off the infection; fasting was supposed to cause bad breath.

9. The physician grows rich on those who have outworn their youth; every spring he buys a new harness for his horse and every fall a new mistress for himself.

1. "Wolf": cancer or lupus; "measle": an infection of swine, sometimes confused with human measles.

2. The wells at Lucca are the mineral springs at nearby Montecatini, renowned as a place to "take the cure." Aches are a symptom of syphilis.

3. Skin disease.

4. Foolishness.

being, for the subtlest folly proceeds from the subtlest wisdom.
Let me be simply honest.

ANTONIO I do understand your inside.

BOSOLA DO you so?

ANTONIO Because you would not seem to appear to th' world

Puffed up with your preferment, you continue
This out-of-fashion melancholy. Leave it, leave it.

BOSOLA Give me leave to be honest in any phrase, in any compliment
whatsoever. Shall I confess myself to you? I look no higher than I can reach:
they are the gods that must ride on winged horses. A lawyer's mule of a slow
pace will both suit my disposition and business; for, mark me, when
a man's mind rides faster than his horse can gallop, they quickly both tire.

ANTONIO You would look up to heaven, but I think

The devil, that rules i' th' air, stands in your light.

BOSOLA Oh, sir, you are lord of the ascendant,⁵ chief man with the duchess;
a duke was your cousin-german removed.⁶ Say you were lineally descended
from King Pepin,⁷ or he himself, what of this? Search the heads of the
greatest rivers in the world, you shall find them but bubbles of water. Some
would think the souls of princes were brought forth by some more weighty
cause than those of meaner persons: they are deceived, there's the same
hand to them; the like passions sway them; the same reason that makes a
vicar go to law for a tithe-pig⁸ and undo his neighbors, makes them spoil a
whole province, and batter down goodly cities with the cannon.

[Enter DUCHESS and LADIES.]

DUCHESS Your arm, Antonio; do I not grow fat?

I am exceeding short-winded. Bosola,
I would have you, sir, provide for me a litter,
Such a one as the Duchess of Florence rode in.

BOSOLA The duchess used one when she was great with child.

DUCHESS I think she did. Come hither, mend my ruff;

Here, when? Thou art such a tedious⁰ lady, and *clumsy*
Thy breath smells of lemon peels;⁹ would thou hadst done;
Shall I swoon under thy fingers? I am
So troubled with the mother!¹

BOSOLA [*aside*] I fear too much.

DUCHESS I have heard you say that the French courtiers

Wear their hats on 'fore the king.

ANTONIO I have seen it.

DUCHESS In the presence?

ANTONIO Yes.

DUCHESS Why should not we bring up that fashion? 'Tis

Ceremony more than duty that consists

In the removing of a piece of felt.

Be you the example to the rest o' th' court;

Put on your hat first.

ANTONIO YOU must pardon me.

5. In astrology, the predominating influence, controlling destiny.

6. First cousin once removed.

7. Father of Charlemagne, hence source of a great dynasty.

8. A parson was entitled to a tenth ("tithe") of his

parishioners' annual profit and was often paid in crops or livestock, but was thought mean if he sued for a petty sum.

9. Lemon peels, chewed to sweeten the breath.

1. Heartburn, but with a second meaning not lost on Bosola.

I have seen, in colder countries than in France,
Nobles stand bare to th' prince, and the distinction
Methought showed reverently.

BOSOLA I have a present for your grace.

DUCHESS For me, sir?

BOSOLA Apricots, madam.

DUCHESS O, sir, where are they?

I have heard of none to-year.

BOSOLA [*aside*] Good: her color rises.

DUCHESS Indeed, I thank you: they are wondrous fair ones.

What an unskillful fellow is our gardener!

We shall have none this month.

BOSOLA Will not your grace pare them?

DUCHESS No. They taste of musk, methinks; indeed they do.

BOSOLA I know not: yet I wish your grace had pared em.

DUCHESS Why?

BOSOLA I forgot to tell you, the knave gardener,

Only to raise his profit by them the sooner,

Did ripen them in horse dung.²

DUCHESS O, you jest.

You shall judge: pray taste one.

ANTONIO Indeed, madam,

I do not love the fruit.

DUCHESS Sir, you are loath

To rob us of our dainties: 'tis a delicate fruit;

They say they are restorative.

BOSOLA 'Tis a pretty art,

This grafting.

DUCHESS 'Tis so; a bettering of nature.

BOSOLA To make a pippin grow upon a crab,^o *crab apple*

A damson on a blackthorn, [*aside*] How greedily she eats them!

A whirlwind strike off these bawd farthingales!³

For, but for that and the loose-bodied gown,

I should have discovered apparently^o

certainly

The young springaP cutting a caper in her belly.

fellenv

DUCHESS I thank you, Bosola. They were right good ones,

If they do not make me sick.

ANTONIO How now, madam?

DUCHESS This green fruit and my stomach are not friends;

How they swell me!

BOSOLA [*aside*] Nay, you are too much swelled already.

DUCHESS Oh, I am in an extreme cold sweat!

BOSOLA I am very sorry.

DUCHESS Lights to my chamber! O good Antonio,

I fear I am undone!

DELIO Lights there, lights!

[*Exeunt* DUCHESS *and* LADIES. *Exit, on the other side,* BOSOLA.]

ANTONIO O my most trusty Delio, we are lost!

2. Which grows warm as it decomposes.

3. Early hoopskirts, capable of concealing the figure.

- I fear she's fall'n in labor; and there's left
 No time for her remove.
- 150 DELIO Have you prepared
 Those ladies to attend her? And procured
 That politic⁰ safe conveyance for the midwife
 Your duchess plotted?
- ANTONIO I have.
- DELIO Make use, then, of this forced occasion:
 155 Give out that Bosola hath poisoned her
 With these apricots; that will give some color
 For her keeping close.
- ANTONIO Fie, fie, the physicians
 Will then flock to her.
- DELIO For that you may pretend
 She'll use some prepared antidote of her own,
 160 Lest the physicians should re-poison her.
- ANTONIO I am lost in amazement:⁰ I know not what to
 think on't. *confusion*
 [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE 2. *The scene continues.*

- [*Enter BOSOLA.*]
- BOSOLA SO, SO, there's no question but her tetchiness¹ and most vulturous
 eating of the apricots are apparent signs of breeding.
- [*Enter an OLD LADY.*]
- Now?
- OLD LADY I am in haste, sir.
- 5 BOSOLA There was a young waiting woman had a monstrous desire to see the
 glasshouse²—
- OLD LADY Nay, pray let me go.
- BOSOLA And it was only to know what strange instrument it was should swell
 up a glass to the fashion of a woman's belly.
- 10 OLD LADY I will hear no more of the glasshouse. You are still³ abusing
 women!
- BOSOLA Who, I? No; only by the way now and then mention your frailties.
 The orange tree bears ripe and green fruit and blossoms all together; and
 some of you give entertainment for pure love, but more for more precious
 15 reward. The lusty spring smells well, but drooping autumn tastes well. If we
 have the same golden showers that rained in the time of Jupiter the thun-
 derer, you have the same Danaes still,⁴ to hold up their laps to receive them.
 Didst thou never study the mathematics?
- OLD LADY What's that, sir?
- 20 BOSOLA Why, to know the trick how to make a many lines meet in one center.
 Go, go, give your foster daughters good counsel: tell them that the devil
 takes delight to hang at a woman's girdle, like a false rusty watch, that she
 cannot discern how the time passes. *[Exit OLD LADY.]*
 [*Enter ANTONIO, DELIO, RODERIGO, and GRISOLAN.*]

2.2

1. Irritability.
 2. Where bottles were blown, near the theater in
 Blackfriars.

3. Always.
 4. Jupiter's success in wooing Danae in a shower
 of gold traditionally illustrated female venality.

ANTONIO Shut up the courtgates.
 RODERIGO Why, sir? What's the danger?
 ANTONIO Shut up the posterns presently,⁵ and call
 All the officers o' th' court.
 GRISOLAN I shall instantly. [Exit.]
 ANTONIO Who keeps the key o' th' park gate?
 RODERIGO Forobosco.
 ANTONIO Let him bring't presently.
[Reenter GRISOLAN with SERVANTS.]
 1 SERVANT O, gentlemen o' the court, the foulest treason!
 BOSOLA *[aside]* If that these apricots should be poisoned now,
 Without my knowledge!
 1 SERVANT There was taken even now
 A Switzer⁰ in the duchess' bedchamber— Swiss guard
 2 SERVANT A Switzer?
 1 SERVANT With a pistol in his great codpiece.⁶
 BOSOLA Ha, ha, ha!
 1 SERVANT The codpiece was the case for't.
 2 SERVANT There was
 A cunning traitor: who would have searched his codpiece?
 1 SERVANT True, if he had kept out of the ladies' chambers.
 And all the molds of his buttons were leaden bullets.
 2 SERVANT O wicked cannibal!
 A firelock⁰ in's codpiece! pistol
 1 SERVANT 'Twas a French plot,
 Upon my life.
 2 SERVANT TO see what the devil can do!
 ANTONIO Are all the officers here?
 SERVANTS We are.
 ANTONIO Gentlemen,
 We have lost much plate⁷ you know, and but this evening
 Jewels, to the value of four thousand ducats,
 Are missing in the duchess' cabinet.
 Are the gates shut?
 SERVANT Yes.
 ANTONIO 'Tis the duchess' pleasure
 Each officer be locked into his chamber
 Till the sun-rising; and to send the keys
 Of all their chests and of their outward doors
 Into her bedchamber. She is very sick.
 RODERIGO At her pleasure.
 ANTONIO She entreats you take't not ill:
 The innocent shall be the more approved by it.
 BOSOLA Gentlemen o' th' wood-yard, where's your Switzer now?
 1 SERVANT By this hand, 'twas credibly reported by one o' th' black guard.⁸
[Exeunt all except ANTONIO and DELIO.]
 DELIO How fares it with the duchess?

5. At once. "Posterns": outer gates.

6. An outside flap worn on the front of men's trunk hose.

7. Massive gold and silver dishes, a frequent form

of wealth in the days before banks.

8. Kitchen scullions. The "wood-yard" is a source of firewood for kitchen and fireplaces.

- ANTONIO She's exposed
Unto the worst of torture, pain, and fear.
- DELIO Speak to her all happy comfort.
- ANTONIO HOW I do play the fool with mine own danger!
You are this night, dear friend, to post to Rome;
My life lies in your service.
- DELIO Do not doubt me.
- ANTONIO Oh, 'tis far from me, and yet fear presents me
Somewhat that looks like danger.
- DELIO Believe it,
Tis but the shadow of your fear, no more;
How superstitiously we mind our evils!
The throwing down salt, or crossing of a hare,
Bleeding at nose, the stumbling of a horse,
Or singing of a cricket, are of power
To daunt whole man" in us. Sir, fare you well: *all courage*
I wish you all the joys of a blessed father:
And, for my faith, lay this unto your breast,
Old friends, like old swords, still are trusted best.
- [Enter CARIOLA.]
- CARIOLA Sir, you are the happy father of a son: *[Exit.]*
Your wife commends him to you.
- ANTONIO Blessed comfort!
For heaven's sake tend her well: I'll presently
Go set a figure for's nativity.⁹
- SCENE 3. *The scene continues.* *[Exeunt.]*
- [Enter BOSOLA, with a dark lantern.]
- BOSOLA Sure I did hear a woman shriek: list, ha!
And the sound came, if I received it right,
From the duchess' lodgings. There's some stratagem
In the confining all our courtiers
To their several⁰ wards: I must have part of it; *separate*
My intelligence will freeze else.¹ List, again!
It may be 'twas the melancholy bird,
Best friend of silence and of solitariness,
The owl, that screamed so. Ha! Antonio?
- [Enter ANTONIO with a candle, his sword drawn.]
- ANTONIO I heard some noise. Who's there? What art thou? Speak.
- BOSOLA Antonio? Put not your face nor body
To such a forced expression of fear.
I am Bosola, your friend.
- ANTONIO Bosola!
[aside] This mole does undermine me.—Heard you not
A noise even now?
- BOSOLA From whence?
- ANTONIO From the duchess' lodging.
- BOSOLA Not I. Did you?

9. Cast his horoscope right away.

2.3

1. All my news will be cold otherwise.

ANTONIO I did, or else I dreamed.
 BOSOLA Let's walk towards it.
 ANTONIO No, it may be 'twas
 But the rising of the wind.
 BOSOLA Very likely.
 Methinks 'tis very cold, and yet you sweat:
 You look wildly.
 ANTONIO I have been setting a figure²
 For the duchess' jewels.
 BOSOLA Ah, and how falls your question?
 Do you find it radical?⁰ *significant*
 ANTONIO What's that to you?
 'Tis rather to be questioned what design,
 When all men were commanded to their lodgings,
 Makes you a nightwalker.
 BOSOLA In sooth, I'll tell you:
 Now all the court's asleep, I thought the devil
 Had least to do here; I came to say my prayers;
 And if it do offend you I do so,
 You are a fine courtier.
 ANTONIO [*aside*] This fellow will undo me.
 You gave the duchess apricots today:
 Pray heaven they were not poisoned!
 BOSOLA Poisoned? A Spanish fig³
 For the imputation!
 ANTONIO Traitors are ever confident
 Till they are discovered. There were jewels stolen, too;
 In my conceit,⁰ none are to be suspected *opinion*
 More than yourself.
 BOSOLA You are a false steward.
 ANTONIO Saucy slave, I'll pull thee up by the roots.
 BOSOLA May be the ruin will crush you to pieces.
 ANTONIO You are an impudent snake indeed, sir:
 Are you scarce warm, and do you show your sting?
 You libel well, sir.
 BOSOLA No, sir: copy it out,
 And I will set my hand to't.⁴
 ANTONIO [*aside*] My nose bleeds.
 One that were superstitious would count
 This ominous, when it merely comes by chance:
 Two letters, that are wrought here for my name,⁵
 Are drowned in blood!
 Mere accident.—For you, sir, I'll take order
 I' th' morn you shall be safe.⁰ [*aside*] 'Tis that must color *under guard*
 Her lying-in^o—Sir, this door you pass not: *giving birth*
 I do not hold it fit that you come near
 The duchess' lodgings, till you have quit⁰ yourself. *cleared*

2. Establishing the loss involved. But Bosola takes the expression astrologically, as if Antonio were casting a horoscope.

3. An obscene gesture, which Bosola doubtless

makes onstage.

4. Bosola denies the charge, not by denying malignancy, but by offering to publish it.

5. Embroidered on the handkerchief.

[*aside*] The great are like the base, nay, they are the same,
 When they seek shameful ways to avoid shame. [Exit.]

BOSOLA Antonio hereabout did drop a paper:
 Some of your help, false friend: [*opening his lantern*] Oh, here it is.
 What's here? A child's nativity calculated? [reads]
 "The duchess was delivered of a son, 'tween the hours twelve and one in
 the night, *Anno Dom.* 1504,"—that's this year—"decimo nono Decem-
 bris,"⁶—that's this night—"taken according to the meridian of Malfi"—that's
 our duchess: happy discovery! "The lord of the first house being combust⁷
 in the ascendant, signifies short life; and Mars being in a human sign, joined
 to the tail of the Dragon, in the eighth house, doth threaten a violent death.
Caetera non scrutantur."⁸

Why, now 'tis most apparent: this precise⁰ fellow officious
 Is the duchess' bawd:⁹ I have it to my wish! procurer
 This is a parcel of intelligency
 Our courtiers were cased up for: it needs must follow
 That I must be committed on pretense
 Of poisoning her; which I'll endure, and laugh at.
 If one could find the father now! But that
 Time will discover. Old Castruccio
 I' th' morning posts to Rome: by him I'll send
 A letter that shall make her brothers' galls
 O'erflow their livers. This was a thrifty⁰ way. shrewd
 Though lust do mask in ne'er so strange disguise,
 She's oft found witty, but is never wise. [Exit.]

SCENE 4. *The palace of the CARDINAL at Rome.*

[Enter CARDINAL and JULIA.]

CARDINAL Sit. Thou art my best of wishes. Prithee, tell me
 What trick didst thou invent to come to Rome
 Without thy husband.

JULIA Why, my lord, I told him
 I came to visit an old anchorite⁰ hermit
 Here for devotion.

CARDINAL Thou are a witty false one—
 I mean, to him.

JULIA You have prevailed with me
 Beyond my strongest thoughts! I would not now
 Find you inconstant.

CARDINAL Do not put thyself
 To such a voluntary torture, which proceeds
 Out of your own guilt.

JULIA How, my lord?

CARDINAL YOU fear
 My constancy, because you have approved⁰ experienced
 Those giddy and wild turnings in yourself.

JULIA Did you e'er find them?

6. December 19.

7. Burnt up; i.e., the ruling planet is close to the sun.

8. "The rest is not examined"—i.e., the horoscope is incomplete. Mars and the Dragon are sinister signs, even separately; fatal together.

CARDINAL Sooth, generally for women;
A man might strive to make glass malleable,
Ere he should make them fixed.

JULIA So, my lord.

CARDINAL We had need go borrow that fantastic glass
Invented by Galileo the Florentine¹
To view another spacious world i' th' moon,
And look to find a constant woman there.

JULIA This is very well, my lord.

CARDINAL Why do you weep?
Are tears your justification? The selfsame tears
Will fall into your husband's bosom, lady,
With a loud protestation that you love him
Above the world. Come, I'll love you wisely,
That's jealously, since I am very certain
You cannot make me cuckold.

JULIA I'll go home
To my husband.

CARDINAL You may thank me, lady,
I have taken you off your melancholy perch,
Bore you upon my fist, and showed you game,
And let you fly at it.² I pray thee, kiss me.
When thou wast with thy husband, thou wast watched
Like a tame elephant: still you are to thank me:
Thou hadst only kisses from him and high feeding;
But what delight was that? 'Twas just like one
That hath a little fingering on the lute,
Yet cannot tune it: still you are to thank me.

JULIA You told me of a piteous wound i' th' heart
And a sick liver, when you wooed me first,
And spake like one in physic.³

[A knock is heard.]

CARDINAL Who's that?
Rest firm," for my affection to thee,
Lightning moves slow to 't.^o
[Enter SERVANT.]

*be assured
by-comparison*

SERVANT Madam, a gentleman,
That's come post from Malfi, desires to see you.

CARDINAL Let him enter. I'll withdraw.

[Exit.]

SERVANT He says
Your husband, old Castruccio, is come to Rome,
Most pitifully tired with riding post.⁴

[Exit.]

[Enter DELIO.]

JULIA Signor Delio! [*aside*]'—'tis one of my old suitors.

DELIO I was bold to come and see you.

JULIA Sir, you are welcome.

24

1. In 1504, Galileo's telescope was more than one hundred years in the future, but the reference was topical for Webster's audience.

2. The cardinal speaks of himself as a falconer

training a bird (Julia).

3. Like a person under a doctor's care.

4. When riding post, one changed horses at regular intervals without stopping to rest oneself.

DELIO Do you lie^o here? *lodge*

JULIA Sure, your own experience
Will satisfy you no: our Roman prelates
Do not keep lodging for ladies.

DELIO Very well.
I have brought you no commendations from your husband,
For I know none by him.

JULIA I hear he's come to Rome.

DELIO I never knew man and beast, of a horse and a knight,
So weary of each other: if he had had a good back,
He would have undertook to have borne his horse,
His breech was so pitifully sore.

JULIA Your laughter
Is my pity.

DELIO Lady, I know not whether
You want money, but I have brought you some.

JULIA From my husband?

DELIO No, from mine own allowance.

JULIA I must hear the condition, ere I be bound to take it.

DELIO Look on't, 'tis gold: hath it not a fine color?

JULIA I have a bird more beautiful.

DELIO Try the sound on't.

JULIA A lute string far exceeds it:
It hath no smell, like cassia or civet;
Nor is it physical,^o though some fond^o doctors *medicinal/foolish*
Persuade us see the't in cullises:^o I'll tell you, *broth*
This is a creature bred by—
[Reenter SERVANT.]

SERVANT Your husband's come,
Hath delivered a letter to the Duke of Calabria
That, to my thinking, hath put him out of his wits. *[Exit.]*

JULIA Sir, you hear:
Pray, let me know your business and your suit
As briefly as can be.

DELIO With good speed: I would wish you,
At such time as you are nonresident
With your husband, my mistress.

JULIA Sir, I'll go ask my husband if I shall,
And straight return your answer. *[Exit.]*

DELIO Very fine!
Is this her wit, or honesty,^o that speaks thus? *chastity*
I heard one say the duke was highly moved
With a letter sent from Malfi. I do fear
Antonio is betrayed: how fearfully
Shows his ambition now! Unfortunate fortune!
They pass through whirlpools, and deep woes do shun,
Who the event weigh ere the action's done.⁵ *[Exit.]*

5. I.e., who judge of actions before seeing their final consequences.

SCENE 5. *The scene continues.*

[Enter CARDINAL, and FERDINAND with a letter.]

FERDINAND I have this night digged up a mandrake.¹

CARDINAL Say you?

FERDINAND And I am grown mad with't.

CARDINAL What's the prodigy?⁰ *fearful wonder*

FERDINAND Read there—A sister damned: she's loose i' th' hilts;²

Grown a notorious strumpet.

CARDINAL Speak lower.

FERDINAND Lower?

Rogues do not whisper't now, but seek to publish't

(As servants do the bounty of their lords)

Aloud; and with a covetous searching eye,

To mark who note them. O, confusion seize her!

She hath had most cunning bawds to serve her turn,

And more secure conveyances for lust

Than towns of garrison for service.⁰ *receiving supplies*

CARDINAL Is't possible?

Can this be certain?

FERDINAND Rhubarb, oh, for rhubarb

To purge this choler!³ Here's the cursed day

To prompt my memory, and here't shall stick

Till of her bleeding heart I make a sponge

To wipe it out.

CARDINAL Why do you make yourself
So wild a tempest?

FERDINAND Would I could be one,

That I might toss her palace 'bout her ears,

Root up her goodly forests, blast her meads,⁰

And lay her general territory as waste

As she hath done her honors. *meadows*

CARDINAL Shall our blood,

The royal blood of Aragon and Castile,

Be thus attainted?

FERDINAND Apply desperate physic:⁰

We must not now use balsamum,⁰ but fire,⁰ *medicine*

The smarting cupping glass⁴ for that's the mean

To purge infected blood, such blood as hers.

There is a kind of pity in mine eye,

I'll give it to my handkercher; and now 'tis here,

I'll bequeath this to her bastard. *balm/cautery*

CARDINAL What to do?

FERDINAND Why, to make soft lint for his mother's wounds,

When I have hewed her to pieces.

CARDINAL Cursed creature!

2.5

1. A fabulous root, violently aphrodisiac but also deadly poison. Both aspects apply to Ferdinand.

2. I.e., promiscuous.

3. Rhubarb, as a laxative, was thought curative of the high pressures of hot rage.

4. By which people were bled.

Unequal nature, to place women's hearts
So far upon the left side!⁵

FERDINAND Foolish men,
That e'er will trust their honor in a bark
Made of so slight weak bulrush as is woman,
Apt every minute to sink it!

CARDINAL Thus ignorance, when it hath purchased honor,
It cannot wield it.

FERDINAND Methinks I see her laughing—
Excellent hyena! Talk to me somewhat, quickly,
Or my imagination will carry me
To see her in the shameful act of sin.

CARDINAL With whom?

FERDINAND Haply⁰ with some strong-thighed bargeman,
Or one o' th' wood-yard that can quoit the sledge⁰ *perhaps*
Or toss the bar,⁶ or else some lovely squire *throw the hammer*
That carries coal up to her privy lodgings.

CARDINAL You fly beyond your reason.

FERDINAND Go to, mistress!
Tis not your whore's milk that shall quench my wild fire,
But your whore's blood.

CARDINAL How idly shows this rage, which carries you,
As men conveyed by witches through the air,
On violent whirlwinds! This intemperate noise
Fitly resembles deaf men's shrill discourse,
Who talk aloud,⁰ thinking all other men *loudly*
To have their imperfection.

FERDINAND Have not you
My palsy?

CARDINAL Yes, I can be angry, but
Without this rupture: there is not in nature
A thing that makes man so deformed, so beastly,
As doth intemperate anger. Chide yourself.
You have divers men who never yet expressed
Their strong desire of rest but by unrest,
By vexing of themselves. Come, put yourself
In tune.

FERDINAND So; I will only study to seem
The thing I am not. I could kill her now,
In you, or in myself; for I do think
It is some sin in us heaven doth revenge
By her.

CARDINAL Are you stark mad?

FERDINAND I would have their bodies
Burnt in a coal pit with the ventage⁰ stopped, *chimney*
That their cursed smoke might not ascend to heaven;
Or dip the sheets they lie in in pitch or sulphur,

5. The left is the sinister side, associated with bad luck, deceit, and passion.

6. Gross tests of strength,

Wrap them in't, and then light them like a match;
 Or else to boil their bastard to a cullis,⁰
 And give't his lecherous father to renew⁰
 The sin of his back.⁷

*broth
 repair*

CARDINAL I'll leave you.

75 FERDINAND Nay, I have done.
 I am confident, had I been damned in hell,
 And should have heard of this, it would have put me
 Into a cold sweat. In, in; I'll go sleep.
 Till I know who leaps my sister, I'll not stir:
 That known, I'll find scorpions to string my whips,⁸
 so And fix her in a general eclipse.

[Exeunt.]

Act 3

SCENE 1. *Amalfi.*

[Enter ANTONIO and DELIO.]

ANTONIO Our noble friend, my most beloved Delio!

Oh, you have been a stranger long at court;
 Came you along with the Lord Ferdinand?

DELIO I did, sir. And how fares your noble duchess?

5 ANTONIO Right fortunately well: she's an excellent
 Feeder of pedigrees; since you last saw her,
 She hath had two children more, a son and daughter.

DELIO Methinks 'twas yesterday: let me but wink,
 And not behold your face, which to mine eye
 10 Is somewhat leaner, verily I should dream
 It were within this half-hour.

ANTONIO You have not been in law, friend Delio,
 Nor in prison, nor a suitor at the court,
 Nor begged the reversion of some great man's place,
 15 Nor troubled with an old wife, which doth make
 Your time so insensibly⁰ hasten.

imperceptibly

DELIO Pray, sir, tell me,
 Hath not this news arrived yet to the ear
 Of the Lord Cardinal?

ANTONIO I fear it hath:
 The Lord Ferdinand, that's newly come to court,
 Doth bear himself right dangerously.

20 DELIO Pray, why?

ANTONIO He is so quiet that he seems to sleep
 The tempest out, as dormice do in winter.
 Those houses that are haunted are most still
 Till the devil be up.

DELIO What say the common people?

25 ANTONIO The common rabble do directly say
 She is a strumpet.

7. As Atreus did to Thyestes in Greek legend. "The sin of his back": sexual capacity.

8. Tipping the thongs of a whip with "scorpions"

(tips of jagged steel or lead that sting and bite the flesh) is an old metaphor for aggravated punishment.



John Donne, anonymous, ca. 1595

This portrait presents Donne in the guise of a melancholy lover fond of self-display; the signs are his broad-brimmed black hat, soulful eyes, sensual lips, delicate hands, and untied but expensive lace collar. Parts of Donne's *Songs and Sonnets* (pp. 603 ff.) date from this period. Melancholy, supposedly caused by an excess of black bile and often associated with the scholarly and artistic temperament, was identified in Robert Burton's massive and very popular *Anatomy of Melancholy* as a well-nigh universal attribute of the period. It is the temperament of many literary characters, among them Hamlet, Duke Orsino (in *Twelfth Night*, p. 510), Jacques in *As You Like It*, and Milton's Π Pensive (p. 1801). PRIVATE COLLECTION/ BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY.



Lady Sidney and Six of Her Children, Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger, ca. 1596

This portrait of Barbara (Gamage) Sidney, wife of Sir Robert Sidney of Penshurst, provides an insight into domestic relations in the period, as well as an illuminating comment on Ben Jonson's poem "To Penshurst" (p. 644). Robert Sidney (brother of Sir Philip Sidney) is absent, serving as governor of the English stronghold in Flushing. Lady Sidney is portrayed as a fruitful, fostering mother. Her hands rest on her two sons—both still in skirts, though the heir wears a sword; the four daughters are arranged in two pairs, the elder of each pair imitating her mother's nurturing gesture. The eldest daughter will become Lady Mary Wroth, author of *Urania* and the sonnet sequence *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* (pp. 652 ff.). REPRODUCED BY KIND PERMISSION OF VLSCOUNT DE L'ISLE, FROM HIS PRIVATE COLLECTION AT PENSURST PLACE.



Lucy, Countess of Bedford, as a Masquer, attributed to John de Critz, ca. 1606

Lucy (Harrington) Russell, countess of Bedford, prominent courtier, favorite of Queen Anne, patron of Donne and Jonson, and frequent planner of and participant in court masques, is shown in masquing costume, for the wedding masque *Hymenaei*, by Ben Jonson and Inigo Jones. Jonson describes the masquing ladies as "attired richly and alike in the most celestial colors" associated with the rainbow, with elaborate headdresses and shoes, "all full of splendor, sovereignty, and riches." Their masque dances were "fully of subtlety and device."
WOBURN ABBEY, BEDFORDSHIRE, UK/BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY.



Charles I on Horseback, Sir Anthony Van Dyck, 1637—38

One of Charles I's court painters, knighted and pensioned by the king, Van Dyck produced several portraits of the royal family and their circle at court. This magnificent equestrian portrait of the king in armor on a white horse presents him as hero and warrior, in a pose that looks back to portraits and statues of Roman emperors on horseback. It was painted to be hung at the end of the Long Gallery in St. James Palace. NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON, UK/ BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY, NY.



The Penitent Magdalen, Georges de la Tour, ca. 1638—43

This remarkable image of a young woman in meditative pose, her face lit by candlelight and her hand touching a skull, can serve as an emblem for the extensive meditative literature of the period—the poetry and prose of Donne, Herbert, Vaughan, and Traherne, among others—on such topics as sickness, human mortality, the transience of life and beauty, and the inevitability of death. REUNION DES MUSSES NATIONAUX/ART RESOURCE, NY.

The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century (1660–1785)



Landscape with Apollo and the Muses, Claude Lorrain, 1652

Claude's poetic landscapes inspired many British landscape gardens. In this painting, a river god sprawls by the Castalian spring under Mount Parnassus; the white swans are sacred to Apollo. On the terrace to the left, Apollo plays his lyre, surrounded by the nine Muses, while four poets approach through the woods. At the upper left, below a temple, the fountain of Hippocrene pours forth its inspiring waters. The dreamlike distance of the figures in this mysterious, luminous scene is intended to draw the viewer in. Similarly, in landscape gardens visitors were invited to stroll amid temples, inscriptions, swans, and statues, gradually comprehending the master plan. NATIONAL GALLERY OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND/BRIDGEIVIAN ART LIBRARY.





Great Fire of London,
Dutch school, 1666

The fire of London, described by Dryden in *Annus Mirabilis* and by Pepys in his diary, destroyed most of the central city. In the foreground of this panorama, huddled refugees carry their goods away from the city. Under a pall of smoke across the Thames, St. Paul's Cathedral blazes in the center, with London Bridge on the far left and the Tower on the far right. The fire raged for four days, after which a new city eventually rose from the ashes.
MUSEUM OF LONDON, UK/
BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY.

ELIZABETH CARY

1585?—1639

Elizabeth (Tanfield) Cary was the first Englishwoman to write and publish a drama, *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613); it was probably composed between 1602 and 1609 and invites comparison with Webster's *Duchess of Malfi*, performed in 1613. Both plays have as protagonists forceful queens who insist on preserving the integrity of their own emotional lives in regard to marriage and who otherwise flout gender expectations; both queens are murdered by violently jealous men who then go mad. Cary's play, however, was not intended for the stage: it is a Senecan closet drama, a genre that dramatizes the clash of ideological positions. *Mariam* explores issues important in Cary's own life and controverted in the Jacobean state: the claims of conscience, the analogy of domestic and state tyranny, the power of kings and husbands, the rights and duties of wives and subjects, the justifications for resistance to tyrants, and the possibility and power of passive resistance.

The major source for Cary's life is a memoir by one of her daughters written about 1655. Though conceived as an exemplary biography or saint's life, it shows Cary continually caught between pressures to conform and submit and an inner imperative to resist and challenge authority. Daughter of a successful lawyer and judge, Sir Lawrence Tanfield, and of a mother descended from the country gentry, she grew up in Oxfordshire as a precocious only child, reading omnivorously, learning languages, translating Seneca's epistles and Ortelius's geography, and writing verses. The memoir claims that she learned, chiefly on her own, French, Spanish, Italian, Latin, and Hebrew (though her tutor John Davies of Hereford probably helped); that she often read all night, bribing the servants for candles her mother refused; and that at age twelve she regaled her father with arguments against Calvin's *Institutes*. In 1602, at age seventeen, she married Sir Henry Cary, a successful courtier who was at length appointed privy councillor (1618), Viscount Falkland in the Scottish peerage (1620), and lord deputy of Ireland (1622).

The memoir portrays Elizabeth struggling to conform her own inclinations and "strong will" to the will of her "very absolute" husband. She bore eleven children between 1609 and 1624 and nursed all but one; she read continually in history, poetry, moral philosophy, and the Church Fathers; and in 1626, now back in England, she converted openly to Catholicism—a move that left her isolated, attacked, cast off by husband and family, and in acute financial distress. (A covert profession would have caused no trouble in the court of the Catholic queen, Henrietta Maria, but an open avowal was especially threatening to her husband as governor of Ireland.) Ultimately, she brought six of her children to Catholicism, spiriting two sons abroad in the dead of night to receive a Jesuit education and leading four daughters to join a Benedictine convent at Cambray. Her eldest son, Lucius, celebrated in Ben Jonson's Cary-Morison ode (p. 1439), became the center of a noted intellectual circle at his estate, Great Tew.

Most of Cary's other writing did not survive, apparently: the memoir attributes to her a verse "Life of Tamurlane," several saints' lives in verse, an answer to a controversial Protestant tract by her son Lucius, and translations of the works of Cardinal Perron and other French divines; she and her tutor Davies also refer to an earlier tragedy set in Sicily. We do have her epitaph on Buckingham (ca. 1628), several trenchant letters to Charles I and others seeking redress after her husband cast her off, and a translation (1630) of Cardinal Perron's answer to a treatise by King James. Also, she is probably (but not certainly) the author of a remarkable *History of the Life, Reign, and Death of Edward II* (ca. 1627—28); if so, she was the first Englishwoman to write a full-scale history.

The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry Cary supplied an Argument to the play, but the modern reader may be better served by a succinct summary of the historical situation and the play. Observing the unity of time, Cary brings the pressure of antecedent events and incorporates materials from other parts of the Herod story (drawn chiefly from Josephus's *Antiquities*) to heighten dramatic tension. In 39 B.C.E., before the play begins, Herod the Great, with the aid of Rome, has supplanted Hircanus, the hereditary king and priest in Israel, divorced his first wife, Doris, and married Hircanus's granddaughter, the singularly beautiful Mariam. To secure his throne he arranged a drowning accident to remove the new high priest, Mariam's brother Aristobolus, and had old Hircanus executed. Called to Rome to answer accusations leveled by Alexandra, the mother of Mariam and Aristobolus, Herod left orders with his uncle Josephus, who is also the husband of his sister Salome, to kill Mariam in the event of his death so no other man could possess her. When he returned, Herod had Josephus killed for telling Mariam about the decree for her death, taking that as evidence supporting Salome's false charge that the two were lovers. He then married Salome to Constabarus, who, unknown to Herod, had hidden away the sons of Babas, who were under sentence of death for their opposition to Herod. Soon Herod was again in Rome, in danger of death as a partisan of the defeated and recently deceased Marc Antony. Before departing, he had left with his officer Sohemus another order for Mariam to be killed in the event of his death; but Sohemus, like Josephus before him, revealed the decree to her.

The play begins as a rumor comes of Herod's death, causing a sense of liberation and new beginnings under the joint rule of Mariam and her mother, Alexandra, in the minority of Mariam's son. Mariam is at first torn between grief and joy but is relieved that the tyrant who murdered her kin and decreed her death will not return. Pheroras, Herod's brother, who had been under command to marry an infant, now marries his true love, Graphina. The sons of Babas now come out of hiding to serve the state, and Constabarus is no longer in peril for having concealed them. Sohemus will not suffer for his decision to let Mariam live in defiance of Herod's command. Even those who regret Herod's death benefit from it: his sister Salome, who had first plotted to have her second husband, Constabarus, killed by Herod so she might marry a new lover, now determines upon divorce instead—scandalous for a woman in Israel but hardly so wicked as murder.

At Herod's unexpected return, all these hopeful new beginnings are crushed. Babas's sons are executed. Sohemus is accused by Salome of adultery with Mariam and is executed for that (and for revealing Herod's instructions). Mariam refuses Herod's sexual advances and berates him for murdering her kin. Salome engineers a plot by which Mariam's servant offers (supposedly from her) a cup of poison to Herod and then goads Herod to command her death. A messenger recounts the details of Mariam's noble death, and Herod runs mad with grief and remorse, persuaded at last of her innocence and inestimable worth.

In the scenes presented here, Mariam is warned, and herself recognizes, that she brings death on herself by refusing to live by the accepted female triad of virtues: she is chaste but manifestly not silent or obedient. She challenges patriarchal control within the institution of marriage, claiming a wife's right to her own speech—public and private—as well as to the integrity of her own emotional life and self-definition.

From The Tragedy of Mariam, the Fair Queen of Jewry

From Act 3

SCENE 3

[ON THE DUTIES OF A WIFE]

[MARIAM. SOHEMUS.]

MARIAM Sohemus, tell me what the news may be
 That makes your eyes so full, your cheeks so blue?

SOHEMUS I know not now how to call them. Ill for me
 Tis sure they are: not so, I hope, for you.
 Herod—

MARIAM Oh, what of Herod?

SOHEMUS Herod lives.

[MARIAM] HOW! Lives? What, in some cave or forest hid?

SOHEMUS Nay, back returned with honor. Caesar gives
 Him greater grace than e'er Anthonius did.

MARIAM Foretell the ruin of my family,
 Tell me that I shall see our city burned:
 Tell me I shall a death disgraceful die,
 But tell me not that Herod is returned.

SOHEMUS Be not impatient, madam, be but mild,
 His love to you again will soon be bred.

MARIAM I will not to his love be reconciled,
 With solemn vows I have forsworn his bed.

SOHEMUS But you must break those vows.

MARIAM I'll rather break
 The heart of Mariam. Cursed is my fate:
 But speak no more to me, in vain ye speak⁰ *advise me*
 To live with him I so profoundly hate.

SOHEMUS Great queen, you must to me your pardon give,
 Sohemus cannot now your will obey:
 If your command should me to silence drive,
 It were not to obey, but to betray.
 Reject and slight my speeches, mock my faith,
 Scorn my observance,⁰ call my counsel naught: *dutiful service*
 Though you regard not what Sohemus saith,
 Yet will I ever freely speak my thought.
 I fear ere long I shall fair Mariam see
 In woeful state, and by herself undone:
 Yet for your issue's sake¹ more temp'rate be,
 The heart by affability is won.

MARIAM And must I to my prison turn again?
 Oh, now I see I was an hypocrite:
 I did this morning for his death complain,
 And yet do mourn, because he lives, ere night.
 When I his death believed, compassion wrought,
 And was the stickler⁰ 'twixt my heart and him: *mediator*

1. Mariam's sons by Herod, Alexander and Aristobulus.

But now that curtain's drawn from off my thought,
 Hate doth appear again with visage grim:
 And paints the face of Herod in my heart,
 In horrid colors with detested look:
 Then fear would come, but scorn doth play her part,
 And saith that scorn with fear can never brook.⁰ *put up with*
 I know I could enchain him with a smile:
 And lead him captive with a gentle word,
 I scorn my look should ever man beguile,
 Or other speech than meaning⁰ to afford. *what I mean*
 Else Salome in vain might spend her wind,
 In vain might Herod's mother whet her tongue:
 In vain had they complotted and combined,
 For I could overthrow them all ere long.
 Oh, what a shelter is mine innocence,
 To shield me from the pangs of inward grief:
 Gainst all mishaps it is my fair defense,
 And to my sorrows yields a large relief.
 To be commandress of the triple earth,²
 And sit in safety from a fall secure:
 To have all nations celebrate my birth,
 I would not that my spirit were impure.
 Let my distressed state unpitied be,
 Mine innocence is hope enough for me. *[Exit.]*
 SOHEMUS Poor guiltless queen! Oh, that my wish might place
 A little temper⁰ now about thy heart: *moderation*
 Unbridled speech is Mariam's worst disgrace,⁰ *fault*
 And will endanger her without desert.⁰ *her deserving it*
 I am in greater hazard. O'er my head,
 The fatal axe doth hang unsteadily:
 My disobedience once discovered
 Will shake it down: Sohemus so shall die.
 For when the king shall find, we thought his death
 Had been as certain as we see his life:
 And marks withal I slighted so his breath,⁰ *command*
 As to preserve alive his matchless wife—
 Nay more, to give to Alexander's hand⁰ *Mariam's son*
 The regal dignity; the sovereign power,
 How I had yielded up at her command,
 The strength of all the city, David's Tower⁴—
 What more than common death may I expect,
 Since I too well do know his cruelty?
 'Twere death a word of Herod's to neglect;
 What then to do directly contrary?
 Yet, life, I quit thee with a willing spirit,
 And think thou could'st not better be employed:

2. Probably Rome, Egypt, and Jerusalem.

3. An allusion to the sword of Damocles; Damocles was a courtier to Dionysius of Syracuse, who suspended a sword by a single hair over Damocles' head to illustrate the precariousness of

a king's fortunes.

4. A fort Herod built by the western wall of Jerusalem; it was named David's Tower later, by the crusaders.

85 I forfeit thee for her that more doth merit,
 Ten such⁰ were better dead than she destroyed. *such as I*
 But fare thee well, chaste queen, well may I see
 The darkness palpable, and rivers part:⁵
 The sun stand still, nay more, retorted be,⁶
 90 But never woman with so pure a heart.
 Thine eyes' grave majesty keeps all in awe,
 And cuts the wings of every loose desire:
 Thy brow is table to the modest law;⁷
 Yet though we dare not love, we may admire.⁸
 95 And if I die, it shall my soul content,
 My breath in Mariam's service shall be spent.

CHORUS Tis not enough for one that is a wife
 To keep her spotless from an act of ill:
 But from suspicion she should free her life,
 And bare⁰ herself of power as well as will. *stri-p*
 Tis not so glorious for her to be free,
 As by her proper⁰ self restrained to be. *own*

When she hath spacious ground to walk upon,
 Why on the ridge should she desire to go?
 105 It is no glory to forbear alone⁰ *only*
 Those things that may her honor overthrow.
 But 'tis thankworthy if she will not take
 All lawful liberties for honor's sake.

That wife her hand against her fame doth rear,
 no That more than to her lord alone will give
 A private word to any second ear,
 And though she may with reputation live,
 Yet though most chaste, she doth her glory blot,
 And wounds her honor, though she kills it not.⁹

us When to their husbands they themselves do bind,
 Do they not wholly give themselves away?
 Or give they but their body, not their mind,
 Reserving that, though best, for others' prey?
 No sure, their thoughts no more can be their own,
 120 And therefore should to none but one be known.

Then she usurps upon another's right,
 That seeks to be by public language graced:
 And though her thoughts reflect with purest light,
 Her mind if not peculiar⁰ is not chaste. *exclusive*

5. Darkness was one of the ten plagues called down on Israel by Moses; "rivers part" refers to the parting of the Red Sea that enabled the Israelites to escape from Pharaoh (Exodus 14.21–22).

6. Joshua commanded the sun to stand still (Joshua 10.12–14); Sohemus imagines it traveling backward.

7. Sohemus describes Mariam's brow as a tablet ("table") on which the law of modesty is engraved.

8. Cf. the speech in which Antonio speaks of the Duchess of Malfi (p. 1466).

9. I.e., the wife that gives a private word to any besides her husband may not lose her reputation but blots it.

For in a wife it is no worse to find,

A common⁰ body than a common mind.

shared, public

And every mind, though free from thought of ill,

That out of glory⁰ seeks a worth to show,

desire of praise

When any's ears but one therewith they fill,¹

Doth in a sort her pureness overthrow.

Now Mariam had (but that to this she bent)²

Been free from fear, as well as innocent.

From Act 4

SCENE 8

[MARIAM'S FATE]

MARIAM Am I the Mariam that presumed so much,

And deemed my face must needs preserve my breath?

Aye, I it was that thought my beauty such,

As it alone could countermand my death.

Now death will teach me: he can pale as well

A cheek of roses as a cheek less bright,

And dim an eye whose shine doth most excel,

As soon as one that casts a meaner light.

Had not myself against myself conspired,

No plot, no adversary from without

Could Herod's love from Mariam have retired,

Or from his heart have thrust my semblance out.

The wanton queen that never loved for love,

False Cleopatra, wholly set on gain,

With all her sleights did prove,⁰ yet vainly prove,

try

For her the love of Herod to obtain.

Yet her allurements, all her courtly guile,

Her smiles, her favors, and her smooth deceit

Could not my face from Herod's mind exile,

But were with him of less than little weight.

That face and person that in Asia late⁰

recently

For beauty's goddess, Paphos' queen,⁰ was ta'en:

Venus

That face that did captive⁰ great Julius' fate,

take captive

That very face that was Anthonius' bane,⁰

destruction

That face that to be Egypt's pride was born,

That face that all the world esteemed so rare:¹

Did Herod hate, despise, neglect, and scorn,

When with the same, he Mariam's did compare.

This made that I improvidently wrought,²

And on the wager even my life did pawn:

Because I thought, and yet but truly thought,

That Herod's love could not from me be drawn.

1. I.e., when they fill any other ears (besides the husband's) with speech to show their worth.

2. Except that she talked too freely to others.

1. The Egyptian queen Cleopatra was the beauty

who captivated both Julius Caesar and Mark Antony (lines 23-24).

2. I.e., this caused me to act recklessly.

But now, though out of time,⁰ I plainly see
 It could be drawn, though never drawn from me,
 Had I but with humility been graced,
 As well as fair I might have proved me wise:
 But I did think because I knew me chaste,
 One virtue for a woman might suffice.
 That mind for glory of our sex might stand,
 Wherein humility and chastity
 Doth march with equal paces hand in hand.
 But one, if single seen, who setteth by?⁰
 And I had singly one, but 'tis my joy,
 That I was ever innocent, though sour:
 And therefore can they but my life destroy,
 My soul is free from adversary's power.
 You princes great in power, and high in birth,
 Be great and high, I envy not your hap.⁰
 Your birth must be from dust, your power on earth;
 In heav'n shall Mariam sit in Sara's lap.³

*too late**takes account**lot*

S * f-

3. Mariam envisions herself not in Abraham's bosom but in its female counterpart, the lap of Abraham's wife, Sarah.

The Gender Wars

What are women good for? By the English Renaissance, men had been debating this question for centuries. Misogynists argued the case for woman's supposed natural inferiority and proper subordination to man on several grounds: the imperfections of the female body, mind, and spirit; women's disposition to frivolity, vanity, shrewishness, extravagance, and sexual voracity; and especially the claim that in the Garden of Eden, Eve caused Adam (and all humankind) to fall from innocence. The Wife of Bath's Prologue offers an amusing compendium of arguments pro and con that were already hoary by Chaucer's time. Some defenses of women, among them "Eve's Apology" in Aemilia Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* (p. 1317), earnestly challenge these stereotypes. More often, men composed prose tracts on both sides of the "woman question" in a spirit of witty rhetorical gamesmanship.

Joseph Swetnam (ca. 1570?—1621) prompted such an exchange of tracts by publishing his *Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward, and Unconstant Women* in 1615, under the pseudonym Tom Tel-troth. His other book, *The School of the Noble and Worthy Science of Defence* (1617), indicates that he was a fencing master, and both books testify to his admitted lack of formal education. Swetnam's rambling but lively attack on women cobbles together proverbs, lore, rowdy jokes, invective, and anecdotes, as well as often inexact or misattributed paraphrases of what various authorities had to say about women, evidently derived from anthologies and commonplace books. The latter were printed versions of the personal notebooks into which many readers were accustomed to copy, under various headings depending on interest and use, quotations and citations from their reading. The *Arraignment* touched off a pamphlet war between the years 1615 and 1620, including four reissues of Swetnam's book and at least eight rejoinders or related works. Two of the answers bear women's allegorical names, Esther Sowernam (a satiric play on Swe[e]tnam) and Constantia Munda ("a steadfast world"); they may or may not have been actually written by women. Other works include a stage play, *Swetnam the Woman-Hater Arraigned by Women* (1620), and two satires on cross-dressing (which are included on Norton Literature Online). But the first response (1617), and the only one of these tracts published under the author's own name, was *A Muzzle for Melastomus* (Black Mouth) by the nineteen-year-old Rachel Speght (ca. 1597—?). Speght was the first Englishwoman to claim the role of polemicist and critic of gender ideology. Her tract defending women was published by, and perhaps solicited by, Swetnam's bookseller, Thomas Archer.

A Muzzle employs the railing attacks and witty ripostes expected in such a controversy. But most of Speght's treatise undertakes a serious argument, reinterpreting controversial biblical texts to yield a more equitable concept of gender. Speght's father, a Calvinist clergyman and an author himself, evidently provided her with some classical education—very rare for seventeenth-century women of any class. In her writings she both claims and displays a knowledge of Latin, some training in logic and rhetoric, and some familiarity with a range of learned authorities. In 1621 she published a long meditative poem, *Mortality's Memorandum*, occasioned by her mother's death. She prefaced it with an address to the reader reaffirming her authorship of *A Muzzle* and with a three-hundred-line autobiographical poem, "A Dream," which reworks medieval dream visions such as *The Romance of the Rose* to portray allegorically the obstacles she encountered and the rapturous delight she experienced

in her pursuit of learning (For the text of "A Dream," go to Norton Literature Online). She also gives that experience a more general application by putting a vigorous defense of women's education in the mouth of the character Truth.

JOSEPH SWETNAM

*From The Arraignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward¹ and
Unconstant Women: Or the Vanity of Them,
Choose You Whether*

*Neither to the best, nor yet to the worst;
but to the common sort of women.*

Musing with myself being idle, and having little ease to pass the time withal, and I being in a great choler² against some women, I mean more than one, and so in the rough of my fury, taking [I took] my pen in hand to beguile the time withal. Indeed, I might have employed myself to better use, than in such an idle business.

* * #

To the Reader. Read it, if you please, and like as you list: neither to the wisest clerk,³ nor yet to the starkest fool, but unto the ordinary sort of giddy-headed young men, I send this greeting.

If thou mean to see the bearbaiting⁴ of women, then trudge to this bear garden apace, and get in betimes,⁵ and view every room where thou mayest best sit, for thy own pleasure, profit, and heart's ease, and bear with my rudeness if I chance to offend thee. But before I do open this trunk full of torments against women, I think it were not amiss . . . to drive all the women out of my hearing, for doubt lest this little spark kindle into such a flame, and raise so many stinging hornets humming about my ears, that all the wit I have will not quench the one, nor quiet the other. For I fear me I have set down more than they will like of, and yet a great deal less than they deserve: and for better proof, I refer myself to the judgment of men which have more experience than myself. For I esteem little of the malice of women, for men will be persuaded by reason, but women must be answered with silence, for I know women will bark more at me than Cerberus the two-headed dog did at Hercules, when he came into Hell to fetch out the fair Proserpina.⁶

* = \$

1. Unruly, stubbornly willful.

2. Anger. Choler was one of the four humors, this one supposedly the source of anger and irascibility.

3. Scholar; originally, a clergyman (cleric).

4. Popular sport in medieval and early modern England in which a bear, chained to a post by his neck or one leg, was attacked by several dogs. The Paris Garden in Southwark was the largest and most popular bear garden in London.

5. In good time.

6. Swetnam has confused several classical myths. Cerberus, the monster guarding the entrance to Hades, was said to have three (not two) heads, and Mercury (Hermes), not Hercules, was sent by Jove to release Proserpina. But the twelfth labor of Hercules was to bring Cerberus from Hades to the upper world.

Chapter I. This first chapter shows to what use women were made. It also shows that most of them degenerate from the use they were framed unto, by leading a proud, lazy, and idle life, to the great hindrance of their poor husbands.

Moses describes a woman thus: at the first beginning (says he) a woman was made to be a helper unto man,⁷ and so they are indeed: for she helps to spend and consume that which man painfully gets. He also says that they were made of the rib of a man,⁸ and that their froward nature shows; for a rib is a crooked thing, good for nothing else, and women are crooked by nature, for small occasion will cause them to be angry.

Again, in a manner, she was no sooner made, but straightway her mind was set upon mischief, for by her aspiring mind and wanton will she quickly procured man's fall, and therefore ever since they are and have been a woe unto man, and follow the line of their first leader.⁹

For I pray you let us consider the times past, with the time present. First, that of David and Solomon, if they had occasion so many hundred years ago to exclaim so bitterly against women, for the one of them said, that it was better to be a doorkeeper, and better dwell in a den among lions, than to be in the house with a froward and wicked woman. And the other said, that the climbing up of a sandy hill to an aged man was nothing so wearisome as to be troubled with a froward woman.¹ . . . If a woman hold an opinion, no man can draw her from it; tell her of her fault, she will not believe that she is in any fault; give her good counsel, but she will not take it. If you do but look after another woman, then she will be jealous, the more thou lovest her, the more she will disdain thee, and if thou threaten her, then she will be angry, flatter her, and then she will be proud, and if thou forbear her, it makes her bold, and if thou chasten her, then she will turn into a serpent. At a word, a woman will never forget an injury, nor give thanks for a good turn. What wise man then will exchange gold for dross, pleasure for pain, a quiet life, for wrangling brawls, from the which married men are never free.

« * if

And what of all this? Why nothing, but to tell thee that a woman is better lost than found, better forsaken than taken. Saint Paul says, that they which marry, do well, but he also says, that they which marry not, do better,² and he no doubt was well advised what he spoke. Then, if thou be wise, keep thy head out of the halter and take heed before thou have cause to curse thy hard pennyworth,³ or wish the priest speechless which knit the knot.

The philosophers which lived in the old time, their opinions were so hard of marriage that they never delighted therein, for one of them being asked why he married not? he answered, that it was too soon. And afterwards when he was old, he was asked the same question, and he said then that it was too late.

7. Genesis 2.18: "And the Lord God said. It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."

8. Genesis 2.21-22.

9. I.e., Eve.

1. Swetnam evidently relies on his imperfect memory or on careless notes. The comparisons he paraphrases are not from Solomon or David but from the biblical Apocrypha, attributed in the Book of Ecclesiasticus to Jesus Son of Sirach: "I had

rather dwell with a lion and a dragon, than to keep house with a wicked woman. . . . As the climbing up a sandy way is to the feet of the aged, so is a wife full of words to a quiet man."

2. 1 Corinthians 7.38: "So then he that giveth her [his virgin] in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better." Swetnam takes the quote out of context.

3. Something, in this case a wife, that is worth only a penny.

If thou marriest a woman of evil report, her discredits will be a spot in thy brow; thou canst not go in the street with her without mocks, nor among thy neighbors without frumps.⁴ And commonly the fairest women are soonest enticed to yield unto vanity. He that has a fair wife and a whetstone, everyone will be whetting thereon.⁵ And a castle is hard to keep when it is assaulted by many, and fair women are commonly caught at. He that marries a fair woman, everyone will wish his death to enjoy her. And if thou be never so rich, and yet but a clown⁶ in condition, then will thy fair wife have her credit to please her fancy, for a diamond has not his grace but in gold, no more has a fair woman her full commendations but in the ornament of her bravery,⁷ by which means there are divers women whose beauty has brought their husbands into great poverty and discredit by their pride and whoredom. A fair woman commonly will go like a peacock, and her husband must go like a woodcock.⁸

1615

RACHEL SPEGHT

*From A Muzzle for Melastomus*¹

*Not unto tke veriest idiot that ever set pen to paper, hut to the cynical²
baiter of women, or metamorphosed Misogunes,³ Joseph Swetnam.*

From standing water, which soon putrifies, can no good fish be expected, for it produces no other creatures but those that are venomous or noisome, as snakes, and such like. Semblably,⁴ no better stream can we look should issue from your idle corrupt brain than that whereto the rough of your fury (to use your own words) has moved you to open the sluice. In which excrement of your roving cognitions you have used such irregularities touching concordance,⁵ and observed so disordered a method, as I doubt not to tell you, that a very accidence scholar would have quite put you down⁶ in both. You appear herein not unlike that painter who, seriously endeavoring to portray Cupid's bow, forgot the string.⁷ For you, being greedy to botch up your mingle mangle invective against women, have not therein observed, in many places, so much as a grammar sense.⁸ But the emptiest barrel makes the loudest sound, and so we will account of you.

Many propositions have you framed, which, as you think, make much

4. Derisive jeers.

5. A whetstone is an abrasive stone for sharpening knives or other edged tools. The bawdy joke suggests that "everyone" will make use of both the stone and the fair wife.

6. A countryman, one who is uncouth or ill-bred.

7. Her rich and showy clothing and jewelry.

8. A common European migratory bird with mottled brown plumage; easily taken in a snare, it was associated with gullibility.

1. Black mouth.

2. A play on the Latin *cynicus*, "canine," "doglike."

3. Hater of women (Greek, cf. Misogynist).

Speght identifies Swetnam as the author of the *Arraignment*, which he had signed Thomas Teltroth.

4. Likewise.

5. Agreement of the parts of a sentence, according to the rules of grammar.

6. Revealed your errors and thereby disgraced you. "Accidence scholar": a schoolboy learning his Latin grammar.

7. This may refer not to an actual image, but rather to the omission of what is crucially important.

8. See his first sentence for an example.

against women, but if one would make a logical assumption, the conclusion would be flat against your own sex. Your dealing wants so much discretion that I doubt whether to bestow so good a name as the dunce upon you: but minority⁹ bids me keep within my bounds. And therefore I only say unto you that your corrupt heart and railing tongue have made you a fit scribe for the Devil.

In that you have termed your virulent foam *The Bearhaiting of Women*, you have plainly displayed your own disposition to be cynical, in that there appears no other dog or bull to bait them, but yourself. Good had it been for you to have put on that muzzle which Saint James would have all Christians to wear: "Speak not evil one of another,"¹ and then you had not seemed so like the serpent Porphirus, as now you do; which, though full of deadly poison, yet being toothless, hurts none so much as himself.² For you having gone beyond the limits not of humanity alone but of Christianity, have done greater harm unto your own soul than unto women, as may plainly appear. First, in dishonoring of God by palpable blasphemy, wresting and perverting every place of Scripture that you have alleged, which by the testimony of Saint Peter, is to the destruction of them that do so.³ Secondly, it appears by your disparaging of, and opprobrious speeches against, that excellent work of God's hands, which in his great love he perfected for the comfort of man. Thirdly, and lastly, by this your hodgepodge of heathenish sentences, similes, and examples, you have set forth yourself in your right colors unto the view of the world, and I doubt not but the judicious will account of you according to your demerit. As for the vulgar sort, which have no more learning than you have showed in your book, it is likely they will applaud you for your pains.

. . . if

Of Woman's excellency, with the causes of her creation, and of the sympathy which ought to be in man and wife each toward other.

. . . True it is, as is already confessed, that women first sinned, yet find we no mention of spiritual nakedness till man had sinned. Then it is said, "Their eyes were opened,"⁴ the eyes of their mind and conscience, and then perceived they themselves naked, that is, not only bereft of their integrity which they originally had, but felt the rebellion and disobedience of their members in the disordered motions of their now corrupt nature, which made them for shame to cover their nakedness. Then, and not before, it is said that they saw it, as if sin were imperfect, and unable to bring a deprivation of a blessing received, or death on all mankind, till man, in whom lay the active power of generation, had transgressed. The offense therefore of Adam and Eve is by Saint Augustine thus distinguished, "the man sinned against God and himself, the woman against God, herself, and her husband."⁵ Yet in her giving of the fruit to eat she had no malicious intent toward him, but did therein show a desire to make her husband partaker of that happiness which she thought by their eating they

9. Her own youth (she is just nineteen years old).

1. James 4.1 1. This and later biblical texts, marked (M) in these notes, are identified in the margins of Speght's original text as evidence of scholarly accuracy.

2. This toothless but venomous serpent is discussed in the naturalist Topsell's volume *Serpents*,

though not the quality of hurting only himself.

3. 2 Peter 3.16 (M).

4. Genesis 3.7 (M).

5. This formula became a commonplace, perhaps derived (very loosely) from some phrases in St. Augustine's sermon "De Adam et Eva et Sancta Maria."

should both have enjoyed. This her giving Adam of that sauce wherewith Satan had served her, whose sourness before he had eaten she did not perceive, was that which made her sin to exceed his. Wherefore, that she might not of him who ought to honor her be abhorred, the first promise that was made in Paradise God made to woman, that by her seed should the serpent's head be broken.⁶ Whereupon Adam calls her *Hevah*, life,⁷ that as the woman had been an occasion of sin, so should woman bring forth the Savior from sin, which was in the fullness of time accomplished . . . so that by Eve's blessed seed (as Saint Paul affirms) it is brought to pass, "that male and female are all one in Christ Jesus."⁸

* * *

The efficient cause of woman's creation was Jehovah the Eternal, the truth of which is manifest in Moses his narration of the six days works, where he says, "God created them male and female."⁹ And David, exhorting all the earth to sing unto the Lord, meaning, by a metonymy,¹ earth, all creatures that live on the earth of which nation or sex soever, gives this reason, "For the Lord hath made us."² That work, then, cannot choose but be good, yea very good, which is wrought by so excellent a workman as the Lord, for he being a glorious creator, must needs effect a worthy creature. . . .

Secondly, the material cause, or matter whereof woman was made, was of a refined mold, if I may so speak. For man was created of the dust of the earth, but woman was made of a part of man, after that he was a living soul. Yet was she not produced from Adam's foot, to be his too low inferior, nor from his head to be his superior, but from his side, near his heart, to be his equal. That where he is lord she may be lady: and therefore said God concerning man and woman jointly, "Let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the fowls of the heaven, and over every beast that moves upon the earth."³ By which words he makes their authority equal, and all creatures to be in subjection unto them both. . . .

Thirdly, the formal cause, fashion, and proportion of a woman was excellent. For she was neither like the beasts of the earth, fowls of the air, fishes of the sea, or any other inferior creature, but man was the only object which she did resemble. For as God gave man a lofty countenance, that he might look up toward heaven, so did he likewise give unto woman. And as the temperature⁴ of man's body is excellent, so is woman's. . . . And (that more is) in the image of God were they both created; yea and to be brief, all the parts of their bodies, both external and internal, were correspondent and meet each for other.

Fourthly and lastly, the final cause or end, for which woman was made, was to glorify God, and to be a collateral companion for man to glorify God, in using her body and all the parts, powers, and faculties thereof, as instruments for his honor.

* * *

6. Genesis 3.15 (M).

7. Genesis 3.20 (M).

8. Galatians 3.28 (M).

9. Genesis 1.27 (M). Speght here begins her analysis of woman's creation according to Aristotle's four causes of the making of any object: the efficient cause is the agent who made it; the material cause is the matter of which it is made; the formal

cause is the plan or design by which it is formed; the final cause is the purpose for which it is made.

1. A figure of speech in which a part or attribute of a thing is used for the whole.

2. Psalms 100.3 (M).

3. Genesis 1.26 (M).

4. Mixture or composition of elements.

To *the Reader*⁵

Although (courteous reader) I am young in years and more defective in knowledge, that little smattering in learning which I have obtained being only the fruit of such vacant hours as I could spare from affairs befitting my sex, yet am I not altogether ignorant of that analogy which ought to be used in a literate responsory.⁶ But the bearbaiting of women, unto which I have framed my apologetical⁷ answer, being altogether without method, irregular, without grammatical concordance, and a promiscuous mingle mangle, it would admit no such order to be observed in the answering thereof, as a regular responsory requires. . . .

1617

5. This preface introduces a brief satiric treatise appended to *A Muzzle*, titled "Certain *Quaeres* to the baiter of women, with confutation of some

parts of his diabolical discipline."

6. Answer or reply.

7. Offering a defense or vindication.

Forms of Inquiry

The problem of knowledge—what we know, how we know, what areas of knowledge most demand attention, what methods are useful in studying those areas—came to be of pressing concern to seventeenth-century thinkers and writers. Experimental scientists produced treatises explaining their discoveries: Galileo on astronomy, William Gilbert on magnetism, William Harvey on the circulation of the blood. But many more authors investigated areas of learning in the study rather than the laboratory, offering programs for new modes of inquiry; explorations of nature and human nature; examinations of human psychology, social behavior, and personal religion; reports of antiquarian discoveries; and analyses of the social and political order. Although Latin remained important for international scholarly discourse, many writers on such subjects were now choosing to write essays and treatises in English.

The works included here represent very different forms of inquiry, registering each author's personal vision of the world in his own distinctive style. Francis Bacon produced brief, often aphoristic essays on matters of practical morality, social behavior, and politics, adopting the voice of accumulated public wisdom, and writing from the perspective of a man of affairs eager to make his way in the murky world of Jacobean court culture. In longer treatises he proposed programs for radically expanding human knowledge by a systematic program of scientific analysis and experiment, and he also devised a fictional scientific Utopia. Richard Burton's massive, digressive treatise on melancholy analyzes in a loose, galloping style all aspects of a psychological malady Burton thought universal to humankind. In a period of fierce religious strife, Sir Thomas Browne offered a description of his personal religious views, constructing himself in intimate but elegant prose as a tolerant, self-aware exponent of the inclusivity for which the Church of England strove. Thomas Hobbes, in a forthright, analytic style, developed a comprehensive theory of human nature based on matter and sense impressions; that theory in turn led to his theory of the commonwealth as necessarily founded upon absolute sovereignty.

In these and other writings of the period we see English prose developing remarkable stylistic range: sometimes epigrammatic, sometimes homely and vulgar, sometimes witty and boldly imagistic, sometimes learnedly allusive, sometimes ornately Latinate. In terms of syntax, whereas sixteenth-century prose typically employs long sentences with complex patterns of subordination and parallelism, early-seventeenth-century prose often features broken rhythms, more irregular phrasing, and more loosely organized sentences.

SIR FRANCIS BACON

1561-1626

As a literary figure Sir Francis Bacon played a central role in the development of the English essay and also inaugurated the genre of the scientific Utopia in his *New Atlantis* (1627). But he was even more important to the intellectual and cultural history of the earlier seventeenth century for his treatises on reforming and promoting learning through experiment and induction. His life span closely overlapped that of

Donne and Jonson, but unlike them he came from a noble family close to the centers of government and power. During Elizabeth's reign he studied law and entered Parliament. But it was under James I that his political fortunes took off: he was knighted in 1603, became attorney general in 1613, lord chancellor (the highest judicial post) and Baron Verulam in 1618, and Viscount St. Albans in 1621. That same year, however, he was convicted on twenty-three counts of corruption and accepting bribes, and was fined, imprisoned, and forced from office. Bacon admitted the truth of the charges (though they were in part politically motivated), merely observing that everyone took bribes and that bribery never influenced his judgment. He later commented: "I was the justest judge that was in England these fifty years, but it was the justest censure in Parliament that was these 200 years."

As an essayist Bacon stands at almost the opposite pole from his great French predecessor Michel de Montaigne (1533—1592), who proposed to learn about humankind by an intensive analysis of his own body and mind and of his sensations, emotions, attitudes, and ideas. Bacon's essays are instead on topics "Civil and Moral." Montaigne's are tentative in structure; witty, expansive, and reflective in style; intimate^caridid^and affable in tone; and he speaks constantly in the first person. By contrast, Bacon adopts an aphoristic structure and a curt, often disjunctive style, as well as a tone of cool objectivity and weighty sententiousness; he seldom uses "I," but instead presents himself as a mouthpiece for society's accumulated practical wisdom. The ten short pieces of the first edition of his essays (1597) are little more than collections of maxims placed in sequence; the thirty-eight of the second edition (1612) are longer and looser; the fifty-eight of the final edition (1625) are still longer, are smoother in texture, use more figurative language, and are more unified. In that last edition, more than half of the essays deal with public life, and many of the others—even on such topics as truth, marriage, and love—are written from the vantage point of a man of affairs rather than that of a profound moralist. They evoke an atmosphere of expediency and self-interest but also voice precepts of moral wisdom and public virtue, offering a penetrating insight into the interests, problems, and thinking of the Jacobean ruling class.

Early in his life Bacon declared, "I have taken all knowledge to be my province." Whereas Donne, in the *First Anniversary*, saw human history as a process of inevitable degeneration and decay, Bacon saw it as progressive and believed that his new "scientific" method would lead humankind to a better future. He attempted a survey of the entire field of learning in *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), analyzing the principal obstacles to that advancement (rhetoric prompting the study of words rather than things, medieval scholasticism that ignores nature and promotes a barren rationalism, and pseudosciences such as astrology and alchemy); then he set forth what remains to be investigated. His *Novum Organum* (1620), written in Latin, urged induction—combining empirical investigation with carefully limited and tested generalizations—as the right method of investigating nature: the title challenged Aristotle's *Organon*, still the basis of university education, with its heavy reliance on deduction. *Novum Organum* includes a trenchant analysis of four kinds of "Idols"—psychological dispositions and intellectual habits that hold humankind back in its quest for truth and cause it to cling obstinately to the past. But despite his emphasis on experiment, Bacon generally ignored the major scientific discoveries of his age, by Galileo, Harvey, Gilbert and others; his true role was as a herald of the modern age. Despite his critique of rhetoric, he used the rich resources of figurative language—and of Utopian fiction in *The New Atlantis*—to urge a new faith in experiment and science. The thrust of his method was to segregate theology and science as "two truths," freeing science to go its own way unhampered by the old dogmas and creeds and unrestrained by the morality they supported. He is a primary creator of the myth of science as a pathway to Utopia; late in the century the Boyal Society honored him as a prophet.

FROM ESSAYS¹

Of Truth

"What is truth?" said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer.² Certainly there be that delight in giddiness,³ and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting free will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing wits,⁴ which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labor which men take in finding out of truth; nor again, that when it is found, it imposeth upon⁵ men's thoughts, that doth bring lies in favor; but a natural though corrupt love of the lie itself. One of the later school of the Grecians examineth the matter, and is at a stand⁶ to think what should be in it, that men should love lies, where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets, nor for advantage, as with the merchant, but for the lie's sake. But I cannot tell: this same truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masques and mummeries and triumphs of the world half so stately and daintily as candlelights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day, but it will not rise to the price of a diamond or carbuncle,⁷ that showeth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt that if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves? One of the fathers, in great severity, called poesy *vinum daemonum*,⁸ because it filleth the imagination, and yet it is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in, and settleth in it, that doth the hurt, such as we spake of before. But howsoever these things are thus in men's depraved judgments and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of truth, which is the lovemaking or wooing of it, the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign good of human nature. The first creature⁹ of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense; the last was the light of reason; and his sabbath work ever since is the illumination of his Spirit. First he breathed light upon the face of the matter, or chaos; then he breathed light into the face of man; and still he breatheth and inspireth light into the face of his chosen. The poet that beautified the sect that was otherwise inferior to the rest¹ saith yet excellently well: "It is a pleasure to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof below; but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth" (a hill not to

1. Bacon's essays appeared in three editions, 1597 (10 essays), 1612 (38 essays), and 1625 (58 essays); we illustrate the very considerable stylistic differences between the earliest and latest collections by presenting two versions of "Of Studies." Otherwise, all selections are from the 1625 collection, in which "Of Truth" stands first.

2. See John 18.38 for Pilate's idle query to Jesus.

3. Foolish changeability. "That": those who.

4. Discursive minds. "Philosophers of that kind": the Greek Sceptics, who taught the uncertainty of

all things.

5. Restricts, controls.

6. I.e., is baffled.

7. Ruby.

8. "The wine of devils"; St. Augustine is probably being cited.

9. Creation.

1. Lucretius's *On the Nature of Things* expressed the Epicurean creed, which Bacon thought inferior because it emphasized pleasure.

be commanded,² and where the air is always clear and serene), "and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below": so always that this prospect³ be with pity, and not with swelling or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.

To pass from theological and philosophical truth to the truth of civil business, it will be acknowledged even by those that practice it not, that clear and round⁴ dealing is the honor of man's nature, and that mixture of falsehood is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth⁵ it. For these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent; which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet. There is no vice that doth so cover a man with shame as to be found false and perfidious. And therefore Montaigne saith prettily, when he inquired the reason why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace, and such an odious charge, saith he, "If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth is as much to say as that he is brave towards God and a coward towards men."⁶ For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man. Surely the wickedness of falsehood and breach of faith cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last peal to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men, it being foretold that when Christ cometh, he shall not "find faith upon the earth."⁷

1625

Of Marriage and Single Life

He that hath wife and children hath given hostages to fortune; for they are impediments to great enterprises, either of virtue or mischief. Certainly the best works, and of greatest merit for the public, have proceeded from the unmarried or childless men, which both in affection and means have married and endowed the public. Yet it were great reason that those that have children should have greatest care of future times, unto which they know they must transmit their dearest pledges. Some there are who, though they lead a single life, yet their thoughts do end with themselves, and account future times impertinences.¹ Nay, there are some other that account wife and children but as bills of charges. Nay more, there are some foolish rich covetous men that take a pride in having no children, because they may be thought so much the richer. For perhaps they have heard some talk, "Such an one is a great rich man," and another except to it, "Yea, but he hath a great charge of children"; as if it were an abatement to his riches. But the most ordinary cause of a single life is liberty, especially in certain self-pleasing and humorous² minds, which are so sensible of every restraint, as they will go near to think their girdles and garters to be bonds and shackles. Unmarried men are best friends, best masters, best servants, but not always best subjects, for they are light to run away, and almost all fugitives are of that condition. A single life doth well with

2. Topped by anything higher.

3. I.e., provided always that this observation.

4. Upright.

5. Debases.

6. Essays 2.18.

7. Luke 18.8.

1. Irrelevant concerns.

2. Unbalanced, whimsical.

churchmen, for charity will hardly water the ground where it must first fill a pool. It is indifferent for judges and magistrates, for if they be facile³ and corrupt, you shall have a servant five times worse than a wife. For soldiers, I find the generals commonly in their hortatives⁴ put men in mind of their wives and children; and I think the despising of marriage amongst the Turks maketh the vulgar soldier more base. Certainly wife and children are a kind of discipline of humanity; and single men, though they be many times more charitable, because their means are less exhaust,⁵ yet, on the other side, they are more cruel and hardhearted (good to make severe inquisitors), because their tenderness is not so oft called upon. Grave natures, led by custom, and therefore constant, are commonly loving husbands, as was said of Ulysses, *Vetulam suam praetulit immortalitati*.⁶ Chaste women are often proud and froward,⁷ as presuming upon the merit of their chastity. It is one of the best bonds, both of chastity and obedience, in the wife if she think her husband wise, which she will never do if she find him jealous. Wives are young men's mistresses, companions for middle age, and old men's nurses; so as a man may have a quarrel⁸ to marry when he will. But yet he was reputed one of the wise men that made answer to the question when a man should marry: "A young man not yet, an elder man not at all."⁹ It is often seen that bad husbands have very good wives; whether it be that it raiseth the price of their husbands' kindness when it comes, or that the wives take a pride in their patience. But this never fails, if the bad husbands were of their own choosing, against their friends' consent; for then they will be sure to make good their own folly.

1612, 1625

Of Great Place

Men in great place are thrice servants: servants of the sovereign or state, servants of fame, and servants of business. So as they have no freedom, neither in their persons, nor in their actions, nor in their times. It is a strange desire, to seek power and to lose liberty, or to seek power over others and to lose power over a man's self. The rising unto place is laborious, and by pains men come to greater pains; and it is sometimes base, and by indignities men come to dignities. The standing is slippery, and the regress is either a downfall or at least an eclipse, which is a melancholy thing: *Cum non sis quifueris, non esse cur velis vivere*.¹ Nay, retire men cannot when they would, neither will they when it were reason; but are impatient of privateness, even in age and sickness, which require the shadow;² like old townsmen, that will be still sitting at their street door, though thereby they offer age to scorn. Certainly great persons had need to borrow other men's opinions to think themselves happy; for if they judge by their own feeling, they cannot find it; but if they think with

3. Pliable.

4. Exhortations.

5. Exhausted.

6. "He preferred his old wife to immortality." Ulysses might have had immortality with the nymph Calypso but preferred to go back to Penelope.

7. Ill-tempered.

8. Pretext.

9. Thales (6th century B.C.E.), one of the Seven Sages of Greece.

1. "When you aren't what you were, there's no reason to live" (Cicero, *Familial Letters* 7.3).

2. "The shadow" of retirement, out of the glare of public life.

themselves what other men think of them, and that other men would fain be as they are, then they are happy, as it were by report; when perhaps they find the contrary within. For they are the first that find their own griefs, though they be the last that find their own faults. Certainly men in great fortunes are strangers to themselves, and while they are in the puzzle of business they have no time to tend their health, either of body or mind. *IHi mors gravis incubat, qui notus nimis omnibus, ignotus moritur sibi.*³ In place there is license to do good and evil, whereof the latter is a curse; for in evil the best condition is not to will, the second not to can.⁴ But power to do good is the true and lawful end of aspiring; for good thoughts (though God accept them) yet towards men are little better than good dreams, except they be put in act; and that cannot be without power and place, as the vantage and commanding ground. Merit and good works is the end of man's motion, and conscience⁵ of the same is the accomplishment of man's rest; for if a man can be partaker of God's theater,⁶ he shall likewise be partaker of God's rest. *Et conversus Deus, ut aspiceret opera quae fecerunt manus suae, vidit quod omnia essent bona nimis;*⁷ and then the Sabbath.

In the discharge of thy place set before thee the best examples, for imitation is a globe⁸ of precepts. And after a time set before thee thine own example; and examine thyself strictly, whether thou didst not best at first. Neglect not also the examples of those that have carried themselves ill in the same place; not to set off thyself by taxing⁹ their memory, but to direct thyself what to avoid. Reform, therefore, without bravery, or scandal¹ of former times and persons; but yet set it down to thyself, as well to create good precedents as to follow them. Reduce things to the first institution,² and observe wherein and how they have degenerate; but yet ask counsel of both times; of the ancient time what is best, and of the latter time what is fittest. Seek to make thy course regular, that men may know beforehand what they may expect; but be not too positive and peremptory, and express thyself well when thou digressest from thy rule. Preserve the right of thy place, but stir not questions of jurisdiction; and rather assume thy right in silence and *de facto*,³ than voice it with claims and challenges. Preserve likewise the rights of inferior places, and think it more honor to direct in chief than to be busy in all. Embrace and invite helps and advices touching the execution of thy place, and do not drive away such as bring thee information as meddlers, but accept of them in good part. The vices of authority are chiefly four: delays, corruption, roughness, and facility.⁴ For delays, give easy access, keep times appointed, go through with that which is in hand, and interlace not business⁵ but of necessity. For corruption, do not only bind thine own hands or thy servants' hands from taking, but bind the hands of suitors also from offering. For integrity used doth the one; but integrity professed, and with a manifest detestation of bribery, doth the other. And avoid not only the fault, but the suspicion. Whosoever is found variable and changeth manifestly, without manifest cause, giveth suspicion of corruption.

3. "Death lies heavily on him who, while too well known to everyone else, dies unknown to himself" (Seneca, *Thyestes*).

4. Be able.

5. Consciousness.

6. Actions in the world.

7. "And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Genesis 1.31).

8. World.

9. Blaming.

1. Defaming. "Bravery": ostentation.

2. To their original form.

3. Without debate, as a matter of course.

4. Docility, too great obligingness.

5. I.e., do not carry on different businesses at the same time.

Therefore, always when thou changest thine opinion or course, profess it plainly and declare it, together with the reasons that move thee to change; and do not think to steal it.⁶ A servant or a favorite, if he be inward,⁷ and no other apparent cause of esteem, is commonly thought but a byway to close⁸ corruption. For roughness, it is a needless cause of discontent; severity breedeth fear, but roughness breedeth hate. Even reproofs from authority ought to be grave, and not taunting. As for facility, it is worse than bribery; for bribes come but now and then, but if importunity or idle respects⁹ lead a man, he shall never be without. As Solomon saith, "To respect persons is not good, for such a man will transgress for a piece of bread."¹

It is most true that was anciently spoken, "A place showeth the man"; and it showeth some to the better and some to the worse. *Omnium consensu capax imperii, nisi imperasset*,² saith Tacitus of Galba; but of Vespasian he saith, *Solus imperantium Vespasianus mutatus in melius*.³ though the one was meant of sufficiency, the other of manners and affection. It is an assured sign of a worthy and generous spirit, whom honor amends.⁴ For honor is, or should be, the place of virtue; and as in nature things move violently to their place and calmly in their place, so virtue in ambition is violent, in authority settled and calm. All rising to great place is by a winding stair; and if there be factions, it is good to side a man's self⁵ whilst he is in the rising, and to balance himself when he is placed. Use the memory of thy predecessor fairly and tenderly; for if thou dost not, it is a debt will sure be paid when thou art gone. If thou have colleagues, respect them, and rather call them when they look not for it, than exclude them when they have reason to look to be called. Be not too sensible⁶ or too remembering of thy place in conversation and private answers to suitors; but let it rather be said, "When he sits in place he is another man."

1612,1625

Of Superstition¹

It were better to have no opinion of God at all than such an opinion as is unworthy of him. For the one is unbelief, the other is contumely:² and certainly superstition is the reproach of the deity. Plutarch saith well to that purpose: "Surely" (saith he) "I had rather a great deal men should say there was no such man at all as Plutarch, than that they should say that there was one Plutarch that would eat his children as soon as they were born"—as the poets speak of Saturn.³ And as the contumely is greater towards God, so the danger is greater towards men. Atheism leaves a man to sense, to philosophy, to natural piety, to laws, to reputation, all which may be guides to an outward moral virtue, though religion were not. But superstition dismounts all these, and

6. Change your mind without its being noticed.

7. In his master's confidence.

8. Secret.

9. Irrelevant considerations.

1. Cf. Proverbs 28.21.

2. "Everyone would have thought him a good ruler, if he had not ruled."

3. "Of all the emperors, only Vespasian changed for the better."

4. I.e., whom promotion improves. "Sufficiency": abilities. "Affection": disposition.

5. For a man to take sides.

6. Sensitive.

1. Irrational religious practices founded on fear or ignorance.

2. Contempt.

3. Saturn (Cronos), god of time (among other things), was reputed to have eaten all his children, as time does. Many of the sentiments in Bacon's essay come from Plutarch's essay "On Superstition."

erecteth an absolute monarchy in the minds of men. Therefore atheism did never perturb states, for it makes men wary of themselves as looking no further;⁴ and we see the times inclined to atheism (as the time of Augustus Caesar) were civil times. But superstition hath been the confusion of many states, and bringeth in a new *primum mobile*, that ravisheth all the spheres of government.⁵ The master of superstition is the people, and in all superstition wise men follow fools, and arguments are fitted to practice in a reversed order. It was gravely said by some of the prelates in the council of Trent, where the doctrine of the schoolmen bare great sway, *that the schoolmen were like astronomers, which did feign eccentrics and epicycles and such engines of orbs to save the phenomena, though they knew there were no such things;*⁶ and in like manner that the schoolmen had framed a number of subtle and intricate axioms and theorems to save the practice of the church.

The causes of superstition are: pleasing and sensual rites and ceremonies; excess of outward and pharisaical holiness;⁷ overgreat reverence of traditions, which cannot but load the church; the stratagems of prelates for their own ambition and lucre; the favoring too much of good intentions, which openeth the gate to conceits⁸ and novelties; the taking an aim at divine matters by human, which cannot but breed mixture of imaginations; and lastly barbarous times, especially joined with calamities and disasters. Superstition without a veil is a deformed thing, for as it addeth deformity to an ape to be so like a man, so the similitude of superstition to religion makes it the more deformed. And as wholesome meat corrupteth to little worms, so good forms and orders corrupt into a number of petty observances. There is a superstition in avoiding superstition, when men think to do best if they go furthest from the superstition formerly received; therefore care would be had that (as it fareth in ill purgings) the good be not taken away with the bad, which commonly is done when the people is the reformer.⁹

1612, 1625

Of Plantations¹

Plantations are amongst ancient, primitive, and heroical works. When the world was young it beget more children; but now it is old it begets fewer: for I may justly account new plantations to be the children of former kingdoms.

4. I.e., not looking beyond their own personal lifetimes. The rule of Augustus Caesar (following) was marked by general peace and civil quiet (i.e., civilized). In this period of Roman history, many members of the elite no longer believed in the pagan gods, though they participated in the forms of state religion.

5. The prime mover (*primum mobile*) was supposed to control the motions of the other heavenly spheres; superstition is a second (and contrary) mover.

6. "Save the phenomena" means "explain appearances," as did the elaborate theories of pre-Copernican astronomers (epicycles, trepidation, and such concepts). So with the Scholastic philosophers ("schoolmen").

7. The Pharisees were the strict party among the Jews of Christ's time; they taught precise obser-

vance of the letter of Mosaic law.

8. Fancies.

9. The final sentence is directed against Puritan reformers, who loathed ceremonies, traditions, liturgy, and images, which they considered "superstitions."

1. The planting of colonies had been a standard topic of political theory since Plato, with attention focused on such matters as the choice of site, the best mix of population, and the treatment of indigenous peoples. Sir Thomas More considered the matter in his *Utopia*, and it took on increased practical importance in the narratives of English explorers such as Sir Walter Raleigh, and especially in the early 17th century, with the establishment of the first permanent English settlements in the New World. Bacon's essay largely avoids the most acute moral issues English colonization was pos-

I like a plantation in a pure soil; that is, where people are not displaced to the end to plant in others. For else it is rather an extirpation than a plantation. Planting of countries is like planting of woods; for you must make account to leese² almost twenty years profit, and expect your recompense in the end. For the principal thing that hath been the destruction of most plantations hath been the base and hasty drawing of profit in the first years. It is true, speedy profit is not to be neglected, as far as may stand³ with the good of the plantation, but no further. It is a shameful and unblessed thing to take the scum of people, and wicked condemned men, to be the people with whom you plant; and not only so, but it spoileth the plantation, for they will ever live like rogues, and not fall to work, but be lazy, and do mischief, and spend victuals, and be quickly weary, and then certify over⁴ to their country, to the discredit of the plantation. The people wherewith you plant ought to be gardeners, plowmen, laborers, smiths, carpenters, joiners,⁵ fishermen, fowlers, with some few apothecaries, surgeons, cooks, and bakers.

In a country of plantation, first look about what kind of victual the country yields of itself to hand, as chestnuts, walnuts, pineapples, olives, dates, plums, cherries, wild honey, and the like, and make use of them. Then consider what victual or esculent⁶ things there are which grow speedily and within the year, as parsnips, carrots, turnips, onions, radish, artichokes of Jerusalem,⁷ maize, and the like. For wheat, barley, and oats, they ask⁸ too much labor; but with peas and beans you may begin, both because they ask less labor and because they serve for meat⁹ as well as for bread. And of rice likewise cometh a great increase, and it is a kind of meat. Above all, there ought to be brought store of biscuit, oatmeal, flour, meal, and the like in the beginning, till bread may be had. For beasts or birds, take chiefly such as are least subject to diseases, and multiply fastest, as swine, goats, cocks, hens, turkeys, geese, house doves, and the like. The victual in plantations ought to be expended almost as in a besieged town; that is, with certain¹ allowance. And let the main part of the ground employed to gardens or corn be to² a common stock, and to be laid in and stored up and then delivered out in proportion; besides some spots of ground that any particular person will manure³ for his own private. Consider likewise what commodities the soil where the plantation is doth naturally yield, that they may some way help to defray the charge of the plantation (so it be not, as was said, to the untimely prejudice of the main business), as it hath fared with tobacco in Virginia. Wood commonly aboundeth but too much, and therefore timber is fit to be one. If there be iron ore and streams whereupon to set the mills, iron is a brave commodity, where wood aboundeth.⁴ Making of bay-salt, if the climate be proper for it, would be put in experience.⁵ Growing silk likewise, if any be, is a likely commodity. Pitch and tar, where store of firs and pines are, will not fail; so drugs and sweet woods, where they are, cannot but yield great profit. Soap ashes likewise, and other things that may be

ing: English participation in the brutal African slave trade, and the stocking of "plantations" in Ireland with Scottish Presbyterian settlers (to supplement genocidal policies that were starving out the indigenous Roman Catholics). These policies sowed the seeds of slavery in America and civil war in Ireland.

2. Lose.

3. Be consistent.

4. Report.

5. Workers in fine carpentry.

6. Edible.

7. Jerusalem artichokes, a species of sunflower

having an edible root. "Jerusalem" is a mistranslation of the Italian word for sunflower, *girasole*.

8. Require. "For": as for.

9. I.e., as a main dish.

1. Fixed.

2. For. "Corn": grain.

3. Cultivate.

4. Waterpower and wood fires were required for getting iron out of ore. "Brave": excellent.

5. I.e., should be tried. "Bay-salt" is a coarse salt obtained by evaporating seawater. "Growing silk" (next sentence): vegetable silk.

thought of. But moil⁶ not too much underground, for the hope of mines is very uncertain, and useth to make the planters lazy in other things.

For government, let it be in the hands of one, assisted with some counsel; and let them have commission to exercise martial laws, with some limitation. And above all, let men make that profit of being in the wilderness, as they have God always, and his service, before their eyes. Let not the government of the plantation depend upon too many counselors and undertakers⁷ in the country that planteth, but upon a temperate number; and let those be rather noblemen and gentlemen than merchants, for they look ever to the present gain. Let there be freedoms from custom⁸ till the plantation be of strength; and not only freedom from custom, but freedom to carry their commodities where they may make their best of them, except there be some special cause of caution. Cram not in people by sending too fast, company after company, but rather harken how they waste,⁹ and send supplies proportionably, but so as the number may live well in the plantation, and not by surcharge¹ be in penury.

It hath been a great endangering to the health of some plantations, that they have built along the sea and rivers, in marish² and unwholesome grounds. Therefore, though you begin there, to avoid carriage and other like commodities,³ yet build still rather upwards from the streams than along. It concerneth likewise the health of the plantation that they have good store of salt with them, that they may use it in their victuals when it shall be necessary. If you plant where savages are, do not only entertain them with trifles and jingles, but use them justly and graciously, with sufficient guard nevertheless; and do not win their favor by helping them to invade their enemies, but for their defense it is not amiss. And send oft of them over to the country that plants, that they may see a better condition than their own, and commend it when they return. When the plantation grows to strength, then it is time to plant with women as well as with men, that the plantation may spread into generations and not be ever pieced from without. It is the sinfullest thing in the world to forsake or destitute a plantation once in forwardness; for besides the dishonor it is the guiltiness of blood of many commiserable⁴ persons.

1625

Of Negotiating

It is generally better to deal by speech than by letter, and by the mediation of a third than by a man's self. Letters are good when a man would draw an answer by letter back again, or when it may serve for a man's justification afterwards to produce his own letter, or where it may be danger to be interrupted or heard by pieces. To deal in person is good when a man's face breedeth regard, as commonly with inferiors, or in tender¹ cases, where a man's eye upon the countenance of him with whom he speaketh may give him a direction how far to go; and generally, where a man will reserve to himself

6. Labor. "Soap ashes": ashes used for making soap.

7. Investors holding shares in the enterprise.

8. Customs duties.

9. I.e., observe at what rate the population declines.

1. I.e., by being overpopulated.

2. Marshy.

3. Disadvantages, inconveniences.

4. Worthy of compassion. "Destitute": abandon.

1. Delicate.

liberty either to disavow or to expound. In choice of instruments, it is better to choose men of a plainer sort, that are like to do that that is committed to them, and to report back again faithfully the success,² than those that are cunning to contrive out of other men's business somewhat to grace themselves, and will help the matter in report for satisfaction sake. Use also such persons as affect³ the business wherein they are employed, for that quickeneth much; and such as are fit for the matter, as bold men for expostulation, fair-spoken men for persuasion, crafty men for inquiry and observation, froward and absurd men for business that doth not well bear out itself.⁴ Use also such as have been lucky, and prevailed before in things wherein you have employed them; for that breeds confidence, and they will strive to maintain their prescription.⁵ It is better to sound a person with whom one deals afar off, than to fall upon the point at first, except you mean to surprise him by some short question. It is better dealing with men in appetite,⁶ than with those that are where they would be. If a man deal with another upon conditions, the start or first performance is all, which a man cannot reasonably demand,⁷ except either the nature of the thing be such which must go before, or else a man can persuade the other party that he shall still need him in some other thing, or else that he be counted the honestest man. All practice is to discover or to work.⁸ Men discover themselves in trust, in passion, at unawares, and of necessity, when they would have somewhat done and cannot find an apt pretext. If you would work any man, you must either know his nature and fashions, and so lead him; or his ends, and so persuade him; or his weakness and disadvantages, and so awe him; or those that have interest in him, and so govern him. In dealing with cunning persons, we must ever consider their ends, to interpret their speeches; and it is good to say little to them, and that which they least look for. In all negotiations of difficulty, a man may not look to sow and reap at once, but must prepare business, and so ripen it by degrees.

1597,1625

Of Masques and Triumphs¹

These things are but toys to come amongst such serious observations; but yet, since princes will have such things, it is better they should be graced with elegancy, than daubed with cost. Dancing to song is a thing of great state and pleasure. I understand it that the song be in choir, placed aloft, and accompanied with some broken music,² and the ditty fitted to the device. Acting in song, especially in dialogues, hath an extreme good grace; I say acting, not dancing (for that is a mean and vulgar thing);³ and the voices of the dialogue would be strong and manly (a bass and tenor, no treble), and the ditty high and tragical, not nice or dainty. Several choirs, placed one over against

2. Result.

3. Like.

4. I.e., when your business is less than honest, use an ill-tempered or foolish person.

5. Keep up their reputation.

6. Who are hungry, i.e., ambitious men.

7. You cannot reasonably make special conditions favorable to you, except in the circumstances noted.

8. All sharp bargaining aims to find out what men are up to or to make use of them. "Discover" (next

sentence): reveal.

1. For an example of court masques, see Jonson, *The Masque of Blackness* (p. 1326).

2. Part-music, for different voices and different kinds of instruments.

3. Bacon's emphasis on dialogue and song (as opposed to dance) is in keeping with the increased emphasis on dialogue in later Jacobean and Caroline masques; dance, however, remains at the center of both early and late masques.

another, and taking the voices by catches anthem-wise, give great pleasure. Turning dances into figure⁴ is a childish curiosity; and, generally, let it be noted, that those things which I here set down are such as to naturally take the sense, and not respect petty wonderments. It is true, the alterations of scenes, so it be quietly and without noise, are things of great beauty and pleasure for they feed and relieve the eye before it be full of the same object. Let the scenes abound with light, specially colored and varied; and let the masquers, or any other that are to come down from the scene,⁵ have some motions upon the scene itself before their coming down; for it draws the eye strangely, and makes it with great pleasure to desire to see that it cannot perfectly discern. Let the songs be loud and cheerful, and not chirpings or pulings; let the music, likewise, be sharp and loud, and well placed. The colors that show best by candlelight⁶ are white, carnation, and a kind of seawater green; and oes or spangs,⁷ as they are of no great cost, so they are of most glory. As for rich embroidery, it is lost and not discerned. Let the suits of the masquers be graceful, and such as become the person when the vizors are off; not after examples of known attires, Turks, soldiers, mariners, and the like. Let antimasques⁸ not be long; they have been commonly of fools, satyrs, baboons, wild men, antics, beasts, sprites, witches, Ethiopes, pigmies, turquets,⁹ nymphs, rustics, Cupids, statues moving, and the like. As for angels, it is not comical enough to put them in antimasques; and anything that is hideous, as devils, giants, is, on the other side, as unfit; but, chiefly, let the music of them be recreative, and with some strange changes. Some sweet odors suddenly coming forth, without any drops falling, are, in such a company as there is steam and heat, things of great pleasure and refreshment. Double masques, one of men, another of ladies, addeth state and variety; but all is nothing, except the room be kept clear and neat.

For jousts, and tourneys, and barriers,¹ the glories of them are chiefly in the chariots, wherein the challengers make their entry; especially if they be drawn with strange beasts, as lions, bears, camels, and the like; or in the devices of their entrance, or in the bravery of their liveries, or in the goodly furniture of their horses and armor. But enough of these toys.

1625

Of Studies

[1597 version]

Studies serve for pastimes, for ornaments, and for abilities. Their chief use for pastime is in privateness² and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and

4. Patterns with allegorical or numerological significance.

5. To unmask at the end and come onto the floor, so as to take part in the general dancing (the revels) with members of the court.

6. The Banqueting Hall at Whitehall, the site of many court masques, was lit only by candlelight; viewers complained that some masques were hard to see.

7. Spangles shaped like the letter "O."

8. The antic dances (presented by professionals) that preceded the main masque dances and represented the vices, follies, or disorders that are to be dispelled with the arrival of the main masques (royal and noble personages).

9. Turkish dwarfs.

1. One form of masque was the "joust," "tourney" (tournament), or "barriers," which chiefly involved knights, who represented allegorical qualities, tilting lances against each other.

1. This version of the essay illustrates Bacon's early epigrammatic, aphoristic style, featuring balance, parallelism, disjunction between sentences, and a curtness that is occasionally cryptic. The 1625 version keeps some aphoristic elements unchanged but provides more connectives and transitions, resulting in a smoother, more flowing style.

2. Private life.

for ability, is in judgment. For expert men' can execute, but learned men are fittest to judge or censure. To spend too much time in them is sloth; to use them too much for ornament is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules is the humor⁴ of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience. Crafty men contemn them, simple men admire them, wise men use them, for they teach not their own use; but that⁵ is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict nor to believe, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read but cursorily; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Reading maketh a full man, conference⁶ a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit;⁷ and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that⁸ he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets, witty;⁹ the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy,¹ deep; moral,² grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend.

Of Studies

[1625 *version*]

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight is in privateness¹ and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment and disposition of business. For expert men² can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshaling of affairs, come best from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules is the humor³ of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience; for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need pruning by study; and studies themselves do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them, for they teach not their own use; but that⁴ is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously;⁵ and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy and extracts made of them by others, but that would be only in the less important arguments and the meaner sort of books; else distilled books are like common distilled waters,⁶ flashy things. Reading maketh a full man, conference⁷ a ready man, and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man

3. Men of experience.

4. Disposition, implying folly.

5. I.e., the knowledge of how to use them. "Without" (following): outside.

6. Conversation.

7. Lively intelligence.

8. That which.

9. Clever.

1. Science.

2. Moral philosophy.

1. Private life.

2. Men of experience.

3. Folly.

4. I.e., the knowledge of how to use them. "Without" (following): outside.

5. Attentively.

6. Used as home remedies, without real value.

7. Conversation.

write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit;⁸ and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know that⁹ he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets, witty;¹ the mathematics, subtle; natural philosophy,² deep; moral, grave; logic and rhetoric, able to contend. *Abeunt studia in mores.*³ Nay, there is no stond or impediment in the wit but may be wrought out by fit studies, like as diseases of the body may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins,⁴ shooting for the lungs and breast, gentle walking for the stomach, riding for the head, and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the schoolmen, for they are *cumini sectores* he be not apt to beat over matters⁶ and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyer's cases. So every defect of the mind may have a special receipt.⁷

From The Advancement of Learning

[THE ABUSES OF LANGUAGE]¹

Martin Luther, conducted (no doubt) by an higher providence, but in discourse of reason finding what a province he had undertaken against the bishop of Rome² and the degenerate traditions of the church, and finding his own solitude being no ways aided by the opinions of his own time, was enforced to awake all antiquity and to call former times to his succor to make a party against the present time, so that the ancient authors both in divinity and in humanity which had long time slept in libraries began generally to be read and revolved.³ This by consequence did draw on a necessity of a more exquisite travail in the languages original wherein those authors did write,⁴ for the better understanding of those authors and the better advantage of pressing and applying their words. And thereof grew again a delight in their manner of style and phrase, and an admiration of that kind of writing, which was much furthered and precipitated by the enmity and opposition that the propounders of those (primitive but seeming new) opinions had against the schoolmen, who were generally of the contrary part, and whose writings were altogether in a differing style and form, taking liberty to coin and frame new terms of art to express their own sense and to avoid circuit of speech, without regard to the pureness, pleasantness, and (as I may call it) lawfulness of the phrase or word.⁵ And

8. Lively intelligence.

9. That which.

1. Clever.

2. Science. "Moral" (following): i.e., moral philosophy.

3. "Studies culminate in manners" (Ovid, *Heroides*). "Stond" (following): stoppage.

4. Gallstone and kidneys.

5. "Dividers of cuminsseed," i.e., hairsplitters. "Schoolmen": Scholastic philosophers.

6. Discuss a subject thoroughly.

7. Cure, prescription.

1. Among the "three distempers of learning" that Bacon proposes to cure in this work, the most important involves "vain imaginations, vain alterations, and vain affectations"; to help explain these he offers a concise history of changes in the

language of learned discourse since the Reformation.

2. The pope. "Province": task.

3. Considered. Luther (1483-1546) indeed looked back to the original languages of the Bible and to ancient authors in "divinity" (chiefly Augustine), but he was not involved in the efforts of the humanists (including Erasmus and Sir Thomas More) to revive the classical languages and authors.

4. Classical Greek and Latin, and biblical Hebrew. "Exquisite travail": careful work.

5. The Scholastic philosophers ("schoolmen") used the living Latin of the Middle Ages, wrenching the language yet further from classical norms in applying it to subtle philosophical matters; the humanists denounced the Scholastics' Latin as

again, because the greatest labor then was with the people (of whom the Pharisees were wont to say, *Execrabilis ista turba, quae non novit legem*,⁶) for the winning and persuading of them there grew of necessity in chief price and request⁷ eloquence and variety of discourse, as the fittest and forciblest access into the capacity of the vulgar sort. So that these four causes concurring (the admiration of ancient authors, the hate of the schoolmen, the exact study of languages, and the efficacy of preaching) did bring in an affectionate study of eloquence and copy⁸ of speech, which then began to flourish. This grew speedily to an excess, for men began to hunt more after words than matter, and more after the choiceness of the phrase, and the round and clean composition of the sentence, and the sweet falling of the clauses, and the varying and illustration of their works with tropes and figures⁹ than after the weight of matter, worth of subject, soundness of argument, life of invention, or depth of judgment. Then grew the flowing and watery vein of Osorius, the Portugal bishop, to be in price. Then did Sturmius spend such infinite and curious pains upon Cicero the orator and Hermogenes the rhetorician, besides his own books of periods and imitation and the like.' Then did Carr of Cambridge and Ascham with their lectures and writings almost deify Cicero and Demosthenes, and allure all young men that were studious unto that delicate and polished kind of learning.² Then did Erasmus take occasion to make the scoffing echo, *Decern annos consumpsi in legendo Cicerone*, and the echo answered in Greek, *one, Asine* Then grew the learning of the schoolmen to be utterly despised as barbarous. In sum, the whole inclination and bent of those times was rather towards copy than weight.

Here therefore is the first distemper of learning, when men study words and not matter, whereof though I have represented an example of late times, yet it hath been and will be *secundum maius et minus*⁴ in all time. And how is it possible but this should have an operation to discredit learning, even with vulgar capacities, when they see learned men's works like the first letter of a patent or limned⁵ book, which though it hath large flourishes, yet it is but a letter? It seems to me that Pygmalion's frenzy⁶ is a good emblem or portraiture of this vanity, for words are but the images of matter, and except they have life of reason and invention, to fall in love with them is all one as to fall in love with a picture.

But yet notwithstanding, it is a thing not hastily to be condemned to clothe and adorn the obscurity even of philosophy itself with sensible and plausible elocation. For hereof we have great examples in Xenophon, Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, and of Plato also in some degree; and hereof likewise there is great use, for surely to the severe inquisition of truth and the deep progress into

barbarous and sought instead to imitate classical models, especially Cicero.

6. "This people who knoweth not the law are cursed" (John 7.49).

7. Worth and demand.

8. Copiousness. "Affectionate": affected.

9. Figurative language.

1. Jeronimo Osorio (1506-1580) wrote a history of Portuguese conquests in a flowing style that caused him to be known as "the Portuguese Cicero." His contemporary, Johann Sturm, edited texts of Cicero and the Greek rhetorician Hermogenes; his "book of periods" was a rhetorical handbook.

2. Nicholas Carr was professor of Greek at Cam-

bridge; Roger Ascham was tutor to Queen Elizabeth and author of *The Schoolmaster*. Both admired the rhetorical polish of the Roman orator Cicero and the Greek orator Demosthenes.

3. "I spent ten years in reading Cicero." Echo answers, "Ass!" The joke is in the *Colloquies* of Erasmus.

4. More or less, depending on circumstances.

5. Illuminated, i.e., illustrated, as with elaborate initial capitals. Royal grants ("patents") were also engrossed with fancy initial letters.

6. Pygmalion's "frenzy" (delirium) was to fall in love with a statue he had carved of a beautiful woman.

philosophy it is some hindrance, because it is too early satisfactory to the mind of man, and quencheth the desire of further search before we come to a just period; but then if a man be to have any use of such knowledge in civil occasions of conference, counsel, persuasion, discourse, or the like, then shall he find it prepared to his hands in those authors which write in that manner. But the excess of this is so justly contemptible that as Hercules, when he saw the image of Adonis, Venus' minion, in a temple, said in disdain, *Nil sacri es*;⁷ so there is none of Hercules' followers in learning, that is, the more severe and laborious sort of inquirers into truth,⁸ but will despise those delicacies and affectations as indeed capable of no divineness.

1605

From Novum Organum¹

19

There are and can be only two ways of searching into and discovering truth. The one flies from the senses and particulars to the most general axioms, and from these principles, the truth of which it takes for settled and immovable, proceeds to judgment and to the discovery of middle axioms.² And this way is now in fashion. The other derives from the senses and particulars, rising by a gradual and unbroken ascent, so that it arrives at the most general axioms last of all.³ This is the true way, but as yet untried.

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22

Both ways set out from the senses and particulars, and rest in the highest generalities, but the difference between them is infinite. For the one just glances at experiment and particulars in passing, the other dwells duly and orderly among them. The one, again, begins at once by establishing certain abstract and useless generalities, the other rises by gradual steps to that which is prior and better known in the order of nature.

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38

The idols and false notions which are now in possession of the human understanding and have taken deep root therein, not only so beset men's minds that truth can hardly find entrance, but even after entrance is obtained, they will again in the very instauration⁴ of the sciences meet and trouble us, unless

7. "You're nothing holy." Adonis was the lover ("minion") of Venus, deified after his death while boar hunting.

8. Hercules early in life was offered a choice between a life of ignoble ease and sensory delights and one of strenuous virtue. He chose the latter, and so do his followers in learning.

1. *Novum Organum*, or "The New Instrument of Learning," was written not in English but in Latin, for an international scholarly audience. Nonetheless it requires our attention here, as it is the keystone of Bacon's vast project to reform the

structure of human learning from the ground up. His reform called for careful observation of all aspects of nature and controlled experiment, but the first part of the book analyzes the stumbling blocks in the way—among them, famously, the various "idols," or delusive images of truth that lead people away from the exact knowledge of science.

2. The deductive method, associated with Aristotle and the Scholastic philosophers.

3. The inductive method that Bacon here champions.

4. Renovation, renewal.

men being forewarned of the danger fortify themselves as far as may be against their assaults.

41

The Idols of the Tribe have their foundation in human nature itself, and in the tribe or race of men. For it is a false assertion that the sense of man is the measure of things. On the contrary, all perceptions as well of the sense as of the mind are according to the measure of the individual and not according to the measure of the universe. And the human understanding is like a false mirror, which, receiving rays irregularly, distorts and discolors the nature of things by mingling its own nature with it.

42

The Idols of the Cave are the idols of the individual man. For everyone (besides the errors common to human nature in general) has a cave or den of his own, which refracts and discolors the light of nature, owing either to his own proper and peculiar nature, or to his education and conversation with others, or to the reading of books, and the authority of those whom he esteems and admires; or to the difference of impressions, accordingly as they take place in a mind preoccupied and predisposed or in a mind indifferent and settled, or the like. So that the spirit of man (according as it is meted out to different individuals) is in fact a thing variable and full of perturbation, and governed as it were by chance. Whence it was well observed by Heraclitus⁵ that men look for sciences in their own lesser worlds, and not in the greater or common world.

43

There are also idols formed by the intercourse and association of men with each other, which I call Idols of the Marketplace, on account of the commerce and consort of men there. For it is by discourse that men associate, and words are imposed according to the apprehension of the vulgar. And therefore the fit and unfit choice of words wonderfully obstructs the understanding. Nor do the definitions or explanations wherewith in some things learned men are wont to guard and defend themselves, by any means set the matter right. But words plainly force and overrule the understanding, and throw all into confusion, and lead men away into numberless empty controversies and idle fancies.

44

Lastly, there are idols which have immigrated into men's minds from the various dogmas of philosophies, and also from wrong laws of demonstration. These I call Idols of the Theater, because in my judgment all the received systems are but so many stage plays, representing worlds of their own creation after an unreal and scenic fashion. Nor is it only of the systems now in vogue

5. Greek philosopher (ca. 513 B.C.E.) who considered knowledge to be based on perception by the senses and thought that everything was in flux.

or only of the ancient sects and philosophies that I speak; for many more plays of the same kind may yet be composed and in like artificial manner set forth, seeing that errors the most widely different have nevertheless causes for the most part alike. Neither again do I mean this only of entire systems, but also of the many principles and axioms in science, which by tradition, credulity, and negligence have come to be received.

59

But the Idols of the Marketplace are the most troublesome of all: idols which have crept into the understanding through the alliances of words and names. For men believe that their reason governs words; but it is also true that words react on the understanding; and this it is that has rendered philosophy and the sciences sophistical and inactive. Now words, being commonly framed and applied according to the capacity of the vulgar, follow those lines of division which are most obvious to the vulgar understanding. And whenever an understanding of greater acuteness or a more diligent observation would alter those lines to suit the true divisions of nature, words stand in the way and resist the change. Whence it comes to pass that the high and formal discussions of learned men end oftentimes in disputes about words and names; with which (according to the use⁶ and wisdom of the mathematicians) it would be more prudent to begin, and so by means of definitions reduce them to order. Yet even definitions cannot cure this evil in dealing with natural and material things; since the definitions themselves consist of words, and those words beget others;⁷ so that it is necessary to recur to individual instances, and those in due series and order; as I shall say presently when I come to the method and scheme for the formation of notions and axioms.

60

The idols imposed by words on the understanding are of two kinds. They are either names of things which do not exist (for as there are things left unnamed through lack of observation, so likewise are there names which result from fantastic suppositions and to which nothing in reality corresponds), or they are names of things which exist, but yet confused and ill-defined, and hastily and irregularly derived from realities. Of the former kind are Fortune, the Prime Mover, Planetary Orbits, Element of Fire, and like fictions which owe their origin to false and idle theories.⁸ And this class of idols is more easily expelled, because to get rid of them it is only necessary that all theories should be steadily rejected and dismissed as obsolete.⁹

But the other class, which springs out of a faulty and unskillful abstraction, is intricate and deeply rooted. Let us take for example such a word as *humid*-, and see how far the several things which the word is used to signify agree with

6. Custom.

7. Bacon's mistrust of words helped to prompt the Royal Society (founded in 1645) to cultivate a plain, stripped prose style for purposes of scientific communication.

8. The "Prime Mover" was a transparent sphere on the outside of the universe, supposed to move all the other spheres; the "Element of Fire" was an area of pure, invisible fire, supposed to exist above

the atmosphere. By "Planetary Orbits" Bacon may be referring to the old notion of crystalline spheres in which the planets were supposed to be set. Obviously, these concepts could be based on no observation.

9. Bacon does not mean "theories" in the inclusive modern sense, but "abstractions loosely invoked to explain particular facts."

each other; and we shall find the word *humid* to be nothing else than a mark loosely and confusedly applied to denote a variety of actions which will not bear to be reduced to any constant meaning. For it both signifies that which easily spreads itself round any other body; and that which in itself is indeterminate and cannot solidize; and that which readily yields in every direction; and that which easily divides and scatters itself; and that which easily unites and collects itself; and that which readily flows and is put in motion; and that which readily clings to another body and wets it; and that which is easily reduced to a liquid, or being solid easily melts. Accordingly when you come to apply the word—if you take it in one sense, flame is humid; if in another, air is not humid; if in another, fine dust is humid; if in another, glass is humid. So that it is easy to see that the notion is taken by abstraction only from water and common and ordinary liquids, without any due verification.

There are however in words certain degrees of distortion and error. One of the least faulty kinds is that of names of substances, especially of lowest species and well-deduced (for the notion of *chalk* and of *mud* is good, of *earth* bad); a more faulty kind is that of actions, as *to generate*, *to corrupt*, *to alter*; the most faulty is of qualities (except such as are the immediate objects of the sense), as *heavy*, *light*, *rare*, *dense*, and the like. Yet in all these cases some notions are of necessity a little better than others, in proportion to the greater variety of subjects that fall within the range of the human sense.

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Idols of the Theater, or of systems, are many, and there can be and perhaps will be yet many more. For were it not that now for many ages men's minds have been busied with religion and theology; and were it not that civil governments, especially monarchies, have been averse to such novelties, even in matters speculative, so that men labor therein to the peril and harming of their fortunes, not only unrewarded, but exposed also to contempt and envy; doubtless there would have arisen many other philosophical sects like to those which in great variety flourished once among the Greeks. For as on the phenomena of the heavens many hypotheses may be constructed, so likewise (and more also) many various dogmas may be set up and established on the phenomena of philosophy. And in the plays of this philosophical theater you may observe the same thing which is found in the theater of the poets, that stories invented for the stage are more compact and elegant, and more as one would wish them to be, than true stories out of history.

In general, however, there is taken for the material of philosophy either a great deal out of a few things, or a very little out of many things; so that on both sides philosophy is based on too narrow a foundation of experiment and natural history, and decides on the authority of too few cases. For the rational school of philosophers snatches from experience a variety of common instances, neither duly ascertained nor diligently examined and weighed, and leaves all the rest to meditation and agitation of wit.¹

There is also another class of philosophers, who having bestowed much diligent and careful labor on a few experiments, have thence made bold to

1. Bacon's enthusiasm for experiment at times led him to denigrate the value of reason, but what he chiefly opposes here is the excessive concern with logic he finds in the Scholastic philosophers.

educate and construct systems; wresting all other facts in a strange fashion to conformity therewith.

And there is yet a third class, consisting of those who out of faith and veneration mix their philosophy with theology and traditions; among whom the vanity of some has gone so far aside as to seek the origin of sciences among spirits and genii. So that this parent stock of errors—this false philosophy is of three kinds: the sophistical, the empirical, and the superstitious.

s s s

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So much concerning the several classes of idols, and their equipage: all of which must be renounced and put away with a fixed and solemn determination, and the understanding thoroughly freed and cleansed; the entrance into the kingdom of man, founded on the sciences, being not much other than the entrance into the kingdom of heaven, whereinto none may enter except as a little child.

1620

*From The New Atlantis*¹

[SOLOMON'S HOUSE]

We came at our day and hour, and I was chosen by my fellows for the private access.² We found him in a fair chamber, richly hanged, and carpeted under foot, without any degrees to the state.³ He was set upon a low throne richly adorned, and a rich cloth of state over his head, of blue satin embroidered. He was alone, save that he had two pages of honor, on either hand one, finely attired in white. His undergarments were the like that we saw him wear in the chariot;⁴ but instead of his gown, he had on him a mantle with a cape of the same fine black, fastened about him. When we came in, as we were taught, we bowed low at our first entrance, and when we were come near his chair, he stood up, holding forth his hand ungloved and in posture of blessing; and we every one of us stooped down, and kissed the hem of his tippet.⁵ That done, the rest departed, and I remained. Then he warned the pages forth of the room, and caused me to sit down beside him, and spake to me thus in the Spanish tongue:

"God bless thee, my son; I will give thee the greatest jewel I have. For I will impart unto thee, for the love of God and men, a relation of the true state of

1. Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516) set a fashion for accounts of imaginary communities with more or less ideal forms of government. Bacon's imaginary community has at its center an account of a research establishment, Solomon's House, that could exist in any society; indeed a version of it was established in England in 1662 as the Royal Society. Bacon's title alludes to the legendary island and ideal commonwealth in the Atlantic Ocean described by Plato in *Critias*; in the 17th century it was sometimes located in the New World. Bacon places his island, Bensalem, in the Pacific, roughly where the Solomon Islands had been discovered in

1568. After an imaginary journey the nameless narrator and his shipmates discover an island cut off from Hebrew and Greek civilization (though given a special revelation of Christianity) and thereby freed to focus on the development of science.

2. Audience with one of the scientific "Fathers" of Solomon's House.

3. Without stairs leading up to the dais.

4. He had made a triumphal entry into the city the previous day, wearing an undergarment of white linen and a black robe.

5. Scarf.

Solomon's House. Son, to make you know the true state of Solomon's House, I will keep this order. First, I will set forth unto you the end of our foundation. Secondly, the preparations and instruments we have for our works. Thirdly, the several employments and functions whereto our fellows are assigned. And fourthly, the ordinances and rites which we observe.

"The end of our foundation is the knowledge of causes, and secret motions of things; and the enlarging of the bounds of human empire, to the effecting of all things possible.

"The preparations and instruments are these. We have large and deep caves of several depths: the deepest are sunk six hundred fathom; and some of them are digged and made under great hills and mountains; so that if you reckon together the depth of the hill and the depth of the cave, they are, some of them, above three miles deep. For we find that the depth of a hill, and the depth of a cave from the flat, is the same thing; both remote alike from the sun and heaven's beams, and from the open air. These caves we call the Lower Region, and we use them for all coagulations, indurations,⁶ refrigerations, and conservations of bodies. We use them likewise for the imitation of natural mines, and the producing also of new artificial metals, by compositions and materials which we use, and lay there for many years. We use them also sometimes (which may seem strange) for curing of some diseases, and for prolongation of life in some hermits that choose to live there, well accommodated of⁷ all things necessary, and indeed live very long; by whom also we learn many things.

"We have burials in several earths, where we put divers cements,⁸ as the Chinese do their porcelain. But we have them in greater variety, and some of them more fine. We have also great variety of composts and soils, for the making of the earth fruitful.

"We have high towers, the highest about half a mile in height, and some of them likewise set upon high mountains, so that the vantage of the hill, with the tower, is in the highest of them three miles at least. And these places we call the Upper Region, accounting the air between the high places and the low as a Middle Region. We use these towers, according to their several heights and situations, for insolation,⁹ refrigeration, conservation, and for the view of divers meteors—as winds, rain, snow, hail; and some of the fiery meteors' also. And upon them, in some places, are dwellings of hermits, whom we visit sometimes, and instruct what to observe.

"We have great lakes, both salt and fresh, whereof we have use for the fish and fowl. We use them also for burials of some natural bodies, for we find a difference in things buried in earth, or in air below the earth, and things buried in water. We have also pools, of which some do strain fresh water out of salt, and others by art do turn fresh water into salt. We have also some rocks in the midst of the sea, and some bays upon the shore, for some works wherein is required the air and vapor of the sea. We have likewise violent streams and cataracts, which serve us for many motions; and likewise engines for multiplying and enforcing² of winds to set also on going divers motions.

"We have also a number of artificial wells and fountains, made in imitation of the natural sources and baths, as tinted upon³ vitriol, sulphur, steel, brass,

6. Hardenings.

7. Provided with.

8. Clays and pottery mixtures.

9. Exposure to the sun.

1. Anything that fell from the sky was, in Renaissance terminology, a meteor.

2. Reinforcing, strengthening.

3. Tintured with.

lead, niter, and other minerals; and again, we have little wells for infusions of many things, where the waters take the virtue⁴ quicker and better than in vessels or basins. And amongst them we have a water which we call Water of Paradise, being by that we do to it, made very sovereign⁵ for health and prolongation of life.

"We have also great and spacious houses, where we imitate and demonstrate meteors—as snow, hail, rain, some artificial rains of bodies and not of water, thunders, lightnings; also generations of bodies in air—as frogs, flies, and divers others.

"We have also certain chambers, which we call Chambers of Health, where we qualify⁶ the air as we think good and proper for the cure of divers diseases and preservation of health.

"We have also fair and large baths, of several mixtures, for the cure of diseases and the restoring of man's body from arefaction;⁷ and others for the confirming of it in strength of sinews, vital parts, and the very juice and substance of the body.

"We have also large and various orchards and gardens, wherein we do not so much respect beauty as variety of ground and soil, proper for divers trees and herbs, and some very spacious, where trees and berries are set, whereof we make divers kinds of drinks, besides the vineyards. In these we practice likewise all conclusions* of grafting and inoculating, as well of wild trees as fruit trees, which produceth many effects. And we make (by art) in the same orchards and gardens trees and flowers to come earlier or later than their seasons, and to come up and bear more speedily than by their natural course they do. We make them also by art greater much than their nature; and their fruit greater and sweeter, and of differing taste, smell, color, and figure, from their nature. And many of them we so order as they become of medicinal use.

"We have also means to make divers plants rise by mixtures of earths without seeds, and likewise to make divers new plants, differing from the vulgar,⁹ and to make one tree or plant turn into another.

"We have also parks and enclosures of all sorts of beasts and birds; which we use not only for view or rareness, but likewise for dissections and trials,¹ that thereby we may take light what may be wrought upon the body of man. Wherein we find many strange effects: as continuing life in them, though divers parts, which you account vital, be perished and taken forth; resuscitating of some that seem dead in appearance; and the like. We try also all poisons and other medicines upon them, as well of chirurgery² as physic. By art likewise, we make them greater or taller than their kind is, and contrariwise dwarf them and stay their growth; we make them more fruitful and bearing than their kind is, and contrariwise barren and not generative. Also, we make them differ in color, shape, activity, many ways. We find means to make commixtures and copulations of different kinds, which have produced many new kinds,³ and them not barren, as the general opinion is. We make a number of kinds of serpents, worms, fishes, flies, of putrefaction, whereof some are advanced (in effect) to be perfect creatures, like beasts or birds, and have sexes, and do propagate. Neither do we this by chance, but we know before-

4. Property (of the substances put into water).

5. Efficacious.

6. Modify.

7. Drying up.

8. Experiments.

9. Ordinary.

1. Experiments.

2. Surgery.

3. Species. It was commonly supposed that all hybrids were sterile (see following).

hand of what matter and commixture what kind of those creatures will arise.

"We have also particular pools where we make trials upon fishes, as we have said before of beasts and birds.

"We have also places for breed and generation of those kinds of worms and flies which are of special use; such as are with you your silkworms and bees."⁴

"For the several employments and offices of our fellows, we have twelve that sail into foreign countries under the names of other nations (for our own we conceal), who bring us the books and abstracts and patterns of experiments of all other parts. These we call Merchants of Light.

"We have three that collect the experiments which are in all books. These we call Depredators.

"We have three that collect the experiments of all mechanical arts, and also of liberal sciences, and also of practices which are not brought into arts. These we call Mystery-men.

"We have three that try new experiments, such as themselves think good. These we call Pioneers or Miners.

"We have three that draw the experiments of the former four into titles and tables, to give the better light for the drawing of observations and axioms out of them. These we call Compilers.

"We have three that bend themselves, looking into the experiments of their fellows, and cast about how to draw out of them things of use and practice for man's life and knowledge, as well for works as for plain demonstration of causes, means of natural divinations, and the easy and clear discovery of the virtues and parts of bodies. These we call Dowry-men or Benefactors.

"Then after divers meetings and consults of our whole number, to consider of the former labors and collections, we have three that take care out of them to direct new experiments, of a higher light, more penetrating into nature than the former. These we call Lamps.

"We have three others that do execute the experiments so directed, and report them. These we call Inoculators.

"Lastly, we have three that raise the former discoveries by experiments into greater observations, axioms, and aphorisms. These we call Interpreters of Nature.

"We have also, as you must think, novices and apprentices, that the succession of the former employed men do not fail; besides a great number of servants and attendants, men and women. And this we do also: we have consultations, which of the inventions and experiences which we have discovered shall be published, and which not; and take all an oath of secrecy for the concealing of those which we think fit to keep secret; though some of those we do reveal sometimes to the State, and some not.⁵

"For our ordinances and rites, we have two very long and fair galleries: in one of these we place patterns and samples of all manner of the more rare and excellent inventions; in the other we place the statues of all principal inventors. There we have the statue of your Columbus, that discovered the West Indies;

4. The narrator continues to describe the various bakeries, vineyards, breweries, and kitchens operated by Solomon's House. He enumerates the medicines discovered there, as well as various experiments with heat. The researchers study light,

sound, perfumes, mechanics, mathematics, and all ways of deceiving the senses.

5. Bacon allows his scientists considerable autonomy in relation to the state.

also the inventor of ships; your monk that was the inventor of ordnance and of gunpowder;⁶ the inventor of music; the inventor of letters; the inventor of printing; the inventor of observations of astronomy; the inventor of works in metal; the inventor of glass; the inventor of silk of the worm; the inventor of wine; the inventor of corn and bread; the inventor of sugars; and all these by more certain tradition than you have. Then we have divers inventors of our own, of excellent works, which since you have not seen, it were too long to make descriptions of them; and besides, in the right understanding of those descriptions you might easily err. For upon every invention of value we erect a statue to the inventor, and give him a liberal and honorable reward. These statutes are some of brass, some of marble and touchstone,⁷ some of cedar and other special woods gilt and adorned; some of iron, some of silver, some of gold.

"We have certain hymns and services, which we say daily, of laud and thanks to God for his marvelous works; and forms of prayer, imploring his aid and blessing for the illumination of our labors, and the turning of them into good and holy uses.

"Lastly, we have circuits or visits of divers principal cities of the kingdom; where, as it cometh to pass, we do publish such new profitable inventions as we think good. And we do also declare natural divinations of diseases, plagues, swarms of hurtful creatures, scarcity, tempests, earthquakes, great inundations, comets, temperature of the year, and divers other things; and we give counsel thereupon, what the people shall do for the prevention and remedy of them."

And when he had said this he stood up; and I, as I had been taught, kneeled down; and he laid his right hand upon my head, and said, "God bless thee, my son, and God bless this relation which I have made. I give thee leave to publish it, for the good of other nations; for we here are in God's bosom, a land unknown." And so he left me; having assigned a value of about two thousand ducats for a bounty to me and my fellows. For they give great largesses, where they come, upon all occasions.

The rest was not perfected.

1627

6. Tradition credited Roger Bacon, a 13th-century monk, with the discovery of gunpowder.

7. A hard basaltic-type rock,

ROBERT BURTON

1577-1640

Robert Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* assumes, unlike Bacon, that knowledge of psychology, not science, is humankind's greatest need. His enormous, baggy, delightful treatise analyzes in encyclopedic detail that ubiquitous Jacobean malady, melancholy, supposedly caused, according to contemporary humor theory, by an excess of black bile. It was responsible, according to Burton and others, for the wild passions and despair of lovers, the agonies and ecstasies of religious devotees, the frenzies of madmen, and the studious abstraction of scholars such as Shakespeare's Hamlet or

Milton's II Penseroso. But for Burton melancholy is more than a particular temperament or disease: it encompasses all the folly and madness intrinsic to the fallen human condition and so afflicts the whole world—necessarily including Burton himself.

Burton was a scholar and cleric who lived in Christ Church College, Oxford, all his life: he never married, never traveled, never sought success in the world, but lived, as he says of himself in his preface, "a silent, sedentary, solitary, private life," researching his great book in the Bodleian Library and reading omnivorously in other topics. First published in 1621, the *Anatomy* went through five editions during the author's life, each one much augmented over the last. In his preface Burton creates a persona for himself, Democritus Junior, who proposes to complete the supposedly lost book on melancholy and madness by the Greek "laughing philosopher" Democritus. As Democritus Junior he promises not only to laugh but also to scoff, satirize, and lament.

The title term "anatomy" invites expectations of a clear, logical, ordered treatment of a medical subject after the manner of Vesalius, expectations also evoked by Donne in his *Anatomy of the World*. Burton's subtitle promises an analysis of "all the kinds, causes, symptoms, prognostics, and several cures" of melancholy, and a division into three parts—the Causes and Effects, the Cures, and the two principal kinds, Love Melancholy and Religious Melancholy—as well as various "sections, members, and subsections." But instead of such clarity and rigidity of structure, the categories collapse into each other. Since melancholy is universal, Burton finds warrant to be all-inclusive and digressive, to take us in picaresque disorder from one subject to the next, moving readily from the inner landscape to the world outside. The work contains a utopia, a treatise on climatology, and discourses on geography and meteorology, as well as case studies of various sufferers from melancholy: a man who thought he was glass; a man who thought he was butter; maids, nuns, and widows who suffer sexual deprivation; etc. Also, Burton cites every authority who wrote about any aspect of melancholy, from classical times to his present, but in no special order and without privileging even citations from Scripture. Such randomness and their own contradictions undercut the authorities, collapsing them all into the idiosyncratic style of Burton/Democritus Junior. Burton's prose style of long, loose sentences, with their pell-mell momentum as of thoughts rushing beyond the author's control, suggests a disorderly world not at all amenable to Baconian logic and science. Burton concludes by offering the pragmatic advice "Be not idle" as the only remedy against melancholy. His book, were we to read it all, would keep us from idleness for a good long time.

From The Anatomy¹ of Melancholy

From *Democritus² Junior to the Reader*

Gentle Reader, I presume thou wilt be very inquisitive to know what antic or personate³ actor this is, that so insolently intrudes upon this common theater to the world's view, arrogating another man's name; whence he is, why he doth it, and what he hath to say. Although, as he said,⁴ *Primum si noluero*,

1. A logical dissection of a topic into its several parts, on an analogy with a medical anatomy. (See also Donne, *An Anatomy of the World*, p. 1289.) Burton's full title plays wittily with the term while pointing to the massive scope of his work: *The Anatomy of Melancholy. What it is, with all the kinds, causes, symptoms, prognostics, Or several cures of it. In three Partitions, uith their several sections, members, & subsections. Philosophically, medicinally, historically opened & cut up.*

2. In this extract Burton describes Democritus (ca. 460-370 B.C.E.), the Greek philosopher

known as a founder of atomism and as the "laughing philosopher," and explains why he constructs himself as his son and intellectual heir.

3. Impersonating. "Antic": clownish.

4. Burton's marginal note (not reprinted here) identifies the following passage as from Seneca's satire on the death of Claudius Caesar: "In the first place, if I don't want to answer, I won't; who will make me?" Here, as often elsewhere, Burton provides his own translation or paraphrase just before or after the Latin quotes that he sprinkles in liberally as they occur to him; in such cases no trans-

non respondebo, quis coacturns est? I am a free man born, and may choose whether I will tell; who can compel me? If I be urged, I will as readily reply as that Egyptian in Plutarch,⁵ when a curious fellow would needs know what he had in his basket, *Qium vides velatam, quid inquiris in rem absconditam?* It was therefore covered, because he should not know what was in it. Seek not after that which is hid; if the contents please thee, "and be for thy use, suppose the Man in the Moon, or whom thou wilt, to be the author"; I would not willingly be known. Yet in some sort to give thee satisfaction, which is more than I need, I will show a reason, both of this usurped name, title, and subject. And first of the name of Democritus; lest any man by reason of it should be deceived, expecting a pasquil,⁶ a satire, some ridiculous treatise (as I myself should have done), some prodigious tenet, or paradox of the earth's motion, of infinite worlds, *in infinito vacuo, exfortuita atomorum collisione*, in an infinite waste, so caused by an accidental collision of motes in the sun, all which Democritus held, Epicurus and their master Leucippus⁷ of old maintained, and are lately revived by Copernicus, Brunus,⁸ and some others. Besides, it hath been always an ordinary custom, as Gellius observes, "for later writers and impostors to broach many absurd and insolent fictions under the name of so noble a philosopher as Democritus, to get themselves credit, and by that means the more to be respected," as artificers usually do, *Novo qui marmori ascribunt Praxitelen suo.*⁹ 'Tis not so with me.

*Non hie Centauros, non Gorgonas, Harpyasque
Invenies, hominem pagina nostra sapit.*

No Centaurs here, or Gorgons look to find,
My subject is of man and humankind.

Thou thyself art the subject of my discourse.

*Quicquid agunt homines, votum, timor, ira, voluptas,
Gaudia, discursus, nostri farrago lihelli.*

Whate'er men do, vows, fears, in ire, in sport,
Joys, wand'rings, are the sum of my report.

My intent is no otherwise to use his name, than Mercurius Gallobelgicus, Mercurius Britannicus, use the name of Mercury, Democritus Christianus, etc.; although there be some other circumstances for which I have masked myself under this vizard, and some peculiar respects which I cannot so well express, until I have set down a brief character of this our Democritus, what he was, with an epitome of his life.

Democritus, as he is described by Hippocrates and Laertius, was a little wearish¹ old man, very melancholy by nature, averse from company in his latter days, and much given to solitariness, a famous philosopher in his age, *coaevus*² with Socrates, wholly addicted to his studies at the last, and to a private life:

lation will be supplied. The notes that follow will not identify every quotation and allusion but supply only what is needed for comprehension.

5. Plutarch, "On Curiosity," *Moralia*: "Seeing the cover, why do you ask what is concealed?"

6. Lampoon.

7. Leucippus of Miletus was, with Democritus, the founder of the atomistic philosophy that Epi-

curus adopted.

8. Giordano Bruno (1548—1600), an Italian priest who was executed for advocating Copernican astronomy and other advanced opinions.

9. "Who sign their own new statues with the name of Praxitiles," the famous Greek sculptor.

1. Wizened.

2. Coeval; contemporary.

writ many excellent works, a great divine, according to the divinity of those times, an expert physician, a politician, an excellent mathematician, as *Diacosmus* and the rest of his works do witness. He was much delighted with the studies of husbandry, saith Columella, and often I find him cited by Constantinus and others treating of that subject. He knew the natures, differences of all beasts, plants, fishes, birds; and, as some say, could understand the tunes and voices of them. In a word, he was *omnifariam doctus*, a general scholar, a great student; and to the intent he might better contemplate, I find it related by some, that he put out his eyes, and was in his old age voluntarily blind, yet saw more than all Greece besides, and writ of every subject, *Nihil in toto opificio naturae, de quo non scripsit*.³ A man of an excellent wit, profound conceit; and to attain knowledge the better in his younger years he traveled to Egypt and Athens, to confer with learned men, "admired of some, despised of others." After a wandering life, he settled at Abdera, a town in Thrace, and was sent for thither to be their lawmaker, recorder, or town clerk as some will; or as others, he was there bred and born. Howsoever it was, there he lived at last in a garden in the suburbs, wholly betaking himself to his studies and a private life, "saving that sometimes he would walk down to the haven,"⁴ and laugh heartily at such variety of ridiculous objects, which there he saw." Such a one was Democritus.

But in the meantime, how doth this concern me, or upon what reference do I usurp his habit? I confess, indeed, that to compare myself unto him for aught I have yet said, were both impudency and arrogancy. I do not presume to make any parallel, *antistat mihi millihus trecentis, parvus sum, nullus sum, altum nec spiro, nec spero*.⁵ Yet thus much I will say of myself, and that I hope without all suspicion of pride, or self-conceit, I have lived a silent, sedentary, solitary, private life, *mihi et musis*⁶ in the university, as long almost as Xenocrates in Athens, *ad senectam fere*⁷ to learn wisdom as he did, penned up most part in my study. For I have been brought up a student in the most flourishing college of Europe, *augustissimo collegio*,⁸ and can brag with Jovius, almost, *in ea luce domicilii Vaticani, totius orhis celeherrimi, per 37 annos multa opportunque didici*,⁹ for thirty years I have continued (having the use of as good libraries as ever he had) a scholar, and would be therefore loath, either by living as a drone to be an unprofitable or unworthy member of so learned and noble a society, or to write that which should be anyway dishonorable to such a royal and ample foundation. Something I have done, though by my profession a divine, yet *turbine raptus ingenii*, as he¹ said, out of a running wit, an unconstant, unsettled mind, I had a great desire (not able to attain to a superficial skill in any) to have some smattering in all, to be *aliquis in omnibus, nidlus in singidis*,² which Plato commends, out of him Lipsius approves and furthers, "as fit to be imprinted in all curious wits, not to be a slave of one science, or dwell altogether in one subject, as most do, but to rove abroad, *centum puer artium*"³ to have an oar in every man's boat, to taste of every dish,

3. "There is nothing in the whole range of nature's works about which he has not written."

4. Harbor.

5. "He is immeasurably superior to me. I am insignificant, a nobody, with little ambition and small prospects."

6. "For myself and my studies."

7. "Virtually to old age."

8. Christ's Church College, Oxford.

9. "In the splendor of my Vatican residence, the most famous [library] in the world, I have spent

thirty-seven full and advantageous years." Paolo Giovio (Jovius 1483—1552) wrote the history of his own time in forty-five volumes, under the patronage of Pope Clement VII.

1. Julius Caesar Scaliger, an Italian scholar (1484—1558) of encyclopedic learning, a neo-Latin poet, and a literary critic whose *Poetics* is a massive commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics*.

2. "Competent in all [subjects], insignificant in any one."

3. "The servant of a hundred arts."

and sip of every cup," which, saith Montaigne, was well performed by Aristotle and his learned countryman Adrian Turnebos. This roving humor (though not with like success) I have ever had, and like a ranging spaniel, that barks at every bird he sees, leaving his game, I have followed all, saving that which I should, and may justly complain, and truly, *qui ubique est, nusquam est*,⁴ which Gesner did in modesty, that I have read many books, but to little purpose, for want of good method; I have confusedly tumbled over divers authors in our libraries, with small profit for want of art, order, memory, judgment. I never traveled but in map or card, in which my unconfined thoughts have freely expatiated, as having ever been especially delighted with the study of cosmography. Saturn was lord of my geniture, culminating, etc., and Mars principal significator of manners, in partile conjunction with mine ascendant; both fortunate in their houses, etc.⁵ I am not poor, I am not rich; *nihil est, nihil deest*, I have little, I want nothing: all my treasure is in Minerva's⁶ tower. Greater preferment as I could never get, so am I not in debt for it, I have a competency (*laus Deo*)⁷ from my noble and munificent patrons, though I live still a collegiate student, as Democritus in his garden, and lead a monastic life, *ipse mihi theatrum*,⁸ sequestered from those tumults and troubles of the world, *et tanquam in specula positus* (as he⁹ said), in some high place above you all, like *Stoicus sapiens, omnia saecula praeterita praesentiaque videns, uno velut intuitu* I hear and see what is done abroad, how others run, ride, turmoil, and macerate themselves in court and country, far from those wrangling lawsuits, *aulae vanitatem, fori ambitionem, ridere mecum soleo*,² I laugh at all; "only secure lest my suit go amiss, my ships perish," corn and cattle miscarry, trade decay, "I have no wife nor children good or bad to provide for." A mere spectator of other men's fortunes and adventures, and how they act their parts, which methinks are diversely presented unto me, as from a common theater or scene. I hear new news every day, and those ordinary rumors of war, plagues, fires, inundations, thefts, murders, massacres, meteors, comets, spectrums, prodigies, apparitions, of towns taken, cities besieged in France, Germany, Turkey, Persia, Poland, etc., daily musters and preparations, and suchlike, which these tempestuous times afford, battles fought, so many men slain, monomachies,³ shipwrecks, piracies, and sea fights, peace, leagues, stratagems, and fresh alarms. A vast confusion of vows, wishes, actions, edicts, petitions, lawsuits, pleas; laws, proclamations, complaints, grievances are daily brought to our ears. New books every day, pamphlets, corantos,⁴ stories, whole catalogues of volumes of all sorts, new paradoxes, opinions, schisms, heresies, controversies in philosophy, religion, etc. Now come tidings of weddings, masquings, mummeries, entertainments, jubilees, embassies, tilts and tournaments, trophies, triumphs, revels, sports, plays: then again, as in a new shifted scene, treasons, cheating tricks, robberies, enormous villainies in all kinds, funerals, burials, deaths of princes, new discoveries, expeditions: now comical, then tragical matters. Today we hear of new lords and officers created, tomorrow of some great men deposed, and then again of fresh honors conferred; one is let loose,

4. "He who is everywhere is nowhere."

5. He was born under the gloomy planet Saturn (his "ascendant"), whose influence was somewhat modified by the fiery and energetic planet Mars; and he was fortunate in the houses (parts of the heavens) those planets occupied.

6. Goddess of wisdom.

7. "Praise be to God."

8. "A theater to myself."

9. Daniel Heinsius (1580-1655), one of the most famous classical scholars of the Dutch Renaissance and a neo-Latin poet and dramatist.

1. "The Stoic sage seeing all past and present ages simultaneously, and at a single glance."

2. "I laugh to myself at the vanity of the court, the ambition of public life."

3. Single combats.

4. Newspapers.

another imprisoned; one purchaseth, another breaketh; he thrives, his neighbor turns bankrupt; now plenty, then again dearth and famine; one runs, another rides, wrangles, laughs, weeps, etc. Thus I daily hear, and suchlike, both private and public news; amidst the gallantry and misery of the world—jollity, pride, perplexities and cares, simplicity and villainy; subtlety, knavery, candor and integrity, mutually mixed and offering themselves—I rub on *privus privatus*,⁵ as I have still lived, so I now continue, *statu quo prius*,⁶ left to a solitary life and mine own domestic discontents: saving that sometimes, *ne quid mentiar*,⁷ as Diogenes went into the city and Democritus to the haven to see fashions, I did for my recreation now and then walk abroad, look into the world, and could not choose but make some little observation.

« » *

From *Love Melancholy*

PART 3. SECTION 2, MEMBER 1, SUBSECTION 2: HOW LOVE
TYRANNIZETH OVER MEN. LOVE, OR HEROICAL MELANCHOLY, HIS
DEFINITION, PART AFFECTED.

Tis a happy state this¹ indeed, when the fountain is blessed (saith Solomon, Proverbs v. 18), "and he rejoiceth with the wife of his youth, and she is to him as the loving hind and pleasant roe,² and he delights in her continually." But this love of ours is immoderate, inordinate, and not to be comprehended in any bounds. It will not contain itself within the union of marriage or apply to one object, but is a wandering, extravagant, a domineering, a boundless, an irrefragable,³ a destructive passion; sometimes this burning lust rageth after marriage, and then it is properly called jealousy; sometimes before, and then it is called heroical melancholy; it extends sometimes to corrivals, etc., begets rapes, incests, murders: *Marcus Antoninus compressit Faustinae sororem, Caracalla Juliam novercam, Nero matrem, Caligula sorores, Cinyras Myrrham filiam*,⁴ etc. But it is confined within no terms of blood, years, sex, or whatsoever else. Some furiously rage before they come to discretion or age. Quartailla in Petronius⁵ never remembered she was a maid; and the Wife of Bath in Chaucer cracks,

Since I was twelve years old, believe,
Husbands at kirk-door had I five.⁶

Aretine's Lucretia sold her maidenhead a thousand times before she was twenty-four years old, *plus millies vendideram virginitatem, etc., neque te celaho, non deerant qui ut integram amhirent*.⁷ Rahab, that harlot, began to be a professed quean at ten years of age, and was but fifteen when she hid the

5. "In complete privacy."

6. "In the same condition as before."

7. "Not to conceal anything." "Diogenes" (following): Cynic philosopher, noted for his moroseness and austerity of life.

1. I.e., the state of matrimony.

2. The hind is a female and the roebuck ("roe") a male deer.

3. Not to be questioned.

4. "Marc Antony slept with his sister Faustina, Caracalla with his stepmother Julia, Nero with his mother, Caligula with his sisters, Cinyras with his

daughter Myrrha."

5. A character in the *Satyricon* of Petronius Arbiter (1st century c.E.).

6. Burton cites from memory, and inaccurately.

7. "Moreover, there were those who could restore it." The tale of Lucretia comes from a set of dialogues published by Pietro Aretino in 1534; they parody the dialogues of Plato and are set in a brothel. The "quean" (whore) Rahab (following) appears in Joshua 2. Hugh Broughton (below) was a biblical scholar of Burton's day.

spies, as Hugh Broughton proves, to whom Serrarius the Jesuit, *quaest. 6 in cap. 2* Josue, subscribes. Generally women begin *pubescere* as they call it, or *catulire* as Julius Pollux cites, *lib. 2, cap. 3 Onomast.* out of Aristophanes, at fourteen years old, then they do offer themselves, and some plainly rage. Leo Afer⁸ saith that in Africa a man shall scarce find a maid at fourteen years of age, they are so forward, and many amongst us after they come into the teens do not live without husbands, but linger.⁹ What pranks in this kind the middle age have played is not to be recorded, *si mihi sint centum linguae, sint oraque centum*,¹ no tongue can sufficiently declare, every story is full of men and women's insatiable lust, Neros, Heliogabali, Bonosi,² etc. *Coelius Aufilenum, et Quintius Aufilenam depereunt*,³ etc. They neigh after other men's wives (as Jeremy, *cap. v.8* complaineth) like fed horses, or range like town bulls, *raptores virginum et viduarum*,⁴ as many of our great ones do. Solomon's wisdom was extinguished in this fire of lust, Samson's strength enervated, piety in Lot's daughters quite forgot, gravity of priesthood in Eli's sons, reverend old age in the elders that would violate Susanna, filial duty in Absalom to his stepmother, brotherly love in Amnon towards his sister.⁵ Human, divine laws, precepts, exhortations, fear of God and men, fair, foul means, fame, fortunes, shame, disgrace, honor cannot oppose, stave off, or withstand the fury of it, *omnia vincit amor*,⁶ etc. No cord nor cable can so forcibly draw, or hold so fast, as love can do with a twined thread. The scorching beams under the equinoctial or extremity of cold within the circle Arctic, where the very seas are frozen, cold or torrid zone cannot avoid or expel this heat, fury, and rage of mortal men.

*Quo fugis? ah, demens! nulla est fuga, tu licet usque
Ad Tanaim fugias, usque sequetur amor.*⁷

Of women's unnatural, unsatiable lust, what country, what village doth not complain? Mother and daughter sometimes dote on the same man; father and son, master and servant on one woman.

*Sed amor, sed ineffrenata libido,
Quid castvum in terris intentatumque reliquit?*⁸

What breach of vows and oaths, fury, dotage, madness might I reckon up! Yet this is more tolerable in youth, and such as are still in their hot blood; but for an old fool to dote, to see an old lecher, what more odious, what can be more absurd? And yet what so common? Who so furious? *Amare ea aetate si occiperint, multo insaniunt acrius*.⁹ Some dote then more than ever they did in their youth. How many decrepit, hoary, harsh, writhen, bursten-bellied, crooked, toothless, bald, blear-eyed, impotent, rotten old men shall you see

8. Leo Afer, or Africanus, was a 16th-century Spanish Moor who wrote one of the first accounts of Africa. *Pubescere*- mature sexually. *Catulire*: desire a male. Julius Pollux compiled a dictionary (*Onomasticon*) that Burton cites frequently.

9. I.e., they waste away if they are not married.
1. "If I had a hundred tongues, a hundred mouths."

2. Nero and Heliogabalus were sexually depraved Roman emperors, their vices described in lurid detail by Roman historians and moralists. Bonosus, a 3rd-century C.E. Roman usurper, was merely a drunk, but his close associate Proculus boasted of having deflowered one hundred virgins in a single night.
3. "Coelius had an itch for Aufilenus, Quintius for

Aufilena." From Catullus, the Roman erotic poet.

4. "Ravishers of maids and widows." Jeremiah 5.8.

5. For these biblical stories see 1 Kings 11.3, Judges 16, Genesis 19.30-35, 1 Samuel 2.22, Daniel 13 (Apocrypha), 2 Samuel 16.22, 13.1-19.

6. "Love conquers all."

7. "Whither away? ah, madman! there is no escape. Flee to the remotest districts of the river Don, love will still follow." From Propertius, the Latin elegist.

8. "But love, unbridled passion, leaves nothing on earth untempted, nothing chaste." From Euripides, the Greek tragedian.

9. "When they start loving at that age, the madness takes them worse." From Plautus, the Roman comic dramatist.

flickering still in every place? One gets him a young wife, another a courtesan, and when he can scarce lift his leg over a sill and hath one foot already in Charon's boat,¹ when he hath the trembling in his joints, the gout in his feet, a perpetual rheum in his head, a continue cough, "his sight fails him, thick of hearing, his breath stinks,"² all his moisture is dried up and gone, may not spit from him, a very child again, that cannot dress himself or cut his own meat, yet he will be dreaming of and honing after wenches; what can be more unseemly? Worse it is in women than in men; when she is *aetate declivis, diu vidua, mater olim, parum decore matrimonium sequi videtur*, an old widow, a mother so long since (in Pliny's opinion),³ she doth very unseemly seek to marry; yet whilst she is so old, a crone, a beldam, she can neither see nor hear, go nor stand, a mere carcass, a witch, and scarce feel, she caterwauls and must have a stallion, a champion, she must and will marry again, and betroth herself to some young man that hates to look on her but for her goods, abhors the sight of her, to the prejudice of her good name, her own undoing, grief of friends, and ruin of her children.

But to enlarge or illustrate this power and effects of love is to set a candle in the sun. It rageth with all sorts and conditions of men, yet is most evident among such as are young and lusty, in the flower of their years, nobly descended, high fed, such as live idly and at ease; and for that cause (which our divines call burning lust) this *ferinus insanus amor*, this mad and beastly passion, as I have said, is named by our physicians heroical love, and a more honorable title put upon it, *amor nohilis* as Savonarola⁴ styles it, because noble men and women make a common practice of it and are so ordinarily affected with it. Avicenna,⁵ *lib. 3, fen. 1, tract. 4, cap. 23*, calleth this passion *Ilishi* and defines it to be "a disease or melancholy vexation or anguish of mind, in which a man continually meditates of the beauty, gesture, manners of his mistress, and troubles himself about it"; "desiring" (as Savonarola adds) "with all intentions and eagerness of mind to compass or enjoy her; as commonly hunters trouble themselves about their sports, the covetous about their gold and goods, so is he tormented still about his mistress." Arnoldus Villanovanus⁶ in his book of heroical love defines it "a continual cogitation of that which he desires, with a confidence or hope of compassing it"; which definition his commentator cavils at. For continual cogitation is not the *genus* but a symptom of love; we continually think of that which we hate and abhor, as well as that which we love; and many things we covet and desire without all hope of attaining. Carolus a Lorme in his *Questions* makes a doubt *an amor sit morbus*, whether this heroical love be a disease: Julius Pollux, *Onomast. lib. 6, cap. 44*, determines it. They that are in love are likewise sick; *lascivus, salax, lasciviens, et qui in venerem furit, vere est aegrotus*.⁷ Arnoldus will have it improperly so called, and a malady rather of the body than mind. Tully,⁸ in his *Tusculans*, defines it a furious disease of the mind; Plato, madness itself; Ficinus, his commentator, *cap. 12*, a species of madness, "for many have run mad for women" (I Esdras iv.26); but Rhasis,⁹ "a melancholy passion"; and most physicians make

1. Charon ferries the souls of the dead across the river Styx.

2. Quoted from Cyprian, 3rd-century bishop of Carthage.

3. Pliny, *Natural History* 8. The Latin is translated by Burton.

4. Not the Florentine reformer, but his grandfather Michele, a Paduan physician.

5. An encyclopedic Arabian physician of the 11th

century.

6. Arnold of Villanova was a Spanish doctor, astrologer, and alchemist of the 13th and early 14th centuries.

7. "One who is lustful, lecherous, lascivious, and mad with desire is really sick."

8. I.e., Cicero.

9. Rhasis, or Rhazes, was an Arab physician of the 10th century.

it a species or kind of melancholy (as will appear by the symptoms), and treat of it apart; whom I mean to imitate, and to discuss it in all his kinds, to examine his several causes, to show his symptoms, indications, prognostics, effects, that so it may be with more facility cured.

The part affected in the meantime, as Arnoldus supposeth, "is the former part of the head for want of moisture," which his commentator rejects. Langius, *Med. epist. lib. 1, cap. 24*, will have this passion sited in the liver, and to keep residence in the heart, "to proceed first from the eyes so carried by our spirits, and kindled with imagination in the liver and heart"; *cogit amare iecur*,¹ as the saying is. *Medium ferit per hepar*, as Cupid in Anacreon. For some such cause belike, Homer feigns Titius' liver (who was enamored of Latona) to be still gnawed by two vultures day and night in hell, "for that young men's bowels thus enamored are so continually tormented by love."² Gordonius, *cap. 2, part. 2*, "will have the testicles an immediate subject or cause, the liver an antecedent." Fracastorius agrees in this with Gordonius,³ *inde primitus imaginatio venerea, erectio, etc.; titillatissimam partem vocat, ita ut nisi extruso semine gestiens voluptas non cessat, nec assidua veneris recordatio, addit Guastavinus, Comment., 4 sect., prob. 27 Arist.*⁴ But properly it is a passion of the brain, as all other melancholy, by reason of corrupt imagination, and so doth Jason Pratensis, *cap. 19, De morb. cerebri* (who writes copiously of this erotic love), place and reckon it amongst the affections of the brain. Melanchthon, *De anima*, confutes those that make the liver a part affected, and Guianerius, *tract. 15, cap. 13 et 17*, though many put all the affections in the heart, refers it to the brain. Ficinus, *cap. 7, In Convivium Platonis*, "will have the blood to be the part affected." Jo. Freitagius, *cap. 14, Noct. med.*, supposeth all four affected, heart, liver, brain, blood; but the major part concur upon the brain, 'tis *imaginatio laesa*,⁵ and both imagination and reason are misaffected; because of his corrupt judgment and continual meditation of that which he desires, he may truly be said to be melancholy. If it be violent, or his disease inveterate, as I have determined in the precedent partitions, both imagination and reason are misaffected, first one, then the other.

1621, 1651

1. "The liver compels one to love"; and in the next phrase, "Love strikes through the liver." Anacreon was a Greek lyric poet.

2. *Odyssey 11*.

3. Gordonius, Guastavinus, Jason Pratensis, Guianerius, Freitagius, et al. (see following) are Renaissance physicians from the ragbag of Burton's encyclopedic reading. Two who stand out are Girolamo Fracastoro and Marsilio Ficino—the former a physician still remembered for his work

on communicable diseases, the latter known mostly for his learned commentaries on the dialogues of Plato.

4. "Whence at first come erotic imaginings, erection, etc.; it so rouses the most excitable part, adds Guastavinus, that until emission takes place, the longing pleasure does not cease, nor the constant recollection of lovemaking."

5. A wounded imagination.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

1605-1682

Sir Thomas Browne presents his best-known work, *Religio Medici* (A Doctor's Beligion), as "the true Anatomy of myself." This work is not, as we might expect from the title, a spiritual autobiography relating, like many in the period, an angst-filled story of conversion or an account of providential experiences. Nor does Browne report the

facts of his life: that he was born into the family of a cloth merchant, attended Winchester School and Pembroke College, Oxford, studied at the best medical schools (Montpelier, Padua, Leiden), practiced medicine in Yorkshire and Norwich, married in 1641, and fathered twelve children. Instead, this work is an exercise in delighted self-analysis and self-portrayal, outlining Browne's own sometimes eccentric views on a wide variety of topics pertaining to religious doctrine and practice. For this purpose Browne constructs an engaging persona: the genial, speculative doctor who finds nothing human foreign to him and so is the very personification of charity and inclusiveness: he can readily participate in the customs of others in food, drink, or religion (even in certain Roman Catholic practices) but yet value his own.

In this two-part treatise divided into short numbered paragraphs, Browne voices his fondness for Anglo-Catholic ritual but also his belief in Calvinist predestination; he denounces religious persecution but thinks many religious martyrs not particularly admirable; he believes in witches but is skeptical of latter-day miracles. His love of mystery and wonder (in sharp contrast to Bacon) leads him to revel in metaphor and take positive joy in accepting things contrary to reason: "I love to lose myself in a mystery, to pursue my reason to an O *altitudo!*" According to his preface, he wrote the work around 1636 for himself only and circulated it in manuscript to a few friends but then was forced by a pirated edition (1642) to print a correct version (1643). Yet his decision to publish just as the king and Parliament took to the battlefield in the civil war was hardly fortuitous, and the treatise has political resonance. Describing himself as one who sympathizes with and has himself held several erroneous or heretical views, Browne disparages dogmatism and holds up to gentle irony those who claim exclusive possession of the path to salvation. At the same time, he deplores schism and is ready to conform his mind to the teachings and practices of the Church of England. His self-analysis comments on the wider world of church and state, posing his example of tolerant inclusiveness against reforming Puritans eager to rid the church of its errors.

Browne wrote *Pseudodoxia Epidemica, or Vidgar Errors* (1646), in a Baconian vein, analyzing the causes of popular errors in a wide variety of fields. *Hydriotaphia, or Urn-Burial* (1658), shows Browne as a passionate antiquarian, prompted to study and comment on the funeral customs of various peoples by the discovery near Norwich of funeral urns that were thought (erroneously) to be of Roman origin. That work culminates in a sonorous meditation on mortality and the futility of all such commemorations, given the inevitable obliteration of all human fame. It was published with an even more curious work, *The Garden of Cyrus*, named after the Persian emperor who supposedly made the famous Hanging Gardens of Babylon. This work displays Browne the naturalist recounting the history of horticulture, and also the mystical and Neoplatonic Browne who finds quincunxes (shapes with five members or parts) everywhere in nature. Browne was a favorite prose stylist of many later writers, among them Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Charles Lamb, Thomas De Quincey, and Herman Melville: polysyllabic and Latinate, his prose mixes wit and sumptuous rhetoric, often rising to a resonant poetry.

*From Religio Medici*¹

From Part 1

1. For my religion, though there be several circumstances that might persuade the world I have none at all—as the general scandal of my profes-

1. The Religion of a Doctor. Browne avoids any conflict between science and religion by a forthright "fideism"—entirely separating reason from faith and thereby exempting faith from any critique

by reason, or any support from it. This was also the stance of some contemporary Roman Catholic skeptics, notably Montaigne and Pierre Charron.

sion,² the natural course of my studies, the indifferency³ of my behavior and discourse in matters of religion, neither violently defending one, nor with that common ardor and contention opposing another—yet in despite hereof I dare without usurpation assume the honorable style of a Christian. Not that I merely owe this title to the font,⁴ my education, or clime wherein I was born, as being bred up either to confirm those principles my parents instilled into my unwary understanding, or by a general consent proceed in the religion of my country; but having in my riper years and confirmed judgment seen and examined all, I find myself obliged by the principles of grace and the law of mine own reason to embrace no other name but this. Neither doth herein my zeal so far make me forget the general charity I owe unto humanity, as rather to hate than pity Turks, infidels, and (what is worse) Jews;⁵ rather contenting myself to enjoy that happy style than maligning those who refuse so glorious a title.

2. But because the name of a Christian is become too general to express our faith—there being a geography of religions as well as lands, and every clime distinguished not only by their laws and limits, but circumscribed by their doctrines and rules of faith—to be particular, I am of that reformed new-cast religion wherein I mislike nothing but the name;⁶ of the same belief our Savior taught, the apostles disseminated, the Fathers authorized, and the martyrs confirmed; but by the sinister ends of princes, the ambition and avarice of prelates, and the fatal corruption of times, so decayed, impaired, and fallen from its native beauty that it required the careful and charitable hands of these times to restore it to its primitive integrity. Now the accidental occasion whereon, the slender means whereby, the low and abject condition of the person by whom so good a work was set on foot,⁷ which in our adversaries beget contempt and scorn, fills me with wonder, and is the very same objection the insolent pagans first cast at Christ and his disciples.

3. Yet have I not so shaken hands with those desperate resolutions—who had rather venture at large their decayed bottom⁸ than bring her in to be new trimmed in the dock, who had rather promiscuously retain all than abridge any, and obstinately be what they are than what they have been—as to stand in diameter⁹ and sword's point with them. We have reformed from them, not against them; for, omitting those impropriations and terms of scurrility betwixt us, which only difference¹ our affections and not our cause, there is between us one common name and appellation, one faith and necessary body of principles common to us both; and therefore I am not scrupulous to converse and live with them, to enter their churches in defect of ours, and either pray with them or for them. I could never perceive any rational consequence from those many texts which prohibit the children of Israel to pollute themselves with the temples of the heathens; we being all Christians, and not divided by such detested impieties as might profane our prayers or the place wherein we make

2. Doctors were popularly reputed to be irreligious or atheistic.

3. Impartiality.

4. The baptismal font.

5. Browne thought them worse because they had been given a better chance than the others to know and accept Christianity.

6. Protestantism, for its connotations of conten-

tiousness.

7. Luther, who was a miner's son, began the Reformation.

8. The leaky ship of the Roman Catholic Church. "Shaken hands with": parted from.

9. In complete opposition.

1. Differentiate. "Impropriations": reproaches.

them; or that a resolved conscience may not adore her Maker anywhere, especially in places devoted to his service; where, if their devotions offend him, mine may please him, if theirs profane it, mine may hallow it. Holy water and crucifix, dangerous to the common people, deceive not my judgment nor abuse my devotion at all. I am, I confess, naturally inclined to that which misguided zeal terms superstition.² My common conversation I do acknowledge austere, my behavior full of rigor, sometimes not without morosity; yet at my devotion I love to use the civility of my knee, my hat, and hand, with all those outward and sensible motions which may express or promote my invisible devotion. I should violate my own arm rather than a church, nor willingly deface the memory of saint or martyr. At the sight of a cross or crucifix I can dispense with my hat, but scarce with the thought and memory of my Savior. I cannot laugh at, but rather pity, the fruitless journeys of pilgrims, or condemn the miserable condition of friars; for though misplaced in circumstance, there is somewhat in it of devotion. I could never hear the Ave-Maria bell without an elevation,³ or think it a sufficient warrant, because they erred in one circumstance, for me to err in all—that is, in silence and dumb contempt. Whilst, therefore, they directed their devotions to her, I offered mine to God, and rectified the errors of their prayers by rightly ordering mine own. At a solemn procession I have wept abundantly while my consorts,⁴ blind with opposition and prejudice, have fallen into an excess of scorn and laughter. There are questionless, both in Greek, Roman, and African churches, solemnities and ceremonies whereof the wiser zeals do make a Christian use; and stand condemned by us, not as evil in themselves, but as allurements and baits of superstition to those vulgar heads that look askint on the face of truth, and those unstable judgments that cannot consist⁵ in the narrow point and center of virtue without a reel or stagger to the circumference.

4. As there were many reformers, so likewise many reformations; every country proceeding in a particular way and method, according as their national interest together with their constitution and clime inclined them: some angrily and with extremity, others calmly and with mediocrity,⁶ not rending but easily dividing the community, and leaving an honest possibility of a reconciliation; which, though peaceable spirits do desire, and may conceive that revolution of time and the mercies of God may effect, yet that judgment that shall consider the present antipathies between the two extremes, their contrarieties in condition, affection, and opinion, may with the same hopes expect an union in the poles of heaven.

5. But—to difference myself nearer, and draw into a lesser circle—there is no church whose every part so squares unto my conscience, whose articles, constitutions, and customs seem so consonant unto reason, and as it were framed to my particular devotion, as this whereof I hold my belief: the Church of England, to whose faith I am a sworn subject, and therefore in a double obligation subscribe unto her articles and endeavor to observe her constitutions. Whatsoever is beyond, as points indifferent, I observe according to the rules of my private reason or the humor and fashion of my devotion; neither believing this because Luther affirmed it nor disapproving that because Calvin

2. He defines himself here and in the next few lines against Puritan iconoclasts who would uproot all such "superstitions."

3. Exaltation of mind. "Ave-Maria bell": Angelus,

rung daily at 6:00 and 12:00, morning and night.

4. Companions.

5. Stand firm. "Asquint": cross-eyed.

6. Moderation. "Extremity": violence.

hath disavouched it. I condemn not all things in the council of Trent nor approve all in the synod of Dort.⁷ In brief, where the Scripture is silent, the church is my text; where that speaks, 'tis but my comment; where there is a joint silence of both, I borrow not the rules of my religion from Rome or Geneva,⁸ but the dictates of my own reason. It is an unjust scandal of our adversaries and a gross error in ourselves to compute the nativity of our religion from Henry the Eighth, who, though he rejected the Pope, refused not the faith of Rome, and effected no more than what his own predecessors desired and essayed in ages past, and was conceived the state of Venice would have attempted in our days.⁹ It is as uncharitable a point in us to fall upon those popular scurrilities and opprobrious scoffs of the bishop of Rome, to whom as a temporal prince we owe the duty of good language. I confess there is cause of passion between us. By his sentence I stand excommunicated: "heretic" is the best language he affords me; yet can no ear witness I ever returned to him the name of "antichrist," "man of sin," or "whore of Babylon."¹ It is the method of charity to suffer without reaction. Those usual satires and invectives of the pulpit may perchance produce a good effect on the vulgar, whose ears are opener to rhetoric than logic; yet do they in no wise confirm the faith of wiser believers, who know that a good cause needs not to be patroned by a passion, but can sustain itself upon a temperate dispute.

6. I could never divide myself from any man upon the difference of an opinion, or be angry with his judgment for not agreeing with me in that from which perhaps within a few days I should dissent myself. I have no genius to disputes in religion, and have often thought it wisdom to decline them, especially upon a disadvantage, or when the cause of truth might suffer in the weakness of my patronage. Where we desire to be informed, 'tis good to contest with men above ourselves; but to confirm and establish our opinions, 'tis best to argue with judgments below our own, that the frequent spoils and victories over their reasons may settle in ourselves an esteem and confirmed opinion of our own. Every man is not a proper champion for truth, nor fit to take up the gauntlet in the cause of verity. Many, from the ignorance of these maxims and an inconsiderate zeal unto truth, have too rashly charged the troops of error, and remain as trophies unto the enemies of truth. A man may be in as just possession of truth as of a city, and yet be forced to surrender. 'Tis therefore far better to enjoy her with peace than to hazard her on a battle. If therefore there rise any doubts in my way, I do forget them or at least defer them till my better settled judgment and more manly reason be able to resolve them; for I perceive every man's own reason is his best Oedipus,² and will upon a reasonable truce find a way to loose those bonds wherewith the subtleties of error have enchained our more flexible and tender judgments. In philosophy, where truth seems double-faced, there is no man more paradoxical than myself, but in divinity I love to keep the road; and, though not in an implicit, yet an humble faith, follow the great wheel of the church, by which I move, not reserving any proper poles or motion from the epicycle of my own brain.³

7. The Council of Trent (1545-63), in Italy, defined Catholic dogma after the Reformation; the Council of Dort (1618-19), in Holland, defined Calvinist doctrine.

8. Rome was the center of Catholicism; Geneva was a Calvinist city-state.

9. Though he repudiated the pope, Henry VIII was for long an ambiguous Protestant. Venice was

excommunicated in 1606 for challenging papal authority.

1. Stock terms of anti-Catholic abuse.

2. Solver of riddles, as Oedipus solved that of the Sphinx.

3. In Ptolemaic astronomy, an "epicycle" is a small circle centered on the largest circle of a planet's orbit, hypothesized to account for inexplicable var-

By this means I leave no gap for heresies, schisms, or errors, of which at present I hope I shall not injure truth to say I have no taint or tincture. I must confess my greener studies have been polluted with two or three—not any begotten in the latter centuries, but old and obsolete, such as could never have been revived but by such extravagant and irregular heads as mine. For indeed heresies perish not with their authors, but like the river Arethusa, though they lose their currents in one place, they rise up again in another.⁴ One general council is not able to extirpate one singular heresy. It may be canceled for the present, but revolution of time and the like aspects from heaven will restore it, when it will flourish till it be condemned again; for as though there were a metempsychosis, and the soul of one man passed into another, opinions do find after certain revolutions men and minds like those that first begat them. To see ourselves again we need not look for Plato's year.⁵ Every man is not only himself; there have been many Diogenes and as many Timons,⁶ though but few of that name. Men are lived over again; the world is now as it was in ages past. There was none then but there hath been someone since that parallels him, and is as it were his revived self.

9. As for those wingy mysteries in divinity and airy subtleties in religion, which have unhinged the brains of better heads, they never stretched the *pia mater*⁷ of mine. Methinks there be not impossibilities enough in religion for an active faith. The deepest mysteries ours contains have not only been illustrated but maintained by syllogism and the rule of reason. I love to lose myself in a mystery, to pursue my reason to an O *altitudo!*⁸ 'Tis my solitary recreation to pose my apprehension with those involved enigmas and riddles of the Trinity, with Incarnation and Resurrection. I can answer all the objections of Satan and my rebellious reason with that odd resolution I learned of Tertullian, *Certum est quia impossibile est.*⁹ I desire to exercise my faith in the difficultest points, for to credit ordinary and visible objects is not faith but persuasion. Some believe the better for seeing Christ his sepulcher, and when they have seen the Red Sea doubt not of the miracle. Now, contrarily, I bless myself and am thankful that I lived not in the days of miracles, that I never saw Christ nor his disciples. I would not have been one of those Israelites that passed the Red Sea, nor one of Christ's patients on whom he wrought his wonders: then had my faith been thrust upon me, nor should I enjoy that greater blessing pronounced to all that believe and saw not. 'Tis an easy and necessary belief to credit what our eye and sense hath examined. I believe he was dead, buried, and rose again; and desire to see him in his glory rather than to contemplate him in his cenotaph or sepulcher. Nor is this much to believe. As we have reason, we owe this faith unto history; they only had the advantage of a bold and noble faith who lived before his coming, who upon obscure prophecies and mystical types¹ could raise a belief and expect apparent impossibilities.

iations in the planet's motion.

4. In myth, when the nymph Arethusa, in Greece, was pursued by the river god Alpheus, she dived into the sea and came up again in Sicily as a fountain.

5. Browne's note on this reads: "A revolution of certain thousand years, when all things should return unto their former estate."

6. Diogenes was a Cynic philosopher, Timon a noted misanthrope, both Greek.

7. A membrane covering the brain, often used to

refer to the brain itself.

8. From Romans 11.33: "O the depth [Latin Vulgate, *altitudo*] of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" The Latin term can also mean "heights."

9. Tertullian commenting on the Resurrection: "It is certain because it is impossible."

1. Foreshadowings of Christ in the Old Testament.

i 5. * * * I could never content my contemplation with those general pieces of wonder, the flux and reflux of the sea, the increase of Nile, the conversion of the needle to the north; and have studied to match and parallel those in the more obvious and neglected pieces of nature, which without further travel I can do in the cosmography of myself. We carry with us the wonders we seek without us: there is all Africa and her prodigies² in us. We are that bold and adventurous piece of nature which he that studies wisely learns in a compendium what others labor at in a divided piece and endless volume.

16. Thus are there two books from whence I collect my divinity: besides that written one of God, another of his servant nature, that universal and public manuscript that lies expanded unto the eyes of all. Those that never saw him in the one have discovered him in the other. This was the scripture and theology of the heathens: the natural motion of the sun made them more admire him than its supernatural station³ did the children of Israel; the ordinary effects of nature wrought more admiration in them than in the other all his miracles. Surely the heathens knew better how to join and read these mystical letters than we Christians, who cast a more careless eye on these common hieroglyphics, and disdain to suck divinity from the flowers of nature. Nor do I so forget God as to adore the name of nature; which I define not, with the schools, the principle of motion and rest, but that straight and regular line, that settled and constant course the wisdom of God hath ordained the actions of his creatures according to their several kinds. To make a revolution every day is the nature of the sun, because that necessary course which God hath ordained it, from which it cannot swerve but by a faculty⁴ from that voice which first did give it motion. Now this course of nature God seldom alters or perverts, but like an excellent artist hath so contrived his work that with the selfsame instrument, without a new creation, he may effect his obscurest designs. Thus he sweetened the water with a wood;⁵ preserved the creatures in the Ark, which the blast of his mouth might have as easily created: for God is like a skillful geometrician, who when more easily and with one stroke of his compass he might describe or divide a right line, had yet rather do this in a circle or longer way according to the constituted and forelaid principles of his art. Yet this rule of his he doth sometimes pervert, to acquaint the world with his prerogative, lest the arrogancy of our reason should question his power and conclude he could not. And thus I call the effects of nature the works of God, whose hand and instrument she only is; and therefore to ascribe his actions unto her is to devolve the honor of the principal agent upon the instrument: which if with reason we may do, then let our hammers rise up and boast they have built our houses, and our pens receive the honor of our writings. I hold there is a general beauty in the works of God, and therefore no deformity in any kind or species of creature whatsoever. I cannot tell by what logic we call a toad, a bear, or an elephant ugly; they being created in those outward shapes and figures which best express the actions of their inward forms, and having passed that general visitation of God, who saw that all that he had made was good⁶—that is, conformable to his will, which abhors deformity and is the rule of order and beauty. There is therefore no deformity

2. Marvels.

3. Standing still, as at the battle of Gibeon (Joshua 10.13).

4. Authority.

5. Exodus 15.25 tells how the Lord sweetened the bitter waters of Marah with a special tree.

6. Genesis 1.31.

but in monstrosity; wherein notwithstanding there is a kind of beauty, nature so ingeniously contriving the irregular parts as they become sometimes more remarkable than the principal fabric. To speak yet more narrowly, there was never anything ugly or misshapen but the chaos; wherein notwithstanding (to speak strictly) there was no deformity because no form, nor was it yet impregnate by the voice of God. Now, nature is not at variance with art nor art with nature, they both being the servants of his providence: art is the perfection of nature. Were the world now as it was the sixth day, there were yet a chaos: nature hath made one world and art another. In brief, all things are artificial, for nature is the art of God.

. . .

34. These⁷ are certainly the magisterial and masterpieces of the Creator; the flower or (as we may say) the best part of nothing; actually existing what we are but in hopes and probability. We are only that amphibious piece between a corporal and spiritual essence; that middle form that links those two together, and makes good the method of God and nature, that jumps not from extremes but unites the incompatible distances by some middle and participating natures. That we are the breath and similitude of God it is indisputable and upon record of holy Scripture; but to call ourselves a microcosm or little world I thought it only a pleasant trope of rhetoric⁸ till my nearer judgment and second thoughts told me there was a real truth therein. For first we are a rude mass and in the rank of creatures which only are and have a dull kind of being not yet privileged with life or preferred to sense or reason. Next we live the life of plants, the life of animals, the life of men, and at last the life of spirits; running on, in one mysterious nature, those five kinds of existences which comprehend the creatures not only of the world but of the universe. Thus is man that great and true amphibium whose nature is disposed to live not only like other creatures in divers elements but in divided and distinguished worlds. For though there be but one world to sense, there are two to reason; the one visible, the other invisible, whereof Moses seems to have left no description, and of the other⁹ so obscurely that some parts thereof are yet in controversy: and truly for the first chapters of Genesis I must confess a great deal of obscurity. Though divines have, to the power of human reason, endeavored to make all go in a literal meaning, yet those allegorical interpretations are also probable, and perhaps the mystical method of Moses bred up in the hieroglyphical schools of the Egyptians.¹

. . .

59. Again, I am confident and fully persuaded, yet dare not take my oath of my salvation. I am as it were sure, and do believe without all doubt, that there is such a city as Constantinople; yet for me to take my oath thereon were a kind of perjury, because I hold no infallible warrant from my own sense to confirm me in the certainty thereof. And truly, though many pretend an absolute certainty of their salvation, yet when an humble soul shall contemplate her own unworthiness she shall meet with many doubts and suddenly find how little we stand in need of the precept of St. Paul, *Work out your salvation*

7. The angels.

8. Figure of speech.

9. The visible world. Moses was supposed to have been the author of Genesis.

1. Some Neoplatonists thought that Moses, reared among the Egyptians, understood their hieroglyphic symbolism and imitated it in his own writing.

*with fear and trembling.*² That which is the cause of my election I hold to be the cause of my salvation, which was the mercy and beneplacit³ of God before I was or the foundation of the world. *Before Abraham was, I am*, is the saying of Christ;⁴ yet is it true in some sense if I say it of myself, for I was not only before myself but Adam, that is, in the idea of God and the decree of that synod held from all eternity. And in this sense, I say, the world was before the creation and at an end before it had a beginning; and thus was I dead before I was alive. Though my grave be England, my dying place was Paradise, and Eve miscarried of me before she conceived of Cain.

From *Part 2*

1. Now for that other virtue of charity,⁵ without which faith is mere notion, and of no existence, I have ever endeavored to nourish the merciful disposition and humane inclination I borrowed from my parents, and regulate it to the written and prescribed laws of charity; and if I hold the true anatomy of myself,⁶ I am delineated and naturally framed to such a piece of virtue. For I am of a constitution so general that it comforts and sympathizeth with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy, in diet, humor, air, anything. I wonder not at the French for their dishes of frogs, snails, and toadstools, nor at the Jews for locusts and grasshoppers; but being amongst them, make them my common viands, and I find they agree with my stomach as well as theirs. I could digest a salad gathered in a churchyard as well as in a garden. I cannot start at the presence of a serpent, scorpion, lizard, or salamander, at the sight of a toad or viper I find in me no desire to take up a stone to destroy them. I feel not in myself those common antipathies that I can discover in others: those national repugnances do not touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch; but where I find their actions in balance with my countrymen's, I honor, love and embrace them in the same degree. I was born in the eighth climate,⁷ but seem for to be framed and constellated unto all. I am no plant that will not prosper out of a garden. All places, all airs make unto me one country; I am in England everywhere and under any meridian. I have been shipwrecked,⁸ yet am not enemy with the sea or winds; I can study, play, or sleep in a tempest. In brief, I am averse from nothing; my conscience would give me the lie if I should say I absolutely detest or hate any essence but the devil, or so at least abhor anything but that we might come to composition.⁹ If there be any among those common objects of hatred I do contemn and laugh at, it is that great enemy of reason, virtue, and religion, the multitude—that numerous piece of monstrosity which, taken asunder, seem men and the reasonable creatures of God, but confused together make but one great beast, and a monstrosity more prodigious than Hydra.¹ It is no breach of charity to call these fools; it is the style all holy writers have afforded them, set down by Solomon in canonical Scrip-

2. *Philippians 2.12*. "Election" (following): chosen by God for salvation.

3. Good pleasure.

4. *John 8.58*.

5. Like many theological manuals, Browne's first book concerns faith, the second charity.

6. If I have properly analyzed myself. See Donne, *An Anatomy of the World* (p. 1289), and Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (p. 1574), for the way

this term is used. "Delineated" (following): designed.

7. In the eighth of the twenty-four regions between the equator and the poles.

8. Browne was shipwrecked returning to England from Ireland in 1630.

9. Reach an agreement.

1. In Greek mythology, a nine-headed serpent that grew two heads for every one that was cut off.

ture² and a point of our faith to believe so. Neither in the name of multitude do I only include the base and minor sort of people; there is a rabble even amongst the gentry, a sort of plebeian heads whose fancy moves with the same wheel as these; men in the same level with mechanics, though their fortunes do somewhat gild their infirmities, and their purses compound for their follies.³ But as in casting account, three or four men together come short in account of one man placed by himself below them, so neither are a troop of these ignorant dorados⁴ of that true esteem and value as many a forlorn person whose condition doth place him below their feet. Let us speak like politicians, there is a nobility without heraldry, a natural dignity whereby one man is ranked with another, another filed before him, according to the quality of his desert, and preeminence of his good parts. Though the corruption of these times and the bias of present practice wheel another way, thus it was in the first and primitive commonwealths, and is yet in the integrity and cradle of well-ordered polities, till corruption getteth ground, ruder desires laboring after that which wiser considerations contemn, everyone having a liberty to amass and heap up riches, and they a license or faculty to do or purchase anything.

1642 (pirated)

1643 (authorized)

*From Hydriotaphia, or Urn-Burial*¹

From *Chapter 5*

Now since these dead bones have already outlasted the living ones of Methuselah,² and in a yard under ground, and thin walls of clay, outworn all the strong and specious buildings above it, and quietly rested under the drums and trappings of three conquests;³ what prince can promise such diuturnity unto his relics, or might not gladly say,

*Sic ego componi versus in ossa velim?*⁴

Time, which antiquates antiquities, and hath an art to make dust of all things, hath yet spared these minor monuments. * * *

Circles and right lines limit and close all bodies, and the mortal right-lined circle must conclude and shut up all.⁵ There is no antidote against the opium of time, which temporally considereth all things: our fathers find their graves in our short memories, and sadly tell us how we may be buried in our survivors. Gravestones tell truth scarce forty years.⁶ Generations pass while some trees stand, and old families last not three oaks. To be read by bare inscriptions like many in Gruter,⁷ to hope for eternity by enigmatical epithets or first letters of

2. E.g., Proverbs 1.7: "fools despise wisdom and instruction."

3. With the growing rebelliousness of the Puritan merchants and even some of the aristocracy as his point of reference, Browne redefines the rabble in terms of attitude and moral worth, not class.

4. Wealthy persons.

1. The subtitle indicates the occasion of the work: *A Discourse of the Sepulchral Urns lately found in Norfolk*. The discovery of some forty or fifty ancient urns in a Norfolk field prompted this discourse on ancient funerary customs, death, and immortality.

2. Methuselah lived 969 years (Genesis 5.27).

3. If the bones were Roman (as Browne thought)

the conquests would be Saxon, Danish, and Norman. "Diuturnity" (following): long life.

4. "Thus I, when dead, should wish to go to rest" (Tibullus).

5. Browne's note equates "the mortal right-lined circle" with the Greek letter theta (θ), the first letter of the word for death (*thanatos*) and a symbol of it.

6. Because old corpses were dug up and replaced with new (see Donne, "The Relic," lines 3–4, p. 1280).

7. Jan Gruter (1560–1627), a Dutch scholar who published a collection of inscriptions.

our names, to be studied by antiquaries, who we were, and have new names given us like many of the mummies, are cold consolations unto the students of perpetuity, even by everlasting languages.

To be content that times to come should only know there was such a man, not caring whether they knew more of him, was a frigid ambition in Cardan;⁸ disparaging his horoscopol inclination and judgment of himself. Who cares to subsist like Hippocrates' patients, or Achilles' horses in Homer, under naked nominations, without deserts and noble acts,⁹ which are the balsam in our memories, the *entelechia*¹ and soul of our subsistences? To be nameless in worthy deeds exceeds² an infamous history. The Canaanitish woman lives more happily without a name than Herodias with one. And who had not rather have been the good thief than Pilate?³

But the iniquity of oblivion blindly scattereth her poppy,⁴ and deals with the memory of men without distinction to merit of perpetuity. Who can but pity the founder of the pyramids? Herostratus lives that burnt the temple of Diana; he is almost lost that built it.⁵ Time hath spared the epitaph of Adrian's horse,⁶ confounded that of himself. In vain we compute our felicities by the advantage of our good names, since bad have equal durations, and Thersites is like to live as long as Agamemnon.⁷ Who knows whether the best of men be known, or whether there be not more remarkable persons forgot than any that stand remembered in the known account of time? Without the favor of the everlasting register,⁸ the first man had been as unknown as the last, and Methusalem's long life had been his only chronicle.

Oblivion is not to be hired: the greater part must be content to be as though they had not been, to be found in the register of God, not in the record of man. Twenty-seven names make up the first story, and the recorded names ever since contain not one living century.⁹ The number of the dead long exceedeth all that shall live. The night of time far surpasseth the day, and who knows when was the equinox? Every hour adds unto that current arithmetic, which scarce stands one moment. And since death must be the Lucina¹ of life, and even pagans could doubt whether thus to live were to die; since our longest sun sets at right descensions, and makes but winter arches,² and therefore it cannot be long before we lie down in darkness, and have our light in ashes;³ since the brother of death daily haunts us with dying mementos, and time that grows old itself bids us hope no long duration; diuturnity⁴ is a dream and folly of expectation.

Darkness and light divide the course of time, and oblivion shares with mem-

8. Girolamo Cardano, an Italian mathematician and occultist of the 16th century, declared, "I want it to be known that I exist, I do not wish it to be known what [kind of person] I am."

9. In the *Iliad*, Homer provides more than merely the names ("naked nominations") of Achilles' immortal horses, Xanthus and Balius: their lineage is specified, and they play an important role in the action.

1. Essence, perfection.

2. Is better than.

3. The woman of Canaan asked Christ to heal her daughter (Matthew 15.22-28); Herodias demanded the head of John the Baptist (Mark 6.22-25); the good thief crucified beside Christ was promised paradise (Luke 23.39-43); Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judaea, refused to intervene to save Christ. (Matthew 27.24).

4. Opiate. "Iniquity": inequity.

5. We remember Herostratus, who burned the

great temple of Diana at Ephesus, one of the seven wonders of the world, but scarcely remember the builder (Chersiphon, according to Pliny).

6. Hadrian, emperor of Rome in the 2nd century, erected an inscribed monument to his horse.

7. Thersites, the scurrilous scoffer of the *Iliad*; Agamemnon, leader of the Greek forces.

8. The Bible.

9. Genesis 1-5 tells the story of the human race from the creation to the flood in twenty-seven names; of all the names since the flood, not one hundred ("century") are really well known.

1. Roman goddess of childbirth. "That current arithmetic": that continual addition.

2. I.e., even the longest human life is like a short winter's day (in which the sun traces a low "arch").

3. At funerals, Browne's note says, the Jews place a wax candle in a pot of ashes beside the corpse. The "brother of death" (following) is sleep.

4. Longlastingness.

ory a great part even of our living beings; we slightly remember our felicities, and the smartest strokes of affliction leave but short smart upon us. Sense endureth no extremities, and sorrows destroy us or themselves. To weep into stones are fables.⁵ Afflictions induce callosities;⁶ miseries are slippery, or fall like snow upon us, which notwithstanding is no unhappy stupidity. To be ignorant of evils to come, and forgetful of evils past, is a merciful provision in nature, whereby we digest the mixture of our few and evil days, and, our delivered senses not relapsing into cutting remembrances, our sorrows are not kept raw by the edge of repetitions. A great part of antiquity contented their hopes of subsistency with a transmigration of their souls: a good way to continue their memories, while, having the advantage of plural successions, they could not but act something remarkable in such variety of beings, and enjoying the fame of their passed selves, make accumulation of glory unto their last durations. Others, rather than be lost in the uncomfortable night of nothing, were content to recede into the common being, and make one particle of the public soul of all things, which was no more than to return into their unknown and divine original again. Egyptian ingenuity was more unsatisfied, contriving their bodies in sweet consistencies,⁷ to attend the return of their souls. But all was vanity, feeding the wind, and folly. The Egyptian mummies, which Cambyses or time hath spared, avarice now consumeth. Mummy is become merchandise, Mizraim cures wounds, and Pharaoh is sold for balsams.⁸

In vain do individuals hope for immortality, or any patent⁹ from oblivion, in preservations below the moon; men have been deceived even in their flatteries above the sun, and studied conceits to perpetuate their names in heaven. The various cosmography of that part hath already varied the names of contrived constellations: Nimrod is lost in Orion, and Osiris in the Dog Star.¹ While we look for incorruption in the heavens, we find they are but like the earth, durable in their main bodies, alterable in their parts: whereof beside comets and new stars, perspectives² begin to tell tales, and the spots that wander about the sun, with Phaethon's favor,³ would make clear conviction.

There is nothing strictly immortal but immortality. Whatever hath no beginning may be confident of no end; all others have a dependent being and within the reach of destruction; which is the peculiar⁴ of that necessary essence that cannot destroy itself; and the highest strain of omnipotency, to be so powerfully constituted as not to suffer even from the power of itself. But the sufficiency of Christian immortality frustrates all earthly glory, and the quality of either state after death makes a folly of posthumous memory. God, who can only⁵ destroy our souls, and hath assured our resurrection, either of our bodies or names hath directly promised no duration. Wherein there is so much of chance that the boldest expectants have found unhappy frustration; and to hold long subsistence seems but a scape⁶ in oblivion. But man is a noble

5. Like Niobe, whose grief turned her to stone.

6. Calluses, hardness, indifference.

7. The reference is to embalming practices.

8. The story of Cambyses ravaging Egypt is told in Herodotus 3. Powdered mummy was sold in the 17th century as medicine (see Donne, "Love's Alchemy," line 24, p. 1272). "Mizraim": i.e., Egypt; Mizraim was a son of Ham (Genesis 10.6–14).

9. Protection.

1. The names of the stars and constellations change—Nimrod to Orion, Osiris to Sirius, or the

Dog Star.

2. Telescopes.

3. Phaethon's foolish attempt to drive the chariot of his father, the sun god Helios (Apollo), nearly set the world on fire. His erratic course suggests to Browne the wandering sunspots recently charted by astronomers.

4. Characteristic.

5. Who alone can.

6. Weak trick.

animal, splendid in ashes and pompous in the grave, solemnizing natiivities and deaths with equal luster, nor omitting ceremonies of bravery⁷ in the infamy of his nature.

Life is a pure flame, and we live by an invisible sun within us. A small fire sufficeth for life, great flames seemed too little after death, while men vainly affected precious pyres, and to burn like Sardanapalus;⁸ but the wisdom of funeral laws found the folly of prodigal blazes, and reduced undoing fires unto the rule of sober obsequies, wherein few could be so mean as not to provide wood, pitch, a mourner, and an urn.

Five languages secured not the epitaph of Gordianus.⁹ The man of God¹ lives longer without a tomb than any by one, invisibly interred by angels, and adjudged to obscurity, though not without some marks directing human discovery. Enoch and Elias, without either tomb or burial, in an anomalous state of being, are the great examples of perpetuity, in their long and living memory, in strict account being still on this side death, and having a late part yet to act upon this stage of earth.² If in the decreitory term of the world³ we shall not all die but be changed, according to received translation, the last day will make but few graves; at least quick resurrections will anticipate lasting sepulchers; some graves will be opened before they be quite closed, and Lazarus be no wonder.⁴ When many that feared to die shall groan that they can die but once, the dismal state is the second and living death, when life puts despair on the damned; when men shall wish the coverings of mountains, not of monuments, and annihilations shall be courted.⁵

While some have studied monuments, others have studiously declined them; and some have been so vainly boisterous that they durst not acknowledge their graves, wherein Alaricus seems most subtle, who had a river turned to hide his bones at the bottom.⁶ Even Sulla,⁷ that thought himself safe in his urn, could not prevent revenging tongues, and stones thrown at his monument. Happy are they whom privacy makes innocent, who deal so with men in this world that they are not afraid to meet them in the next; who, when they die, make no commotion among the dead, and are not touched with that poetical taunt of Isaiah.⁸

Pyramids, arches, obelisks were but the irregularities of vainglory, and wild enormities of ancient magnanimity. But the most magnanimous resolution rests in the Christian religion, which trampleth upon pride, and sits on the neck of ambition, humbly pursuing that infallible perpetuity unto which all others must diminish their diameters, and be poorly seen in angles of contingency.⁹

Pious spirits who passed their days in raptures of futurity made little more

7. Splendor.

8. Sardanapalus burned up a palace full of eunuchs, concubines, and treasures as his funeral pyre.

9. The epitaph of this emperor of Rome (238—44), though written in five languages, was obliterated.

1. Moses (Deuteronomy 34).

2. Enoch and Elijah ("Elias") were translated straight to heaven (Genesis 5:24, 2 Kings 2:11); they are sometimes identified with the "witnesses" who are to return to earth in the last days (Revelation 11:5).

3. The decreed end of the world, the Last Judgment.

4. Lazarus, the dead man raised by Christ (John 11).

5. The damned souls will shriek for mountains to shield them from the wrath of God (Luke 23:30, Revelation 6:16).

6. Alaric, the Gothic invader, was buried in the bed of the river Busento (410 C.E.).

7. Roman politician and general, who died 78 B.C.E.

8. In Isaiah 14 the might ones of the earth are taunted with their approaching downfall into hell. "Privacy": private station in life.

9. The smallest possible angle.

of this world than the world that was before it, while they lay obscure in the chaos of preordination and night of their forebeings. And if any have been so happy as truly to understand Christian annihilation, ecstasy, exolution,¹ liquefaction, transformation, the kiss of the spouse, gustation of God, and ingression into the divine shadow, they have already had an handsome anticipation of heaven; the glory of the world is surely over, and the earth in ashes unto them.

To "subsist in lasting monuments, to live in their productions, to exist in their names and predicament of chimeras,² was large satisfaction unto old expectations, and made one part of their Elysiums.³ But all this is nothing in the metaphysics of true belief. To live indeed is to be again ourselves, which being not only an hope but an evidence in noble believers, 'tis all one to lie in St. Innocent's churchyard, as in the sands of Egypt:⁴ ready to be anything, in the ecstasy of being ever, and as content with six foot as the *moles* of Adrianus.⁵

—*Tabesne cadavera solvat,
An rogos, haud refert.*

LUCAN

1658

1. The loosening or freeing of the spirit.
2. In the condition of phantasms.
3. The pagan afterworld.
4. In Paris, where bodies soon decompose, contrasted with the desert, where they last a long time.
5. Adrian's (Hadrian's) tomb, now Castel San

Angelo in Rome, the type of a magnificent mausoleum. The Latin tag following is translated, "By the swift funeral pyre or slow decay / (No matter which) the bodies pass away" (Lucan, *Pharsalia* 7.809-10).

THOMAS HOBBS

1588-1679

The English civil war and its aftermath raised fundamental questions about the nature and legitimacy of state power. In 1651 Thomas Hobbes attempted to answer those questions in his ambitious masterwork of political theory, *Leviathan*. A gifted mathematician, Hobbes believed in working rigorously from clearly defined first principles to conclusions, so he grounded his political vision upon a comprehensive philosophy of nature and of knowledge. Hobbes held that everything in the universe is composed only of matter; spirit does not exist. All knowledge is gained through sensory impressions, which are nothing but matter in motion. What we call the self is, for Hobbes, simply a tissue of sensory impressions—clear and immediate in the presence of the objects that evoke them, vague and less vivid in their absence. As a result, an iron determinism of cause and effect governs everything in the universe, including human action.

Human beings, Hobbes thought, seek self-preservation as a primary goal, and power as a means to secure that goal. His politics spring directly from these premises. Because all humans are roughly equal, physically and mentally, they possess equal hopes of attaining goods, as well as equal fears of danger from others. In the state of nature, before the foundation of some sovereign power to keep them all in awe,

everyone is continually at war with everyone else, and life, in Hobbes's memorable phrase, is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." To escape this ghastly strife, humans covenant with one another to establish a sovereign government over ail of them. That sovereign power—which need not be a king but is always indivisible—incorporates the wills and individuality of them all, so that the people no longer have wills, rights, or liberties apart from the sovereign's will. The sovereign's virtually absolute dominion over his subjects extends to the right to pronounce on all matters of religion and doctrine. The four parts of Hobbes's long treatise deal, respectively, with the nature of human beings, the creation of the state, the proper subordination of the church to state sovereignty, and what Hobbes labels the "kingdom of darkness," the Roman Catholic Church.

In Hobbes's system, the founding political covenant, once made, cannot be revoked. Revolution against or resistance to the sovereign for any reason is absurd, since no tyranny can be so evil as the state of war that the sovereign power prevents. Yet if the sovereign should be overthrown, the individual ruler has no further claim, and the people, for their safety, must accept the new sovereign power unconditionally. Hobbes's materialism and secularism scandalized Puritans. The Puritans also rejected its argument for an absolutism that cannot be modified or qualified, even on religious grounds. Other versions of covenant theory, for instance Milton's *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, insisted that the power transferred by the people to the sovereign could be limited or revoked. Nor did royalists find much reassurance in Hobbes's political theory. Hobbes was generally associated with the royalist cause, as a tutor to the Cavendish family and as an exile in Paris from 1640 to 1651, where he tutored the future Charles II. Yet his argument made no real distinction between a legitimate monarch and a successful usurper, like Oliver Cromwell; moreover, Hobbes's virtual exclusion of God from politics made many supporters of the king as uncomfortable as it did the Puritans. After the Restoration, Hobbes was widely suspected of atheism, and publication of many of his books, including a history of the civil war entitled *Behemoth*, was prohibited until after his death. Undeterred, Hobbes continued to write on a variety of psychological, political, and mathematical topics, completing a translation of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* at the age of eighty-six.

Hobbes's political theory did not fit easily into the established patterns of English thought partly because his perspective was essentially cosmopolitan. Educated at Oxford as a classicist, Hobbes traveled widely in Europe between 1610 and 1660 as a companion and tutor of noblemen, often remaining abroad for years at a time. During these lengthy sojourns he became acquainted with many of the leading intellectuals and scientists on the Continent, including Galileo, Descartes, and the prominent French mathematician Pierre Gassendi, who argued that the universe was governed entirely by mechanical principles. The most important political philosophers for Hobbes were also Continental figures: the Italian Niccolo Machiavelli, who saw human beings as naturally competitive and power hungry, and Jean Bodin, a French theorist of indivisible, absolute monarchy. One English writer who did influence Hobbes profoundly was Francis Bacon, whose amanuensis Hobbes had been in Bacon's last years. Ironically, Hobbes was not invited to join the Royal Society, established after the Restoration on Baconian principles, because his religious views were suspect and because he had quarreled with several of the society's founders. Yet Hobbes is truly Bacon's heir, sharing Bacon's utter lack of sentimentality and a memorably astringent prose style.

*From Leviathan*¹From *The Introduction*

[THE ARTIFICIAL MAN]

Nature (the art whereby God hath made and governs the world) is by the art of man, as in many other things, so in this also imitated, that it can make an artificial² animal. For seeing life is but a motion of limbs, the beginning whereof is in some principal part within, why may we not say that all automata (engines that move themselves by springs and wheels as doth a watch) have an artificial life?³ For what is the heart but a spring; and the nerves but so many strings; and the joints but so many wheels, giving motion to the whole body such as was intended by the artificer? Art goes yet further, imitating that rational and most excellent work of nature, man. For by art is created that great Leviathan called a Commonwealth or State (in Latin, *Civitas*), which is but an artificial man, though of greater stature and strength than the natural, for whose protection and defense it was intended; and in which the sovereignty is an artificial soul, as giving life and motion to the whole body; the magistrates and other officers of judicature and execution, artificial joints; reward and punishment (by which, fastened to the seat of the sovereignty, every joint and member is moved to perform his duty) are the nerves, that do the same in the body natural; the wealth and riches of all the particular members are the strength; *salus populi* (the people's safety) its business; counselors, by whom all things needful for it to know are suggested unto it, are the memory; equity and laws an artificial reason and will; concord, health; sedition, sickness; and civil war, death. Lastly, the pacts and covenants by which the parts of this body politic were at first made, set together, and united, resemble that *Fiat* or the "let us make man," pronounced by God in the creation.⁴

. . .

From *Part 1. Of Man*

CHAPTER 1. OF SENSE

Concerning the thoughts of man, I will consider them first singly and afterwards in train or dependence upon one another. Singly, they are every one a representation or appearance of some quality or other accident of a body without us, which is commonly called an object. Which object worketh on the eyes, ears, and other parts of man's body, and by diversity of working produceth diversity of appearances.

The original of them all is that which we call sense. (For there is no conception in a man's mind which hath not at first, totally or by parts, been begotten upon the organs of sense.)⁵ The rest are derived from that original.

1. The title refers to the primordial sea creature Leviathan, described in Job 41 as the prime evidence of and analogue to God's power, beyond all human measure and comprehension. Hobbes takes him as figure for the sovereign power in the state. Leviathan was also sometimes taken as a figure for Satan, on the basis of Job 41.34: "he is a king over all the children of pride."

2. Made by art.

3. Hobbes's definition of life as motion collapses the distinction between the life of humans and the life of machines or institutions.

4. Genesis 1.26.

5. This view of the mind as a blank sheet written on by physical experience will influence the philosophy of John Locke and David Hume.

To know the natural cause of sense is not very necessary to the business now in hand, and I have elsewhere written of the same at large. Nevertheless, to fill each part of my present method, I will briefly deliver the same in this place.

The cause of sense is the external body or object which presseth the organ proper to each sense, either immediately as in the taste and touch, or mediately, as in seeing, hearing, and smelling; which pressure, by the mediation of nerves and other strings and membranes of the body continued inwards to the brain and heart, causeth there a resistance or counterpressure or endeavor of the heart to deliver itself;⁶ which endeavor, because outward, seemeth to be some matter without. And this seeming or fancy is that which men call sense; and consisteth, as to the eye, in a light or color figured; to the ear, in a sound; to the nostril in an odor; to the tongue and palate in a savor; and to the rest of the body in heat, cold, hardness, softness, and such other qualities as we discern by feeling. All which qualities called "sensible"⁷ are, in the object that causeth them, but so many several motions of the matter by which it presseth our organs diversely. Neither, in us that are pressed, are they anything else but diverse motions; for motion produceth nothing but motion. But their appearance to us is fancy, the same waking, that dreaming. And as pressing, rubbing, or striking the eye makes us fancy a light; and pressing the ear produceth a din; so do the bodies also we see or hear produce the same by their strong though unobserved actions. For if those colors and sounds were in the bodies or objects that cause them, they could not be severed from them, as by glasses⁸ and in echoes by reflection we see they are; where we know the thing we see is in one place, the appearance in another. And though at some certain distance the real and very object seem invested with the fancy it begets in us, yet still the object is one thing, the image or fancy is another. So that sense in all cases is nothing else but original fancy, caused (as I have said) by the pressure, that is by the motion, of external things upon our eyes, ears, and other organs thereunto ordained.

But the philosophy schools⁹ through all the universities of Christendom, grounded upon certain texts of Aristotle, teach another doctrine, and say for the cause of vision, that the thing seen sendeth forth on every side a visible species—in English, a visible show, apparition, or aspect, or a being seen—the receiving whereof into the eye is seeing. And for the cause of hearing, that the thing heard sendeth forth an audible species, that is an audible aspect or audible being seen, which entering at the ear maketh hearing. Nay for the cause of understanding also they say the thing understood sendeth forth intelligible species, that is an intelligible being seen, which coming into the understanding makes us understand. I say not this as disapproving the use of universities, but because I am to speak hereafter of their office in a commonwealth, I must let you see on all occasions by the way what things would be amended in them; amongst which the frequency of insignificant speech¹ is one.

§ # .

6. Hobbes's physiology of sense is, in keeping with his premises, strictly mechanical.

7. I.e., accessible through the senses.

8. Mirrors.

9. Led by the Scholastic philosophers (school-

men).

1. Unmeaningful speech. Cf. Bacon's critique of the idols of the marketplace and the theater in *Novum Organum* 43-44 and 59-62.

CHAPTER 13. OF THE NATURAL CONDITION OF MANKIND AS
CONCERNING THEIR FELICITY AND MISERY

Nature hath made men so equal in the faculties of body and mind as that, though there be found one man sometimes manifestly stronger in body or of quicker mind than another, yet when all is reckoned together, the difference between man and man is not so considerable as that one man can thereupon claim to himself any benefit, to which another may not pretend as well as he. For as to the strength of body, the weakest has strength enough to kill the strongest, either by secret machination, or by confederacy² with others that are in the same danger with himself.

And as to the faculties of the mind—setting aside the arts grounded upon words, and especially that skill of proceeding upon general and infallible rules, called science; which very few have, and but in few things; as being not a native faculty, born with us; nor attained, as prudence, while we look after somewhat else—I find yet a greater equality amongst men than that of strength. For prudence is but experience, which equal time equally bestows on all men, in those things they equally apply themselves unto. That which may perhaps make such equality incredible is but a vain conceit of one's own wisdom, which almost all men think they have in a greater degree than the vulgar—that is, than all men but themselves and a few others, whom by fame, or for concurring with themselves, they approve. For such is the nature of men, that howsoever they may acknowledge many others to be more witty, or more eloquent, or more learned, yet they will hardly believe there be many so wise as themselves; for they see their own wit at hand, and other men's at a distance. But this proveth rather that men are in that point equal, than unequal. For there is not ordinarily a greater sign of the equal distribution of anything than that every man is contented with his share.

From this equality of ability ariseth equality of hope in the attaining of our ends. And therefore if any two men desire the same thing, which nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies; and in the way to their end (which is principally their own conservation, and sometimes their delectation³ only) endeavor to destroy or subdue one another. And from hence it comes to pass, that where an invader hath no more to fear than another man's single power, if one plant, sow, build, or possess a convenient seat, others may probably be expected to come prepared with forces united, to dispossess and deprive him, not only of the fruit of his labor, but also of his life or liberty. And the invader again is in the like danger of another.

And from this diffidence⁴ of one another, there is no way for any man to secure himself so reasonable as anticipation; that is, by force or wiles to master the persons of all men he can, so long, till he see no other power great enough to endanger him; and this is no more than his own conservation requireth, and is generally allowed. Also because there be some, that taking pleasure in contemplating their own power in the acts of conquest, which they pursue farther than their security requires; if others that otherwise would be glad to be at ease within modest bounds, should not by invasion increase their power, they would not be able long time, by standing only on their defense, to subsist. And by consequence, such augmentation of dominion over men being necessary to a man's conservation, it ought to be allowed him.

2. Alliance.

3. Pleasure.

4. Lack of faith, mistrust.

Again, men have no pleasure, but on the contrary a great deal of grief, in keeping company, where there is no power able to overawe them all. For every man looketh that his companion should value him at the same rate he sets upon himself; and upon all signs of contempt, or undervaluing, naturally endeavors, as far as he dares (which amongst them that have no common power to keep them in quiet, is far enough to make them destroy each other), to extort a greater value from his contemners⁵ by damage, and from others by the example.

So that in the nature of man, we find three principal causes of quarrel. First, competition; secondly, diffidence; thirdly, glory.

The first maketh men invade for gain; the second, for safety; and the third, for reputation. The first use violence to make themselves masters of other men's persons, wives, children, and cattle; the second, to defend them; the third, for trifles, as a word, a smile, a different opinion, and any other sign of undervalue, either direct in their persons, or by reflection in their kindred, their friends, their nation, their profession, or their name.

Hereby it is manifest that during the time men live without a common power to keep them all in awe, they are in that condition which is called war; and such a war as is of every man against every man. For war consisteth not in battle only, or the act of fighting, but in a tract of time wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known; and therefore the notion of time is to be considered in the nature of war, as it is in the nature of weather. For as the nature of foul weather lieth not in a shower or two of rain, but in an inclination thereto of many days together; so the nature of war consisteth not in actual fighting, but in the known disposition thereto, during all the time there is no assurance to the contrary. All other time is peace.

Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of war, where every man is enemy to every man, the same is consequent to the time wherein men live without other security than what their own strength and their own invention shall furnish them withal. In such condition there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain, and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving, and removing, such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and, which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

It may seem strange to some man that has not well weighed these things, that nature should thus dissociate and render men apt to invade and destroy one another; and he may therefore, not trusting to this inference, made from the passions, desire perhaps to have the same confirmed by experience. Let him therefore consider with himself, when taking a journey, he arms himself and seeks to go well accompanied; when going to sleep, he locks his doors; when even in his house he locks his chests; and this when he knows there be laws, and public officers, armed, to revenge all injuries shall be done him; what opinion he has of his fellow subjects, when he rides armed; of his fellow citizens, when he locks his doors; and of his children and servants, when he locks his chests. Does he not there as much accuse mankind by his actions, as I do by my words? But neither of us accuse man's nature in it. The desires

5. Scorners.

and other passions of man are in themselves no sin. No more are the actions that proceed from those passions, till they know a law that forbids them, which, till laws be made, they cannot know; nor can any law be made, till they have agreed upon the person that shall make it.

It may peradventure be thought there was never such a time nor condition of war as this; and I believe it was never generally so, over all the world; but there are many places where they live so now. For the savage people in many places of America, except the government of small families, the concord whereof dependeth on natural lust, have no government at all and live at this day in that brutish manner as I said before. Howsoever, it may be perceived what manner of life there would be, where there were no common power to fear, by the manner of life which men that have formerly lived under a peaceful government use to degenerate into in a civil war.⁶

But though there had never been any time wherein particular men were in a condition of war one against another, yet in all times, kings and persons of sovereign authority, because of their independency, are in continual jealousies, and in the state and posture of gladiators; having their weapons pointing, and their eyes fixed on one another; that is, their forts, garrisons, and guns upon the frontiers of their kingdoms, and continual spies upon their neighbors, which is a posture of war. But because they uphold thereby the industry of their subjects, there does not follow from it that misery which accompanies the liberty of particular men.

To this war of every man against every man, this also is consequent: that nothing can be unjust. The notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice, have there no place. Where there is no common power, there is no law; where no law, no injustice. Force and fraud are in war the two cardinal virtues. Justice and injustice are none of the faculties neither of the body nor mind. If they were, they might be in a man that were alone in the world, as well as his senses and passions. They are qualities that relate to men in society, not in solitude. It is consequent also to the same condition that there be no propriety,⁷ no dominion, no *mine* and *thine* distinct; but only that to be every man's, that he can get; and for so long as he can keep it. And thus much for the ill condition which man by mere nature is actually placed in; though with a possibility to come out of it, consisting partly in the passions, partly in his reason.

The passions that incline men to peace are fear of death, desire of such things as are necessary' to commodious living, and a hope by their industry to obtain them. And reason suggesteth convenient articles of peace, upon which men may be drawn to agreement. These articles are they which otherwise are called the Laws of Nature, whereof I shall speak more particularly in the two following chapters.

FROM CHAPTER 14. OF THE FIRST AND SECOND NATURAL LAWS

The Right of Nature, which writers commonly call *ius naturale*, is the liberty each man hath to use his own power as he will himself for the preservation of his own nature, that is to say, of his own life; and consequently of doing anything which in his own judgment and reason he shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto.

By Liberty is understood, according to the proper signification of the word,

6. Hobbes is thinking of the recent civil wars in England, and perhaps also of the Greek civil wars

described by Thucydides (whom he translated).

7. Property.

the absence of external impediments, which impediments may oft take away part of a man's power to do what he would, but cannot hinder him from using the power left him according as his judgment and reason shall dictate to him.

A Law of Nature (*lex naturalis*) is a precept or general rule found out by reason, by which a man is forbidden to do that which is destructive of his life or taketh away the means of preserving the same; and to omit that by which he thinketh it may be best preserved. For though they that speak of this subject use to confound⁸ *Ius* and *Lex*, *Right* and *Law*, yet they ought to be distinguished, because Right consisteth in liberty to do or to forbear, whereas Law determineth and bindeth to one of them: so that Law and Right differ as much as obligation and liberty, which in one and the same matter are inconsistent.

And because the condition of man (as hath been declared in the precedent chapter) is a condition of war of every one against every one, in which case every one is governed by his own reason, and there is nothing he can make use of that may not be a help unto him in preserving his life against his enemies: it followeth that in such a condition every man has a right to every thing, even to one another's body. And therefore as long as this natural right of every man to every thing endureth, there can be no security to any man (how strong or wise soever he be) of living out the time which nature ordinarily alloweth men to live. And consequently it is a precept or general rule of reason, *That every man ought to endeavor peace, as far as he has hope of obtaining it; and when he cannot obtain it, that he may seek and use all helps and advantages of war. The first branch of which rule containeth the first and fundamental law of nature, which is to seek peace and follow it. The second, the sum of the right of nature, which is, b)> all means we can to defend ourselves.*

From this fundamental law of nature, by which men are commanded to endeavor peace, is derived this second law: *That a man be willing, when others are so too, as far-forth as⁹ for peace and defense of himself he shall think it necessary, to lay down this right to all things, and be contented with so much liberty against other men as he would allow other men against himself. For as long as any man holdeth this right of doing anything he liketh, so long are all men in the condition of war. But if other men will not lay down their right, as well as he, then there is no reason for anyone to divest himself of his. For that were to expose himself to prey (which no man is bound to) rather than to dispose himself to peace. This is that law of the Gospel: *Whatsoever you require that others should do to you, that do ye to them.*¹*

FROM CHAPTER 15. OF OTHER LAWS OF NATURE

From that law of nature by which we are obliged to transfer to another such rights as, being retained, hinder the peace of mankind, there followeth a third, which is this: *That men perform their covenants made:*² without which, covenants are in vain, and but empty words; and, the right of all men to all things remaining, we are still in the condition of war.

And in this law of nature consisteth the fountain and original of Justice. For where no covenant hath preceded, there hath no right been transferred,

8. Confuse.

9. Insofar as.

1. The Golden Rule: Matthew 7.12, Luke 6.31.

2. Though the terms are general, Hobbes refers in this chapter especially to the covenants men make

with each other when they transfer power to the sovereign. Milton makes very different use of covenant theory to justify the rebellion and regicide in *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*.

and every man has right to every thing; and consequently no action can be unjust. But when a covenant is made, then to break it is unjust; and the definition of injustice is no other than *the not performance of covenant*. And whatsoever is not unjust is just. * * *

For the question is not of promises mutual where there is no security of performance on either side, as when there is no civil power erected over the parties promising; for such promises are no covenants. But either where one of the parties has performed already, or where there is a power to make him perform: there is the question whether it be against reason, that is against the benefit of the other, to perform or not. And I say it is not against reason.³ For the manifestation whereof, we are to consider: first, that when a man doth a thing which (notwithstanding anything can be foreseen and reckoned on) tendeth to his own destruction, howsoever⁴ some accident, which he could not expect, arriving may turn it to his benefit; yet such events do not make it reasonably or wisely done. Secondly, that in a condition of war, wherein every man to every man, for want of a common power to keep them all in awe, is an enemy, there is no man can hope by his own strength or wit to defend himself from destruction without the help of confederates; where everyone expects the same defense by the confederation that anyone else does. And therefore he which declares he thinks it reason to deceive those that help him can in reason expect no other means of safety than what can be had from his own single power. He therefore that breaketh his covenant, and consequently declareth that he thinks he may with reason do so, cannot be received into any society that unite themselves for peace and defense, but by the error of them that receive him; nor when he is received be retained in it without seeing the danger of their error; which errors a man cannot reasonably reckon upon as the means of his security. And therefore if he be left or cast out of society, he perisheth; and if he live in society, it is by the errors of other men, which he could not foresee nor reckon upon; and consequently against the reason of his preservation; and so as all men that contribute not to his destruction forbear him only out of ignorance of what is good for themselves.

As for the instance of gaining the secure and perpetual felicity of heaven by any way, it is frivolous: there being but one way imaginable, and that is not breaking, but keeping of covenant.

And for the other instance of attaining sovereignty by rebellion, it is manifest that though the event follow, yet because it cannot reasonably be expected, but rather the contrary; and because by gaining it so others are taught to gain the same in like manner, the attempt thereof is against reason. Justice therefore, that is to say, keeping of covenant, is a rule of reason, by which we are forbidden to do anything destructive to our life, and consequently a law of nature.

From Part 2: Of Commonwealth

CHAPTER 17. OF THE CAUSES, GENERATION, AND DEFINITION OF A
COMMONWEALTH

The final cause, end, or design of men, who naturally love liberty and dominion over others, in the introduction of that restraint upon themselves in which

3. I.e., to perform the promise.

4. Even though.

we see them live in commonwealths, is the foresight of their own preservation and of a more contented life thereby—that is to say, of getting themselves out from their miserable condition of war which is necessarily consequent, as has been shown (Chapter 13), to the natural passions of men when there is no visible power to keep them in awe and tie them by fear of punishment to the performance of their covenants and observation of those laws of nature set down in the fourteenth and fifteenth chapters.

For the laws of nature—as justice, equity, modesty, mercy, and, in sum, doing to others as we would be done to—of themselves, without the terror of some power to cause them to be observed, are contrary to our natural passions, that carry us to partiality,⁵ pride, revenge, and the like. And covenants without the sword are but words, and of no strength to secure a man at all. Therefore, notwithstanding the laws of nature (which everyone has then kept when he had the will to keep them, when he can do it safely), if there be no power erected, or not great enough for our security, every man will—and may lawfully—rely on his own strength and art for caution⁶ against all other men. And in all places where men have lived by small families, to rob and spoil one another has been a trade, and so far from being reputed against the law of nature that the greater spoils they gained, the greater was their honor; and men observed no other laws therein but the laws of honor—that is to abstain from cruelty, leaving to men their lives and instruments of husbandry. And as small families did then, so now do cities and kingdoms, which are but greater families, for their own security enlarge their dominions upon all pretenses of danger and fear of invasion or assistance that may be given to invaders, and endeavor as much as they can to subdue or weaken their neighbors by open force and secret arts, for want of other caution, justly; and are remembered for it in after ages with honor.

Nor is it the joining together of a small number of men that gives them this security, because in small numbers small additions on the one side or the other make the advantage of strength so great as is sufficient to carry the victory, and therefore gives encouragement to an invasion. The multitude sufficient to confide in for our security is not determined by any certain number but by comparison with the enemy we fear, and is then sufficient when the odds of the enemy is not of so visible and conspicuous moment to determine the event⁷ of war as to move him to attempt.

And be there never so great a multitude, yet if their actions be directed according to their particular judgments and particular appetites, they can expect thereby no defense nor protection, neither against a common enemy nor against the injuries of one another. For being distracted in opinion⁸ concerning the best use and application of their strength, they do not help but hinder one another, and reduce their strength by mutual opposition to nothing; whereby they are easily not only subdued by a very few that agree together, but also, when there is no common enemy, they make war upon each other for their particular interest. For if we could suppose a great multitude of men to consent in the observation of justice and other laws of nature without a common power to keep them all in awe, we might as well suppose all mankind to do the same, then there neither would be, nor need to be, any civil government or commonwealth at all, because there would be peace without subjection.

5. Favoritism, to oneself or another.

6. Precaution, defense.

7. Outcome.

8. I.e., by opinions.

Nor is it enough for the security which men desire should last all the time of their life that they be governed and directed by one judgment for a limited time, as in one battle or one war. For though they obtain a victory by their unanimous endeavor against a foreign enemy, yet afterwards, when either they have no common enemy or he that by one part is held for an enemy is by another part held for a friend, they must needs, by the difference of their interests, dissolve and fall again into a war among themselves.

It is true that certain living creatures, as bees and ants, live sociably one with another—which are therefore by Aristotle numbered among political creatures—and have no other direction than their particular judgments and appetites, nor speech whereby one of them can signify to another what he thinks expedient for the common benefit; and therefore some man may perhaps desire to know why mankind cannot do the same. To which I answer:

First, that men are continually in competition for honor and dignity, which these creatures are not; and consequently among men there arises on that ground envy and hatred and finally war, but among these not so.

Secondly, that among these creatures the common good differs not from the private; and being by nature inclined to their private, they procure thereby the common benefit. But man, whose joy consists in comparing himself with other men, can relish nothing but what is eminent.

Thirdly, that these creatures—having not, as man, the use of reason—do not see nor think they see any fault in the administration of their common business; whereas among men there are very many that think themselves wiser and abler to govern the public better than the rest, and these strive to reform and innovate, one this way, another that way, and thereby bring it into distraction and civil war.

Fourthly, that these creatures, though they have some use of voice in making known to one another their desires and other affections, yet they want that art of words by which some men can represent to others that which is good in the likeness of evil, and evil in the likeness of good, and augment or diminish this apparent greatness of good and evil, discontenting men and troubling their peace at their pleasure.

Fifthly, irrational creatures cannot distinguish between injury and damage, and therefore, as long as they be at ease, they are not offended with their fellows; whereas man is then most troublesome when he is most at ease, for then it is that he loves to show his wisdom and control the actions of them that govern the commonwealth.

Lastly, the agreement of these creatures is natural, that of men is by covenant only, which is artificial, and therefore it is no wonder if there be somewhat else required besides covenant to make their agreement constant and lasting, which is a common power to keep them in awe and to direct their actions to the common benefit.

The only way to erect such a common power as may be able to defend them from the invasion of foreigners and the injuries of one another, and thereby to secure them in such sort as that by their own industry and by the fruits of the earth they may nourish themselves and live contentedly, is to confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon one assembly of men that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, into one will, which is as much as to say, to appoint one man or assembly of men to bear their person, and everyone to own and acknowledge himself to be the author of whatsoever he that so bears their person shall act or cause to be acted in those things

which concern the common peace and safety, and therein to submit their wills everyone to his will, and their judgments to his judgment. This is more than consent or concord; it is a real unity of them all in one and the same person, made by covenant of every man with every man, in such manner as if every man should say to every man, "I authorize and give up my right of governing myself to this man, or to this assembly of men, on the condition that you give up your right to him and authorize all his actions in like manner." This done, the multitude so united in one person is called a commonwealth, in Latin *civitas*. This is the generation of that great Leviathan (or rather, to speak more reverently, of that mortal god) to whom we owe, under the immortal God, our peace and defense. For by this authority, given him by every particular man in the commonwealth, he has the use of so much power and strength conferred on him that, by terror thereof, he is enabled to form the wills of them all to peace at home and mutual aid against their enemies abroad. And in him consists the essence of the commonwealth, which, to define it, is one person, of whose acts a great multitude, by mutual covenants one with another, have made themselves everyone the other's, to the end he may use the strength and means of them all as he shall think expedient for their peace and common defense. And he that carries this person is called sovereign and said to have sovereign power; and everyone besides, his subject.

1651

GEORGE HERBERT
1593-1633

Unlike the learned and witty style of the work of his friend John Donne, George Herbert's style in his volume of religious poetry, *The Temple*, is deceptively simple and graceful. But it is also marked by self-irony, a remarkable intellectual and emotional range, and a highly conscious artistry that is evident in the poems' tight construction, exact diction, perfect control of tone, and enormously varied stanzaic forms and rhythmic patterns. These poems reflect Herbert's struggle to define his relationship to God through biblical metaphors invested with the tensions of relationships familiar in his own society: king and subject, lord and courtier, master and servant, father and child, bridegroom and bride, friends of unequal status. None of Herbert's secular English poems survives, so his reputation rests on this single volume, published posthumously. *The Temple* contains a long prefatory poem, "The Church-Porch," and a long concluding poem, "Church Militant," which together enclose a collection of 177 short lyrics entitled *The Church*, among which are sonnets, songs, hymns, laments, meditative poems, dialogue poems, acrostic poems, emblematic poems, and more. Herbert's own description of the collection is apt: "a picture of the many spiritual conflicts that have passed between God and my soul." Izaak Walton reports that Herbert gave the manuscript to his friend Nicholas Farrar, head of a quasi-monastic community at Little Gidding, with instructions to publish it if he thought it would "turn to the advantage of any dejected poor soul" and otherwise to burn it. Fortunately, Farrar chose to publish, and *The Temple* became the major influence on the religious lyric poets of the Caroline age: Henry Vaughan, Richard Crashaw, Thomas Traherne, and even Edward Taylor, the American colonial poet.

The fifth son of an eminent Welsh family, Herbert (and his nine siblings) had an upbringing carefully monitored by his mother, Magdalen Herbert, patron and friend of Donne and several other scholars and poets. Herbert was educated at Westminster School and at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he subsequently held a fellowship and wrote Latin poetry: elegies on the death of Prince Henry (1612), witty epigrams, poems on Christ's Passion and death, and poems defending the rites of the English church. In 1620 he was appointed "public orator," the official spokesman and correspondent for the university. This was a step toward a career at court or in public service, as was his election as the member of Parliament from Montgomery in 1624. But that route was closed off by the death of influential patrons and the change of monarchs. Like Donne, Herbert hesitated for some years before being ordained, but in 1630 he took up pastoral duties in the small country parish at Bemerton in Wiltshire. Whereas Donne preached to monarchs and statesmen, Herbert ministered to a few cottagers, and none of his sermons survive. His small book on the duties of his new life, *A Priest to the Temple; or, The Country Parson*, testifies to the earnestness and joy, but also to the aristocratic uneasiness, with which he embraced that role. In chronic bad health, he lived only three more years—performing pastoral duties assiduously, writing and revising his poems, playing music, and listening to the organ and choir at nearby Salisbury Cathedral.

Herbert locates himself in the church through many poems that treat church liturgy, architecture, and art—e.g., "Church Monuments" and "The Windows"—but his primary emphasis is always on the soul's inner architecture. Unlike Donne's poems, Herbert's poems do not voice anxious fears about his salvation or about his desperate sins and helplessness; his anxieties center rather on his relationship with Christ, most often represented as that of friend with friend. Many poems register the speaker's distress over the vacillations and regressions in this relationship, over his lack of "fruition" in God's service, and over the instability in his own nature, purposes, and temperament. In several dialogic poems the speaker's difficulties and anxieties are alleviated or resolved by the voice of a divine friend heard within or recalled through a Scripture text (as in "The Collar"). In poem after poem he has to come to terms with the fact that his relationship with Christ is always radically unequal, that Christ must both initiate it and enable his own response. Herbert struggles constantly with the paradox that, as the works of a Christian poet, his poems ought to give fit praise to God but cannot possibly do so—an issue explored in "The Altar," the two "Jordan" poems, "Easter," "The Forerunners," and many more.

His recourse is to develop a biblical poetics that renounces conventional poetic styles—"fiction and false hair"—to depend instead on God's "art" wrought in his own soul and displayed in the language, metaphors, and symbolism of the Bible. He makes scant use of Donnean learned imagery, but his scriptural allusions carry profound significances. A biblical metaphor provides the unifying motif for the volume: the New Testament temple in the human heart (1 Corinthians 3.16). Another recurring biblical metaphor represents the Christian as plant or tree or flower in God's garden, needing pruning, rain, and nurture. Herbert was profoundly influenced by the genre of the emblem, which typically associated mysterious but meaningful pictures and mottoes with explanatory text. Shaped poems like "The Altar" or "Easter Wings" present image and picture at once; others, like "The Windows," resemble emblem commentary. Other poems allude to typological symbolism, which reads persons and events in the Old Testament as types or foreshadowings of Christ, the fulfillment or antitype. Often, as in "The Bunch of Grapes," Herbert locates both type and antitype in the speaker's soul.

FROM THE TEMPLE¹The Altar²

A broken ALTAR, Lord, thy servant rears,
 Made of a heart, and cemented with tears:
 Whose parts are as thy hand did frame;
 No workman's tool hath touched the same.³

5 A H E A R T alone
 Is such a stone,
 As nothing but
 Thy power doth cut.
 Wherefore each part
 10 Of my hard heart
 Meets in this frame,
 To praise thy Name:

 That, if I chance to hold my peace,
 These stones to praise thee may not cease.⁴

15 Oh let thy blessed SACRIFICE be mine,
 And sanctify this ALTAR to be thine.

Redemption¹

Having been tenant long to a rich lord,
 Not thriving, I resolved to be bold,
 And make a suit unto him, to afford
 A new small-rented lease, and cancel th' old.²

5 In heaven at his manor I him sought:
 They told me there that he was lately gone
 About some land which he had dearly bought
 Long since on earth, to take possession.

10 I straight" returned, and knowing his great birth, *atonce*
 Sought him accordingly in great resorts—
 In cities, theaters, gardens, parks, and courts:
 At length I heard a ragged noise and mirth

 Of thieves and murderers; there I him espied,
 Who straight, "Your suit is granted," said, and died.

1. The title of Herbert's volume sets his poems in relation to David's psalms for the Temple at Jerusalem; his are "psalms" for the New Testament temple in the heart. All of the following poems come from this volume, published in 1633.

2. A variety of emblem poem. Emblems customarily have three parts; a picture, a motto, and a poem. This land collapses picture and poem into one, presenting the emblem image by its very shape. Shaped poems have been used by authors from Hellenistic times to Dylan Thomas.

3. A reference to Exodus 20.25, in which the Lord enjoins Moses to build an altar of uncut stones,

not touched by any tool, and also to Psalm 51.17: "a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

4. A reference to Luke 19.40: "I tell you that, if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." Herbert's poems obtain much of their resonance from their biblical echoes.

1. Literally, "buying back." In this beautifully concise sonnet Herbert figures God as a landlord, himself as a discontented tenant.

2. I.e., to ask him for a new lease, with a smaller rent; the figure points to the New Testament supplanting the Old.

Easter¹

Rise, heart, thy lord is risen. Sing his praise
 Without delays,
 Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
 With him may'st rise;
 5 That, as his death calcined⁰ thee to dust, *burned, to powder*
 His life may make thee gold, and, much more, just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
 With all thy art.
 The cross taught all wood to resound his name
 10 Who bore the same.
 His stretched sinews taught all strings what key
 Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort, both heart and lute, and twist² a song
 Pleasant and long;
 15 Or, since all music is but three parts vied³
 And multiplied,
 Oh let thy blessed spirit bear a part,
 And make up our defects with his sweet art.

The Song

I got me flowers to straw⁰ thy way,⁴ *strew*
 20 I got me boughs off many a tree;
 But thou wast up by break of day
 And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The sun arising in the east,
 Though he give light and th' east perfume,
 25 If they should offer to contest
 With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
 Though many suns to shine endeavor?
 We count three hundred, but we miss:^o *misunderstand*
 30 There is but one, and that one ever.

]. The first three stanzas work out the poetics of writing hymns; then comes the hymn itself.

2. Weave. "Consort": harmonize.

3. Increased by repetition. Harmony is based on

the triad, the chord.

4. Evokes the scene of Christ's entry into Jerusalem (Matthew 21.8).

Easter Wings¹

Lord, who createdst man in wealth and store,⁰ *abundance*
 Though foolishly he lost the same,
 Decaying more and more
 Till he became
 5 Most poor:
 With thee
 O let me rise
 As larks, harmoniously,
 And sing this day thy victories:
 10 Then shall the fall further the flight in me.²

My tender age in sorrow did begin:
 And still with sicknesses and shame
 Thou didst so punish sin,
 That I became
 15 Most thin.
 With thee
 Let me combine,
 And feel this day thy victory;
 For, if I imp³ my wing on thine,
 20 Affliction shall advance the flight in me.

Affliction (1)¹

When first thou didst entice to thee my heart,
 I thought the service brave:⁰ *splendid*
 So many joys I writ down for my part,
 Besides what I might have
 5 Out of my stock of natural delights,
 Augmented with thy gracious benefits.

I looked on thy furniture so fine,
 And made it fine to me;
 Thy glorious household stuff did me entwine,
 10 And 'tice⁰ me unto thee. *entice*

Such stars I counted mine: both heaven and earth
 Paid me my wages in a world of mirth.

What pleasures could I want,⁰ whose king I served, *lack*
 Where joys my fellows were?
 15 Thus argued into hopes, my thoughts reserved
 No place for grief or fear;

1. Another emblem poem whose shape presents the emblem picture; the lines, increasing and decreasing, imitate flight, and also the spiritual experience of falling and rising. Early editions printed the poem with the lines running vertically, making the wing shape more apparent.

2. Refers to the "Fortunate Fall," which brought humankind so great a redeemer.

3. In falconry, to insert feathers in a bird's wing.
1. Herbert sometimes used the same title for several poems, thereby associating them; editors distinguish them by adding numbers.

Therefore my sudden soul caught at the place,
And made her youth and fierceness seek thy face.

At first thou gav'st me milk and sweetnesses;
20 I had my wish and way:
My days were strawed⁰ with flowers and happiness; *strewn*
There was no month but May.
But with my years sorrow did twist and grow,
And made a party unawares⁰ for woe. *unwittingly*

25 My flesh began unto^o my soul in pain, *started complaining to*
Sicknesses cleave⁰ my bones; *penetrate*
Consuming agues⁰ dwell in every vein, *fevers with convulsions*
And tune my breath to groans.
Sorrow was all my soul; I scarce believed,
30 Till grief did tell me roundly, that I lived.

When I got health, thou took'st away my life,
And more; for my friends die:
My mirth and edge was lost: a blunted knife
Was of more use than I.
35 Thus thin and lean without a fence or friend,
I was blown through with every storm and wind.

Whereas my birth and spirit rather took
The way that takes the town,
Thou didst betray me to a lingering book,
40 And wrap me in a gown.⁰ *priest's garb*
I was entangled in the world of strife,
Before I had the power to change my life.

Yet, for I threatened oft the siege to raise,
Not simpering all mine age,
45 Thou often didst with academic praise
Melt and dissolve my rage.
I took thy sweetened pill, till I came where
I could not go away, nor persevere.

Yet lest perchance I should too happy be
50 In my unhappiness,
Turning my purge⁰ to food, thou throwest me *laxative*
Into more sicknesses.
Thus doth thy power cross-bias me,^o not making *turn me from my aim*
Thine own gift good, yet me from my ways taking.

55 Now I am here, what thou wilt do with me
None of my books will show:
I read, and sigh, and wish I were a tree,
For sure then I should grow
To fruit or shade; at least, some bird would trust
60 Her household to me, and I should be just.

Yet, though thou troublest me, I must be meek;
 In weakness must be stout.
 Well, I will change the service, and go seek
 Some other master out.
 65 Ah, my dear God! though I am clean forgot,
 Let me not love thee, if I love thee not.

Prayer (1)¹

Prayer, the church's banquet; angels' age,
 God's breath in man returning to his birth;
 The soul in paraphrase,² heart in pilgrimage;
 The Christian plummet,³ sounding heaven and earth;
 5 Engine against th' Almighty, sinner's tower,
 Reversed thunder, Christ-side-piercing spear,
 The six-days' world transposing⁴ in an hour;
 A kind of tune which all things hear and fear:
 Softness and peace and joy and love and bliss;
 10 Exalted manna,⁵ gladness of the best;
 Heaven in ordinary,⁶ man well dressed,
 The milky way, the bird of paradise,
 Church bells beyond the stars heard, the soul's blood,
 The land of spices; something understood.

Jordan (1)¹

Who says that fictions only and false hair
 Recome a verse? Is there in truth no beauty?
 Is all good structure in a winding stair?
 May no lines pass, except they do their duty⁰ *pay reverence*
 5 Not to a true, but painted chair?²
 Is it no verse, except enchanted groves
 And sudden arbors shadow coarse-spun lines?³
 Must purling⁰ streams refresh a lover's loves? *rippling*
 Must all be veiled,⁴ while he that reads, divines,
 10 Catching the sense at two removes?

1. This extraordinary sonnet is a series of epithets without a main verb, defining prayer by metaphor.

2. Clarifying by expansion.

3. A weight used to measure ("sound") the depth of water.

4. A musical term indicating sounds produced at another pitch from the original.

5. The food God supplied to the Israelites in the wilderness.

6. I.e., everyday heaven.

1. The river Jordan, which the Israelites crossed

to enter the Promised Land, was also taken as a symbol for baptism.

2. It was the custom for men to bow before a throne, whether it was occupied or not (see Donne, "Satire 3," lines 47-48, p. 1286), but to require bowing before a throne in a painting would be ridiculous.

3. "Sudden," i.e., that appear unexpectedly (an artificial effect much sought after in landscape gardening). "Shadow": shade.

4. As in allegory.

Shepherds⁵ are honest people: let them sing;
 Riddle who list,⁶ for me, and pull for prime:⁶ *wishes*
 I envy no man's nightingale or spring;
 Nor let them punish me with loss of rhyme,
 15 Who plainly say, *My God, My King.*⁷

Church Monuments¹

While that my soul repairs to her devotion,
 Here I entomb my flesh, that it betimes⁰ *while time remains*
 May take acquaintance of this heap of dust
 To which the blast of death's incessant motion,
 5 Fed with the exhalation of our crimes,
 Drives all at last. Therefore I gladly trust

My body to this school, that it may learn
 To spell his elements and find his birth
 Written in dusty heraldry and lines⁰ *engraving, genealogy*
 10 Which dissolution sure doth best discern,
 Comparing dust with dust and earth with earth.²
 These laugh at jet and marble,³ put for signs

To sever the good fellowship of dust
 And spoil the meeting. What shall point out them⁴
 15 When they shall bow and kneel and fall down flat
 To kiss those heaps which now they have in trust?
 Dear flesh, while I do pray, learn here thy stem
 And true descent, that, when thou shalt grow fat

And wanton in thy cravings, thou mayest know
 20 That flesh is but the glass⁰ which holds the dust *hourglass*
 That measures all our time, which also shall
 Be crumbled into dust. Mark here below
 How tame these ashes are, how free from lust,
 That thou mayest fit thyself against thy fall.

The Windows¹

Lord, how can man preach thy eternal word?
 He is a brittle, crazy⁰ glass, *flawed, distorting*
 Yet in thy temple thou dost him afford
 This glorious and transcendent place,
 5 To be a window through thy grace.

5. Conventional pastoral poets.

6. To draw a lucky card in the game of primero. "For me": as far as I am concerned.

7. Echoes Psalm 145.1: "my God, O king."

1. The earlier, manuscript version of the poem does not divide it into stanzas.

2. Alludes to Genesis 3.19: "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

3. Jet (black basalt) and marble are used for tomb

monuments. "These": i.e., dust and earth.

4. The inhabitants of the tombs.

1. From his little parish at Bemerton, Herbert used to walk twice a week across Salisbury Plain to the great cathedral, where he delighted not only in the music but in the stained-glass windows. This poem explores how the preacher himself may become such a window.

But when thou dost anneal in glass² thy story,
 Making thy life to shine within
 The holy preachers, then the light and glory
 More reverend grows, and more doth win,
 Which else shows wat'rish, bleak, and thin.

Doctrine and life, colors and light, in one
 When they combine and mingle, bring
 A strong regard and awe; but speech alone
 Doth vanish like a flaring thing,
 And in the ear, not conscience, ring.

Denial

When my devotions could not pierce
 Thy silent ears,
 Then was my heart broken, as was my verse;
 My breast was full of fears
 And disorder;¹

My bent thoughts, like a brittle bow,
 Did fly asunder:
 Each took his way; some would to pleasures go,
 Some to the wars and thunder
 Of alarms.

As good go anywhere, they say,
 As to benumb
 Both knees and heart in crying night and day,
Come, come, my God, O come!
 But no hearing.

O that thou shouldst give dust a tongue
 To cry to thee,
 And then not hear it crying! All day long
 My heart was in my knee,
 But no hearing.

Therefore my soul lay out of sight,
 Untuned, unstrung;
 My feeble spirit, unable to look right,
 Like a nipped⁰ blossom, hung
 Discontented.

frostbitten

O cheer and tune my heartless breast;
 Defer no time,
 That so thy favors granting my request,
 They and my mind may chime,⁰
 And mend my rhyme.

ring together, agree

2. To burn colors into glass.

1. Unrhymed, as are the concluding lines of each stanza except the last.

Virtue

Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
 The bridal of the earth and sky:
 The dew shall weep thy fall tonight,
 For thou must die.

5 Sweet rose, whose hue, angry and brave,¹
 Bids the rash gazer wipe his eye:
 Thy root is ever in its grave,
 And thou must die.

Sweet spring, full of sweet days and roses,
 10 A box where sweets⁰ compacted lie; *perfumes*
 My music shows ye have your closes,²
 And all must die.

Only a sweet and virtuous soul,
 Like seasoned timber, never gives;
 15 But though the whole world turn to coal,³
 Then chiefly lives.

Man

My God, I heard this day
 That none doth build a stately habitation,
 But he that means to dwell therein.
 What house more stately hath there been,
 5 Or can be, than is man? to¹ whose creation
 All things are in decay.

For man is every thing
 And more; he is a tree, yet bears more² fruit;
 A beast, yet is or should be more;
 10 Reason and speech we only bring.³
 Parrots may thank us, if they are not mute:
 They go upon the score.⁴

Man is all symmetry,
 Full of proportions, one limb to another,
 15 And all to all the world besides;⁵
 Each part may call the farthest, brother;
 For head with foot hath private amity,
 And both with moons and tides.

1. Splendid. "Angry": having the hue of anger, red.
 2. Concluding cadences in music. This poem has often been set to music.

3. Will be reduced to a cinder at the Last Judgment.

1. Compared to.

2. A textual variant is "no."

3. Man has a vegetable, an animal, and a spiritual

nature; he is the only creature that speaks and reasons.

4. Parrots are indebted to us for speech.

5. The notion of man as microcosm, whose parts all correspond to features of the great world. Cf. Donne, *Holy Sonnet* 5, p. 1295, and Browne, *Religio Medici*, p. 1587.

Nothing hath got so far
 But man hath caught and kept it as his prey.
 His eyes dismount⁰ the highest star: *bring dawn to earth*
 He is in little all the sphere.⁰ *the universe*
 Herbs gladly cure our flesh; because that they
 Find their acquaintance there.

For us the winds do blow,
 The earth doth rest, heav'n move, and fountains flow;
 Nothing we see but means our good,
 As our delight, or as our treasure.
 The whole is either our cupboard of food,
 Or cabinet of pleasure.

The stars have us to bed;
 Night draws the curtain which the sun withdraws,
 Music and light attend our head.
 All things unto our flesh are kind⁰ *akin*
 In their descent and being; to our mind
 In their ascent and cause.

Each thing is full of duty.
 Waters united are our navigation,
 Distinguished,⁰ our habitation; *separated*
 Below, our drink; above, our meat;⁶
 Both are our cleanliness. Hath one such beauty?
 Then how are all things neat!

More servants wait on man
 Than he'll take notice of; in every path,
 He treads down that⁷ which doth befriend him,
 When sickness makes him pale and wan.
 O mighty love! Man is one world, and hath
 Another to attend him.

Since then, my God, thou hast
 So brave⁰ a palace built, O, dwell in it, *splendid*
 That it may dwell with thee at last!
 Till then, afford us so much wit,
 That, as the world serves us, we may serve thee,
 And both thy servants be.

Jordan (2)¹

When first my lines of heavenly joys made mention,
 Such was their luster, they did so excel,
 That I sought out quaint words and trim invention;
 My thoughts began to burnish,⁰ sprout, and swell, *burgeon*

6. Oceans are valuable for navigation; the earth was created by dividing waters from waters (Genesis 1.6–7); on earth water is drink; from above it provides rain to grow our food ("meat").

7. The herb that will cure him when he's sick.
 1. Cf. "Jordan (1)" (p. 1611), and Sidney, *Astro-phil and Stella* 1 (p. 975).

5 Curling with metaphors a plain intention,
 Decking the sense, as if it were to sell.⁰ *for sale*

Thousands of notions in my brain did run,
 Offering their service, if I were not sped:⁰ *su-pplied, satisfied*
 I often blotted what I had begun;

10 This was not quick⁰ enough, and that was dead. *lively*
 Nothing could seem too rich to clothe the sun,
 Much less those joys which trample on his head.²

As flames do work and wind when they ascend,
 So did I weave myself into the sense;

15 But while I bustled, I might hear a friend
 Whisper, "How wide³ is all this long pretense!
 There is in love a sweetness ready penned:
 Copy out only that, and save expense."

Time

Meeting with Time, "Slack thing," said I,¹

"Thy scythe is dull; whet it for shame."

"No marvel, sir," he did reply,

"If it at length deserve some blame;

5 But where one man would have me grind it,
 Twenty for one too sharp do find it."

"Perhaps some such of old did pass,

Who above all things loved this life;

To whom thy scythe a hatchet was,

10 Which now is but a pruning knife.²
 Christ's coming hath made man thy debtor,
 Since by thy cutting he grows better.

"And in his blessing thou art blessed,

For where thou only wert before

is An executioner at best,
 Thou art a gardener now, and more,
 An usher to convey our souls
 Beyond the utmost stars and poles.

"And this is that makes life so long,

20 While it detains us from our God.
 Ev'n pleasures here increase the wrong,
 And length of days lengthens the rod.⁰ *used for blows*
 Who wants⁰ the place where God doth dwell *lacks*
 Partakes already half of hell.

2. The "joys which trample on" the sun's head are heavenly joys (line 1).

3. Irrelevant, wide of the mark.

1. Herbert's speaker reports his dialogue with

Time.

2. A hatchet kills, a pruning knife improves growing things.

25 "Of what strange length must that needs be,
Which ev'n eternity excludes!"—
Thus far Time heard me patiently,
Then chafing said, "This man deludes:
What do I here before his door?"
30 He doth not crave less time, but more."

The Bunch of Grapes¹

Joy, I did lock thee up;^o but some bad man *hold you fast*
Hath let thee out again,
And now methinks I am where I began
Sev'n years ago: one vogue^o and vein, *tendency*
5 One air of thoughts usurps my brain.
I did towards Canaan draw, but now I am
Brought back to the Red Sea, the sea of shame.²

For as the Jews of old by God's command
Traveled, and saw no town,
10 So now each Christian hath his journeys spanned;
Their story pens and sets us down.³
A single deed is small renown.
God's works are wide, and let in future times;
His ancient justice overflows our crimes.

15 Then have we too our guardian fires and clouds;
Our Scripture-dew^o drops fast; *manna*
We have our sands and serpents, tents and shrouds;^o *temporary shelters*
Alas! our murmurings come not last.
But where's the cluster? where's the taste
20 Of mine inheritance? Lord, if I must borrow,
Let me as well take up their joy as sorrow.

But can he want^o the grape who hath the wine? *lack*
I have their fruit and more.
Blessed be God, who prospered Noah's vine⁴
25 And made it bring forth grapes good store.
But much more him I must adore
Who of the Law's sour juice⁵ sweet wine did make,
Even God himself being pressed for my sake.

1. When the children of Israel almost lost hope in the wilderness, God inspired Moses to send forth scouts, who returned to report that Canaan was a land of milk and honey. They brought back a bunch of grapes so big they had to carry it between them on a pole (Numbers 13.23).

2. The Red Sea's color suggests blushing for shame. Because the Israelites complained about their long ordeal in the wilderness after leaving Egypt, God drove them back toward the Red Sea.

3. The wandering of the Israelites in the wilderness toward the land of Canaan was taken to be a type (prefiguration) of the Christian's trials on the path of salvation. "Spanned": measured out.

4. Noah's vine (Genesis 9) was taken as a type of the earth replenished by God after the Flood.

5. The severe rules of the Old Testament as contrasted with the sweeter and more liberal covenant of the New Testament, which Christ's crucifixion established.

The Pilgrimage

I traveled on, seeing the hill where lay
 My expectation.
 A long it was and weary way.
 The gloomy cave of desperation
 I left on th' one, and on the other side
 The rock of pride.¹

And so I came to fancy's meadow, strowed⁰ *strewn*
 With many a flower;
 Fain^o would I here have made abode, *gladly*
 But I was quickened by my hour.²
 So to care's copse^o I came, and there got through *thicket of trees*
 With much ado.

That led me to the wild of passion, which
 Some call the wold⁰— *treeless plain, moor*
 A wasted place but sometimes rich.
 Here I was robbed of all my gold
 Save one good angel,³ which a friend had tied
 Close to my side.

At length I got unto the gladsome hill
 Where lay my hope,
 Where lay my heart; and, climbing still,
 When I had gained the brow and top,
 A lake of brackish waters on the ground
 Was all I found.

With that abashed, and struck with many a sting
 Of swarming fears,
 I fell, and cried, "Alas, my king!
 Can both the way and end be tears?"
 Yet taking heart I rose, and then perceived
 I was deceived:

My hill was further; so I flung away,
 Yet heard a cry,
 Just as I went: *None goes that way*
And lives: "If that be all," said I,
 "After so foul a journey, death is fair,
 And but a chair."⁴

1. The rock and cave allude to Scylla and Charybdis, perils faced by Odysseus and often allegorized. The spiritual pilgrimage through allegorical perils was a frequent literary motif: cf. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* and Vaughan's "Regeneration" (p. 1627).

2. Short span of life.

3. A golden coin as well as (punningly) a guardian angel.

4. "Chair" implies rest and relaxation but also a conveyance (a sedan chair).

The Holdfast¹

I threatened to observe the strict decree
 Of my dear God with all my power and might.
 But I was told by one, it could not be;
 Yet I might trust in God to be my light.

5 Then will I trust, said I, in him alone.
 Nay, ev'n to trust in him, was also his;
 We must confess, that nothing is our own.
 Then I confess that he my succor is.

But to have naught is ours, not to confess
 10 That we have naught. I stood amazed at this,
 Much troubled, till I heard a friend express,
 That all things were more ours by being his.
 What Adam had, and forfeited for all,
 Christ keepeth now, who cannot fail or fall.

The Collar¹

I struck the board² and cried, "No more;
 I will abroad!
 What? Shall I ever sigh and pine?
 My lines and life are free, free as the road,
 5 Loose as the wind, as large as store.
 Shall I be still in suit?³
 Have I no harvest but a thorn
 To let me blood, and not restore
 What I have lost with cordial⁰ fruit? *restorative to the heart*
 10 Sure there was wine
 Before my sighs did dry it; there was corn⁰ *grain*
 Before my tears did drown it.
 Is the year only lost to me?
 Have I no bays⁴ to crown it,
 15 No flowers, no garlands gay? All blasted?
 All wasted?
 Not so, my heart; but there is fruit,
 And thou hast hands.
 Recover all thy sigh-blown age
 20 On double pleasures: leave thy cold dispute
 Of what is fit and not. Forsake thy cage,
 Thy rope of sands,

1. Alludes to Psalm 73.27 in the Book of Common Prayer: "It is good for me to hold me fast by God." The poem dramatizes the entire reliance on grace—and the abnegation of any human capacity to cooperate with it or claim any merit—that was a cornerstone of Calvinist theology.

1. The emblematic title suggests a clerical collar that has become a slave's collar; also, punningly,

the speaker's choler (anger) and, perhaps, the caller that he at last hears.

2. Table, with an allusion to the Communion table.

3. Always in attendance, waiting on someone for a favor.

4. The poet's laurel wreath, a symbol of recognized accomplishment.

Which petty thoughts have made, and made to thee
 Good cable,⁵ to enforce and draw,
 And be thy law,
 While thou didst wink and wouldst not see.
 Away! Take heed;
 I will abroad.
 Call in thy death's-head⁶ there; tie up thy fears.
 He that forbears
 To suit and serve his need,
 Deserves his load."
 But as I raved and grew more fierce and wild
 At every word,
 Methoughts I heard one calling, *Child!*⁷
 And I replied, *My Lord.*

The Pulley¹

When God at first made man,
 Having a glass of blessings standing by,
 "Let us," said he, "pour on him all we can:
 Let the world's riches, which dispersed lie,
 Contract into a span."

So strength first made a way;
 Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honor, pleasure.
 When almost all was out, God made a stay,
 Perceiving that, alone of all his treasure,
 Rest⁰ in the bottom lay.

repose

"For if I should," said He,
 "Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
 He would adore my gifts instead of me,
 And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature;
 So both should losers be.

"Yet let him keep the rest,²
 But keep them with repining restlessness:
 Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
 If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
 May toss him to my breast."

5. Christian restrictions on behavior, which the "petty thoughts" of the docile believer have made into strong bonds.

6. Skull, emblem of human mortality, and often used as an object for meditation.

7. The call "Child!" reminds the speaker of Paul's words (Romans 8.14—17) that Christians are not

in "bondage again to fear" but are children of God, "and if children, then heirs."

1. The poem inverts the legend of Pandora's box, which released all manner of evils when opened but left Hope trapped inside.

2. "Rest" has two senses here: "remainder" and "repose."

The Flower

How fresh, O Lord, how sweet and clean
 Are thy returns! even as the flowers in spring,
 To which, besides their own demesne,⁰ *domain, demeanor*
 The late-past frosts tributes of pleasure bring.
 Grief melts away
 Like snow in May,
 As if there were no such cold thing.

Who would have thought my shriveled heart
 Could have recovered greenness? It was gone
 Quite underground; as flowers depart
 To see their mother-root, when they have blown,⁰ *bloomed*
 Where they together
 All the hard weather,
 Dead to the world, keep house unknown.

These are thy wonders, Lord of power,
 Killing and quickening, bringing down to hell
 And up to heaven in an hour,
 Making a chiming of a passing-bell.¹
 We say amiss
 This or that is:
 Thy word is all, if we could spell.⁰ *read*

O that I once past changing were,
 Fast in thy Paradise, where no flower can wither!
 Many a spring I shoot up fair,
 25 Offering⁰ at heaven, growing and groaning thither; *aiming*
 Nor doth my flower
 Want a spring shower,⁰ *tears of contrition*
 My sins and I joining together.

But while I grow in a straight line,
 30 Still upwards bent,⁰ as if heaven were mine own, *directed*
 Thy anger comes, and I decline:
 What frost to that? What pole is not the zone
 Where all things burn,
 When thou dost turn,
 35 And the least frown of thine is shown?²

And now in age I bud again,
 After so many deaths I live and write;
 I once more smell the dew and rain,
 And relish versing. O my only light,
 40 It cannot be
 That I am he
 On whom thy tempests fell all night.

1. The "passing-bell," intended to mark the death of a parishioner, is tolled in a monotone; a "chiming" bell offers pleasant variety.

2. I.e., compared with God's wrath, what polar chill would not seem like the heat of the equator?

These are thy wonders, Lord of love,
 To make us see we are but flowers that glide;⁰
 45 Which when we once can find and prove,⁰ *slip silently away*
 Thou hast a garden for us where to bide; *ex-perience*
 Who would be more,
 Swelling through store,
 Forfeit their Paradise by their pride.

The Forerunners

The harbingers are come: see, see their mark;
 White is their color,¹ and behold my head.
 But must they have my brain? Must they dispark⁰ *turn out*
 Those sparkling notions which therein were bred?
 5 Must dullness turn me to a clod?
 Yet have they left me "Thou art still my God."²

Good men ye be to leave me my best room,
 Even all my heart and what is lodged there:
 I pass not,⁰ I, what of the rest become, *care not*
 10 So "Thou art still my God" be out of fear.
 He will be pleased with that ditty;
 And if I please Him, I write fine and witty.

Farewell, sweet phrases, lovely metaphors:
 But will ye leave me thus? When ye before
 15 Of stews⁰ and brothels only knew the doors, *whorehouses*
 Then did I wash you with my tears, and more,
 Brought you to church well-dressed and clad:
 My God must have my best, even all I had.

Lovely enchanting language, sugarcane,
 20 Honey of roses, whither wilt thou fly?
 Hath some fond lover ticed⁰ thee to thy bane?⁰ *enticed / poison*
 And wilt thou leave the church and love a sty?
 Fie! thou wilt soil thy 'broidered coat,
 And hurt thyself and him that sings the note.

25 Let foolish lovers, if they will love dung,
 With canvas, not with arras,⁰ clothe their shame: *fine cloth*
 Let Folly speak in her own native tongue.
 True Beauty dwells on high; ours is a flame
 But borrowed thence to light us thither:
 30 Beauty and beauteous words should go together.

Yet, if you go, I pass not;⁰ take your way. *I don't care*
 For "Thou art still my God" is all that ye
 Perhaps with more embellishment can say.

1. Harbingers rode ahead of a royal traveling party to requisition lodgings, marking the doors with chalk.

2. Echoes Psalm 31.14: "But I trusted in thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my God."

Go, birds of spring; let winter have his fee;^o *due*
 35 Let a bleak paleness chalk the door,
 So all within be livelier than before.

Discipline

Throw away thy rod,
 Throw away thy wrath:
 O my God,
 Take the gentle path.

5 For my heart's desire
 Unto thine is bent:
 I aspire
 To a full consent.

Not a word or look
 I affect^o to own,
 But by book,¹ *wish, pretend*
 And thy book alone.

Though I fail, I weep:
 Though I halt^o in pace, *limp*
 Yet I creep
 To the throne of grace.

Then let wrath remove;
 Love will do the deed:
 For with love
 Stony hearts will bleed.

Love is swift of foot;
 Love's a man of war,²
 And can shoot,
 And can hit from far.

25 Who can 'scape his bow?
 That which wrought on thee,
 Brought thee low,
 Needs must work on me.

Throw away thy rod;
 30 Though man frailties hath,
 Thou art God:
 Throw away thy wrath.

1. I.e., like an actor who follows his playbook.

2. The jubilant song sung by Moses in Exodus 15

calls the Lord "a man of war," but Herbert also alludes to Cupid, another divine bowman.

Death

Death, thou wast once an uncouth, hideous thing,
 Nothing but bones,
 The sad effect of sadder groans:
 Thy mouth was open, but thou couldst not sing.

For we considered thee as at some six
 Or ten years hence,
 After the loss of life and sense,
 Flesh being turned to dust and bones to sticks.

We looked on this side of thee, shooting short,
 Where we did find
 The shells of fledge-souls left behind-
 Dry dust, which sheds no tears, but may extort.¹

But since our Savior's death did put some blood
 Into thy face,
 Thou art grown fair and full of grace,
 Much in request, much sought for as a good.

For we do now behold thee gay and glad
 As at doomsday,
 When souls shall wear their new array,
 And all thy bones with beauty shall be clad.

Therefore we can go die as sleep, and trust
 Half that we have
 Unto an honest faithful grave,
 Making our pillows either down or dust.

Love (3)

Love bade me welcome: yet my soul drew back,
 Guilty of dust and sin.

But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack⁰
 From my first entrance in,

5 Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning
 If I lacked anything.¹

"A guest," I answered, "worthy to be here":
 Love said, "You shall be he."

"I, the unkind, ungrateful? Ah, my dear,
 10 I cannot look on thee."

Love took my hand, and smiling did reply,
 "Who made the eyes but I?"

hesitant

1. Souls that have left the body and gone to heaven are like fledgling chicks that have left the shell behind; that corpse ("dry dust") sheds no tears but may draw ("extort") tears from the sur-

vivors.

1. The first question of tavern waiters to an entering customer would be "What d'ye lack?" (i.e., want).

"Truth, Lord; but I have marred them; let my shame
 Go where it doth deserve."
 15 "And know you not," says Love, "who bore the blame?"
 "My dear, then I will serve."
 "You must sit down," says Love, "and taste my meat."
 So I did sit and eat.²

2. In addition to the sacrament of Communion, the reference is especially to the banquet in heaven, when the Lord "shall gird himself, and

make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them" (Luke 12.37).

HENRY VAUGHAN 1621-1695

Born to a family with deep roots in Wales, Henry Vaughan was educated at Oxford and the Inns of Court but returned to his native county of Breconshire at the outbreak of the civil war and spent the rest of his life there. He served as secretary to the Welsh circuit courts until 1645; briefly fought for King Charles at Chester, just over the border with England; and in his later years took up the practice of medicine without much formal study. In a volume of verse published in 1651, *Olor Iscanus* (The Swan of Usk), he drew attention to his heritage by terming himself "the Silurist": the Silures were an ancient tribe from southeast Wales. Some features of Vaughan's poetry derive from the rich Welsh-language poetic tradition: the frequency of assonance, consonance, and alliteration; the multiplication of comparisons and similes (*dyfalu*); and the sensitivity to nature, especially the countryside around the Usk River.

Some of Vaughan's poetry is secular—*Poems with the Tenth Satire of Juvenal*, *Englised* (1646), *Olor Iscanus* (1651), and a late-published collection of earlier verse, *Thalia Rediviva* (1678). Vaughan's modern reputation, though, rests almost entirely on his religious poetry. In 1650 Vaughan published his major collection of religious verse, *Silex Scintillans* (The Flashing Flint); it was republished in 1655 with a second book added. A conversion experience may have prompted Vaughan's turn to religious themes: the title of the book is explicated by the emblem of a flintlike heart struck by a bolt of lightning from the hand of God.

In the preface to *Silex Scintillans* Vaughan places himself among the many "pious converts" gained by George Herbert's holy life and verse. While his secular poetry recalls Ben Jonson's, the religious poetry overtly and consciously models itself on Herbert's. Some twenty-six poems appropriate their titles from *The Temple*, several owe their metrical form to Herbert, and many begin by quoting one of Herbert's lines (compare Vaughan's "Unprofitableness" with Herbert's "The Flower"). Yet no one with an ear for poetry will mistake Vaughan's long, loose poetic lines for Herbert's artful precision. Vaughan's religious sensibility too differs markedly from Herbert's. Unable to locate himself in a national Church of England, which was now dismantled by war, he wanders unaccompanied through a landscape at once biblical, emblematic, and contemporary, mourning lost innocence. One unifying motif of the poems in *Silex Scintillans* is pilgrimage, though the arrival at the destination is typically deferred. Vaughan seems unable to experience Christ as a friend or supporter in present trials, as Herbert so often does; instead, he longs for a full relationship with the divine yet to come, at the Last Day. Despite his restless solitude, however, Vaughan finds vestiges of the divine everywhere. "I saw eternity the other night," he begins his most famous poem, "The World," situating the "ring of pure and endless light" in a specific,

quotidian moment of illumination. Eternity hovers tantalizingly over the human world of strife, pain, and exploitation, apparently entirely detached from that world but in fact accessible to God's elect, who soar from earthly shadows into the light. Vaughan's twin brother, Thomas, introduced him to Hermetic philosophy, an esoteric brand of Neoplatonism that found occult correspondences between the visible world of matter and the invisible world of spirits. The influence of this philosophical system, so congenial to Vaughan's sensibility, is most apparent in the poem "Cock Crowing."

FROM POEMS

A Song to Amoret¹

If I were dead, and in my place,
 Some fresher youth designed,
 To warm thee with new fires, and grace
 Those arms I left behind;

5 Were he as faithful as the sun,
 That's wedded to the sphere;²
 His blood as chaste, and temperate run,
 As April's mildest tear;

Or were he rich, and with his heaps,
 10 And spacious share of Earth,
 Could make divine affection cheap,
 And court⁰ his golden birth:

pay court to

For all these arts I'd not believe,
 (No though he should be thine)
 15 The mighty amonist⁰ could give
 So rich a heart as mine.

lover

Fortune and beauty thou mightst find,
 And greater men than I:
 But my true resolved mind,
 20 They never shall come nigh.

For I not for an hour did love,
 Or for a day desire,
 But with my soul had from above,
 This endless holy fire.

1646

1. This poem comes from Vaughan's first collection, all on worldly themes and many on love. Amoret has sometimes been identified with Vaughan's first wife, but on no secure ground. Amoret (formed from *amor*, love) is a traditional name for a poet's beloved from classical literature; note

Spenser's use of the name in *Faerie Queene* 3, and the variation on it in his sonnet sequence *Amoretti*.
 2. In the Ptolemaic scheme, each of the planets (including the sun, which was regarded as a planet) occupied one of the spheres revolving around the earth.

FROM SILEX SCINTILLANS

Regeneration¹

A ward, and still in bonds,² one day
 I stole abroad;
 It was high spring, and all the way
 Primrosed³ and hung with shade;
 5 Yet was it frost within,
 And surly winds
 Blasted my infant buds, and sin
 Like clouds eclipsed my mind.

Stormed thus, I straight perceived my spring
 10 Mere stage and show,
 My walk a monstrous, mountained thing,
 Roughcast with rocks and snow;
 And as a pilgrim's eye,
 Far from relief,
 15 Measures the melancholy sky,
 Then drops and rains for grief,

So sighed I upwards still; at last
 'Twixt steps and falls
 I reached the pinnacle, where placed
 20 I found a pair of scales;
 I took them up and laid
 In th' one, late pains;
 The other smoke and pleasures weighed,
 But proved the heavier grains.⁴

25 With that, some cried, "Away!" Straight⁰ I *immediately*
 Obeyed, and led
 Full east, a fair, fresh field could spy;
 Some called it Jacob's bed,⁵
 A virgin soil which no
 30 Rude feet ere trod,
 Where, since he stepped there, only go
 Prophets and friends of God.

Here I reposed; but scarce well set,
 A grove descried⁰ *perceived*
 35 Of stately height, whose branches met

1. The poem allegorizes in rather precise Calvinist terms the experience of God's grace calling the elect and distinguishing between the regenerate and the unregenerate.

2. He begins as one in the Pauline "spirit of bondage" to fear because of sin and as one still in his minority ("wardship") under the Old Testament law. This contrasts with the "spirit of adoption" whereby we are children of God: "And if children then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ" (Romans 8.14-17).

3. Alluding to the adage that the "primrose path" leads to perdition.

4. He climbs Mount Sinai (tries to live by the Old Testament law) but finds his sins and follies far outweigh that effort.

5. Jacob slept in an open field, where he had a vision of a ladder leading to heaven (Genesis 28.11—19); that place, Bethel, was taken as a type or figure for the church. Vaughan's poem "Jacobs Pillow, and Pillar" works out this allegory.

And mixed on every side;
 I entered, and once in,
 Amazed to see't,
 Found all was changed, and a new spring⁶
 40 Did all my senses greet.

The unthrift sun shot vital gold,
 A thousand pieces,
 And heaven its azure did unfold,
 Checkered with snowy fleeces;
 45 The air was all in spice,
 And every bush
 A garland wore; thus fed my eyes,
 But all the ear lay hush.^o *quiet*

Only a little fountain⁷ lent
 50 Some use for ears,
 And on the dumb shades language spent
 The music of her tears;
 I drew her near, and found
 The cistern full
 55 Of divers stones, some bright and round,
 Others ill-shaped and dull.⁸

The first, pray mark, as quick as light
 Danced through the flood;
 But the last, more heavy than the night,
 60 Nailed to the center stood.
 I wondered much, but tired
 At last with thought,
 My restless eye that still desired
 As strange an object brought:

65 It was a bank of flowers, where I descried,
 Though 'twas midday,
 Some fast asleep, others broad-eyed
 And taking in the ray;
 Here musing long, I heard
 70 A rushing wind
 Which still increased, but whence it stirred
 Nowhere I could not find.

I turned me round, and to each shade
 Dispatched an eye
 75 To see if any leaf had made
 Least motion or reply;
 But while I listening sought

6. Imagery in the following lines—spring, perfumes, flowers—alludes to the Song of Solomon in which the bride is traditionally allegorized as the church or the beloved soul.

7. In the Song of Solomon 4.15 the "fountain of waters, a well of living waters" was traditionally

allegorized as Christ.

8. Alludes to 1 Peter 2.5, which refers to the faithful as "lively stones." The different sorts of stones and flowers here suggest the elect and the reprobate.

My mind to ease
 Ry knowing where 'twas, or where not,
80 It whispered, "Where I please."⁹

"Lord," then said I, "on me one breath,
 And let me die before my death!"

"Arise O North, and come thou South wind,
 and blow upon my garden, that the spices
85 thereof may flow out."¹

1650

The Retreat

Happy those early days! when I
 Shined in my angel infancy.
 Before I understood this place
 Appointed for my second race,¹
5 Or taught my soul to fancy aught⁰ *anything*
 But a white, celestial thought;
 When yet I had not walked above
 A mile or two from my first love,
 And looking back, at that short space,
10 Could see a glimpse of His bright face;
 When on some gilded cloud or flower
 My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
 And in those weaker glories spy
 Some shadows of eternity;
15 Before I taught my tongue to wound
 My conscience with a sinful sound,
 Or had the black art to dispense
 A several⁰ sin to every sense, *different*
 But felt through all this fleshly dress
20 Bright shoots of everlastingness.
 O, how I long to travel back,
 And tread again that ancient track!
 That I might once more reach that plain
 Where first I left my glorious train,
25 From whence th' enlightened spirit sees
 That shady city of palm trees.²
 But, ah! my soul with too much stay⁰ *delay*
 Is drunk, and staggers in the way.
 Some men a forward motion love;

9. John 3.8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

1. Vaughan identifies this verse as Canticles (Song of Solomon) 5.17; it is properly 4.16.

1. The poem alludes throughout to the Platonic doctrine of preexistence, in conjunction with

Christ's words (Mark 10.15): "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Comparisons are often made to Wordsworth's Immortality ode.

2. The New Jerusalem, the Heavenly City (for its identification with Jericho, the "city of Palm Trees," Deuteronomy 34.3).

But I by backward steps would move,
 And when this dust falls to the urn,
 In that state I came, return.

1650

Silence, and Stealth of Days!

Silence, and stealth of days! 'tis now
 Since thou art gone¹
 Twelve hundred hours, and not a brow²
 But clouds hang on.
 5 As he that in some cave's thick damp,
 Locked from the light,
 Fixeth a solitary lamp
 To brave the night,
 And walking from his sun, when past
 10 That glimmering ray,
 Cuts through the heavy mists in haste
 Back to his day,³
 So o'er fled minutes I retreat
 Unto that hour
 15 Which showed thee last, but did defeat
 Thy light and power;
 I search and rack my soul to see
 Those beams again,
 But nothing but the snuff⁴ to me
 20 Appareth plain,
 That dark and dead sleeps in its known
 And common urn;
 But those⁵ fled to their maker's throne,
 There shine and burn.
 25 O could I track them! but souls must
 Track one the other,
 And now the spirit, not the dust,
 Must be thy brother.
 Yet I have one pearl,⁶ by whose light
 30 All things I see,
 And in the heart of earth and night,
 Find heaven and thee.

1648

1650

1. As indicated in lines 27—28, the poem is on the loss of Vaughan's brother—not his twin brother, Thomas, the Hermetic philosopher, who did not die until 1666, but his younger brother, William, who died in July 1648.

2. Mountain ridge, or forehead.

3. The miner fixes his lamp halfway down the dark shaft, ventures a little beyond it, but then beats a

hasty retreat.

4. The burned wick of the lamp or candle.

5. The reference is back to "beams."

6. Probably the Bible. The reference is to Matthew 13.45—46, to the merchant who sold all he had to buy a pearl of great price, there likened to the Kingdom of Heaven.

Corruption

Sure it was so. Man in those early days
 Was not all stone and earth;
 He shined a little, and by those weak rays
 Had some glimpse of his birth.
 5 He saw heaven o'er his head, and knew from whence
 He came, condemned, hither;
 And, as first love draws strongest, so from hence
 His mind sure progressed thither.
 Things here were strange unto him: sweat and till,
 10 All was a thorn or weed:¹
 Nor did those last, but (like himself) died still
 As soon as they did seed.
 They seemed to quarrel with him, for that act
 That felled him foiled them all:
 15 He drew the curse upon the world, and cracked
 The whole frame with his fall.²
 This made him long for home, as loath to stay
 With murmurers and foes;
 He sighed for Eden, and would often say,
 20 "Ah! what bright days were those!"
 Nor was heaven cold unto him; for each day
 The valley or the mountain
 Afforded visits, and still Paradise lay
 In some green shade or fountain.
 25 Angels lay lieger³ here; each bush and cell,
 Each oak and highway knew them;
 Walk but the fields, or sit down at some well,
 And he was sure to view them.
 Almighty Love! where art thou now? Mad man
 30 Sits down and freezeth on;
 He raves, and swears to stir nor fire, nor fan,
 But bids the thread⁰ be spun. *thread of Fate*
 I see, thy curtains are close-drawn; thy bow⁴
 Looks dim, too, in the cloud;
 35 Sin triumphs still, and man is sunk below
 The center, and his shroud.
 All's in deep sleep and night: thick darkness lies
 And hatcheth o'er thy people—
 But hark! what trumpet's that? what angel cries,
 40 "Arise! thrust in thy sickle"⁵

1650

1. God's curse on Adam for eating the forbidden fruit included a curse on the earth: "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee" (Genesis 3. 18).

2. Cf. Donne, *An Anatomy of the World*, lines 199-200 (p. 1289).

3. As resident ambassadors (from heaven).

4. The rainbow, God's covenant with Noah after the Flood (Genesis 9.13).

5. Alludes to Revelation 14.15: "And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, 'Thrust in thy sickle, and reap, for the harvest of the earth is now.'"

Unprofitableness

How rich, O Lord! how fresh thy visits are!¹
 Twas but just now my bleak leaves hopeless hung,
 Sullied with dust and mud;
 Each snarling blast shot through me, and did share⁰ *shear off*
 5 Their youth and beauty; cold showers nipped and wrung
 Their spiciness and blood.
 But since thou didst in one sweet glance survey
 Their sad decays, I flourish, and once more
 Breathe all perfumes and spice;
 10 I smell a dew like myrrh, and all the day
 Wear in my bosom a full sun; such store
 Hath one beam from thy eyes.
 But, ah, my God! what fruit hast thou of this?
 What one poor leaf did ever I let² fall
 15 To wait upon thy wreath?
 Thus thou all day a thankless weed dost dress,
 And when th' hast done, a stench or fog is all
 The odor I bequeath.

1650

The World

I saw eternity the other night,
 Like a great ring of pure and endless light,
 All calm as it was bright;
 And round beneath it, Time, in hours, days, years,
 5 Driven by the spheres,¹
 Like a vast shadow moved, in which the world
 And all her train were hurled.
 The doting lover in his quaintest⁰ strain *most ingenious*
 Did there complain;
 10 Near him, his lute, his fancy, and his flights,⁰ *caprices*
 Wit's sour delights,
 With gloves and knots,⁰ the silly snares of pleasure, *love knots*
 Yet his dear treasure,
 All scattered lay, while he his eyes did pour
 15 Upon a flower.

The darksome statesman hung with weights and woe
 Like a thick midnight fog moved there so slow
 He did nor stay nor go;
 Condemning thoughts, like sad eclipses, scowl
 20 Upon his soul,
 And clouds of crying witnesses² without

1. Cf. Herbert's "The Flower" (p. 1621).

2. The original printed text reads "yet," emended here.

1. The concentric spheres of Ptolemaic astron-

omy.

2. In Hebrews 12, the "clouds of witnesses" testified to God's truth in past times. Here, these champions of faith accuse one whose actions deny God.

- Pursued him with one shout.
 Yet digged the mole,³ and, lest his ways be found,
 Worked underground,
 25 Where he did clutch his prey. But one did see
 That policy:⁰ *strategy*
 Churches and altars fed him; perjuries
 Were gnats and flies;
 It rained about him blood and tears; but he
 30 Drank them as free.⁴
- The fearful miser on a heap of rust
 Sat pining all his life there, did scarce trust
 His own hands with the dust;
 Yet would not place⁰ one piece above, but lives *invest*
 35 In fear of thieves.
 Thousands there were as frantic as himself,
 And hugged each one his pelf:
 The downright epicure placed heaven in sense, *the senses*
 And scorned pretense;
 40 While others, slipped into a wide excess,
 Said little less;
 The weaker sort slight, trivial wares enslave,
 Who think them brave⁰ *fine,* *showy*
 And poor, despised Truth sat counting by⁰ *recording*
 45 Their victory.
- Yet some, who all this while did weep and sing,
 And sing and weep, soared up into the ring;
 But most would use no wing.
 "O fools!" said I, "thus to prefer dark night
 50 Before true light!
 To live in grots and caves, and hate the day
 Because it shows the way,
 The way which from this dead and dark abode
 Leads up to God,
 55 A way where you might tread the sun and be
 More bright than he!"
 But as I did their madness so discuss,
 One whispered thus:
 "This ring the bridegroom did for none provide,
 60 But for his bride."⁵

John Chap. 2. ver. 16, 17

All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the
 lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the
 Father, but is of the world.

And the world passeth away, and the lusts thereof,
 but he that doth the will of God abideth forever.

1650

3. I.e., the "darksome statesman" (line 16).

4. I.e., as freely as they rained.

5. Alludes to Revelation 19.7–9, the marriage of the Lamb and his Bride, allegorized as Christ and

the church or Christ and the regenerate soul: "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."

They Are All Gone into the World of Light!

They are all gone into the world of light!
 And I alone sit ling'ring here;
 Their very memory is fair and bright,
 And my sad thoughts doth clear.

5 It glows and glitters in my cloudy breast
 Like stars upon some gloomy grove,
 Or those faint beams in which this hill is dressed
 After the sun's remove.

I see them walking in an air of glory,
 10 Whose light doth trample on my days;
 My days, which are at best but dull and hoary,⁰ *gray with age*
 Mere glimmering and decays.

O holy hope, and high humility,
 High as the heavens above!
 15 These are your walks, and you have showed them me
 To kindle my cold love.

Dear, beauteous death! the jewel of the just,
 Shining nowhere but in the dark;
 What mysteries do lie beyond thy dust,
 20 Could man outlook that mark!⁰ *boundary*

He that hath found some fledged bird's nest may know
 At first sight if the bird be flown;
 But what fair well⁰ or grove he sings in now, *spring*
 That is to him unknown.

25 And yet, as angels in some brighter dreams
 Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
 So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted⁰ themes, *accustomed*
 And into glory peep.

If a star were confined into a tomb,
 30 Her captive flames must needs burn there;
 But when the hand that locked her up gives room,
 She'll shine through all the sphere.

O Father of eternal life, and all
 Created glories under thee!
 35 Resume thy spirit from this world of thrall⁰ *slaver*¹
 Into true liberty!

Either disperse these mists, which blot and fill
 My perspective¹ still as they pass,

I. Literally, telescope, but more freely, distant vision.

Or else remove me hence unto that hill
 40 Where I shall need no glass.

1655

Cock-Crowing¹

Father of lights! what sunny seed,²
 What glance of day hast thou confined
 Into this bird? To all the breed
 This busy ray thou hast assigned;
 5 Their magnetism works all night,
 And dreams of Paradise and light.

Their eyes watch for the morning hue,
 Their little grain expelling night
 So shines and sings, as if it knew
 10 The path unto the house of light.
 It seems their candle, howe'r done,
 Was tinned³ and lighted at the sun. *kindled*

If such a tincture,¹ such a touch,
 So firm a longing can impower,
 15 Shall thy own image⁴ think it much
 To watch for thy appearing hour?
 If a mere blast so fill the sail,
 Shall not the breath of God⁵ prevail?

O thou immortal light and heat!
 20 Whose hand so shines through all this frame,⁰ *universe*
 That by the beauty of the seat,
 We plainly see, who made the same.
 Seeing thy seed abides in me,
 Dwell thou in it, and I in thee.

25 To sleep without thee, is to die;
 Yea, 'tis a death partakes of hell:
 For where thou dost not close the eye
 It never opens, I can tell.

1. The poem calls upon the Hermetic notion of sympathetic attraction between earthly and heavenly bodies, e.g., the cock whose crowing announces the sun's rising because it bears within itself a "seed" of the sun. Vaughan finds here an analogy for the attraction the soul has for its Maker.

2. The opening lines recall a passage from Henry's brother, the Hermetic philosopher Thomas Vaughan: "For she [the Anima or Soul] is guided in her operations by a spiritual metaphysical grain, a seed or glance of light . . . descending from the Father of lights." That term for God is from James

1.17. "Seed," "glance," "ray," and "grain" in line 8 are almost synonymous Hermetic terms for the bit of the sun implanted in the cock. "Magnetism" (line 5) refers to the attraction between the cock's "seed" and its source, the sun.

3. Alchemical term for a spiritual principle whose quality may be infused into material things.

4. Alludes to Genesis 1.27: "So God created man in his own image."

5. Alludes to Genesis 2.7: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

30 In such a dark, Egyptian border,
The shades of death dwell and disorder.⁶

If joys, and hopes, and earnest throes,
And hearts, whose pulse beats still for light
Are given to birds; who, but thee, knows
A love-sick soul's exalted flight?
35 Can souls be tracked by any eye
But his, who gave them wings to fly?

Only this veil⁷ which thou hast broke,
And must be broken yet in me,
This veil, I say, is all the cloak
40 And cloud which shadows thee from me.
This veil thy full-eyed love denies,
And only gleams and fractions spies.

O take it off! Make no delay,
But brush me with thy light, that I
45 May shine unto a perfect day,
And warm me at thy glorious eye!
O take it off! or till it flee,
Though with no lily,⁸ stay with me!

1655

The Night

John 3.2¹

Through that pure virgin-shrine,
That sacred veil drawn o'er thy glorious noon,
That men might look and live as glowworms shine
And face the moon,
5 Wise Nicodemus saw such light
As made him know his God by night.

Most blest believer he!
Who in that land of darkness and blind eyes
Thy long-expected healing wings² could see,
10 When thou didst rise,
And what can never more be done,
Did at midnight speak with the Sun!

O who will tell me where
He found thee at that dead and silent hour?

6. Alludes to Exodus 10.21. Moses bringing down the plague of "darkness over the land of Egypt, even darkness which may be felt."

7. Echoes Hebrews 10.20: "By a new and living way, which he [Christ] hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh."

8. Echoes Song of Solomon 2.16: "My beloved is

mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies."

1. John 3.1—2 describes how a Pharisee named Nicodemus came to Jesus by night and said, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God."

2. Echoes Malachi 4.2: "The Sun of righteousness [shall] arise with healing in his wings."

- 15 What hallowed solitary ground did bear
 So rare a flower,
 Within whose sacred leaves did lie
 The fullness of the Deity?
- No mercy seat of gold,
 20 No dead and dusty cherub nor carved stone,³
 But his own living works did my Lord hold
 And lodge alone;
 Where trees and herbs did watch and peep
 And wonder while the Jews did sleep.
- 25 Dear night! this world's defeat,⁴
 The stop to busy fools; care's check and curb;
 The day of spirits; my soul's calm retreat
 Which none disturb!
 Christ's progress and his prayer time;
 30 The hours to which high heaven doth chime;
- God's silent, searching flight,
 When my Lord's head is filled with dew, and all
 His locks are wet with the clear drops of night;
 His still, soft call;⁵
 35 His knocking time; the soul's dumb watch,
 When spirits their fair kindred catch.
- Were all my loud, evil days
 Calm and unhaunted as is thy dark tent,
 Whose peace but by some angel's wing or voice
 40 Is seldom rent,
 Then I in heaven all the long year
 Would keep, and never wander here.
- But living where the sun
 Doth all things wake, and where all mix and tire
 45 Themselves and others, I consent and run
 To every mire,
 And by this world's ill-guiding light
 Err more than I can do by night.
- There is in God (some say)
 50 A deep but dazzling darkness,⁶ as men here
 Say it is late and dusky, because they
 See not all clear.

3. God commanded the Israelites to cover the Ark of the Covenant with "a mercy seat of pure gold . . . and . . . two cherubims of gold, of beaten work . . . in the two ends of the mercy seat" (Exodus 25.17-18).

4. The style of this stanza and the next imitates Herbert's "Prayer (1)" (p. 1611).

5. Echoes Song of Solomon 5.2: "I sleep, but my heart waketh: it is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my love,

my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night." For the allegory see "The World," note 5.

6. Dionysius the Areopagite (ca. 5th century) deals with concepts of divine darkness, which Nicholas of Cusa later developed, referring to the "Darkness where truly dwells . . . the one who is beyond all" and "the superessential Darkness which is hidden by all the light that is in existing things."

Oh for that night, where I in him
Might live invisible and dim!

1650

The Waterfall¹

With what deep murmurs through time's silent stealth
Doth thy transparent, cool, and watery wealth
 Here flowing fall,
 And chide, and call,
As if his liquid, loose retinue stayed
Ling'ring, and were of this steep place afraid,
 The common pass
 Where, clear as glass,
 All must descend,
 Not to an end,
But quickened by this steep and rocky grave,
Rise to a longer course more bright and brave.⁰ *resplendent*

Dear stream! dear bank! where often I
Have sat and pleased my pensive eye—
Why, since each drop of thy quick⁰ store *living*
Runs thither whence it flowed before,
Should poor souls fear a shade or night,
Who came, sure, from a sea of light?
Or since those drops are all sent back
So sure to thee that none doth lack,
Why should frail flesh doubt any more
That what God takes he'll not restore?
O useful element and clear!
My sacred wash and cleanser here,
My first consigner⁰ unto those *in baptism*
Fountains of life where the Lamb goes!²
What sublime truths and wholesome themes
Lodge in thy mystical deep streams!
Such as dull man can never find
Unless that Spirit lead his mind
Which first upon thy face did move
And hatched all with his quickening love.³
As this loud brook's incessant fall
In streaming rings restagnates⁰ all *makes still again*
Which reach by course the bank, and then
Are no more seen, just so pass men.
Oh my invisible estate,

1. The water, with its startling descent in a waterfall but ultimate circularity to its source, is for Vaughan an emblem of death and restoration of the soul to its source.

2. Echoes Revelation 7.17: "For the Lamb . . .

shall lead them unto living fountains of waters."

3. Alludes to Genesis 1.2: "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The Latin Vulgate version, *incubabant*, is closer to Vaughan's "hatched" than to "moved."

My glorious liberty,⁴ still late!
 Thou art the channel my soul seeks,
 40 Not this with cataracts and creeks.

1655

4. Alludes to Romans 8.21, promising deliverance "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

RICHARD CRASHAW
 ca. 1613-1649

Steps to the Temple (1646, 1648), the name of Richard Crashaw's collection of sacred poetry, clearly acknowledges George Herbert's primacy among **devotional poets**. Yet Crashaw is hardly Herbert's slavish disciple. Indeed, he differs greatly from Herbert and from every other English religious poet of the period. A Roman Catholic convert, Crashaw was profoundly influenced by the Counter-Reformation, which reacted against Protestant austerity by linking heightened spirituality to vivid bodily experiences. He is the only major English poet in the tradition of the Continental baroque, a movement in literature and visual art that developed out of the Counter-Reformation. Baroque style is exuberant, sensuous, and elaborately ornamented, and it deliberately strains decorum, challenging formal restraints and generic limitations. Crashaw's favorite subjects are typical of baroque art: the infant Jesus surrounded by angels and cherubs; the crucified Savior, streaming blood; the sorrowful Virgin; the tearfully penitent Mary Magdalen; saintly martyrs wracked with ecstasy and pain. Although some have pronounced his images grotesque, Crashaw is alone among English poets in rendering the experience of rapture and religious ecstasy.

The son of a Puritan divine noted for hatred of popery, Crashaw was educated at Pembroke College, Cambridge, where he became an adherent of Laudian Anglicanism. In 1636 he was elected a fellow of Peterhouse, another Cambridge college. By 1639 he had become a priest of the Church of England, curate of Little St. Mary's, and a college lecturer. A contemporary wrote that his sermons "ravished more like poems," but apparently none survive. Crashaw called Peterhouse his "little contentful kingdom": his friends included the poet Abraham Cowley and George Herbert's literary executor Nicholas Ferrar, the founder of the Anglican monastic community Little Gidding. In 1643 the Puritans occupied Cambridge, violently disrupting Crashaw's life there. He fled to Paris and to the English court in exile, becoming a Roman Catholic in 1645. He was saved from destitution by obtaining various minor posts through the queen's influence, the last one at Loreto—thought to be Jesus' house at Nazareth, miraculously transported to Italy.

Crashaw's Latin epigrams, published as *Epigrammatum Sacrorum Liber* (1634), were much influenced by Jesuit epigram style and are among the best by an Englishman. In their Latin and later English versions, they are characterized by puns, paradoxes, and sometimes bizarre metaphors, as in the epigram on Luke 11. In 1646 Crashaw published, with the first version of *Steps to the Temple*, a book of secular poems, *The Delights of the Mtses*, some of them in the restrained style of Ben Jonson. But the masterpiece of this book is "Music's Duel," a much-elaborated version of a poem by the Jesuit Favianus Strada about a contest between a nightingale and a lutenist, between melody and harmony. Crashaw imitates music by means of liquid vowels, gliding syntax, onomatopoeia, and the complex blending of sounds. Beyond that, he renders the ecstasy of the listening experience by collapsing one sense

into another (synesthesia), creating an effect of continual metamorphosis.

Crashaw constantly revised his religious poems, usually making them longer. His posthumous volume, *Carmen Deo Nostro* (1652), includes emblems he may have executed himself, among them the padlocked heart prefixed to a poem urging the Countess of Denbigh to convert to Catholicism. Especially notable are the final versions of several hymns, ranging from the witty praise of St. Theresa in "The Flaming Heart" to the meltingly sweet "In the Holy Nativity."

FROM THE DELIGHTS OF THE MUSES

Music's Duel¹

Now westward Sol⁰ had spent the richest beams *the sun*
 Of noon's high glory, when hard by^o the streams *close to*
 Of Tiber, on the scene of a green plat,
 Under protection of an oak, there sat
 5 A sweet lute's-master: in whose gentle airs
 He lost the day's heat, and his own hot cares.
 Close in the covert of the leaves there stood
 A nightingale, come from the neighboring wood:
 (The sweet inhabitant of each glad tree,
 10 Their Muse, their Siren,² harmless Siren she)
 There stood she listening, and did entertain
 The music's soft report: and mold the same
 In her own murmurs, that whatever mood
 His curious^o fingers lent, her voice made good: *skillful*
 15 The man perceived his rival, and her art,
 Disposed to give the light-foot lady sport
 Awakes his lute, and 'gainst the fight to come
 Informs it, in a sweet praeludium^o *prelude, introduction*
 Of closer strains, and ere the war begin,
 20 He lightly skirmishes on every string
 Charged with a flying touch: and straightway she
 Carves out her dainty voice as readily,
 Into a thousand sweet distinguished tones,
 And reckons up in soft divisions,^o *rapid melodic passages*
 25 Quick volumes of wild notes; to let him know
 By that shrill taste, she could do something too.
 His nimble hands instinct then taught each string
 A cap'ring cheerfulness; and made them sing
 To their own dance; now negligently rash
 30 He throws his arm, and with a long drawn dash

1. Based on a much shorter Latin poem by the Jesuit Famianus Strada (1617), which also relates a contest between a nightingale and a lutenist, as a version of the contest between nature and art. Crashaw's poem also represents the contest of two kinds of music, melody (monody) and harmony

(polyphony). The poem is especially remarkable for synesthesia, the blending of sensory images into one another, and sometimes the representation of one sense in the imagery of another.

2. The irresistible singing of sirens lures men to their death.

Blends all together; then distinctly trips
 From this to that; then quick returning skips
 And snatches this again, and pauses there.
 She measures every measure, everywhere
 35 Meets art with art; sometimes as if in doubt
 Not perfect yet, and fearing to be out° *at a loss*
 Trails her plain ditty³ in one long-spun note
 " Through the sleek passage of her open throat:
 A clear unwrinkled song, then doth she point it
 40 With tender accents, and severely joint it
 By short diminutives, that being reared
 In controverting warbles evenly shared,
 With her sweet self she wrangles; he amazed
 That from so small a channel should be raised
 45 The torrent of a voice, whose melody
 Could melt into such sweet variety,
 Strains higher yet; that tickled with rare art
 The tattling⁰ strings (each breathing in his part) *prattling*
 Most kindly do fall out;° the grumbling bass *naturally quarrel*
 50 In surly groans disdains the treble's grace.
 The high-perched treble chirps at this, and chides,
 Until his finger (moderator) hides
 And closes the sweet quarrel, rousing all
 Hoarse, shrill, at once; as when the trumpets call
 55 Hot Mars to th'harvest of death's field, and woo
 Men's hearts into their hands; this lesson too
 She gives him back; her supple breast thrills out
 Sharp airs, and staggers in a warbling doubt
 Of dallying sweetness, hovers o'er her skill,
 60 And folds in waved notes with a trembling bill,
 The pliant series of her slippery song.
 Then starts she suddenly into a throng
 Of short thick sobs, whose thundering volleys float,
 And roll themselves over her lubric° throat *smooth*
 65 In panting murmurs, stilled⁰ out of her breast, *distilled*
 That ever-bubbling spring; the sugared nest
 Of her delicious soul, that there does lie
 Bathing in streams of liquid melody;
 Music's best seed-plot, whence in ripened airs
 70 A golden-headed harvest fairly rears
 His honey-dropping tops, plowed by her breath
 Which there reciprocally laboreth
 In that sweet soil. It seems a holy choir
 Founded to th'name of great Apollo's⁴ lyre.
 75 Whose silver roof rings with the sprightly notes
 Of sweet-lipped angel-imps, that swill their throats
 In cream of morning Helicon,⁵ and then
 Prefer⁰ soft anthems to the ears of men, *offer*
 To woo them from their beds, still murmuring

3. Simple melody, without divisions.

4. God of music and poetry, father of the Muses.

5. Mountain in Greece, home of the Muses; sometimes, the fountains there.

- 50** That men can sleep while they their matins sing:
 (Most divine service) whose so early lay^o
 Prevents^o the eyelids of the blushing day. *song*
 There might you hear her kindle her soft voice,
 In the close murmur of a sparkling noise, *comes before*
- 85** And lay the groundwork of her hopeful song,
 Still keeping in the forward stream, so long
 Till a sweet whirlwind (striving to get out)
 Heaves her soft bosom, wanders round about,
 And makes a pretty earthquake in her breast,
- 90** Till the fledged notes at length forsake their nest;
 Fluttering in wanton shoals, and to the sky
 Winged with their own wild echoes prattling fly.
 She opes the floodgate, and lets loose a tide
 Of streaming sweetness, which in state doth ride
- 95** On the waved back of every swelling strain,
 Rising and falling in a pompous train.
 And while she thus discharges a shrill peal
 Of flashing airs, she qualifies^o their zeal *moderates*
 With the cool epode^o of a graver note, *lyric*
- 100** Thus high, thus low, as if her silver throat
 Would reach the brazen voice of war's hoarse bird;^o *the raven*
 Her little soul is ravished: and so poured
 Into loose ecstasies, that she is placed
 Above herself, music's enthusiast.⁶
- 105** Shame now and anger mixed a double stain
 In the musician's face; yet once again,
 Mistress, I come; now reach a strain, my lute,
 Above her mock, or be forever mute.
 Or tune a song of victory to me,
- 110** Or to thyself sing thine own obsequy;^o *funeral song*
 So said, his hands sprightly as fire he flings,
 And with a quavering coyness tastes the strings.
 The sweet-lipped sisters^o musically frightened, *the Muses*
 Singing their fears are fearfully delighted.
- 115** Trembling as when Apollo's golden hairs
 Are fanned and frizzled, in the wanton airs
 Of his own breath; which married to his lyre
 Doth tune the spheres, and make heaven's self look higher.
 From this to that, from that to this he flies,
- 120** Feels music's pulse in all her arteries,
 Caught in a net which there Apollo spreads,
 His fingers struggle with the vocal threads,
 Following those little rills,⁷ he sinks into
 A Sea of Helicon;⁸ his hand does go
- 125** Those parts of sweetness, which with nectar drop,
 Softer than that which pants in Hebe's⁹ cup.
 The humorous^o strings expound his learned touch *capricious*
 By various glosses; now they seem to grutch^o *grumble*

Literally, one inspired by a god.
 Small streams; also, passages of liquid notes.
 Resort of Apollo and the Muses.

9. Greek goddess of youth and cupbearer to the gods.

And murmur in a buzzing din, then jingle
 130 In shrill tongued accents: striving to be single.
 Every smooth turn, every delicious stroke
 Gives life to some new grace; thus doth h'invoke
 Sweetness by all her names; thus, bravely⁰ thus *splendidly*
 (Fraught with a fury so harmonious)
 135 The lute's light genius now does proudly rise,
 Heaved on the surges of swollen rhapsodies.
 Whose flourish, meteor-like, doth curl the air
 With flash of high-borne fancies; here and there
 Dancing in lofty measures, and anon
 140 Creeps on the soft touch of a tender tone:
 Whose trembling murmurs melting in wild airs
 Runs to and fro, complaining his sweet cares
 Because those precious mysteries that dwell,
 In music's ravished soul he dare not tell,
 145 But whisper to the world: thus do they vary
 Each string his note, as if they meant to carry
 Their master's blest soul (snatched out at his ears
 By a strong ecstasy) through all the spheres
 Of music's heaven; and seat it there on high
 150 In th'empyreum⁰ of pure harmony. *highest heaven*
 At length (after so long, so loud a strife
 Of all the strings, still breathing the best life
 Of blest variety attending on
 His finger's fairest revolution
 155 In many a sweet rise, many as sweet a fall)
 A full-mouthed diapason¹ swallows all.
 This done, he lists what she would say to this,
 And she although her breath's late exercise
 Had dealt too roughly with her tender throat,
 160 Yet summons all her sweet powers for a note
 Alas! in vain! for while, sweet soul, she tries
 To measure all those wild diversities
 Of chatt'ring strings, by the small size of one
 Poor simple voice, raised in a natural tone,
 165 She fails, and failing grieves, and grieving dies.
 She dies; and leaves her life the victor's prize,
 Falling upon his lute; o fit to have
 (That lived so sweetly) dead, so sweet a grave!

1. A grand burst of harmony.

FROM STEPS TO THE TEMPLE

To the Infant Martyrs¹

Go, smiling souls, your new-built cages⁰ break: *their bodies*
 In heaven you'll learn to sing, ere here to speak.²
 Nor let the milky fonts that bathe your thirst
 Re your delay;
 5 The place that calls you hence is, at the worst,
 Milk all the way.³

1646

I Am the Door¹

And now th' art set wide ope, the spear's sad art,
 Lo! hath unlocked thee at the very heart;
 He to himself (I fear the worst)
 And his own hope
 5 Hath shut these doors of heaven, that durst
 Thus set them ope.

1646

On the Wounds of Our Crucified Lord

O these wakeful wounds of thine!
 Are they mouths? or are they eyes?
 Be they mouths, or be they eyne,¹
 Each bleeding part some one supplies.²
 5 Lo! a mouth, whose full-bloomed lips
 At too dear a rate are roses.
 Lo! a bloodshot eye! that weeps
 And many a cruel tear discloses.
 O thou that on this foot hast laid
 10 Many a kiss and many a tear,
 Now thou shalt have all repaid,
 Whatsoe'er thy charges were.

1. This epigram and the three following were originally written in Latin in a volume of "Sacred Epigrams" and then rendered in English versions. Epigrams are brief, pithy, witty poems with, as was often said, "a sting in the tail." This poem addresses the Holy Innocents, the infants murdered by Herod in an effort to destroy the newborn Jesus, who was honored as King of the Jews by the Magi (Matthew 2.16-18).

2. Infant comes from the Latin *infans*, meaning "unable to speak."

3. The Milky Way will replace their mothers' milk.

1. "I am the door; by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved" (1 John 10.9).

1. Eyes, an old plural form.

2. I.e., each wound of Christ is either an eye or a mouth.

This foot hath got a mouth and lips
 To pay the sweet sum of thy kisses;
 15 To pay thy tears, an eye that weeps
 Instead of tears such gems as this is.

The difference only this appears
 (Nor can the change offend),
 The debt is paid in ruby-tears
 20 Which thou in pearls didst lend.

1646

Luke 11. [27]¹
 Blessed be the paps which Thou hast sucked

Suppose he had been tabled at thy teats,
 Thy hunger feels not what he eats:
 He'll have his teat e're long (a bloody one)²
 The Mother then must suck the Son.

1646

FROM CARMEN DEO NOSTRO

In the Holy Nativity of Our Lord God: A Hymn Sung as by
 the Shepherds¹

CHORUS Come we shepherds whose blest sight
 Hath met love's noon in nature's night;
 Come lift we up our loftier song,
 And wake the sun that lies too long.

5 To all our world of well-stol'n joy
 He⁰ slept, and dreamt of no such thing, *the sun*
 While we found out heaven's fairer eye,
 And kissed the cradle of our King.
 Tell him he rises now too late
 10 To show us aught worth looking at.

1. The verse identifies the addressee: "And it came to pass, as he [Jesus] spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, 'Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.' "

2. The wound in Christ's side, making his breast (the fountain of all graces) bloody.

1. See Luke 2.8-20. The poem's form, the interweaving of chorus and alternating soloists, is struc-

turally comparable to an oratorio, an Italian musical form that Crashaw may well have known from his sojourns on the Continent. Its form invites comparison with Dryden's "Alexander's Feast"; and its subject with Milton's "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity" (p. 1789). The last version of this poem (1652), printed here, differs considerably from the first version (1646).

Tell him we now can show him more
 Than he e'er showed to mortal sight;
 Than he himself e'er saw before,
 Which to be seen needs not his light.
 Tell him, Tityrus, where th' hast been;
 Tell him, Thyrsis,² what th' hast seen.

TITYRUS Gloomy night embraced the place
 Where the noble infant lay.
 The babe looked up and showed his face:
 In spite of darkness, it was day.
 It was thy day, sweet!⁰ and did rise,
 Not from the east, but from thine eyes.
 CHORUS It was thy day, sweet, *etc.*

THYRSIS Winter chid aloud, and sent
 The angry north to wage his wars;
 The north forgot his fierce intent,
 And left perfumes instead of scars.
 By those sweet eyes' persuasive powers,
 Where he meant frost, he scattered flowers.
 CHORUS By those sweet eyes', *etc.*

BOTH We saw thee in thy balmy⁰ nest, *eastern, perfumed*
 Young dawn of our eternal day!
 We saw thine eyes break from their east
 And chase the trembling shades away.
 We saw thee; and we blessed the sight.
 We saw thee by thine own sweet light.

TITYRUS Poor world (said I), what wilt thou do
 To entertain this starry stranger?
 Is this the best thou canst bestow,
 A cold, and not too cleanly, manger?
 Contend, ye powers of heaven and earth,
 To fit a bed for this huge birth.
 CHORUS Contend, ye powers, *etc.*

THYRSIS Proud world (said I), cease your contest,
 And let the Mighty Babe alone.
 The phoenix builds the phoenix' nest;³
 Love's architecture is his own.
 The Babe whose birth embraves⁰ this morn *makes splendid*
 Made his own bed ere he was born.
 CHORUS The Babe whose, *etc.*

2. Tityrus and Thyrsis are typical names for shepherds in classical pastoral poetry; Crashaw here identifies such pastoral figures with the biblical shepherds from the hillsides around Bethlehem.

3. The phoenix is the legendary bird of ancient Egypt, often taken as a symbol for Christ. Only one

phoenix existed at any one time; after it had lived five hundred years, it was consumed in flame and a new phoenix rose from the ashes. Christ as Son of God took part in the making of the world long before his incarnation.

TITYRUS I saw the curl'd drops, soft and slow,
 Come hovering o'er the place's head,
 Offering their whitest sheets of snow
 To furnish the fair Infant's bed:
 55 Forbear (said I), be not too bold;
 Your fleece is white, but 'tis too cold.
 CHORUS Forbear (said I), *etc.*

THYRSIS I saw the obsequious seraphims⁴
 Their rosy fleece of fire bestow,
 60 For well they now can spare their wings
 Since heaven itself lies here below.
 Well done (said I), but are you sure
 Your down so warm will pass for pure?
 CHORUS Well done (said I), *etc.*

65 TITYRUS NO, no; your King's not yet to seek
 Where to repose his royal head;
 See, see; how soon his new-bloomed cheek
 Twixt mother's breasts is gone to bed.
 Sweet choice (said we), no way but so
 70 Not to lie cold, yet sleep in snow.
 CHORUS Sweet choice (said we), *etc.*

BOTH We saw thee in thy balmy nest,
 Bright dawn of our eternal day!
 We saw thine eyes break from their east
 75 And chase the trembling shades away.
 We saw thee; and we blessed the sight.
 We saw thee, by thine own sweet light.
 CHORUS We saw thee, *etc.*

FULL CHORUS

80 Welcome, all wonders in one sight!
 Eternity shut in a span.
 Summer in winter. Day in night.
 Heaven in earth, and God in man.
 Great little one! whose all-embracing birth
 Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.

85 Welcome! though not to gold nor silk,
 To more than Caesar's birthright is;
 Two sister seas of virgin milk,
 With many a rarely tempered kiss
 90 That breathes at once both maid^o and mother, *virgin*
 Warms in the one, cools in the other.

Welcome! though not to those gay flies⁵
 Gilded i' th' beams of earthly kings—

4. The highest order of angels, associated with fire because of their ardent love of God.

5. Courtiers, stigmatized in three compressed lines as ephemeral, worldly, and hypocritical.

T O T H E
Noblest & best of Ladies, the
Countess of Denbigh.

Persuading her to Resolution in Religion,
& to render herself without further
delay into the Communion of
the Catholic Church.²

What heaven-entreated heart is this,
Stands trembling at the gate of bliss,
Holds fast the door, yet dares not venture
Fairly to open it, and enter?
5 Whose definition is a doubt
'Twixt life and death, 'twixt in and out.
Say, lingering fair! why comes the birth
Of your brave soul so slowly forth?
Plead your pretenses (O you strong
10 In weakness!) why you choose so long
In labor of your self to lie,
Not daring quite to live nor die.
Ah, linger not, loved soul! A slow
And late consent was^o a long no; *would be*
15 Who grants at last, long time tried
And did his best to have denied.
What magic bolts, what mystic bars,
Maintain the will in these strange wars!
What fatal^o yet fantastic bands *fateful*
20 Keep the free heart from its own hands!
So when the year takes cold, we see
Poor waters their own prisoners be;
Fettered and locked up fast they lie
In a sad self-captivity.
25 Th' astonished nymphs their flood's strange fate deplore,
To see themselves their own severer shore.
Thou that alone canst thaw this cold,
And fetch the heart from its stronghold,
Almighty Love! end this long war,
30 And of a meteor make a star.³
O fix this fair indefinite;
And 'mongst thy shafts of sovereign^o light *supreme, effectual*
Choose out that sure decisive dart
Which has the key of this close heart,

2. Susan, Countess of Denbigh, had been widowed in 1643, when her husband was killed fighting for the king. She went to Paris into exile with Queen Henrietta Maria in 1644 and, along with some other ladies attached to the court of that Roman Catholic queen, was herself attracted to that religion. Crashaw himself was a new convert; here he engages in a poetic version of the pressure

often exerted by both Catholic priests and Anglican clergy on influential court ladies. As usual, he calls upon the imagery of erotic persuasion to urge her conversion.

3. Meteors were sublunary and therefore irregular and transient; stars, located above the moon, were regular, fixed, and permanent.

35 Knows all the corners of't, and can control
 The self-shut cabinet of an unsearched soul.
 O let it be at last love's hour!
 Raise this tall trophy of thy power;
 Come once the conquering way, not to confute,
 40 But kill this rebel-word, *irresolute*,
 That so, in spite of all this peevish strength
 Of weakness, she may write, *resolved at length*.
 Unfold at length, unfold, fair flower,
 And use the season of love's shower.
 45 Meet his well-meaning wounds, wise heart,
 And haste to drink the wholesome dart,
 That healing shaft which heaven till now
 Hath in love's quiver hid for you.
 O dart of love! arrow of light!
 50 O happy you, if it hit right;
 It must not fall in vain, it must
 Not mark the dry, regardless dust.
 Fair one, it is your fate, and brings
 Eternal worlds upon its wings.
 55 Meet it with wide-spread arms, and see
 Its seat your soul's just center be.
 Disband dull fears; give faith the day.
 To save your life, kill your delay.
 It is love's siege, and sure to be
 60 Your triumph, though his victory.
 'Tis cowardice that keeps this field,
 And want of courage not to yield.
 Yield, then, O yield, that love may win
 The fort at last, and let life in.
 65 Yield quickly, lest perhaps you prove
 Death's prey before the prize of love.
 This fort of your fair self, if't be not won,
 He is repulsed indeed; but you are undone.

1652

The Flaming Heart St. Teresa of Avila, a sixteenth-century Spanish mystic and founder of an ascetic order of barefoot Carmelite nuns, was one of the great figures of the Catholic Reformation. Her autobiography, popular throughout Europe and translated into English in 1642 as *The Flaming Heart*, describes not only her practical problems in establishing her order but also a series of ecstatic trances and visitations that represent union with the divine in sensual, indeed erotic, imagery. The great Italian sculptor and architect Pietro Bernini portrayed a famous mystical experience described in Teresa's autobiography in a stunning baroque statue still in the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria, in Rome. It shows the saint in an attitude of ecstatic, swooning abandonment while a juvenile seraph stands over her, about to plunge a golden arrow into her heart. Crashaw may or may not have seen this statue while Bernini was at work on it (it was installed only after Crashaw's death), but his poem addresses a painter who produced a picture of this episode conceived much as Bernini presented it.

THE
FLAMING HEART
UPON THE BOOK AND
Picture of the seraphical saint

T E R E S A ,
(AS SHE IS USUALLY Ex-
pressed with aSERAPHIM
beside her.)¹

Well-meaning readers! you that come as friends,
And catch the precious name this piece pretends,⁰ *putsforivard*
Make not too much haste to admire
That fair-cheeked fallacy of fire.
5 That is a seraphim, they say,
And this the great Teresia.
Readers, be ruled by me, and make
Here a well-placed and wise mistake:
You must transpose the picture quite
10 And spell⁰ it wrong to read⁰ it right; *read/understand*
Read *him* for *her* and *her* for *him*,
And call the saint the seraphim.
Painter, what didst thou understand,
To put her dart into his hand!
15 See, even the years and size of him
Shows this the mother seraphim.
This is the mistress-flame; and duteous he,
Her happy fireworks here comes down to see.
O most poor-spirited of men!
20 Had thy cold pencil kissed her pen²
Thou couldst not so unkindly err
To show us this faint shade for her.
Why, man, this speaks pure mortal frame,
And mocks with female frost love's manly flame.
25 One would suspect thou meant'st to paint
Some weak, inferior, woman saint.
Rut had thy pale-faced purple took
Fire from the burning cheeks of that bright book,
Thou wouldst on her have heaped up all
30 That could be found seraphical:
Whate'er this youth of fire wears fair,
Rosy fingers, radiant hair,
Glowing cheek and glistering wings,

1. "Seraphim" is in fact the plural form of "seraph." This highest order of angels was thought to burn continuously in the fire of divine love.

2. I.e., if you'd only been properly inspired by her book.

All those fair and flagrant⁰ things, *burning*
 35 But before all, that fiery dart
 Had filled the hand of this great heart.
 Do then as equal right requires,
 Since his the blushes be, and hers the fires,
 Resume and rectify thy rude design,
 40 Undress thy seraphim into mine.
 Redeem this injury of thy art,
 Give him the veil, give her the dart.
 Give him the veil, that he may cover
 The red cheeks⁰ of a rivaled lover, *blushes*
 45 Ashamed that our world now can show
 Nests of new seraphims here below.³
 Give her the dart, for it is she
 (Fair youth) shoots both thy shaft and thee.
 Say, all ye wise and well-pierced hearts
 50 That live and die amidst her darts,⁰ *i.e., her writings*
 What is't your tasteful spirits do prove⁰ *experience*
 In that rare life of her and love?
 Say and bear witness. Sends she not
 A seraphim at every shot?
 55 What magazines of immortal arms there shine!
 Heaven's great artillery in each love-spun line.
 Give then the dart to her who gives the flame,
 Give him the veil who kindly takes the shame.
 But if it be the frequent fate
 60 Of worst faults to be fortunate;
 If all's prescription,⁴ and proud wrong
 Harkens not to an humble song,
 For all the gallantry of him,
 Give me the suffering seraphim.⁵
 65 His be the bravery⁰ of all those bright things, *splendor*
 The glowing cheeks, the glistering wings,
 The rosy hand, the radiant dart;
 Leave her alone the Flaming Heart.
 Leave her that, and thou shalt leave her
 70 Not one loose shaft, but love's whole quiver.
 For in love's field was never found
 A nobler weapon than a wound.
 Love's passives are his activ'st part,
 The wounded is the wounding heart.
 75 O heart! the equal poise of love's both parts,
 Big alike with wounds and darts,
 Live in these conquering leaves,⁶ live all the same;
 And walk through all tongues one triumphant flame.
 Live here, great heart; and love and die and kill,
 so And bleed and wound; and yield and conquer still.
 Let this immortal life, where'er it comes,
 Walk in a crowd of loves and martyrdoms.

3. Teresa burns on earth in love, as seraphim do in heaven.

4. I.e., settled beforehand, by the decision of the artist.

5. If Teresa can't be transformed into the angel, Crashaw prefers her as the "suffering" lover.

6. I.e., the leaves of St. Teresa's book.

Let mystic deaths wait on't, and wise souls be
 The love-slain witnesses of this life of thee.
 85 O sweet incendiary! show here thy art,
 Upon this carcass of a hard, cold heart;⁰ *Crashaw's heart*
 Let all thy scattered shafts of light, that play
 Among the leaves of thy large books of day,⁷
 Combined against this breast, at once break in
 - 90 And take away from me myself and sin!
 This gracious robbery shall thy bounty be,
 And my best fortunes such fair spoils of me.⁸
 O thou undaunted daughter of desires!
 By all thy dower of lights and fires;
 95 By all the eagle in thee, all the dove;⁹
 By all thy lives and deaths of love;
 By thy large drafts of intellectual day,
 And by thy thirsts of love more large than they;
 By all thy brim-filled bowls of fierce desire,
 100 By thy last morning's draft of liquid fire;
 By the full kingdom of that final kiss
 That seized thy parting soul, and sealed thee His;
 By all the heavens thou hast in Him,
 Fair sister of the seraphim,
 105 By all of Him we have in thee,
 Leave nothing of myself in me!
 Let me so read thy life that I
 Unto all life of mine may die!

1652

7. Books filled with intellectual and spiritual light.

8. I.e., my best fortune will be to be despoiled in this way.

9. The eagle suggests wisdom and power, for its

lofty flight and ability to look into the sun's eye; the dove suggests mercy and gentleness. Cf. Donne's "The Canonization," line 22 (p. 1268).

ROBERT HERRICK

1591-1674

Robert Herrick was the most devoted of the Sons of Ben, though his epigrams and lyrics (like Jonson's) also show the direct influence of classical poets: Horace, Anacreon, Catullus, Tibullus, Ovid, and Martial. Born in London the son of a goldsmith and apprenticed for some years in that craft, Herrick took B.A. and M.A. degrees at Cambridge and consorted in the early 1620s with Jonson and his "tribe," who met regularly at the Apollo Room. After his ordination in 1623, he apparently served as chaplain to various noblemen and in that role joined Buckingham's failed military expedition to rescue French Protestants at Bhe in 1627. In 1630 he was installed as the vicar of Dean Prior in Devonshire. Expelled as a royalist in 1647, he apparently lived in London until the Restoration, when he was reinstated at Dean Prior and remained there until his death.

Herrick's single volume of poems, *Hesperides* (1648), with its appended book of religious poems, *Noble Numbers*, contains over four hundred short poems. At first glance, they seem merely playful and charming, although remarkable for their equi-

site and unerring artistry and perfect decorum. Many are love poems on the *carpe diem* theme—seize the day, time is fleeting, make love now; a famous example is the elegant song "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time." But Herrick's range is much wider than is sometimes recognized. He moves from the pastoral to the cynical, from an almost rococo elegance to coarse, even vulgar, epigrams, and from the didactic to the dramatic. Also, he derives mythic energy and power from certain recurring motifs. One is metamorphosis, "times trans-shifting," the transience of all natural things. Another is celebration—festivals and feasts—evoking the social, ritualistic, and even anthropological significances and energies contained in rural harvest festivals ("The Hock Cart") or the May Day rituals described in what is perhaps his finest poem, "Corinna's Going A-Maying." Yet another is the classical but also perennial ideal of the "good life," defined in his terms as "cleanly wantonness." For Herrick this involves love devoid of high passion (the several mistresses he addresses seem interchangeable and not very real); the pleasures of food, drink, and song; delight in the beauty of surfaces (as in "Upon Julia's Clothes"); and, finally, the creation of poetry as ballast against the ravages of time.

Published just months before the execution of Charles I, these poems, seem almost oblivious to the catastrophes of the war. But they are not. Poems celebrating rural feasts and festivals, ceremonial social occasions, and the rituals of good fellowship reinforce the conservative values of social stability, tradition, and order threatened by the Puritans. Several poems that draw upon the Celtic mythology of fairy folk make their feasts, temples, worship, and ceremonies stand in for the forbidden ceremonies of the Laudian church and a life governed by ritual. Still other poems, like "The Hock Cart" and "Corinna's Going A-Maying," celebrate the kind of rural festivals that were at the center of the culture wars between royalists and Puritans. Both James I and Charles I urged such activities in their *Book of Sports* as a means of reinforcing traditional institutions in the countryside and deflecting discontent, while Puritans vigorously opposed them as occasions for drunkenness and licentiousness.

FROM HESPERIDES¹

The Argument² of His Book

I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds, and bowers,
 Of April, May, of June, and July flowers.
 I sing of Maypoles, hock carts, wassails, wakes,³
 Of bridegrooms, brides, and of their bridal cakes.
 5 I write of youth, of love, and have access
 By these to sing of cleanly wantonness.
 I sing of dews, of rains, and, piece by piece,
 Of balm, of oil, of spice, and ambergris.⁴
 I sing of times trans-shifting,⁰ and I write *changing*
 10 How roses first came red and lilies white.

1. In myth, the Hesperides, or Western Maidens, guarded an orchard and garden, also called Hesperides, in which grew a tree bearing golden apples. Herrick's title suggests that his poems are golden apples from his residence in western Devonshire; the following poems are all from that volume, published in 1648.

2. Subject matter, theme.

3. Festive, not funerary, occasions, to celebrate the dedication of a new church. "Hock carts" carried home the last load of the harvest, so they were adorned and celebrated. "Wassails" were Twelfth Night celebrations.

4. A secretion of the sperm whale that is used in making perfume—hence it suggests something rare and delectable.

I write of groves, of twilights, and I sing
 The court of Mab and of the fairy king.⁵
 I write of hell; I sing (and ever shall)
 Of heaven, and hope to have it after all.

Upon the Loss of His Mistresses¹

I have lost, and lately, these
 Many dainty mistresses:
 Stately Julia, prime of all;
 Sappho next, a principal;
 5 Smooth Anthea, for a skin
 White and heaven-like crystalline;
 Sweet Electra, and the choice
 Myrrha, for the lute and voice;
 Next Corinna for her wit
 10 And the graceful use of it,
 With Perilla; all are gone,
 Only Herrick's left alone,
 For to number sorrows by
 Their departures hence, and die.

The Vine

I dreamed this mortal part of mine
 Was metamorphosed to a vine,
 Which, crawling one and every way,
 Enthralled my dainty Lucia.¹
 5 Methought, her long small legs and thighs
 I with my tendrils did surprise;
 Her belly, buttocks, and her waist
 By my soft nervelets were embraced.
 About her head I writhing hung,
 10 And with rich clusters (hid among
 The leaves) her temples I behung,
 So that my Lucia seemed to me
 Young Bacchus ravished by his tree.⁰
 My curls about her neck did crawl,
 15 And arms and hands they did enthrall,
 So that she could not freely stir
 (All parts there made one prisoner).
 But when I crept with leaves to hide
 Those parts which maids keep unespied,
 20 Such fleeting pleasures there I took
 That with the fancy I awoke,

the grapevine

5. Mab was queen of the fairies and wife of their king, Oberon.

1. The ladies are imaginary, and their names are traditional in classical love poetry and pastoral

poetry.

1. For the sake of both rhyme and meter, the name of this lady is given three syllables here; in line 12 it has only two.

And found (ah me!) this flesh of mine
 More like a stock⁰ than like a vine. *hard stalk*

Dreams

Here we are all, by day; by night, we're hurled
 By dreams, each one into a several⁰ world. *separate*

Delight in Disorder¹

A sweet disorder in the dress
 Kindles in clothes a wantonness.
 A lawn⁰ about the shoulders thrown *fine* *linen scarf*
 Into a fine distraction;
 5 An erring⁰ lace, which here and there *wandering*
 Enthralls the crimson stomacher;²
 A cuff neglectful, and thereby
 Ribbons to flow confusedly;
 A winning wave, deserving note,
 10 In the tempestuous petticoat;
 A careless shoestring, in whose tie
 I see a wild civility:
 Do more bewitch me than when art
 Is too precise³ in every part.

His Farewell to Sack¹

Farewell, thou thing, time-past so known, so dear
 To me as blood to life and spirit; near,
 Nay, thou more near than kindred, friend, man, wife,
 Male to the female, soul to body, life
 5 To quick action, or the warm soft side
 Of the resigning⁰ yet resisting bride. *yielding*
 The loss of virgins; first fruits of the bed;
 Soft speech, smooth touch, the lips, the maidenhead;
 These and a thousand sweets could never be
 10 So near or dear as thou wast once to me.
 O thou, the drink of gods and angels! Wine
 That scatterest spirit and lust;⁰ whose purest shine *pleasure*
 More radiant than the summer's sunbeams shows,
 Each way illustrious, brave;⁰ and like to those *splendid*

1. One of several poems in this period in which women's dress is a means by which to explore the relation of nature and art. See Jonson's "Still to Be Neat," p. 1444.

2. An ornamental covering of the chest, worn under the laces of the bodice.

3. "Precise" and "precision" were terms used satirically about Puritans. Herrick, in praising feminine disarray, is at one level praising the "sprezzatura," or careless grace, of Cavalier art.

1. Sherry wine, imported from Spain.

15 Comets we see by night, whose shagg'd² portents
 Foretell the coming of some dire events,
 Or^o some full flame which with a pride aspires, *or like to*
 Throwing about his wild and active fires.
 'Tis thou, above nectar, O divinest soul!

20 (Eternal in thyself) that canst control
 That which subverts whole nature: grief and care,
 Vexation of the mind, and damned despair.
 'Tis thou alone who with thy mystic fan³
 Work'st more than wisdom, art, or nature can

25 To rouse the sacred madness,⁴ and awake
 The frost-bound blood and spirits, and to make
 Them frantic with thy raptures, flashing through
 The soul like lightning, and as active too.
 'Tis not Apollo can, or those thrice three

30 Castalian sisters sing,⁵ if wanting^o thee. *lacking*
 Horace, Anacreon both had lost their fame
 Had'st thou not filled them with thy fire and flame.⁶
 Phoebean splendor! and thou Thespian spring!⁷
 Of which sweet swans must drink before they sing

35 Their true-paced numbers and their holy lays^o *songs*
 Which makes them worthy cedar and the bays.⁸
 But why? why longer do I gaze upon
 Thee with the eye of admiration?
 Since I must leave thee, and enforced must say

40 To all thy witching beauties, Go, away.
 But if thy whimpering looks do ask me why,
 Then know that nature bids thee go, not I.
 'Tis her erroneous self has made a brain
 Uncapable of such a sovereign

45 As is thy powerful self. Prithee not smile,
 Or smile more inly, lest thy looks beguile
 My vows denounced^o in zeal, which thus much show thee, *proclaimed*
 That I have sworn but by thy looks to know thee.
 Let others drink thee freely, and desire

50 Thee and their lips espoused, while I admire
 And love thee but not taste thee. Let my muse
 Fail of thy former helps, and only use
 Her inadulterate strength. What's done by me
 Hereafter shall smell of the lamp, not thee.⁹

2. Hairy, referring to a comet's tail.

3. Instrument for winnowing grain; associated with Bacchus, god of wine.

4. Poetic inspiration or frenzy, often likened to intoxication.

5. Apollo, god of poetry, and the Nine Muses; the Castalian spring on Mount Parnassus was sacred to them.

6. Both Horace and Anacreon wrote about the pleasures of wine.

7. In addition to being an epithet of Apollo, *Phoebeus* in Greek means bright, pure. The inhabitants of Thespieae, in Boeotia, worshipped the Muses and held an annual festival in their honor at the spring of Hippocrene, nearby.

8. Cedar oil was used to preserve papyrus; the poet's crown is woven of bay (i.e., laurel) leaves.

9. To "smell of the lamp" is a proverbial expression for a laborious and uninspired literary production.

Corinna's Going A-Maying

Get up! Get up for shame! The blooming morn
Upon her wings presents the god unshorn.¹

See how Aurora throws her fair
Fresh-quilted colors through the air:²
Get up, sweet slug-a-bed, and see
The dew bespangling herb and tree.

Each flower has wept and bowed toward the east
Above an hour since, yet you not dressed;

Nay, not so much as out of bed?
When all the birds have matins⁰ said, *morning prayer*
And sung their thankful hymns, 'tis sin,
Nay, profanation⁰ to keep in, *impiety*

Whenas a thousand virgins on this day
Spring, sooner than the lark, to fetch in May.³

Rise, and put on your foliage, and be seen
To come forth, like the springtime, fresh and green,

And sweet as Flora.⁴ Take no care
For jewels for your gown or hair;
Fear not; the leaves will strew
Gems in abundance upon you;

Resides, the childhood of the day has kept,
Against⁰ you come, some orient pearls⁵ unwept; *until*

Come and receive them while the light
Hangs on the dew-locks of the night,
And Titan⁰ on the eastern hill *the sun*

Retires himself, or else stands still

Till you come forth. Wash, dress, be brief in praying:
Few beads⁶ are best when once we go a-Maying.

Come, my Corinna, come; and, coming, mark
How each field turns⁰ a street, each street a park *turns into*

Made green and trimmed with trees; see how
Devotion gives each house a bough
Or branch: each porch, each door ere this,
An ark, a tabernacle is,⁷

Made up of whitethorn neatly interwove,
As if here were those cooler shades of love.

Can such delights be in the street
And open fields, and we not see't?
Come, we'll abroad; and let's obey
The proclamation⁸ made for May,

1. Apollo, the sun god; sunbeams are seen as his flowing locks.

2. Aurora is goddess of the dawn.

3. On May Day morning, it was the custom to gather whitethorn blossoms and trim the house with them.

4. Flora. Italian goddess of (lowers, had her festival in the spring.

5. Pearls from the Orient were especially lustrous, like drops of dew.

6. Rosary beads of the "old" Catholic religion, but more generally, a casual term for prayers.

7. The doorways, ornamented with whitethorn, are like the Hebrew Ark of the Covenant or the sanctuary that housed it (Leviticus 23.40—42: "Ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees . . .").

8. Probably a reference to Charles I's "Declaration to his subjects concerning lawful sports."

And sin no more, as we have done, by staying;
But, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying.

There's not a budding boy or girl this day
But is got up and gone to bring in May;
45 A deal of youth, ere this, is come
Back, and with whitethorn laden, home.
Some have dispatched their cakes and cream
Before that we have left to dream;
And some have wept, and wooed, and plighted troth,⁹
50 And chose their priest, ere we can cast off sloth.
Many a green gown¹ has been given,
Many a kiss, both odd and even;²
Many a glance, too, has been sent
From out the eye, love's firmament;⁰ sky
55 Many a jest told of the keys betraying
This night, and locks picked; yet we're not a-Maying.

Come, let us go while we are in our prime,
And take the harmless folly of the time.
We shall grow old apace, and die
60 Before we know our liberty.
Our life is short, and our days run
As fast away as does the sun;
And, as a vapor or a drop of rain,
Once lost, can ne'er be found again,
65 So when or you or I are made
A fable, song, or fleeting shade,
All love, all liking, all delight
Lies drowned with us in endless night.³
Then while time serves, and we are but decaying,
70 Come, my Corinna, come, let's go a-Maying.

To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old time is still⁰ a-flying;¹ always
And this same flower that smiles today,
Tomorrow will be dying.

5 The glorious lamp of heaven, the sun,
The higher he's a-getting,
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

9. Engaged themselves to marry.

1. Got by rolling in the grass.

2. Kisses are odd and even in kissing games.

3. Some echoes of the apocryphal book Wisdom of Solomon 2.1–8: "For the ungodly said . . . the breath of our nostrils is as smoke, and a little spark

. . . and our life shall pass away as the trace of a cloud. . . . Come on therefore . . . Let us crown ourselves with rose buds before they be withered." This *carpe diem* sentiment is a frequent theme in classical love poetry.

1. Translates the Latin tempus *fugit*.

That age is best which is the first,
 10 When youth and blood are warmer;
 Rut being spent, the worse, and worst
 Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
 And while ye may, go marry;
 15 For having lost but once your prime,
 You may forever tarry.

The Hock Cart,¹ or Harvest Home

to the Right Honorable Mildmay, Earl of Westmoreland

Come, sons of summer, by whose toil
 We are the lords of wine and oil;²
 By whose tough labors and rough hands
 We rip up first, then reap our lands.
 5 Crowned with the ears of corn,⁰ now come *grain*
 And, to the pipe, sing harvest home.
 Come forth, my lord, and see the cart
 Dressed up with all the country art.
 See here a maukin,⁰ there a sheet, *scarecrow*
 10 As spotless pure as it is sweet,
 The horses, mares, and frisking fillies
 Clad all in linen, white as lilies,
 The harvest swains⁰ and wenches bound *young men*
 For joy to see the hock-cart crowned.
 15 About the cart, hear how the rout
 Of rural younglings raise the shout,
 Pressing before, some coming after,
 Those with a shout and these with laughter.
 Some bless the cart, some kiss the sheaves,
 20 Some prank⁰ them up with oaken leaves; *adorn*
 Some cross the fill-horse,³ some with great
 Devotion stroke the home-borne wheat;
 While other rustics, less attent
 To prayers than to merriment,
 25 Run after with their breeches rent.
 Well, on, brave boys, to your lord's hearth,
 Glittering with fire; where, for your mirth,
 Ye shall see first the large and chief
 Foundation of your feast, fat beef;
 30 With upper stories, mutton, veal,
 And bacon,⁰ which makes full the meal, *pork*
 With several dishes standing by,

1. The last cart carrying home the harvest; hence the occasion for a rural festival, traditional throughout Europe. Mildmay Fane, earl of Westmorland (1628—1660), was one of Herrick's patrons.

2. Wine and oil are the yields of Mediterranean

farming, connecting the English harvest festival to classical pastoral.

3. The fill-horse is harnessed between the shafts of the cart. Crossing the horse and kissing the sheaves suggest the persistence of pre-Reformation rituals in the countryside.

As here a custard, there a pie,
 And here all-tempting frumenty.⁰ *pudding*
 35 And for to make the merry cheer,
 If smirking⁰ wine be wanting⁰ here, *sparkling / lacking*
 There's that which drowns all care, stout beer:
 Which freely drink to your lord's health,
 Then to the plow (the common-wealth),
 40 Next to your flails, your fans,⁴ your vats,
 Then to the maids with wheaten hats,
 To the rough sickle and crook'd scythe,
 Drink, frolic boys, till all be blithe.
 Feed, and grow fat; and, as ye eat,
 45 Be mindful that the lab'ring neat,⁰ *cattle*
 As you, may have their fill of meat.⁵
 And know, besides, ye must revoke⁰ *call back*
 The patient ox unto his yoke,
 And all go back unto the plow
 50 And harrow, though they're hanged up now.
 And you must know, your lord's word's true,
 Feed him ye must whose food fills you,
 And that this pleasure is like rain,
 Not sent ye for to drown your pain
 55 But for to make it spring again.⁶

How Roses Came Red¹

Roses at first were white,
 Till they could not agree,
 Whether my Sappho's breast,
 Or they more white should be.
 5 But being vanquished quite,
 A blush their cheeks bespread;
 Since which (believe the rest)
 The roses first came red.

Upon the Nipples of Julia's Breast

Have ye beheld (with much delight)
 A red rose peeping through a white?
 Or else a cherry (double graced)
 Within a lily center-placed?
 5 Or ever marked⁰ the pretty beam *observed*

4. "Flails" are threshing instruments; "fans" are used to winnow grain from chaff. The plow is the common source of everybody's wealth. In line with the anti-Puritan sentiments of the whole poem, the word "commonwealth," in this communal and earthy sense, invites a contrast with Puritan republican theories.

5. Food (grain or hay).

6. Spring is heralded by rain, but the lines also point to the continual renewal of the agricultural worker's pain and labor.

1. This poem and several others in the collection present minitransformations in witty allusion to Ovid's epiclike *Metamorphoses*.

A strawberry shows half drowned in cream?
 Or seen rich rubies blushing through
 A pure smooth pearl, and orient⁰ too? *iridescent*
 So like to this, nay all the rest,
 10 Is each neat niplet of her breast.

Upon Jack and Jill. Epigram²

When Jill complains to Jack for want of meat,
 Jack kisses Jill, and bids her freely eat.
 Jill says, Of what? Says Jack, On that sweet kiss,
 Which full of nectar and ambrosia is,
 5 The food of poets. So I thought, says Jill;
 That makes them look so lank, so ghost-like still.
 Let poets feed on air or what they will;
 Let me feed full till that I fart, says Jill.

To Marigolds³

Give way, an^o ye be ravished by the sun, *if*
 And hang the head whenas the act is done.
 Spread as he spreads; wax less as he does wane,
 And as he shuts, close up to maids⁰ again. *virgins*

His Prayer to Ben Jonson

When I a verse shall make,
 Know I have prayed thee,
 For old religion's sake,⁴
 Saint Ren to aid me.

5 Make the way smooth for me
 When I, thy Herrick,
 Honoring thee, on my knee,
 Offer my lyric.

Candles I'll give to thee
 10 And a new altar;
 And thou Saint Ren shalt be
 Writ in my psalter.

2. Cf. Jonson, "On Giles and Joan," p. 1429.

3. The English pot marigold closes its (lowers at dusk.

4. Herrick plays on the fact that Jonson was for a while a Catholic (of the "old religion"), as well as a saint in the mock religion of poetry.

The Bad Season Makes the Poet Sad¹

Dull to myself and almost dead to these
 My many fresh and fragrant mistresses,
 Lost to all music now, since every thing
 Puts on the semblance here of sorrowing.
 5 Sick is the land to the heart, and doth endure
 More dangerous faintings by her desperate cure.
 But if that golden age would come again,
 And Charles here rule as he before did reign,
 If smooth and unperplexed the seasons were,
 10 As when the sweet Maria lived here,
 I should delight to have my curls half drowned
 In Tyrian dews,² and head with roses crowned,
 And once more yet (ere I am laid out dead)
*Knock at a star with my exalted head.*³

The Night-Piece, to Julia

Her eyes the glowworm lend thee,
 The shooting stars attend thee;
 And the elves also,
 Whose little eyes glow
 5 Like the sparks of fire, befriend thee.

No Will-o'th'-Wisp mislight thee,¹
 Nor snake or slowworm⁰ bite thee;
 But on, on thy way,
 Not making a stay,
 10 Since ghost there's none to affright thee.

Let not the dark thee cumber;
 What though the moon does slumber?
 The stars of the night
 Will lend thee their light
 15 Like tapers clear without number.

Then, Julia, let me woo thee,
 Thus, thus to come unto me:
 And when I shall meet
 Thy silv'ry feet,
 20 My soul I'll pour into thee.

adder

1. The bad season is evidently political, not meteorological. Line 10 refers to Charles's queen, Henrietta Maria, so the poem must have been written after 1644, when she was forced to retire to France.

2. Perfume from Tyre was one of many Middle Eastern luxuries proverbial in Roman times.

3. The last line translates literally the last line of Horace's first ode, to his patron, Maecenas. Herrick hopes once more to have enlightened readers and an enlightened patron, so that he can feel something of Horace's exaltation.

1. Will-o'-the-wisp traditionally draws travelers astray with false lights.

Upon His Verses

What offspring other men have got,
 The how, where, when I question not.
 These are the children I have left;
 Adopted some, none got by theft.
 5 But all are touched (like lawful plate)¹
 And no verse illegitimate.

His Return to London

From the dull confines of the drooping west,¹
 To see the day spring from the pregnant east,
 Ravished in spirit, I come, nay more, I fly
 To thee, blest place of my nativity!
 5 Thus, thus with hallowed foot I touch the ground
 With thousand blessings by thy fortune crowned.
 O fruitful Genius!² that bestowest here
 An everlasting plenty, year by year.
 O place! O people! Manners! framed to please
 10 All nations, customs, kindreds, languages!
 I am a free-born Roman;³ suffer then
 That I amongst you live a citizen.
 London my home is, though by hard fate sent
 Into a long and irksome banishment;
 is Yet since called back, henceforward let me be,
 O native country, repossessed by thee!
 For, rather than I'll to the west return,
 I'll beg of thee first here to have mine urn.
 Weak I am grown, and must in short time fall;
 20 Give thou my sacred relics burial.

1647?

Upon Julia's Clothes

Whenas in silks my Julia goes,⁰ *walks*
 Then, then, methinks, how sweetly flows
 That liquefaction of her clothes.

 Next, when I cast mine eyes and see
 5 That brave⁰ vibration each way free, *splendid*
 Oh, how that glittering taketh me!

1. A special variety of quartz, known as basanite, was used to test gold and silver objects; the color of the smear left on the touchstone revealed its purity.

1. Devonshire, where his parish, Dean Prior, was located.

2. In classical Rome, the genius of a place was its guardian deity.

3. An ancient Roman born in the city was said to be "free of it," i.e., entitled to its special rights and privileges, including residence there.

Upon Prue, His Maid¹

In this little urn is laid
 Prudence Baldwin, once my maid,
 From whose happy spark here let
 Spring the purple violet.

To His Book's End²

To his book's end this last line he'd have placed:
 Jocund⁰ his muse was, but his life was chaste. *merry, sprightly*

FROM NOBLE NUMBERS

To His Conscience¹

Can I not sin, but thou wilt be
 My private protonotary?²
 Can I not woo thee to pass by
 A short and sweet iniquity?
 5 I'll cast a mist and cloud upon
 My delicate transgression
 So utter dark as that no eye
 Shall see the hugged⁰ impiety. *cherished*
 Gifts blind the wise,³ and bribes do please
 10 And wind⁰ all other witnesses: *pervert*
 And wilt not thou with gold be tied
 To lay thy pen and ink aside?
 That in the mirk⁰ and tongueless night *black, murky*
 Wanton I may, and thou not write?
 15 It will not be; and therefore now
 For times to come I'll make this vow,
 From aberrations to live free,
 So I'll not fear the Judge, or thee.

Another Grace for a Child

Here a little child I stand,
 Heaving up my either hand;
 Cold as paddocks⁰ though they be, *frogs*

1. This is an odd epitaph, since Prudence Baldwin died four years after Herrick.

2. The last poem of *Hesperides*.

1. This and the following poem are from *Noble Numbers*, the collection of Herrick's religious

poems that was bound together with *Hesperides*.

2. Chief recording clerk of a court.

3. Echoes Deuteronomy 16.19: "a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise."

Here I lift them up to thee,
 5 For a benison⁰ to fall *blessing*
 On our meat and on us all. *Amen.*

THOMAS CAREW
 1595-1640

Thomas Carew (pronounced *Carey*) is perhaps the Cavalier poet with the greatest range and complexity. He gained his B.A. at Merton College, Oxford, studied law (his father's profession), held several minor positions in the diplomatic and court bureaucracy, fought for his king in the ill-fated expedition against the Scots (the First Bishops' War, 1639), and died of syphilis. A brilliant, dissolute young man, he was a great favorite with Charles I and Henrietta Maria.

His *Poems* (1640), published posthumously, are witty and often outrageous, but their emphasis on natural sensuality and the need for union between king and subjects encodes a serious critique of the Neoplatonic artifice of the Caroline court. Carew's spectacular court masque, *Coelum Britannicum*, performed at the Banqueting Hall at Whitehall on February 18, 1633, was based on a philosophical dialogue by Giordano Bruno. It combines a dramatization of serious social and political problems in the antimasque with wildly hyperbolic praise of the monarchs in the main masque. As a love poet Carew sometimes plays off Donnean situations and poems; elsewhere, as in "Ask me no more where Jove bestows," he imitates Jonson's most purely lyric vein. But his characteristic note is one of frank sexuality and emotional realism. "The Rapture," probably the most erotic poem of the era, describes the sexual act under the sustained metaphor of a voyage. He also wrote country-house poems that, unlike Jonson's "To Penshurst," describe Saxham and Wrest as places of refuge from the mounting dangers outside their gates. Carew's poems of literary criticism provide astute commentary on contemporary authors. "To Ben Jonson" evaluates Jonson with Jonsonian precision and judiciousness in weighing out praise and blame. His famous "Elegy" on Donne praises Donne's innovation, avoidance of classical tags, "giant fancy," and especially his tough masculinity of style, a feature Carew imitates in this poem's energetic runover couplets, quick changes of rhythms and images, and vigorous "strong lines."

An Elegy upon the Death of the Dean of Paul's,
 Dr. John Donne¹

Can we not force from widowed poetry,
 Now thou art dead, great Donne, one elegy
 To crown thy hearse? Why yet dare we not trust,
 Though with unkneaded dough-baked² prose, thy dust,
 5 Such as the unscissored³ churchman from the flower
 Of fading rhetoric, short-lived as his hour,
 Dry as the sand that measures it,⁴ should lay

1. First appearing with a number of other elegies in the 1633 edition of Donne's poems, then reprinted in 1640 with some changes, Carew's tribute is notable among 17th-century poems on poetry for its technical precision.

2. I.e., tedious and flat.

3. With uncut hair.

4. The hourglass was used by preachers to keep track of time.

Upon thy ashes on the funeral day?
 Have we no voice, no tune? Didst thou dispense⁰ *layout, use up*
 10 Through all our language both the words and sense?
 'Tis a sad truth. The pulpit may her plain
 And sober Christian precepts still retain;
 Doctrines it may, and wholesome uses,⁰ frame, *customs*
 Grave homilies and lectures; but the flame
 15 Of thy brave soul, that shot such heat and light
 As burnt our earth and made our darkness bright,
 Committed holy rapes upon our will,
 Did through the eye the melting heart distill,
 And the deep knowledge of dark truths so teach
 20 As sense might judge what fancy could not reach,⁵ *missed*
 Must be desired⁰ forever. So the fire
 That fills with spirit and heat the Delphic choir,⁶
 Which, kindled first by thy Promethean⁷ breath,
 Glowed here a while, lies quenched now in thy death.
 25 The Muses' garden, with pedantic weeds
 O'erspread, was purged by thee; the lazy seeds
 Of servile imitation thrown away,
 And fresh invention planted; thou didst pay
 The debts of our penurious bankrupt age—
 30 Licentious thefts, that make poetic rage
 A mimic fury, when our souls must be
 Possessed or with Anacreon's ecstasy,
 Or Pindar's,⁸ not their own. The subtle cheat
 Of sly exchanges, and the juggling feat
 35 Of two-edged words,⁹ or whatsoever wrong
 By ours was done the Greek or Latin tongue,
 Thou hast redeemed, and opened us a mine
 Of rich and pregnant fancy, drawn a line
 Of masculine expression, which had good
 40 Old Orpheus¹ seen, or all the ancient brood
 Our superstitious fools admire, and hold
 Their lead more precious than thy burnished gold,
 Thou hadst been their exchequer,⁰ and no more *treasury*
 They in each other's dust had raked for ore.
 45 Thou shalt yield no precedence but of time
 And the blind fate of language, whose tuned chime⁰ *rhyme*
 More charms the outward sense; yet thou mayest claim
 From so great disadvantage greater fame,
 Since to the awe of thy imperious wit
 50 Our stubborn language bends, made only fit
 With her tough thick-ribbed hoops to gird about
 Thy giant fancy, which had proved too stout
 For their soft melting phrases. As in time

5. I.e., so that things too abstract to be imagined might be made plain to sense.

6. The choir of poets, inspired by Apollo, whose oracle was at Delphi.

7. Prometheus stole fire from heaven to aid humankind.

8. Anacreon (6th and 5th centuries B.c.E.) and Pindar (first half of the 5th century B.c.E.) were

famous Greek lyric poets.

9. "Sly exchanges": Carew seems to refer to the habit of using English words in their Latin senses. "Two-edged words" might be puns, but these were a favorite device of Donne's.

1. Ancient Greek poet and prophet, often used as the type of all poets.

- They had the start, so did they cull the prime
 55 Buds of invention many a hundred year,
 And left the rifled fields, besides the fear
 To touch their harvest; yet from those bare lands
 Of what is purely thine, thy only hands
 (And that thy smallest work) have gleaned more
 60 Than all those times and tongues could reap before.
 But thou art gone, and thy strict laws will be
 Too hard for libertines in poetry.
 They will repeal⁰ the goodly exiled train *recall from banishment*
 Of gods and goddesses, which in thy just reign
 65 Were banished nobler poems; now with these
 The silenced tales o' th' *Metamorphoses*²
 Shall stuff their lines and swell the windy page,
 Till verse, refined by thee in this last age,
 Turn ballad-rhyme, or those old idols be
 70 Adored again with new apostasy.
 O pardon me, that break with untuned verse
 The reverend silence that attends thy hearse,
 Whose awful⁰ solemn murmurs were to thee, *awesome*
 More than these faint lines, a loud elegy,
 75 That did proclaim in a dumb eloquence
 The death of all of the arts, whose influence,
 Grown feeble, in these panting numbers⁰ lies *verses*
 Gasping short-winded accents, and so dies:
 So doth the swiftly turning wheel not stand
 80 In th' instant we withdraw the moving hand,
 But some small time maintain a faint weak course
 By virtue of the first impulsive force;
 And so whilst I cast on thy funeral pile
 Thy crown of bays,⁰ oh, let it crack awhile *poet's crown*
 85 And spit disdain, till the devouring flashes
 Suck all the moisture up; then turn to ashes.
 I will not draw the envy to engross
 All thy perfections, or weep all our loss;
 Those are too numerous for an elegy,
 90 And this too great to be expressed by me.
 Though every pen should take a distinct part,
 Yet art thou theme enough to tire⁰ all art.³ *exhaust*
 Let others carve the rest; it shall suffice
 I on thy tomb this epitaph incise:
- 95 *Here lies a king, that ruled as he thought fit
 The universal monarchy of wit;
 Here lie two flamens,⁴ and both those the best:
 Apollo's first, at last the true God's priest.*

1633, 1640

2. Ovid's tales in the *Metamorphoses* were a favorite stockpile of poetic properties for Renaissance poets, but Donne did not use them.

3. This line and the preceding one were omitted

in the 1640 edition.

4. Priests of ancient Rome: Donne was first a priest of Apollo, the pagan god of poetry, and later a Christian priest.

To Ben Jonson

*Upon occasion of his Ode of Defiance
annexed to his play of The New Inn¹*

- 'Tis true, dear Ben, thy just chastising hand
Hath fixed upon the sotted age a brand
To their swoll'n pride and empty scribbling due.
It can nor judge nor write; and yet 'tis true
- 5 Thy comic Muse from the exalted line
Touched by thy *Alchemist*² doth since decline
From that her zenith, and foretells a red
And blushing evening when she goes to bed—
Yet such as shall outshine the glimmering light
- 10 With which all stars shall gild the following night.
Nor think it much (since all thy eaglets may
Endure the sunny trial)³ if we say,
This hath the stronger wing, or that doth shine
Tricked up in fairer plumes, since all are thine.
- 15 Who hath his flock of cackling geese compared
With thy tuned choir of swans? Or who hath dared
To call thy births deformed? But if thou bind
By city-custom, or by gavelkind,⁴
In equal shares thy love to all thy race,
- 20 We may distinguish of their sex and place:
Though one hand shape them and though one brain strike
Souls into all, they are not all alike.
Why should the follies then of this dull age
Draw from thy pen such an immodest rage
- 25 As seems to blast thy else-immortal bays,⁰ *the poet's crown*
When thine own tongue proclaims thy itch of praise?
Such thirst will argue drought. No, let be hurled
Upon thy works by the detracting world
What malice can suggest; let the rout^o say *rabble*
- 30 The running sands that, ere thou make a play,
Count the slow minutes might a Goodwin frame⁵
To swallow when th' hast done thy shipwrecked name.
Let them the dear^o expense of oil upbraid,⁰ *extravagant/scold*
Sucked by thy watchful lamp that hath betrayed
- 35 To theft the blood of martyred authors, spilt
Into thy ink, while thou growest pale with guilt.⁶
Repine^o not at the taper's thrifty waste, *fret*

1. Jonson's late play *The New Inn* was hissed from the stage in 1629 and published in 1631 with an angry "Ode to Himself" (p. 1446) prefixed. Carew's remonstrance must have been written shortly thereafter.

2. Jonson's play (1610) about three confidence tricksters.

3. To make sure the young birds in his nest are genuine eaglets, the eagle is reputed to fly with them up toward the sun; true eagles will not be blinded by the rays.

4. "City-custom" (i.e., London City custom) and

"gavelkind" (a system of land tenure once common in Kent) were two legal ways of dividing an estate equally among all the heirs—as opposed to the normal English rule of primogeniture (everything to the eldest son).

5. Goodwin Sands were shoals in the Strait of Dover, shifty and treacherous, on which many ships were lost. Jonson's slowness in composition was proverbial.

6. The other great charge against Jonson was that he copied or translated too liberally from other authors.

That sleeks thy terser poems; nor is haste
 Praise, but excuse; and if thou overcome
 40 A knotty writer, bring the booty home;
 Nor think it theft if the rich spoils so torn
 From conquered authors be as trophies worn.
 Let others glut on the extorted praise
 Of vulgar breath: trust thou to after days.
 45 Thy labored works shall live when Time devours
 Th' abortive offspring of their hasty hours.
 Thou art not of their rank, the quarrel lies
 Within thine own verge⁷—then let this suffice,
 The wiser world doth greater thee confess
 50 Than all men else, than thy self only less.

ca. 1631

1640

A Song¹

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,
 When June is past, the fading rose;
 For in your beauties orient⁰ deep,
 These flowers, as in their causes, sleep.²

lustrous

5 Ask me no more whither do stray
 The golden atoms of the day;
 For in pure love heaven did prepare
 Those powders to enrich your hair.

10 Ask me no more whither doth haste
 The nightingale when May is past;
 For in your sweet dividing³ throat
 She winters, and keeps warm her note.

15 Ask me no more where those stars light,
 That downwards fall in dead of night;
 For in your eyes they sit, and there
 Fixed become, as in their sphere.

20 Ask me no more if east or west
 The phoenix builds her spicy nest;⁴
 For unto you at last she flies,
 And in your fragrant bosom dies.

1640

7. I.e., within your own territory, against yourself. Duels cannot properly take place between two men of different rank, and as Jonson is out of everyone else's class, he can fight only himself.

1. Widely popular and several times set to music, this poem exists in different forms. Like Donne's "Go and catch a falling star" (p. 1264), it is built around a series of impossibilities.

2. Aristotelian philosophy suggested that objects often lay latent in their causes. The lady is a summation of last summer and cause of the next one.

3. Warbling (from "division," or rapid melodic passage).

4. The phoenix, a legendary bird, builds her nest from spicy shrubs. She dies every five hundred years and a new bird springs from her ashes.

To Saxham¹

Though frost and snow locked from mine eyes
 That beauty which without door lies,
 Thy gardens, orchards, walks, that so
 I might not all thy pleasures know,
 5 Yet, Saxham, thou within thy gate
 Art of thyself so delicate,
 So full of native sweets, that bless
 Thy roof with inward happiness,
 As neither from nor to thy store
 10 Winter takes aught, or spring adds more.
 The cold and frozen air had starved⁰ *killed*
 Much poor, if not by thee preserved,
 Whose prayers have made thy table blest
 With plenty, far above the rest,
 is The season hardly did afford
 Coarse cates^o unto thy neighbors' board, *food*
 Yet thou hadst dainties, as the sky
 Had been thy only volary;⁰ *aviary*
 Or else the birds, fearing the snow
 20 Might to another Deluge² grow,
 The pheasant, partridge, and the lark
 Flew to thy house, as to the Ark.
 The willing ox of himself came
 Home to the slaughter, with the lamb,
 25 And every beast did thither bring
 Himself, to be an offering.
 The scaly herd more pleasure took
 Bathed in thy dish, than in the brook;
 Water, earth, air did all conspire
 30 To pay their tributes to thy fire;
 Whose cherishing flames themselves divide
 Through every room, where they deride
 The night and cold abroad; whilst they,
 Like suns within, keep endless day.
 35 Those cheerful beams send forth their light
 To all that wander in the night,
 And seem to beckon from aloof
 The weary pilgrim to thy roof,
 Where, if refreshed, he will away,
 40 He's fairly welcome; or if stay,
 Far more; which he shall hearty find
 Both from the master and the hind.^o *servant*
 The stranger's welcome each man there
 Stamped on his cheerful brow doth wear,
 45 Nor doth this welcome or his cheer
 Grow less 'cause he stays longer here;

1. Little Saxham, near Bun' Saint Edmunds, in Suffolk, was the country residence of Sir John Crofts, a friend of Carew's. Compare Jonson's "To

Penshurst" (p. 1434).
 2. Noah's Flood (Genesis 7).

There's none observes, much less repines,
 How often this man sups or dines.
 Thou hast no porter at the door
 50 T'examine or keep back the poor,
 Nor locks nor bolts: thy gates have been
 Made only to let strangers in;
 Untaught to shut, they do not fear
 To stand wide open all the year,
 55 Careless who enters, for they know
 Thou never didst deserve a foe;
 And as for thieves, thy bounty's such,
 They cannot steal, thou giv'st so much.

A Rapture

I will enjoy thee now, my Celia, come
 And fly with me to love's Elysium.¹
 The giant, Honor, that keeps cowards out,
 Is but a masquer,⁰ and the servile rout^o *actor / rabble*
 Of baser subjects only bend in vain
 To the vast idol, whilst the nobler train^o *procession*
 Of valiant lovers daily sail between
 The huge Colossus' legs,² and pass unseen
 Unto the blissful shore. Be bold and wise,
 And we shall enter; the grim Swiss³ denies
 Only tame fools a passage, that not know
 He is but form and only frights in show
 The duller eyes that look from far; draw near,
 And thou shalt scorn what we were wont^o to fear. *used*
 We shall see how the stalking pageant⁴ goes
 With borrowed legs, a heavy load to those
 That made and bear him—not as we once thought
 The seed of gods, but a weak model wrought
 By greedy men, that seek to enclose the common,
 And within private arms empale free woman.⁵
 Come then, and mounted on the wings of love,
 We'll cut the flitting air and soar above
 The monster's head, and in the noblest seats
 Of those blessed shades, quench and renew our heats.
 There shall the queens of love and innocence,
 Beauty and nature banish all offense
 From our close ivy twines, there I'll behold
 Thy bared snow and thy unbraided gold.
 There my enfranchised hand on every side

1. In classical mythology, the abode of the blessed spirits.

2. Tradition had it that the ancient Colossus of Rhodes bestrode the entrance to that harbor, so that ships entering or leaving passed between its legs.

3. The pope's Swiss Guard were renowned for their height.

4. Figure in a pageant, make-believe giant.

5. To "empale" is to surround with a fence, but the word has phallic overtones as well. The "enclosing" for landowners' private use of pastureland traditionally open to the whole community ("the commons") was a political issue in 17th-century England.

- 30 Shall o'er thy naked polished ivory slide.
 No curtain there, though of transparent lawn,⁶ *fine linen*
 Shall be before thy virgin treasure drawn,
 But the rich mine to the inquiring eye
 Exposed, shall ready still⁰ for mintage lie, *always*
- 35 And we will coin young Cupids.⁶ There a bed
 Of roses and fresh myrtles shall be spread
 Under the cooler shade of cypress groves;
 Our pillows, of the down of Venus' doves,⁷
 Whereon our panting limbs we'll gently lay
- 40 In the faint respites of our active play,
 That so our slumbers may in dreams have leisure
 To tell the nimble fancy our past pleasure,
 And so our souls that cannot be embraced
 Shall the embraces of our bodies taste.
- 45 Meanwhile the bubbling stream shall court the shore,
 Th' enamored chirping wood-choir shall adore
 In varied tunes the deity of love;
 The gentle blasts of western winds shall move
 The trembling leaves, and through their close boughs breathe
- 50 Still⁰ music, while we rest ourselves beneath *soft*
 Their dancing shade; till a soft murmur, sent
 From souls entranced in amorous languishment
 Rouse us, and shoot into our veins fresh fire
 Till we in their sweet ecstasy expire.
- 55 Then, as the empty bee, that lately bore
 Into the common treasure all her store,
 Flies 'bout the painted field with nimble wing,
 Deflowering the fresh virgins of the spring,
 So will I rifle all the sweets that dwell
- 60 In my delicious paradise, and swell
 My bag with honey, drawn forth by the power
 Of fervent kisses from each spicy flower.
 I'll seize the rosebuds in their perfumed bed,
 The violet knots, like curious mazes spread
- 65 O'er all the garden, taste the ripened cherry,
 The warm, firm apple, tipped with coral berry.
 Then will I visit with a wandering kiss
 The vale of lilies and the bower of bliss,
 And where the beauteous region both divide
- 70 Into two milky ways, my lips shall slide
 Down those smooth alleys, wearing as I go
 A track⁰ for lovers on the printed snow. *path*
 Thence climbing o'er the swelling Apennine,
 Retire into thy grove of eglantine,⁰ *sweetbriar*
- 75 Where I will all those ravished sweets distill
 Through love's alembic,⁸ and with chemic skill
 From the mixed mass one sovereign balm⁹ derive,

6. Behind this metaphor of mine, mint, and coin lies the ancient belief that in the creation of children woman contributes matter, and man, form (*materia* and *orma*).

7. Venus rides in a chariot drawn by a yoke of

doves.

8. I.e., retort—a vessel used for distilling.

9. According to alchemical doctrine, skilled distillation could extract from common metals not only the philosopher's stone but an ointment ("sover-

Then bring that great elixir to thy hive.
 Now in more subtle wreaths I will entwine
 50 My sinewy thighs, my legs and arms with thine;
 Thou like a sea of milk shalt lie displayed,
 Whilst I the smooth, calm ocean invade
 With such a tempest as when Jove of old
 Fell down on Danae in a storm of gold.¹
 85 Yet my tall pine shall in the Cyprian² strait
 Ride safe at anchor and unlade her freight;
 My rudder with thy bold hand like a tried
 And skillful pilot thou shalt steer, and guide
 My bark^o into love's channel, where it shall *vessel*
 90 Dance as the bounding waves do rise or fall.
 Then shall thy circling arms embrace and clip^o *clasp*
 My naked body, and thy balmy lip
 Bathe me in juice of kisses, whose perfume
 Like a religious incense shall consume
 95 And send up holy vapors to those powers
 That bless our loves and crown our sportful hours,
 That with such halcyon³ calmness fix our souls
 In steadfast peace, as no affright controls.^o *overpowers*
 There no rude sounds shake us with sudden starts,
 100 No jealous ears, when we unrip our hearts,
 Suck our discourse in, no observing spies
 This blush, that glance traduce;^o no envious eyes *slander*
 Watch our close meetings, nor are we betrayed
 To rivals by the bribed chambermaid.
 105 No wedlock bonds unwreath our twisted loves,
 We seek no midnight arbor, no dark groves
 To hide our kisses; there the hated name
 Of husband, wife, lust, modest, chaste, or shame
 Are vain and empty words, whose very sound
 110 Was never heard in the Elysian ground.
 All things are lawful there that may delight
 Nature or unrestrained appetite.
 Like and enjoy, to will and act is one;
 We only sin when love's rites are not done.
 115 The Roman Lucrece there reads the divine
 Lectures of love's great master, Aretine,
 And knows as well as Lais how to move
 Her pliant body in the act of love.⁴
 To quench the burning ravisher, she hurls
 120 Her limbs into a thousand winding curls,
 And studies artful postures, such as be
 Carved on the bark of every neighboring tree
 By learned hands, that so adorned the rind
 Of those fair plants, which, as they lay entwined

eign balm"), good to prevent as well as to cure all diseases whatever.

1. Zeus (or Jove) wooed Danae in a shower of gold, begetting Perseus.

2. Cyprus was reputed the birthplace of the goddess of love, Venus, sometimes called simply "the Cyprian." "Pine": mast, and by metonymy, ship.

3. While the halcyon (a legendary sea bird) nests

on the waves, the ocean remains calm.

4. In Elysium, Lucrece (chastest of Roman matrons, who committed suicide to atone for the disgrace of her rape by Tarquin) reads Aretino (bawdiest of Italian pornographers) to provoke her attacker to new efforts. Lai's was a famous prostitute of Corinth.

- 125 Have fanned their glowing fires. The Grecian dame
 That in her endless web toiled for a name
 As fruitless as her work doth there display
 Herself before the youth of Ithaca,
 And th' amorous sport of gamesome nights prefer
- BO Before dull dreams of the lost traveler.⁵
 Daphne hath broke her bark, and that swift foot
 Which th' angry gods had fastened with a root
 To the fixed earth, doth now unfettered run
 To meet th' embraces of the youthful sun.⁶
- 135 She hangs upon him like his Delphic lyre,⁷
 Her kisses blow the old and breathe new fire;
 Full of her god, she sings inspired lays,
 Sweet odes of love, such as deserve the bays
 Which she herself was.⁸ Next her, Laura lies
- HO In Petrarch's learned arms, drying those eyes
 That did in such sweet smooth-paced numbers⁹ flow, *verses*
 As made the world enamored of his woe.⁹
 These and ten thousand beauties more, that died
 Slave to the tyrant, now enlarged,¹ deride
- 145 His canceled laws, and for their time misspent
 Pay into love's exchequer⁰ double rent. *treasury*
 Come then, my Celia, we'll no more forbear
 To taste our joys, struck with a panic fear,
 But will depose from his imperious sway
- 150 This proud usurper and walk free as they,
 With necks unyoked; nor is it just that he
 Should fetter your soft sex with chastity,
 Which Nature made unapt for abstinence;
 When yet this false impostor can dispense
- 155 With human justice and with sacred right,
 And maugre⁰ both their laws, command me fight *in spite of*
 With rivals or with emulous loves, that dare
 Equal with thine their mistress' eyes or hair.
 If thou complain of wrong, and call my sword
- 160 To carve out thy revenge, upon that word
 He^o bids me fight and kill, or else he brands *i.e., Honor*
 With marks of infamy my coward hands.
 And yet religion bids from bloodshed fly,
 And damns me for that act. Then tell me why
- 165 This goblin Honor which the world adores
 Should make men atheists and not women whores.

1640

5. Penelope was the faithful wife of Odysseus ("the lost traveler"); during the twenty years he was away (at Troy and on the way back), she fended off her importunate suitors by weaving an endless web—she unwove by night what she wove by day—which she said she had to finish before she could marry again. But in Elysium, she welcomes "the youth of Ithaca" (the suitors) and enjoys "gamesome nights" with them.

6. Closely pursued by Apollo, god of poetry and the sun, Daphne cried out to her father, the river god Peneus, who turned her into a laurel bush or bay tree so that she could get away from Apollo.

7. The shrine of Apollo was at Delphi; he carries a lyre as an emblem of poetic harmony.

8. The songs she sings deserve the laurel crown of poetry—the laurel she had become.

9. Petrarch (1304-1374) wrote his celebrated sonnet sequence to Laura, mourning his unsatisfied desire in the first part, and Laura's death in the second.

1. The inhabitants of Elysium are liberated ("enlarged") from the prison of "the tyrant" Honor, in which woman must be chaste and men must fight duels.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING
1609-1642

The Cavalier ideal is perhaps best seen in the life and poetry of John Suckling—"natural, easy Suckling," as William Congreve's heroine Millimant termed him in *The Way of the World* several decades later. Born of an aristocratic Norfolk family, Suckling was educated at Cambridge, took the Grand Tour, and fought in the Thirty Years War on the Continent. In 1639 he spent a small fortune to outfit a troop of cavalry in white doublets and scarlet breeches and coats to fight for the king in Scotland (they were ignominiously defeated). In 1641 he took part in an unsuccessful royalist plot to free the king's minister Strafford from execution and then fled to Paris where, a year later, he died bankrupt. Suckling's contemporaries described him as a Don Juan and a wit, as well as "the greatest gallant of his time and the greatest gamester" for bowling and cards. His poems and songs adopt several stances toward love: cynical debunking of love myths, frank enjoyment of sensual pleasure, invitations to love, and poems like "Against Fruition" that claim the greatest delights are in the chase. His witty satire "A Session of the Poets" describes a contest for the position of poet laureate. His playful epithalamium, "A Ballad upon a Wedding," demystifies the usual celebration of the cosmic significances of marriage (as in Spenser's sublime pastoral "Epithalamion") by detailing comic rustic parallels and identifying sex as the great leveler.

Song¹

Why so pale and wan, fond lover?
Prithee, why so pale?
Will, when looking well can't move her,
Looking ill prevail?
Prithee, why so pale?

Why so dull and mute, young sinner?
Prithee, why so mute?
Will, when speaking well can't win her,
Saying nothing do't?
Prithee, why so mute?

Quit, quit, for shame; this will not move,
This cannot take her.
If of herself she will not love,
Nothing can make her:
The devil take her!

1638

1. This song was first printed in Suckling's play *Aglaure* (1638).

FROM FRAGMENTA AUREA¹

Loving and Beloved

There never yet was honest man
 That ever drove the trade of love.
 It is impossible, nor can
 Integrity our ends promote;^o
 For kings and lovers are alike in this,
 That their chief art in reign dissembling is.

promote

Here we are loved and there we love:
 Good nature now and passion strive
 Which of the two should be above
 And laws unto the other give.
 So we false fire with art sometimes discover,
 And the true fire with the same art do cover.

What rack² can fancy find so high?
 Here we must court and here engage,
 Though in the other place we die.
 O! 'tis torture all and cozenage:^o
 And which the harder is I cannot tell,
 To hide true love, or make false love look well.

trickery

Since it is thus, god of desire,^o
 Give me my honesty again,
 And take thy brands back and thy fire;
 I'm weary of the state I'm in:
 Since (if the very best should now befall)
 Love's triumph must be Honor's funeral.

Cupid

1646

A Ballad upon a Wedding¹

I tell thee, Dick, where I have been,
 Where I the rarest things have seen,
 Oh, things without compare!
 Such sights again cannot be found
 5 In any place on English ground,
 Be it at wake^o or fair.

*a parish festival*1. *Golden Remains* (1646).

2. An instrument of torture designed to stretch, or even pull apart, the bodies of those bound on it.

1. The poem is a comic epithalamium (wedding poem) that wittily burlesques such solemn and lofty exemplars of the genre as Spenser's "Epitha-

lamion," turning pastoral into rude rusticity. This poem probably celebrates the wedding of John Lord Lovelace to Anne Wentworth (July 11, 1638); "Dick" may be the poet Richard Lovelace, the groom's brother.

At Charing Cross,² hard by^o the way *close by*
 Where we, thou know'st, do sell our hay,
 There is a house with stairs;
 10 And there did I see coming down
 Such folk as are not in our town,
 Forty, at least, in pairs.

Amongst the rest, one pest'lent^o fine *es-pecially*
 (His beard no bigger, though, than thine)
 15 Walked on before the rest:
 Our landlord looks like nothing to him;
 The King (God bless him!), 'twould undo him,
 Should he go still^o so dressed. *constantly*

At course-a-park,³ without all doubt,
 20 He should have first been taken out
 By all the maids i'th' town,
 Though lusty Roger there had been,
 Or little George upon the Green,
 Or Vincent of the Crown.⁴

25 Rut wot^o you what? The youth was going *know*
 To make an end of all his wooing;
 The parson for him stayed;
 Yet by his leave, for all his haste,
 He did not so much wish all past,
 30 Perchance, as did the maid.

The maid (and thereby hangs a tale,
 For such a maid no Whitsun-ale⁵
 Could ever yet produce):
 No grape that's kindly^o ripe could be *naturally*
 35 So round, so plump, so soft as she,
 Nor half so full of juice.

Her finger was so small, the ring
 Would not stay on which they did bring,
 It was too wide a peck;^o *much too large*
 40 And stay truth (for out it must),
 It looked like the great collar (just)
 About our young colt's neck.

Her feet beneath her petticoat
 Like little mice stole in and out,
 45 As if they feared the light;
 Rut oh! she dances such a way,
 No sun upon an Easter day
 Is half so fine a sight.

2. Originally a stone cross erected by Edward I, it became a busy center of trade in the city of Westminster; the Haymarket is nearby.

3. A country game, in which a girl calls out a boy to choose her.

4. "As good as George of Green" was a folk saying

suggesting male prowess; the other names probably have the same import.

5. Festivals for Whitsunday, or Pentecost (the seventh Sunday after Easter), were occasions for merrymaking and, especially, drinking.

He would have kissed her once or twice,
 50 But she would not, she was so nice,^o *demure*
 She would not do't in sight;
 And then she looked as who should say,
 I will do what I list^o today, *wish*
 And you shall do't at night.

55 Her cheeks so rare a white was on,
 No daisy makes comparison
 (Who sees them is undone),^o *overcome*
 For streaks of red were mingled there,
 Such as are on a Katherine pear⁶
 60 (The side that's next the sun).

Her lips were red, and one was thin,
 Compared to that was next her chin
 (Some bee had stung it newly);
 But, Dick, her eyes so guard her face,
 65 I durst no more upon them gaze
 Than on the sun in July.

Her mouth so small, when she does speak,
 Thou'dst swear her teeth her words did break,
 That they might passage get;
 70 But she so handled still the matter,
 They came as good as ours, or better,
 And are not spent a whit.

If wishing should be any sin,
 The parson himself had guilty been
 75 (She looked that day so purely);
 And did the youth so oft the feat
 At night, as some did in conceit,^o *fancy*
 It would have spoiled him,^o surely *ruined his health*

Passion, oh me! how I run on!
 80 There's that that would be thought upon,
 I trow,^o besides the bride: *reckon*
 The business of the kitchen's great,
 For it is fit that men should eat,
 Nor was it there denied.

85 Just in the nick the cook knocked thrice,
 And all the waiters in a trice
 His summons did obey;
 Each servingman, with dish in hand,
 Marched boldly up, like our trained band,⁷
 90 Presented, and away.

When all the meat was on the table,
 What man of knife or teeth was able

6. A small, early variety of pear.

7. Our village militia, trained in the rudiments of drill and the use of firearms.

To stay to be entreated?
 And this the very reason was,
 95 Before the parson could say grace,
 The company was seated.

Now hats fly off, and youths carouse;
 Healths first go round, and then the house,
 The bride's came thick and thick;
 100 And when 'twas named another's health,
 Perhaps he made it hers by stealth;
 And who could help it, Dick?

O'th' sudden up they rise and dance;
 Then sit again, and sigh, and glance;
 105 Then dance again and kiss;
 Thus several ways the time did pass,
 Whilst ever] woman wished her place,
 And every man wished his.

By this time all were stol'n aside
 no To counsel and undress the bride,
 But that he must not know;
 But yet 'twas thought he guessed her mind,
 And did not mean to stay behind
 Above an hour or so.

When in he came, Dick, there she lay
 us Like new-fall'n snow melting away
 ('Twas time, I trow, to part);
 Kisses were now the only stay,
 Which soon she gave, as who would say,
 120 "Good boy!" with all my heart.⁸

But just as heav'ns would have, to cross it,
 In came the bridesmaids with the posset;⁹
 The bridegroom eat° in spite, *ate*
 For had he left the women to't,
 125 It would have cost two hours to do't,
 Which were too much that night.

At length the candle's out, and now
 All that they had not done, they do:
 What that is, who can tell?
 BO But I believe it was no more
 Than thou and I have done before
 With Bridget and with Nell.

8. Some manuscripts read, "God b'w'y" (God be with you).

9. A mixture of spiced hot milk curdled with

sherry wine, traditionally offered to the bridegroom on his wedding night.

FROM THE LAST REMAINS OF SIR JOHN SUCKLING

Out upon It!

Out upon it! I have loved
 Three whole days together;
 And am like to love three more,
 If it prove fair weather.

5 Time shall molt away his wings,
 Ere he shall discover
 In the whole wide world again
 Such a constant lover.

But the spite on't is, no praise
 10 Is due at all to me:
 Love with me had made no stays,
 Had it any been but she.

Had it any been but she,
 And that very face,¹
 15 There had been at least ere this
 A dozen dozen in her place.

1659

1. Other versions of the poem give the line as "that very very face."

RICHARD LOVELACE

1618-1657

Usually linked with Suckling as a quintessential Cavalier, Richard Lovelace was described by a contemporary as "the most amiable and beautiful person that ever eye beheld." Born into a wealthy Kentish family, he was educated at Oxford and, like Suckling, fought for his king in Scotland (in both expeditions, 1639 and 1640). But he was not a libertine, and his poems, in contrast with Suckling's, often exalt women, love, and honor. Also, he shared with his king a serious interest in art, especially the paintings of Rubens, Van Dyck, and Lely. He was imprisoned for a few months in 1642 for supporting the "Kentish Petition" that urged restoration of the king to his ancient rights; in "To Althea, from Prison," he finds freedom from external bondage in the Cavalier ideals of women, wine, and royalism. During 1643–46 he fought in Holland and France and in the king's armies in England and was wounded abroad. In a general roundup of known royalists in 1648 he was imprisoned for ten months, and while there prepared his poems for publication under the title *Lucasta* (1649). Besides witty and charming love songs, that volume includes the plaintive ballad about the conflict between love and honor, "To Lucasta, Going to the Wars," and also "The Grasshopper," a poem that presents the Cavalier ideal at its most attractive. That emblematic summer creature is taken to symbolize the loss of the king and the care-free Cavalier life in the Puritan "winter," but Lovelace finds in the fellowship of

Cavalier friends a nobler version of the good life and a truer kingship. After 1649 he endured years of penury, largely dependent on the largesse of his friend and fellow royalist, Charles Cotton. His remaining poems appeared in 1659 as *Lucasta: Postume Poems*.

FROM LUCASTA

To Lucasta, Going to the Wars

Tell me not, sweet, I am unkind,
That from the nunnery
Of thy chaste breast and quiet mind
To war and arms I fly.

True, a new mistress now I chase,
The first foe in the field;
And with a stronger faith embrace
A sword, a horse, a shield.

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore;
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honor more.

1649

The Grasshopper¹

To My Noble Friend, Mr. Charles Cotton

O thou that swing'st upon the waving hair
Of some well-filled oaten beard,⁰ *head of grain*
Drunk every night with a delicious tear
Dropped thee from heav'n, where now th' art reared,

5 The joys of earth and air are thine entire,
That with thy feet and wings dost hop and fly;
And when thy poppy⁰ works thou dost retire *opiate*
To thy carved acorn bed to lie.

Up with the day, the sun thou welcom'st then,
10 Sport'st in the gilt-plats⁰ of his beams, *golden fields*
And all these merry days mak'st merry men,
Thyself, and melancholy streams.²

1. In *Aesop's Fables* the grasshopper lives in improvident, carefree idleness, in contrast with the industrious ant who lays up stores for the winter. The circumstances of the poem are those of the Interregnum, when a winter of Puritanism seemed,

to royalists, to be settling over England and obliterating their mode of life. The grasshopper may also allude to the recently executed king, Charles I. 2. The three objects of "mak'st merry" are "men," "thyself," and "melancholy streams."

But ah, the sickle! golden ears are cropped,
 Ceres and Bacchus³ bid goodnight;
 15 Sharp frosty fingers all your flow'rs have topped,
 And what scythes spared, winds shave off quite.

Poor verdant fool! and now green ice! thy joys,
 Large and as lasting as thy perch of grass,
 Bid us lay in 'gainst winter rain, and poise⁰ *counterbalance*
 20 Their floods with an o'erflowing glass.

Thou best of men and friends! we will create
 A genuine summer in each other's breast;
 And spite of this cold time and frozen fate
 Thaw us a warm seat to our rest.

25 Our sacred hearths shall burn eternally
 As vestal flames;⁴ the North Wind, he
 Shall strike his frost-stretched wings, dissolve, and fly
 This Etna in epitome.⁵

Dropping December shall come weeping in,
 30 Bewail th' usurping of his reign;
 But when in showers of old Greek we begin,
 Shall cry, he hath his crown again!⁶

Night as clear Hesper⁰ shall our tapers whip *the evening star*
 From the light casements where we play,
 35 And the dark hag⁷ from her black mantle strip,
 And stick there everlasting day.

Thus richer than untempted kings are we,
 That asking nothing, nothing need:
 Though lord of all that seas embrace, yet he
 40 That wants⁰ himself is poor indeed. *lacks*

1649

To Althea, from Prison

When Love with unconfined wings
 Hovers within my gates,
 And my divine Althea brings
 To whisper at the grates;
 5 When I lie tangled in her hair
 And fettered to her eye,

3. Goddess of grain and god of wine.

4. The Vestal Virgins, in Rome, were responsible for tending an eternal flame in the Temple of Vesta.

5. Boreas, the north wind, folding up ("striking") his wings, flees from the heat of the volcano within Mount Etna, a figure for the fires of friendship.

6. Greek wine was especially favored in the classical world. "Crown" here has multiple associations: the crown worn by "King Christmas" at the festivities banned by Puritans; and the crown Cavaliers hoped would soon be restored to Charles II.
 7. Hecate, a daughter of Night.

The gods¹ that wanton⁰ in the air
 Know no such liberty.

play

When flowing cups run swiftly round,
 10 With no allaying Thames,²
 Our careless heads with roses bound,
 Our hearts with loyal flames;
 When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
 When healths and drafts go free,
 i5 Fishes that tipple in the deep
 Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets,⁰ I
 With shriller throat shall sing
 The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
 20 And glories of my king;
 When I shall voice aloud how good
 He is, how great should be,
 Enlarged winds, that curl the flood,
 Know no such liberty.

caged finches

25 Stone walls do not a prison make,
 Nor iron bars a cage;
 Minds innocent and quiet take
 That for an hermitage.
 If I have freedom in my love,
 30 And in my soul am free,
 Angels alone, that soar above,
 Enjoy such liberty.

1649

Love Made in the First Age.¹ To Chloris

In the nativity of time,
 Chloris, it was not thought a crime
 In direct Hebrew for to woo.²
 Now we make love as all on fire,
 5 Ring retrograde³ our loud desire,
 And court in English backward too.

Thrice happy was that golden age,
 When compliment was construed rage,⁴
 And fine words in the center hid;
 10 When cursed No stained no maid's bliss,

1. Some versions read "birds" instead of "gods."
 2. No mixture of water (as from the river Thames)
 in the wine.

1. The Golden Age, described in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

2. Hebrew, supposed to be the original human language, is read from right to left; we have

reversed this.

3. Backwards, in reverse. The term also has musical connotations, perhaps referring here to a pattern of bell ringing.

4. Passion. Compliments in the Golden Age were understood as ardent propositions.

And all discourse was summed in Yes,
And naught forbade, but to forbid.

Love then unstinted, love did sip,
And cherries -plucked fresh from the lip,
15 On cheeks and roses free he fed;
Lasses like autumn plums did drop,
And lads indifferently⁰ did crop *without preference*
A flower and a maidenhead.

Then unconfined each did tipple
20 Wine from the bunch, milk from the nipple;
Paps tractable as udders were;
Then equally the wholesome jellies
Were squeezed from olive trees and bellies,
Nor suits of trespass did they fear.

25 A fragrant bank of strawberries,
Diapered⁰ with violet's eyes, *decorated, dappled*
Was table, tablecloth, and fare;
No palace to the clouds did swell,
Each humble princess then did dwell
30 In the piazza⁵ of her hair.

Both broken faith and th' cause of it,
All-damning gold, was damned to th' pit;
Their troth, sealed with a clasp and kiss,
Lasted until that extreme day
35 In which they smiled their souls away,
And, in each other, breathed new bliss.

Because no fault, there was no tear;
No groan did grate the granting ear,
No false foul breath their del'cate smell:
40 No serpent kiss poisoned the taste,
Each touch was naturally chaste,
And their mere sense a miracle.

Naked as their own innocence,
And unembroidered from offense⁶
45 They went, above poor riches, gay;
On softer than the cygnet's⁰ down, *young swan*
In beds they tumbled of their own;
For each within the other lay.

Thus did they live; thus did they love,
50 Repeating only joys above;
And angels were, but with clothes on,
Which they would put off cheerfully,

5. Arcade, hence an artful structure.

6. I.e., not ornamented to hide an offense.

To bathe them in the galaxy,⁰ *the Milky Way*
Then gird them with the heavenly zone.⁷

55 Now, Chloris, miserably crave⁰ *heg*
The offered bliss you would not have,
Which evermore I must deny,
Whilst ravished with these noble dreams
And crowned with mine own soft beams,
60 Enjoying of my self I lie.

1659

7. The zodiac of stars.

EDMUND WALLER
1606-1687

Poets of the Restoration and Augustan age regularly identified Edmund Waller as a model, paired as such with Sir John Denham, author of a royalist landscape poem, *Cooper's Hill*. These two poets were rightly seen as innovators in the use of smooth, often end-stopped, and antithetically balanced couplets, which anticipated the metrical norm of the next age, the heroic couplet. They were also praised for "correct," natural, and graceful diction. The son of a very wealthy father, Waller studied at Eton, Cambridge, and Lincoln's Inn; married a wealthy lady who died young; and courted in artful verse the celebrated beauty Dorothy Sidney (as "Sacharissa"). A Parliamentarian at first, he participated in a royalist plot to seize London for the Crown and upon discovery was thought to have saved his life by informing on his co-conspirators. Exiled to Paris in 1643, he was pardoned in 1651. After the Restoration he took an active part in court life and wrote panegyrics on Charles II. His first volume of poems (1645) was published a few months before Milton's first volume and by the same bookseller, who noted that both poets' songs had been set to music by the famous court musician Henry Lawes.

The Story of Phoebus and Daphne Applied¹

Thyrsis, a youth of the inspired train,⁰ *company of poets*
Fair Sacharissa loved, but loved in vain;²
Like Phoebus sung the no less amorous boy;
Like Daphne she, as lovely and as coy.⁰ *reluctant*
5 With numbers⁰ he the flying nymph pursues, *verses*
With numbers such as Phoebus' self might use.
Such is the chase when love and fancy leads
O'er craggy mountains and through flowery meads,⁰ *meadows*

1. Phoebus (Apollo), god of poetry, fell in love with Daphne and pursued her until, in answer to her prayer, she was turned into a laurel or bay tree, which became an emblem of poetic fame. Successful poets are crowned with laurel (bay) leaves.
2. Sacharissa (from the Latin for "sugar", hence,

sweetest) alludes here and in other Waller poems to Lady Dorothy Sidney of Penshurst, eldest daughter of the Earl of Leicester (the son of that Robert Sidney for whom Jonson wrote "To Penshurst"). Waller courted her unsuccessfully for some years; here he alludes to himself as Thyrsis.

- Invoked to testify the lover's care
 10 Or form some image of his cruel fair.
 Urged with his fury, like a wounded deer,
 O'er these he fled; and now approaching near,
 Had reached the nymph with his harmonious lay,^o *song*
 Whom all his charms could not incline to stay.
 15 Yet what he sung in his immortal strain,
 Though unsuccessful, was not sung in vain.
 All but the nymph that should redress his wrong
 Attend his passion and approve his song.
 Like Phoebus thus, acquiring unsought praise,
 20 He caught at love, and filled his arms with bays.

1645

Song

- Go, lovely rose!
 Tell her that wastes her time and me
 That now she knows,
 When I resemble^o her to thee, *compare*
 5 How sweet and fair she seems to be.

- Tell her that's young,
 And shuns to have her graces spied,
 That hadst thou sprung
 In deserts, where no men abide,
 io Thou must have uncommended died.

- Small is the worth
 Of beauty from the light retired;
 Bid her come forth,
 Suffer^o herself to be desired, *permit*
 15 And not blush so to be admired.

- Then die! that she
 The common fate of all things rare
 May read in thee;
 How small a part of time they share
 20 That are so wondrous sweet and fair!

1645

ABRAHAM COWLEY

1618-1667

Abraham Cowley (pronounced *Cooley*) published his first volume of verse, *Poetical Blossoms* (1633), at fifteen; it sold well enough to justify two enlarged editions (1636,

1637)^Educated at Westminster School and Trinity College, Cambridge, he became a fellow of that college, wrote a Latin comedy for student production, and composed many of the lyric poems later published under the title *The Mistress* (1647). In his *Life of Cowley*, Samuel Johnson based his definition of the so-called Metaphysical style chiefly on the extravagant conceits in these poems. As a royalist Cowley was ejected from his fellowship in 1644; he then joined the court at Oxford and followed the queen to Paris, serving her as courtier, spy, and confidential scribe. Returning to England in 1654, he brought out a volume of poems (1656) that included several Pindaric odes. Cowley's Pindarics are generally more irregular and more exalted than Jonson's great Pindaric ode on Cary and Morison, though "Ode: Of Wit," included here, is more restrained, closer to a Horatian ode. Cowley sets aside many current meanings of "wit" (among them, genius, learning, skill at discovering unexpected comparisons, quickness of repartee, imagination, a style based on antithesis, and verbal cleverness including puns and sexual innuendos) in order to urge a more comprehensive, albeit undefinable, conception of that quality. The 1656 volume also contained an unfinished biblical epic, *Davideis*, and an essay about writing biblical epic that no doubt interested Milton, who was then at work on *Paradise Lost*. Though Cowley's preface records a defeated royalist's wish "to retire myself to some of our American plantations" and "forsake this world forever," he settled near London and took a degree in medicine from Oxford. After the Restoration he studied and published on botany and wrote a famous ode on the newly formed Royal Society.

Ode: Of Wit

Tell me, O tell, what kind of thing is wit,
 Thou who master art of it.¹
 For the First Matter loves variety less;
 Less women love't,² either in love or dress.
 5 A thousand different shapes it bears,
 Comely in thousand shapes appears.
 Yonder we saw it plain; and here 'tis now,
 Like spirits in a place, we know not how.

London, that vents⁰ of false ware so much store, *sells*
 10 In no ware deceives us more.
 For men, led by the color and the shape,
 Like Zeuxis' birds, fly to the painted grape;³
 Some things do through our judgment pass
 As through a multiplying⁰ glass, *magnifying*
 15 And sometimes, if the object be too far,
 We take a falling meteor for a star.

Hence 'tis, a wit, that greatest word of fame,
 Grows such a common name;
 And wits by our creation they become

1. The addressee is unknown. "The First Matter" (line 3): the basic material of the universe, given a multiplicity of shapes by the Deity.

2. I.e., wit loves variety even more than women do,

or the First Matter, which takes all shapes.

3. Zeuxis, a Greek painter of the 5th century B.C.E., reportedly painted grapes so realistic that birds came to peck at them.

20 Just so as tit'lar bishops made at Rome.⁴
 'Tis not a tale, 'tis not a jest
 Admired with laughter at a feast,
 Nor florid talk which can that title gain;
 The proofs of wit forever must remain.

25 'Tis not to force some lifeless verses meet
 With their five gouty feet.
 All everywhere, like man's, must be the soul,⁵
 And reason the inferior powers control.

30 Such were the numbers which could call
 The stones into the Theban wall.⁶
 Such miracles are ceased, and now we see
 No towns or houses raised by poetry.

Yet 'tis not to adorn and gild each part;
 That shows more cost than art.
 35 Jewels at nose and lips but ill appear;
 Rather than all things wit, let none be there.
 Several⁰ lights will not be seen, *separate*
 If there be nothing else between.
 Men doubt because they stand so thick i' th' sky
 40 If those be stars which paint the galaxy.

'Tis not when two like words make up one noise,
 Jests for Dutch men and English boys,⁷
 In which who finds out wit, the same may see
 In an'grams and acrostics, poetry.⁸
 45 Much less can that have any place
 At which a virgin hides her face.
 Such dross the fire must purge away; 'tis just
 The author blush there where the reader must.

'Tis not such lines as almost crack the stage
 50 When Bajazet begins to rage;⁹
 Nor a tall met'phor in the bombast way,
 Nor the dry chips of short-lunged Seneca.¹
 Nor upon all things to obtrude
 And force some odd similitude.
 55 What is it then, which like the power divine
 We only can by negatives define?

In a true piece of wit all things must be,
 Yet all things there agree,
 As in the Ark, joined without force or strife,

4. Certain churches in Rome have as their titular incumbents cardinals whose real duties are elsewhere.

5. A formula from the Neoplatonic philosopher Plotinus (205-270 c.E.) has it that the soul is all in every part.

6. In classical mythology, when Amphion and Zethus were fortifying Thebes, Amphion's performance on the lyre was so moving that the stones

rose into place of their own accord.

7. Scorn for a pun mingles with contempt for the Dutch.

8. Cf. the famous essay on wit by Joseph Addison (p. 2481).

9. Bajazet is a grandiloquent character in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*.

1. The Senecan style tended toward terse, epigrammatic statements.

60 All creatures dwelt: all creatures that had life;
 Or as the primitive forms of all
 (If we compare great things with small)
 Which without discord or confusion lie
 In that strange mirror of the Deity.²

65 But love, that molds one man up out of two,
 Makes me forget and injure you.
 I took you for myself, sure, when I thought
 That you in anything were to be taught.

TO Correct my error with thy pen,
 And if any ask me then
 What thing right wit and height of genius is,
 I'll only show your lines, and say, *Tis this*.

1656. 1668

2. As in line 3, Cowley posits a kind of first matter that contains potentially all the objects of the world.

KATHERINE PHILIPS
 1632-1664

The best-known woman poet of her own and the next generation, Katherine Philips was honored as "the Matchless Orinda," the classical name she chose for herself in her poetic addresses to a coterie of chiefly female friends, especially Mary Aubrey (M. A.) and Anne Owen (Lucasia). Sometimes reminiscent of Donne's love lyrics and sometimes of the ancient Greek Sappho's erotic lyrics to women, these poems develop an exalted ideal of female friendship as a Platonic union of souls. Born to a well-to-do Presbyterian family and educated at Mrs. Salmon's Presbyterian School, Philips was taken to Wales when her mother remarried. In 1648, at age seventeen, she was married to James Philips, a prominent member of Parliament. They lived together twelve years, chiefly in the small Welsh town of Cardigan, and had two children: Hector, whose death a few days after birth prompted one of her most moving poems, and Katherine, who lived to adulthood. A royalist despite her Puritan family connections, Philips forged connections with other displaced royalists. Her poems circulated in manuscript and elicited high praise from Vaughan in *Olor Iscanus*. They include elegies, epitaphs, poems at parting, and friendship poems to women and men, but also poetry on political themes: a denunciation of the regicide, "Upon the Double Murder of King Charles," and panegyrics on the restored Stuarts. After the Restoration, James Philips barely escaped execution as a regicide, had his estates confiscated, and lost his seat in Parliament, but Katherine became a favorite at court, promoted by her friend Sir Charles Cotterell ("Poliarchus"), who was master of ceremonies. In Ireland attempting (unsuccessfully) to redeem an investment, she translated Corneille's *Porapey* and her friend the Earl of Orrery produced and printed it in Dublin in 1663. The first edition of her poems, apparently pirated, appeared in 1664, the same year she died of smallpox. Her friend Cotterell brought out an authorized edition in 1667.

A Married State¹

A married state affords but little ease
 The best of husbands are so hard to please.
 This in wives' careful⁰ faces you may spell⁰ *full of cares/read*
 Though they dissemble their misfortunes well.
 5 A virgin state is crowned with much content;²
 It's always happy as it's innocent.
 No blustering husbands to create your fears;
 No pangs of childbirth to extort your tears;
 No children's cries for to offend your ears;
 10 Few worldly crosses to distract your prayers:
 Thus are you freed from all the cares that do
 Attend on matrimony and a husband too.
 Therefore Madam, be advised by me
 Turn, turn apostate to love's levity,
 15 Suppress wild nature if she dare rebel.
 There's no such thing as leading apes in hell.³

ca. 1646

Ms; 1988

Upon the Double Murder of King Charles

In Answer to a Libelous Rhyme made by V. P.¹

I think not on the state, nor am concerned
 Which way soever that great helm² is turned,
 But as that son whose father's danger nigh
 Did force his native dumbness, and untie
 5 His fettered organs: so here is a cause
 That will excuse the breach of nature's laws.³
 Silence were now a sin: nay passion now
 Wise men themselves for merit would allow.⁴
 What noble eye could see (and careless pass)
 10 The dying lion lacked by every ass?
 Hath Charles so broke God's laws, he must not have
 A quiet crown, nor yet a quiet grave?
 Tombs have been sanctuaries; thieves lie here
 Secure from all their penalty and fear.
 15 Great Charles his double misery was this,

1. In a manuscript (Orielson MSS Box 24 at the National Library of Wales) this poem appears with another by Philips, addressed to Anne Barlow (whom she probably met in 1646); this one is probably also for Barlow. Both are signed by her maiden name, C. Fowler, so were evidently written before her marriage in 1648.

2. Praise of the single life is a common topic in women's poetry.

3. Proverbially, the fate of spinsters.

4. The itinerant Welsh preacher Vavasour Powell was a Fifth Monarchist and an ardent republican who justified the regicide on the ground that Christ's second coming was imminent, when he

would rule with his saints, putting down all earthly kings. His poem and Philips's answer were likely written shortly after Charles I's execution (January 30, 1649). Powell's poem has been published by Elizabeth H. Hageman in *English Manuscript Studies*.

2. Steering wheel for the "ships" of state.

3. Breaking the supposed law of nature that excludes women from speaking about public affairs.

4. Wise men, especially Stoic philosophers, normally counsel the firm control or elimination of passions.

Unfaithful friends, ignoble enemies;
 Had any heathen been this prince's foe,
 He would have wept to see him injured so.
 His title was his crime, they'd reason good
 20 To quarrel at the right they had withstood.
 He broke God's laws, and therefore he must die,
 And what shall then become of thee and I?
 Slander must follow treason; but yet stay,
 Take not our reason with our king away.
 25 Though you have seized upon all our defense,
 Yet do not sequester^o our common sense.
 But I admire^o not at this new supply:
 No bounds will hold those who at scepters fly.
 Christ will be King, but I ne'er understood,
 30 His subjects built his kingdom up with blood
 (Except their own) or that he would dispense
 With his commands, though for his own defense.
 Oh! to what height of horror are they come
 Who dare pull down a crown, tear up a tomb!⁵

confiscate
wonder

1649?

1664

Friendship's Mystery, To My Dearest *Lucasia*¹

1

Come, my *Lucasia*, since we see
 That miracles men's faith do move,
 By wonder and by prodigy
 To the dull angry world let's prove
 5 There's a religion in our love.

2

For though we were designed t' agree,
 That fate no liberty destroys,
 But our election is as free
 As angels, who with greedy choice
 10 Are yet determined to their joys.²

3

Our hearts are doubled by the loss,
 Here mixture is addition grown;
 We both diffuse,^o and both engross:^o
 And we whose minds are so much one,
 15 Never, yet ever are alone.

spread out / collect

5. Their slanders tear up Charles's tomb after his death.

1. This poem was first printed, with a musical setting by the royalist musician and composer Henry Lawes, as "Mutual Affection betweene *Orinda* and *Lucasia*" in Lawes's *The Second Book of Ayres* (1655); our text is from *Poems by the Most Deserv-*

edly Admired Mrs. Katherine Philips, the Matchless Orinda (1667). *Lucasia* is Philips's name for her friend Anne Owen.

2. Angels, though created with free will, were thought to have become fixed in goodness when they turned toward God in the first moments after their creation.

4

We court our own captivity
 Than thrones more great and innocent:
 Twere banishment to be set free,
 Since we wear fetters whose intent
 20 Not bondage is, but ornament.

5

Divided joys are tedious found,
 And griefs united easier grow:
 We are selves but by rebound,
 And all our titles shuffled so,
 25 Both princes, and both subjects too.³

6

Our hearts are mutual victims laid,
 While they (such power in friendship lies)
 Are altars, priests, and off'rings made:
 And each heart which thus kindly⁰ dies, *benevolently, naturally*
 30 Grows deathless by the sacrifice.

1655, 1664

To Mrs. M. A.¹ at Parting

I have examined and do find,
 Of all that favor me
 There's none I grieve to leave behind
 But only only thee.
 5 To part with thee I needs must die,
 Could parting separate thee and I.

But neither chance nor compliment
 Did element our love:
 Twas sacred sympathy was lent
 10 Us from the choir above.
 (That friendship fortune did create,
 Still fears a wound from time or fate.)

Our changed and mingled souls are grown
 To such acquaintance now,
 15 That if each would resume their own,
 Alas! we know not how.
 We have each other so engrossed⁰
 That each is in the union lost.²

absorbed

3. Compare Donne, "The Sun Rising", line 21: "She is all states, and all princes, I" (p. 1266).

1. M. A. was Mary Aubrey, the first and, until she married, the dearest member of Philips's "Society of Friendship." Orinda's valedictory poem to her—which Keats admired enough to copy it out in full

in an early letter—recalls some of Donne's lyrics, especially "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" (p. 1275).

2. These lines play upon the Neoplatonic idea of friendship and spiritual love—two souls become one.

And thus we can no absence know,
 20 Nor shall we be confined;
 Our active souls will daily go
 To learn each other's mind.
 Nay, should we never meet to sense,⁰ *physically*
 Our souls would hold intelligence.⁰ *would still commune*

25 Inspired with a flame divine,
 I scorn to court a stay;³
 For from that noble soul of thine
 I ne'er can be away.
 But I shall weep when thou dost grieve;
 30 Nor can I die whilst thou dost live.

By my own temper I shall guess
 At thy felicity,
 And only like my happiness
 Because it pleaseth thee.
 35 Our hearts at any time will tell
 If thou or I be sick or well.

All honor, sure, I must pretend,⁰ *aspire to*
 All that is good or great:
 She that would be Rosania's⁴ friend
 40 Must be at least complete.
 If I have any bravery,⁰ *splendor*
 Tis cause I have so much of thee.

Thy leiger⁰ soul in me shall lie, *ambassadorial*
 And all thy thoughts reveal;
 45 Then back again with mine shall fly,
 And thence to me shall steal.
 Thus still to one another tend:
 Such is the sacred name of friend.

Thus our twin souls in one shall grow,
 50 And teach the world new love,
 Redeem the age and sex, and show
 A flame fate dares not move:
 And courting death to be our friend,
 Our lives, together too, shall end.

55 A dew shall dwell upon our tomb
 Of such a quality
 That fighting armies, thither come,
 Shall reconciled be.
 We'll ask no epitaph, but say:
 60 ORINDA and ROSANIA.

On the Death of My First and Dearest Child,
Hector Philips'

Twice forty months in wedlock² I did stay,
Then had my vows crowned with a lovely boy.
And yet in forty days³ he dropped away;
O swift vicissitude of human joy!

5 I did but see him, and he disappeared,
I did but touch the rosebud, and it fell;
A sorrow unforeseen and scarcely feared,
So ill can mortals their afflictions spell.⁰ *discern*

io And now, sweet babe, what can my trembling heart
Suggest to right my doleful fate or thee?
Tears are my muse, and sorrow all my art,
So piercing groans must be thy elegy.

Thus whilst no eye is witness of my moan,
I grieve thy loss (ah, boy too dear to live!),
15 And let the unconcerned world alone,
Who neither will, nor can, refreshment give.

An off'ring too for thy sad tomb I have,
Too just a tribute to thy early hearse.
Receive these gasping numbers to thy grave,
20 The last of thy unhappy mother's verse.⁴

1655

1667

1. In Philips's manuscript the subtitle reads, "born the 23d of April, and died the 2d of May 1655. Set by Mr. Lawes." The musical setting has been published by Joan Applegate in *English Manuscript Studies*.

2. Philips was married in August 1648.

3. The subtitle indicates that he lived barely ten days; the change here is clearly for the parallelism.

4. This was not in fact Philips's last poem, but the sentiment is both true to human feeling and common in elegy. She had one other child, a year later—a daughter, Katherine, who survived her.

ANDREW MARVELL

1621-1678

Andrew Marvell's finest poems are second to none in this or any other period. He wrote less than Donne, Jonson, and Herbert did, but his range was in some ways greater, as he claimed both the private worlds of love and religion and the public worlds of political and satiric poetry and prose. His overriding concern with art, his elegant, well-crafted, limpid style, and the cool balance and reserve of some poems align him with Jonson. Yet his paradoxes and complexities of tone, his use of dramatic monologue, and his witty, dialectical arguments associate him with Donne. Above all, he is a supremely original poet, so complex and elusive that it is often hard to know what he really thought about the subjects he treated. Many of his poems were published posthumously in 1681, some thirty years after they were written, by a woman

who claimed to be his widow but was probably his housekeeper. So their date and order of composition is often in doubt, as is his authorship of some anonymous works.

The son of a Church of England clergyman, Marvell grew up in Yorkshire, attended Trinity College, Cambridge (perhaps deriving the persistent strain of Neoplatonism in his poetry from the academics known as the Cambridge Platonists), ran off to London, and converted to Roman Catholicism until his father put an end to both ventures. He returned to Cambridge, took his degree in 1639, and stayed on as a scholar until his father's death in 1641. During the years of the civil wars (1642—48), he traveled in France, Italy, Holland, and Spain; much later he said of the Puritan "Good Old Cause" that it was "too good to have been fought for." While his earliest poems associate him with royalists, those after 1649 celebrate the Commonwealth and Oliver Cromwell; although he is sometimes ambivalent, Marvell recognizes divine providence in the political changes. From 1650 to 1652 he lived at Nunappleton as tutor to the twelve-year-old daughter of Thomas Fairfax, who had given over his command of the parliamentary army to Cromwell because he was unwilling to invade Scotland. In these years of retirement and ease, Marvell probably wrote most of his love lyrics and pastorals as well as *Upon Appleton House*. Subsequently he was tutor to Cromwell's ward, William Dutton, and traveled with him on the Continent; in 1657 he joined the blind Milton, at Milton's request, in the post of Latin secretary to Cromwell's Council of State. Marvell accepted the Restoration but maintained his own independent vision and his abiding belief in religious toleration, a mixed state, and constitutional government. He helped his friend Milton avoid execution for his revolutionary polemics and helped negotiate Milton's release from a brief imprisonment. Elected a member of Parliament in 1659 from his hometown, Hull, in Yorkshire, he held that post until 1678, focusing his attention on the needs of his district; on two occasions he went on diplomatic missions—to Holland and Russia. His (necessarily anonymous) antiroyalist polemics of these years include several verse satires on Charles II and his ministers, as well as his best-known prose work, *The Rehearsal Transposed* (1672—73), which defends Puritan dissenters and denounces censorship with verve and wit. He also wrote a brilliant poem of criticism and interpretation on Milton's *Paradise Lost* that was prefixed to the second edition (1674).

Many of Marvell's poems explore the human condition in terms of fundamental dichotomies that resist resolution. In religious or philosophical poems like "The Coronet" or "The Dialogue Between the Soul and Body", the conflict is between nature and grace, or body and soul, or poetic creation and sacrifice. In love poems such as "The Definition of Love" or "To His Coy Mistress" it is often between flesh and spirit, or physical sex and platonic love, or idealizing courtship and the ravages of time. In pastorals like the Mower poems and "The Garden," the opposition is between nature and art, or the fallen and the Edenic state, or violent passion and contentment. Marvell's most subtle and complex political poem, "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland," sets stable traditional order and ancient right against providential revolutionary change, and the goods and costs of retirement and peace against those of action and war. *Upon Appleton House* also opposes the attractions of various kinds of retirement to the duties of action and reformation.

Marvell experimented with style and genre to striking effect. Many of his dramatic monologues are voiced by named, naive personas—the Mower, the Nymph—who stand at some remove from the author. One of his most remarkable figures—the phrase "To a green thought in a green shade," from "The Garden"—derives its power from the unanalyzable suggestiveness the poem invests in the term "green." "To His Coy Mistress," perhaps the best known of the century's *carpe diem* poems, is voiced by a witty and urbane speaker in balanced and artful couplets. But its rapid shifts from the world of fantasy to the charnal house of reality raise questions as to whether this is a clever seduction poem or a probing of existential angst, and whether Marvell intends to endorse or critique this speaker's view of passion and sex. In *Upon Appleton House* Marvell transforms the static, mythic features of Jonson's country-house

poem "To Penshurst" to create a poem of epiclike scope that incorporates history and the conflicts of contemporary society. It assimilates to the course of providential history the topographical features of the Fairfax estate, the Fairfax family myth of origin, the experiences of the poet-tutor on his progress around the estate, and the activities and projected future of the daughter of the house. In the poem's rich symbolism, biblical events—Eden, the first temptation, the Fall, the wilderness experience of the Israelites—find echoes in the experiences of the Fairfax family, the speaker, the history of the English Reformation, and the wanton destruction of the recent civil wars.

FROM POEMS¹The Coronet²

When for the thorns with which I long, too long,
 With many a piercing wound,
 My Savior's head have crowned,
 I seek with garlands to redress that wrong,
 5 Through every garden, every mead,
 I gather flowers (my fruits are only flowers),
 Dismantling all the fragrant towers⁰ *high headdress*
 That once adorned my shepherdess's head:
 And now, when I have summed up all my store,
 10 Thinking (so I myself deceive)
 So rich a chaplet⁰ thence to weave *wreath*
 As never yet the King of Glory wore,
 Alas! I find the serpent old,³
 That, twining⁰ in his speckled breast, *entwining*
 is About the flowers disguised does fold
 With wreaths of fame and interest.⁴
 Ah, foolish man, that wouldst debase with them,
 And mortal glory, heaven's diadem!
 But thou who only couldst the serpent tame,
 20 Either his slippery knots at once untie,
 And disentangle all his winding snare,
 Or shatter too with him my curious frame,⁰ *elaborate construction*
 And let these wither, so that he may die,
 Though set with skill and chosen out with care;
 25 That they, while thou on both their spoils dost tread,⁵
 May crown thy feet, that could not crown thy head.

1650-52

1681

1. Marvell's lyrics were published posthumously in 1681.

2. A floral wreath, also a garland of poems of praise.

3. Alludes to the serpent that tempted Eve (Gen-

esis 3), traditionally understood to be an instrument for Satan.

4. Self-glorification, self-advancement.

5. See the curse on the serpent (Genesis 3.15), that the seed of Eve will bruise his head.

Bermudas¹

Where the remote Bermudas ride
 In th' ocean's bosom unespied,
 From a small boat that rowed along,
 The listening winds received this song:

- 5 "What should we do but sing His praise
 That led us through the wat'ry maze
 Unto an isle so long unknown,
 And yet far kinder than our own?
 Where He the huge sea monsters wracks,²
 10 That lift the deep upon their backs;
 He lands us on a grassy stage,
 Safe from the storms, and prelate's rage.³
 He gave us this eternal spring
 Which here enamels everything,
 15 And sends the fowls to us in care,
 On daily visits through the air;
 He hangs in shades the orange bright,
 Like golden lamps in a green night,
 And does in the pomegranates close
 20 Jewels more rich than Ormus⁴ shows;
 He makes the figs our mouths to meet,
 And throws the melons at our feet;
 But apples⁰ plants of such a price, *pineapples*
 No tree could ever bear them twice;
 25 With cedars, chosen by his hand
 From Lebanon, he stores the land;
 And makes the hollow seas that roar
 Proclaim the ambergris⁵ on shore;
 He cast (of which we rather⁰ boast) *more properly*
 30 The gospel's pearl upon our coast,
 And in these rocks for us did frame
 A temple, where to sound his name.
 O let our voice his praise exalt
 Till it arrive at heaven's vault,
 35 Which, thence (perhaps) rebounding, may
 Echo beyond the Mexique B a y . *G u l f of Mexico*

Thus sung they in the English boat
 An holy and a cheerful note;

1. Otherwise known as the Summer Isles, the Bermudas were described in travel books like John Smith's *The General History of Virginia, New England, and the Summer Isles (1624)* as an Edenic paradise. The poem was probably written after 1653, when Marvell took up residence in the house of John Oxenbridge, who had twice visited the Bermudas.

2. Probably an allusion to the event described in

Edmund Waller's mock epic, a battle between the Bermudans and two stranded whales.

3. The Puritan settlers in Bermuda have escaped both the dangers of the sea voyage and religious persecution at home.

4. Hormuz, a pearl- and jewel-trading center in the Persian Gulf.

5. A substance found in sperm whales that was used in the manufacture of expensive perfume.

And all the way, to guide their chime,
40 With falling oars they kept the time.

ca. 1650-52

1681

A Dialogue Between the Soul and Body¹

SOUL O, who shall from this dungeon raise
A soul enslaved so many ways?²
With bolts of bones, that fettered stands
In feet, and manacled in hands.
5 Here blinded with an eye, and there
Deaf with the drumming of an ear;
A soul hung up, as 'twere, in chains
Of nerves, and arteries, and veins;
Tortured, besides each other part,
10 In a vain head and double heart.

BODY O, who shall me deliver whole
From bonds of this tyrannic soul?
Which, stretched upright, impales me so
That mine own precipice³ I go;
15 And warms and moves this needless⁰ frame *without needs*
(A fever could but do the same),
And, wanting where⁰ its spite to try, *lacking an object*
Has made me live to let me die.
A body that could never rest
20 Since this ill spirit it possessed.

SOUL What magic could me thus confine
Within another's grief to pine?
Where, whatsoever it complain,⁰ *suffer, complain of*
I feel, that cannot feel,⁴ the pain;
25 And all my care itself employs,
That to preserve which me destroys;
Constrained not only to endure
Diseases, but, what's worse, the cure;
And, ready oft the port to gain,
30 Am shipwrecked into health again.

BODY But physic⁰ yet could never reach *medicine*
The maladies thou me dost teach:
Whom first the cramp of hope does tear,
And then the palsy shakes of fear;
35 The pestilence of love does heat,
Or hatred's hidden ulcer eat;

1. The poem derives from the medieval *debat* (debate) on this theme but alters the usual ending, which gives a clear victory to the soul.

2. The soul echoes Romans 7.24: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body

of this death?"

3. Having a soul allows humans to walk erect and so face the danger of falling.

4. The soul can sympathize ("feel") though it has no power of physical sensation.

Joy's cheerful madness does perplex,
 Or sorrow's other madness vex;
 Which knowledge forces me to know,
 40 And memory will not forego.
 What but a soul could have the wit
 To build me up for sin so fit:¹
 So architects do square and hew
 Green trees that in the forest grew.

ca. 1650-52

1681

The Nymph Complaining for the Death of Her Fawn¹

The wanton troopers² riding by
 Have shot my fawn, and it will die.
 Ungentle men! They cannot thrive
 To kill thee. Thou ne'er didst alive
 5 Them any harm; alas, nor could
 Thy death yet do them any good.
 I'm sure I never wished them ill,
 Nor do I for all this, nor will:
 But if my simple prayers may yet
 10 Prevail with heaven to forget
 Thy murder, I will join my tears
 Rather than fail. But, O my fears!
 It cannot die so. Heaven's king
 Keeps register of everything,
 15 And nothing may we use in vain.
 Even beasts must be with justice slain,
 Else men are made their deodands.³
 Though they should wash their guilty hands
 In this warm lifeblood, which doth part
 20 From thine, and wound me to the heart,
 Yet could they not be clean; their stain
 Is dyed in such a purple grain.
 There is not such another in
 The world to offer for their sin.
 1 25 Unconstant Sylvio, when yet
 I had not found him counterfeit,⁰ *false, deceitful*
 One morning (I remember well),
 Tied in this silver chain and bell,
 Gave it to me; nay, and I know
 30 What he said then, I'm sure I do.

1. The lament for the death of a pet is an ancient topic dating back to Catullus and Ovid; the closest analogue may be Virgil's story of Sylvia's deer killed wantonly by the Trojans (*Aeneid* 7.475ff). John Skelton has a mock-heroic poem on "Philip Sparrow." There are also echoes of the Song of Songs, which have prompted critical debate as to whether Marvell uses them with serious allegorical import or the nymph uses them quite inappropriately.

2. Soldiers of the invading Scots army were called "troopers" (ca. 1640), as were, sometimes, soldiers of Cromwell's New Model Army.

3. In English law, animals or objects forfeited to the Crown (literally, to God) because they were the immediate cause of a human being's death. The nymph applies the term to persons who cause the death of animals.

Said he, Look how your huntsman here
 Hath taught a fawn to hunt his dear.
 But Sylvio soon had me beguiled;
 This waxed tame, while he grew wild,
 35 And quite regardless of my smart,
 Left me his fawn, but took his heart.⁴
 Thenceforth I set myself to play
 My solitary time away
 With this; and very well content
 40 Could so mine idle life have spent.
 For it was full of sport, and light
 Of foot and heart, and did invite
 Me to its game. It seemed to bless
 Itself in me; how could I less
 45 Than love it? O I cannot be
 Unkind t' a beast that loveth me.
 Had it lived long, I do not know
 Whether it too might have done so
 As Sylvio did; his gifts might be
 50 Perhaps as false or more than he.
 But I am sure, for aught that I
 Could in so short a time espy,
 Thy love was far more better than
 The love of false and cruel men.
 55 With sweetest milk and sugar first
 I it at mine own fingers nursed.
 And as it grew, so every day
 It waxed more sweet and white than they.
 It had so sweet a breath! and oft
 60 I blushed to see its foot more soft
 And white—shall I say than my hand?—
 Nay, any lady's of the land.
 It is a wondrous thing how fleet
 'Twas on those little silver feet,
 65 With what a pretty skipping grace
 It oft would challenge me the race;
 And when it had left me far away,
 'Twould stay, and run again, and stay.
 For it was nimbler much than hinds,⁵
 70 And trod, as on the four winds.
 I have a garden of my own
 But so with roses overgrown
 And lilies that you would it guess
 To be a little wilderness.
 75 And all the springtime of the year
 It only loved to be there.
 Among the beds of lilies, JU-
 Have sought it oft where it should lie,
 Yet could not, till itself would rise,
 80 Find it, although before mine eyes.

4. A pun: heart/hart (a deer); line 32 also puns on dear/deer.

5. I.e., full-grown deer.

For in the flaxen lilies' shade
 It like a bank of lilies laid.
 Upon the roses it would feed.
 Until its lips ev'n seemed to bleed;
 85 And then to me 'twould boldly trip
 And print those roses on my lip.
 But all its chief delight was still
 On roses thus itself to fill,
 And its pure virgin limbs to fold
 90 In whitest sheets of lilies cold.
 Had it lived long, it would have been
 Lilies without, roses within.
 O help! O help! I see it faint,
 And die as calmly as a saint.
 95 See how it weeps.⁶ The tears do come
 Sad, slowly dropping like a gum.
 So weeps the wounded balsam, so
 The holy frankincense doth flow.⁷
 The brotherless Heliades
 100 Melt in such amber tears as these.⁸
 I in a golden vial will
 Keep these two crystal tears, and fill
 It till it do o'erflow with mine,
 Then place it in Diana's shrine.⁹
 105 Now my sweet fawn is vanished to
 Whither the swans and turtles⁰ go,
 In fair Elysium¹ to endure
 With milk-white lambs and ermines pure.
 O do not run too fast, for I
 110 Will but bespeak⁰ thy grave, and die.
 First my unhappy statue shall
 Be cut in marble, and withal,
 Let it be weeping too; but there
 Th' engraver sure his art may spare,
 115 For I so truly thee bemoan
 That I shall weep, though I be stone:²
 Until my tears, still dropping, wear
 My breast, themselves engraving there.
 There at my feet shalt thou be laid,
 120 Of purest alabaster made;
 For I would have thine image be
 White as I can, though not as thee.

*turtledoves**give orders for*

ca. 1650-52

1681

6. Deer were supposed to weep as they died.

7. Both balsam and frankincense are fragrant resins obtained a drop at a time from trees with holes bored in them.

8. The three daughters of the sun (Helios), grieving the death of their rash brother Phaethon, were transformed to black poplar trees dropping "tears"

of amber.

9. Diana was the goddess of chastity and woodland creatures; nymphs were her attendants.

1. The Elysian fields, a pagan version of heaven.

2. Niobe, lamenting the death of her many children, in whom she took inordinate pride, was turned to stone.

To His Coy Mistress

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.
 5 Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
 Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
 Of Humber would complain.¹ I would
 Love you ten years before the Flood,
 And you should, if you please, refuse
 io Till the conversion of the Jews.²
 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;
 15 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,⁰ *dignity*
 20 Nor would I love at lower rate.
 But at my back I always hear
 Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
 And yonder all before us lie
 Deserts of vast eternity.
 25 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 quaint³ honor turn to dust,
 30 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,⁴
 35 And while thy willing soul transpires
 At every pore with instant fires,⁵
 Now let us sport us while we may,
 And now, like amorous birds of prey,
 Rather at once our time devour
 40 Than languish in his slow-chapped⁶ power.
 Let us roll all our strength and all
 Our sweetness up into one ball,
 And tear our pleasures with rough strife

1. The exotic river Ganges in India is on one side of the world, the Humber River flows past Mar-veil's city, Hull, on the opposite side. Complaints are poems of plaintive, unavailing love.

2. Popular belief had it that the Jews were to be converted just before the Last Judgment. The exaggerated offers in this stanza play off against conventional hyperbolic declarations of love in

Petrarchan poetry.

3. "Quaint" puns on "out of date" and *qneynte*, a term for the female genitals.

4. The text reads "glew," which could be correct, but "dew" is a common emendation.

5. Urgent, sudden enthusiasm. "Transpires": breathes forth.

6. Slowly devouring jaws.

Thorough⁰ the iron gates of life:⁷ *through*
 45 Thus, though we cannot make our sun
 Stand still, yet we will make him run.⁸

ca. 1650-52

1681

The Definition of Love

My Love is of a birth as rare
 As 'tis, for object, strange and high;
 It was begotten by Despair
 Upon Impossibility.

5 Magnanimous Despair alone
 Could show me so divine a thing,
 Where feeble Hope could ne'er have flown
 But vainly flapped its tinsel wing.

And yet I quickly might arrive
 10 Where my extended soul is fixed;¹
 But Fate does iron wedges drive,
 And always crowds itself betwixt.

For Fate with jealous eye does see
 Two perfect loves, nor lets them close;⁰ *unite*
 15 Their union would her ruin be,
 And her tyrannic power depose.²

And therefore her decrees of steel
 Us as the distant poles have placed
 (Though Love's whole world on us doth wheel),³
 20 Not by themselves to be embraced,

Unless the giddy heaven fall,
 And earth some new convulsion tear,
 And, us to join, the world should all
 Be cramped into a planisphere.⁴

25 As lines, so loves oblique may well
 Themselves in every angle greet;⁵
 But ours, so truly parallel,
 Though infinite, can never meet.

7. One manuscript reads "grates," a somewhat different figure for the sexual act proposed.

8. The sun stood still for Joshua (Joshua 10.12) in his war against Gibeon; see the very different resolution in Donne's "The Sun Rising" (p. 1266).

1. The soul has extended itself from the speaker's body and fixed itself to his lover.

2. Two perfections, united, would not be subject to change and thereby to Fate.

3. Rotates as on its axis.

4. A two-dimensional map of the world; Marvell images a round globe collapsed into a flat pancake shape, top to bottom, which would bring the two poles together.

5. Oblique lines can touch in angles, as might "oblique" lovers that (in one meaning of the term) "deviate from right conduct or thought."

Therefore the Love which us doth bind,
 30 But Fate so enviously debars,
 Is the conjunction of the mind,
 And opposition of the stars.⁶

ca. 1650-52

1681

The Picture of Little T. C. in a Prospect of Flowers¹

See with what simplicity
 This nymph begins her golden days!
 In the green grass she loves to lie,
 And there with her fair aspect tames
 5 The wilder flowers and gives them names,
 But only with the roses plays,
 And them does tell
 What color best becomes them and what smell.

Who can foretell for what high cause
 10 This darling of the gods was born?
 Yet this is she whose chaster laws
 The wanton Love shall one day fear,
 And under her command severe
 See his bow broke and ensigns⁰ torn. *flags, pennants*
 15 Happy who can
 Appease this virtuous enemy of man!

O then let me in time compound⁰ *come to terms*
 And parley with those conquering eyes
 Ere they have tried their force to wound,
 20 Ere with their glancing wheels they drive
 In triumph over hearts that strive
 And them that yield but more despise:
 Let me be laid
 Where I may see thy glories from some shade.

25 Meantime, whilst every verdant thing
 Itself does at thy beauty charm,
 Reform the errors of the spring;
 Make that the tulips may have share
 Of sweetness, seeing they are fair;
 30 And roses of their thorns disarm:
 But most procure
 That violets may a longer age endure.

But O, young beauty of the woods,
 Whom Nature courts with fruit and flowers,

6. "Conjunction" is the coming together of two heavenly bodies in the same sign of the zodiac; "opposition" places them at diametrical opposites.

1. The little girl, T. C., has not been identified with any certainty. "Prospect": landscape.

35 Gather the flowers but spare the buds,
 Lest Flora,² angry at thy crime
 To kill her infants in their prime,
 Do quickly make th' example yours;
 And ere we see,
 40 Nip in the blossom all our hopes and thee.

ca. 1650-52

1681

The Mower Against Gardens¹

Luxurious⁰ man, to bring his vice in use,²
 Did after him the world seduce,
 And from the fields the flowers and plants allure,
 Where Nature was most plain and pure.
 5 He first enclosed within the garden's square
 A dead and standing pool of air,
 And a more luscious earth for them did knead,
 Which stupefied them while it fed.
 The pink grew then as double as his mind;³
 10 The nutriment did change the kind.
 With strange perfumes he did the roses taint;
 And flowers themselves were taught to paint.
 The tulip white did for complexion seek,
 And learned to interline its cheek;
 15 Its onion root they then so high did hold,
 That one was for a meadow sold;⁴
 Another world was searched through oceans new,
 To find the marvel of Peru;⁵
 And yet these rarities might be allowed
 20 To man, that sovereign thing and proud,
 Had he not dealt between the bark and tree,⁶
 Forbidden mixtures there to see.
 No plant now knew the stock from which it came;
 He grafts upon the wild the tame,
 25 That the uncertain and adult'rate fruit
 Might put the palate in dispute.
 His green seraglio⁷ has its eunuchs too,
 Lest any tyrant him outdo;
 And in the cherry he does Nature vex,
 30 To procreate without a sex.⁸
 Tis all enforced, the fountain and the grot,⁰

*voluptuous**grotto*

2. Roman goddess of flowers.

1. The four "Mower" poems are linked by their treatment of a distinctly unusual pastoral figure, a mower rather than a shepherd or goatherd, who provides a singular perspective on those familiar pastoral topics, nature versus art and nature's sympathy for man (the pathetic fallacy). As mower wielding a scythe, he evokes other figures (Time, Death).

2. Into common practice.

3. The double pink, or carnation, is a product of

sophisticated ("double") minds.

4. A highly lucrative trade in Dutch tulip bulbs flourished during the 17th century.

5. *Mirabilis jalapa*, the four-o'clock, was an exotic, multicolored flower found originally in tropical America.

6. An adage for interfering between husband and wife, in reference, apparently, to grafting.

7. Enclosure, a harem in a sultan's palace.

8. Cherries were commonly propagated by grafting.

While the sweet fields do lie forgot,
 Where willing Nature does to all dispense
 A wild and fragrant innocence;
 35 And fauns and fairies do the meadows till
 More by their presence than their skill.
 Their statues polished by some ancient hand
 May to adorn the gardens stand;
 But, howsoe'er the figures do excel,
 40 The gods themselves with us do dwell.

ca. 1650-52

1681

Damon the Mower

Hark how the mower Damon sung,
 With love of Juliana stung!¹
 While everything did seem to paint
 The scene more fit for his complaint.²
 5 Like her fair eyes the day was fair,
 But scorching like his amorous care;
 Sharp, like his scythe, his sorrow was,
 And withered, like his hopes, the grass.

 "Oh what unusual heats are here,
 10 Which thus our sunburned meadows sear!
 The grasshopper its pipe gives o'er,
 And hamstringed⁰ frogs can dance no more:
 But in the brook the green frog wades,
 And grasshoppers seek out the shades.
 15 Only the snake, that kept within,
 Now glitters in its second skin.

 "This heat the sun could never raise,
 Nor Dog Star so inflame the days;³
 It from an higher beauty grow'th,
 20 Which burns the fields and mower both;
 Which mads the dog, and makes the sun
 Hotter than his own Phaeton.⁴
 Not July causeth these extremes,
 But Juliana's scorching beams.

 25 "Tell me where I may pass the fires
 Of the hot day or hot desires,
 To what cool cave shall I descend,
 Or to what gelid⁰ fountain bend?
 Alas! I look for ease in vain,

*disabled**icy*

1. Damon is a familiar classical name in pastoral; Juliana gets her name from July (lines 23—24).
 2. The plaintive love song of an unrequited lover.
 3. The Dog Star (Sirius in the constellation Canis Major) rises with the sun in late summer, produc-

ing the heats of "dog days."
 4. Phaethon, son of Helios, the sun god of Greek mythology; he tried to drive his father's chariot but let the horses run away and scorched the world.

30 When remedies themselves complain:⁵
 No moisture but my tears do rest,
 No cold but in her icy breast.

"How long wilt thou, fair shepherdess,
 Esteem me and my presents less?

35 To thee the harmless snake I bring,
 Disarmed of its teeth and sting;
 To thee chameleons, changing hue,
 And oak leaves tipped with honeydew;
 Yet thou, ungrateful, hast not sought
 40 Nor what they are, nor who them brought.

"I am the mower Damon, known
 Through all the meadows I have mown.
 On me the morn her dew distills
 Before her darling daffodils,

45 And if at noon my toil me heat,
 The sun himself licks off my sweat;
 While, going home, the evening sweet
 In cowslip-water bathes my feet.

"What though the piping shepherd stock
 50 The plains with an unnumbered flock?
 This scythe of mine discovers⁰ wide
 More ground than all his sheep do hide.
 With this the golden fleece I shear
 Of all these closes every year,⁶

55 And though in wool more poor than they,
 Yet I am richer far in hay.

uncovers

"Nor am I so deformed to sight
 If in my scythe I looked right;
 In which I see my picture done

60 As in a crescent moon the sun.
 The deathless fairies take me oft
 To lead them in their dances soft,
 And when I tune myself to sing,
 About me they contract their ring.⁷

65 "How happy might I still have mowed,
 Had not Love here his thistles sowed!
 But now I all the day complain,
 Joining my labor to my pain;
 And with my scythe cut down the grass,
 70 Yet still my grief is where it was;
 But when the iron blunter grows,
 Sighing, I whet my scythe and woes."

5. I.e., fountain and cave themselves complain of unusual heat.

6. Hay is the "wool" of the fields ("closes").

7. I.e., the "fair" ring, a discolored circle of grass popularly supposed to result from fairies dancing there.

While thus he threw his elbow round,
 Depopulating all the ground,
 75 And with his whistling scythe does cut
 Each stroke between the earth and root,
 The edged steel, by careless chance,
 Did into his own ankle glance,
 And there among the grass fell down⁸
 80 By his own scythe the mower mown.

"Alas!" said he, "these hurts are slight
 To those that die by Love's despite.
 With shepherd's purse and clown's⁹ all-heal⁹ *rustic's*
 The blood I stanch and wound I seal.
 85 Only for him no cure is found
 Whom Juliana's eyes do wound.
 'Tis Death alone that this must do;
 For, Death, thou art a mower too."

ca. 1650-52

1681

The Mower to the Glowworms

Ye living lamps, by whose dear light
 The nightingale does sit so late,
 And studying all the summer night
 Her matchless songs does meditate,
 5 Ye country comets, that portend
 No war nor prince's funeral,
 Shining unto no higher end
 Than to presage the grass's fall;
 Ye glowworms, whose officious⁹ flame *helpful*
 10 To wand'ring mowers shows the way,
 That in the night have lost their aim,
 And after foolish fires⁹ do stray; *will-o'-the-wisps*
 Your courteous fires in vain you waste,
 Since Juliana here is come,
 15 For she my mind hath so displaced
 That I shall never find my home.

ca. 1650-52

1681

8. Evokes the biblical phrase "All flesh is grass" (Isaiah 40.6).

9. Folk names for popular remedies to heal wounds, found in fields and hedges.

The Mower's Song

My mind was once the true survey
 Of all these meadows fresh and gay,
 And in the greenness of the grass
 Did see its hopes¹ as in a glass;⁰ *mirror*
 5 When Juliana came, and she,
 What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me.²

But these, while I with sorrow pine,
 Grew more luxuriant still and fine,
 That not one blade of grass you spied
 10 But had a flower on either side;
 When Juliana came, and she,
 What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me.

Unthankful meadows, could you so
 A fellowship so true forego,
 15 And in your gaudy May-games³ meet,
 While I lay trodden under feet?
 When Juliana came, and she,
 What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me.

But what you in compassion ought
 20 Shall now by my revenge be wrought,
 And flowers, and grass, and I, and all,
 Will in one common ruin fall;
 For Juliana comes, and she,
 What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me.

And thus ye meadows, which have been
 Companions of my thoughts more green,
 Shall now the heraldry become
 With which I shall adorn my tomb;
 For Juliana comes, and she,
 30 What I do to the grass, does to my thoughts and me.

ca. 1650-52

1681

The Garden

How vainly men themselves amaze⁰ *bewilder*
 To win the palm, the oak, or bays,¹
 And their uncessant labors see
 Crowned from some single herb or tree,
 5 Whose short and narrow-verged⁰ shade *edged*

1. Green is the color of hope.
 2. The alexandrine (twelve-syllable line) used here
 is the only example of a refrain in Marvell.
 3. Festivals and merrymaking marked the first of

May, May Day.
 1. Honors, respectively, for military, civic, and
 poetic achievement.

Does prudently their toils upbraid;⁰ *reprove*
 While all flowers and all trees do close⁰ *unite, agree*
 To weave the garlands of repose!

Fair Quiet, have I found thee here,
 10 And Innocence, thy sister dear?
 Mistaken long, I sought you then
 In busy companies of men.
 Your sacred plants, if here below,⁰ *on earth.*
 Only among the plants will grow;
 15 Society is all but rude,
 To^o this delicious solitude. *compared to*

No white nor red² was ever seen
 So amorous as this lovely green.
 Fond lovers, cruel as their flame,
 20 Cut in these trees their mistress' name:
 Little, alas, they know or heed
 How far these beauties hers exceed!
 Fair trees, wheresoe'er your barks I wound,
 No name shall but your own be found.³

25 When we have run our passion's heat,
 Love hither makes his best retreat.
 The gods, that mortal beauty chase,
 Still⁰ in a tree did end their race: *always*
 Apollo hunted Daphne so,
 30 Only that she might laurel grow;
 And Pan did after Syrinx speed,
 Not as a nymph, but for a reed.⁴

What wondrous life in this I lead!
 Ripe apples drop about my head;
 35 The luscious clusters of the vine
 Upon my mouth do crush their wine;
 The nectarine and curious⁰ peach *exquisite*
 Into my hands themselves do reach;
 Stumbling on melons⁵ as I pass,
 40 Ensnared with flowers, I fall on grass.

Meanwhile the mind, from pleasure less,
 Withdraws into its happiness;
 The mind, that ocean where each kind
 Does straight⁰ its own resemblance find;⁶ *immediately*

2. Colors traditionally associated with female beauty.

3. Marvell proposes to carve in the bark of trees not "Sylvia" or "Laura," but "Beech" and "Oak."

4. Apollo, the god of poetry, chased Daphne until she turned into a laurel (the emblematic reward of poets); Pan pursued Syrinx until she became a reed, out of which he made panpipes. The gods'

motives were, of course, sexual, not horticultural.

5. "Melons," with etymological roots in the Greek word for "apple," may recall the apple over which all humankind stumbled.

6. As the ocean supposedly contained a counterpart of every creature on land, so the ocean of the mind holds the innate ideas of all things (in Neoplatonic philosophy).

45 Yet it creates, transcending these,
Far other worlds and other seas,
Annihilating all that's made
To a green thought in a green shade.

Here at the fountain's sliding foot,
50 Or at some fruit tree's mossy root,
Casting the body's vest⁰ aside, *garment*
My soul into the boughs does glide:
There like a bird it sits and sings,
Then whets⁰ and combs its silver wings, *preens*
55 And, till prepared for longer flight,
Waves in its plumes the various light.⁷

Such was that happy garden-state,
While man there walked without a mate:
After a place so pure and sweet,
60 What other help could yet be meet!⁸
But 'twas beyond a mortal's share
To wander solitary there:
Two paradises 'twere in one
To live in paradise alone.

65 How well the skillful gardener drew
Of flowers and herbs this dial new,⁹
Where from above the milder sun
Does through a fragrant zodiac run;
And as it works, th' industrious bee
70 Computes its time¹ as well as we!
How could such sweet and wholesome hours
Be reckoned but with herbs and flowers?

ca. 1650-52

1681

An Horatian Ode

Upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland¹

The forward⁰ youth that would appear *eager, ambitious*
Must now forsake his Muses dear,
Nor in the shadows sing
His numbers languishing:

7. The multicolored light of this world, contrasted with the white radiance of eternity.

8. Genesis 2.18 recounts the Lord's decision to make a "help meet" for Adam, Eve.

9. The garden itself is laid out as a sundial.

1. With a pun on "thyme."

1. Oliver Cromwell, the general primarily responsible for Parliament's victory in the civil war, returned from conquering Ireland in May 1650, about eighteen months after the execution of

Charles I. The two events were persistently connected: Cromwell's success in Ireland was taken as a sign of God's favor to the new republican regime and to Cromwell as his chosen instrument. Pindaric odes (like Jonson's Cary-Morison ode, p. 1439) are heroic and ecstatic; Horatian odes are poems of cool and balanced judgment, as this one is in its representations of Cromwell, Charles I, and the issues of power and providence.

5 'Tis time to leave the books in dust
 And oil th' unused armor's rust,
 Removing from the wall
 The corselet⁰ of the hall.² *upper body armor*

So restless Cromwell could not cease
 10 In the inglorious arts of peace,
 Rut through adventurous war
 Urged his active star;³

And, like the three-forked lightning, first
 Breaking the clouds where it was nursed,
 is Did through his own side
 His fiery way divide:⁴

For 'tis all one to courage high,
 The emulous, or enemy;
 And with such, to enclose
 20 Is more than to oppose.

Then burning through the air he went,
 And palaces and temples rent;
 And Caesar's head at last
 Did through his laurels blast.⁵

25 'Tis madness to resist or blame
 The force of angry heaven's flame;
 And if we would speak true,
 Much to the man is due,

Who from his private gardens, where
 30 He lived reserved and austere
 (As if his highest plot
 To plant the bergamot),⁶

Could by industrious valor climb
 To ruin the great work of time,
 35 And cast the kingdom old
 Into another mold;

Though Justice against Fate complain,
 And plead the ancient rights in vain:
 But those do hold or break,
 40 As men are strong or weak.

2. Here as elsewhere there are allusions to Lucan's *Pharsalia*, a poem of civil war whose sympathies are with Pompey, Cato, and the Roman Republic against Caesar and the empire. The poem's allusions to Caesar are most often to Charles I, but sometimes to Cromwell.

3. Normally the stars are thought to control men's fates, but Cromwell presses his own star forward.

4. The "three-forked lightning" identifies him with

Zeus, suggesting the elemental force by which he surpassed all those in his own party ("side") of radical Independents; the imagery of giving birth to himself also suggests going Caesar (born by cesarean section) one better.

5. Royal crowns were made of laurel because they were supposed to protect from lightning.

6. A pear-shaped orange (from the Turkish, "prince's pear").

Nature that hateth emptiness,
 Allows of penetration less,⁷
 And therefore must make room
 Where greater spirits come.

45 What field of all the civil wars
 Where his were not the deepest scars?
 And Hampton shows what part
 He had of wiser art;⁸

Where, twining subtle fears with hope,
 50 He wove a net of such a scope
 That Charles himself might chase
 To Caresbrooke's narrow case,

That thence the royal actor⁹ borne,
 The tragic scaffold might adorn;
 55 While round the armed bands
 Did clap their bloody hands.

He nothing common did or mean
 Upon that memorable scene,
 But with his keener eye
 60 The ax's edge¹ did try;

Nor called the gods with vulgar spite
 To vindicate his helpless right;
 But bowed his comely head
 Down, as upon a bed.

65 This was that memorable hour,
 Which first assured the forced power;
 So when they did design
 The Capitol's first line,

A bleeding head where they begun
 70 Did fright the architects to run;
 And yet in that the state
 Foresaw its happy fate.²

And now the Irish are ashamed
 To see themselves in one year tamed;

7. Nature abhors a vacuum, but even more, the penetration of one body's space by another body.

8. Charles was confined at Hampton Court after his defeat, as Parliament attempted to negotiate terms for his restoration. Cromwell was rumored to have connived at his escape to Carisbrooke Castle, on the Isle of Wight, in order to convince Parliament that he could not be trusted and must be executed. Cromwell has shown himself master of the two "arts" of rule defined by Machiavelli, namely, force and craft.

9. The theater metaphors used for Charles are even more powerful because the "tragic scaffold"

was erected outside Whitehall, where so many royal masques were produced.

1. A play on the Latin *acies*, which means the edge of a sword or ax, a keen glance, and the vanguard of a battle. Cf. the newsbook account of the king's execution, p. 1741.

2. Livy and Pliny record that the workmen digging the foundations for a temple of Jupiter at Rome uncovered a bloody head which they were persuaded to take as an omen that Rome would be head (*caput*) of a great empire; the temple and the hill took the name Capitoline from that event.

75 So much one man can do,
 That does both act and know.

 They can affirm his praises best,
 And have, though overcome, confessed
 How good he is, how just,
80 And fit for highest trust.³

 Nor yet grown stiffer with command,
 But still in the republic's hand—
 How fit he is to sway,
 That can so well obey.⁴

85 He to the Commons' feet presents
 A kingdom for his first year's rents;
 And, what he may, forbears
 His fame to make it theirs;⁵

 And has his sword and spoils ungirt,
90 To lay them at the public's skirt:
 So, when the falcon high
 Falls heavy from the sky,

 She, having killed, no more does search,
 But on the next green bough to perch;
95 Where, when he first does lure,
 The falconer has her sure.

 What may not then our isle presume,
 While victory his crest does plume!
 What may not others fear,
100 If thus he crown each year!

 A Caesar he ere long to Gaul,
 To Italy an Hannibal,
 And to all states not free,
 Shall climacteric be.⁶

i05 The Pict no shelter now shall find
 Within his parti-colored mind,
 But from this valor sad,[°] *severe, solemn*
 Shrink underneath the plaid;⁷

3. Cromwell conducted a particularly brutal campaign in Ireland, and the Irish had no such testimonials for him; the lines are deeply equivocal.

4. The maxim about obedience fitting one to rule is a commonplace. The implications of "yet" and "still," along with the next stanza, suggest a Caesar figure who has not—but might—cross the Rubicon and defy the Republic, as Julius Caesar did.

5. Thus far, Cromwell gives the Republic credit for his victories.

6. It was thought that Cromwell's military acumen might subdue France and Italy (which threatened

to attack the new republic to restore Charles II), just as did Caesar and Hannibal of old. "Climacteric": a period of crucial, epochal change—here, the expectation that the example of a successful English republic would topple absolute monarchs abroad.

7. Early Scots were called Picts (from the Latin *pictus*, painted), because the warriors painted themselves many colors; contemporary Scots are "parti-colored" (divided into many factions) like a scotch plaid. Cromwell was about to go to subdue Scotland, which had declared for Charles II.

Happy if in the tufted brake
 no The English hunter him mistake,
 Nor lay his hounds in near
 The Caledonian^o deer.

Scottish

But thou, the war's and Fortune's son,
 March indefatigably on;
 115 And for the last effect,
 Still keep thy sword erect;

Besides the force it has to fright
 The spirits of the shady night,⁸
 The same arts that did gain
 120 A power must it maintain.⁹

1650

1681

Upon Appleton House¹

To My Lord Fairfax

i

Within this sober frame expect
 Work of no foreign architect,
 That unto caves the quarries drew,
 And forests did to pastures hew;
 5 Who of his great design in pain
 Did for a model vault his brain,²
 Whose columns should so high be raised
 To arch the brows that on them gazed.

2

Why should of all things man unrul'd
 10 Such unproportioned dwellings build?
 The beasts are by their dens expressed,
 And birds contrive an equal nest;³
 The low-roofed tortoises do dwell
 In cases fit of tortoiseshell:

8. A sword carried with the blade upright evokes the classical tradition that underworld spirits (here, the slain king and his followers) are frightened off by raised weapons.

9. The maxim alludes to Machiavelli's advice that a kingdom won by force must for some time be maintained by force.

1. From 1651 to 1653, Marvell served as tutor to Mary Fairfax, daughter of Ann Vere and Thomas Fairfax, commander in chief of the parliamentary army throughout the civil wars. Fairfax opposed the regicide and in 1650 resigned his command rather than lead a preemptive strike against Scotland (which had declared for Charles II). Cromwell took over as Fairfax retired to his country estates in Yorkshire, especially Nunappleton, a comparatively simple brick structure on the site of a former Cistercian priory dissolved by Henry VIII along

with all monasteries in 1542. The poem makes the house and its history figure the progress of the Reformation and the recent civil wars, played off against the Fall, the conflicts of the Israelites in the wilderness, and other biblical moments. The poem is structured as a journey around the estate, intersected by a long passage of family history. It was apparently written in the summer of 1651, when Mary Fairfax was twelve.

2. Did design in his brain the absurdly high vaulted ceilings of grand, magnificent houses built for showy display. This poem invites comparison and contrast with other country-house poems and the houses, estates, and society they describe: Jonson's "To Penshurst" (p. 1434), Lanyer's Description of "Cookham" (p. 1319), and Carew's "To Saxham" (p. 1671).

3. I.e., a nest proportioned to their size.

15 No creature loves an empty space;
Their bodies measure out their place.

3

But he, superfluously spread,
Demands more room alive than dead;
And in his hollow palace goes
20 Where winds as he themselves may lose.
What need of all this marble crust
T' impark the wanton mote of dust,
That thinks by breadth the world t' unite
Though the first builders⁴ failed in height?

4

25 But all things are composed here
Like nature, orderly and near:
In which we the dimensions find
Of what more sober age and mind,
When larger sized men did stoop
30 To enter at a narrow loop;
As practicing, in doors so strait,
To strain themselves through heaven's gate.

5

And surely when the after age
Shall hither come in pilgrimage,
35 These sacred places to adore,
By Vere and Fairfax trod before,
Men will dispute how their extent
Within such dwarfish confines went;
And some will smile at this as well
40 As Romulus his bee-like cell.⁵

6

Humility alone designs
Those short but admirable lines,
By which, ungirt and unconstrained,
Things greater are in less contained.
45 Let other vainly strive t'immure
The circle in the quadrature!⁶
These holy mathematics can
In ev'ry figure equal man.⁷

7

Yet thus the laden house does sweat,
50 And scarce endures the master great:
But where he comes the swelling hall
Stirs, and the square grows spherical;⁸
More by his magnitude distressed,
Than he is by its straitness pressed;

4. The proud builders of the Tower of Babel, who thought to make it reach to heaven (Genesis 11).
5. The thatched hut of the legendary founder of Rome.

6. To square the circle.
7. The circle symbolized perfection, the square variously virtue, justice, and prudence.
8. The square hall rises up into a domed cupola.

55 And too officiously^o it slights *overeagerly*
That in itself which him delights.

8

So honor better lowness bears,
Than that unwonted^o greatness wears. *unaccustomed*
Height with a certain grace does bend,
60 But low things clownishly^o ascend. *in rustic fashion*
And yet what needs there here excuse,
Where ev'ry thing does answer use?
Where neatness nothing can condemn,
Nor pride invent^o what to contemn? *find out*

9

65 A stately frontispiece of poor⁹
Adorns without the open door;
Nor less the rooms within commends
Daily new furniture of friends.
The house was built upon the place
70 Only as for a mark of grace;
And for an inn to entertain
Its lord a while, but not remain.¹

10

Him Bishops-Hill, or Denton may,
Or Bilbrough, better hold than they;
75 But Nature here hath been so free
As if she said, Leave this to me.
Art would more neatly^o have defaced *elegantly*
What she had laid so sweetly waste;
In fragrant gardens, shady woods,
80 Deep meadows, and transparent floods.

11

While with slow eyes we these survey,
And on each pleasant footstep stay,
We opportunely may relate
The progress of this house's fate.
85 A nunnery first gave it birth
For virgin buildings oft brought forth.
And all that neighbor-ruin shows
The quarries whence this dwelling rose.

12

Near to this gloomy cloister's gates
90 There dwelt the blooming virgin Thwaites²
Fair beyond measure, and an heir
Which might deformity make fair.
And oft she spent the summer suns

9. Poor people awaiting Fairfax's alms.

1. The house is described as an inn, with an allusion to Hebrews 11.13-16 and the faithful who proclaim themselves "strangers and pilgrims on the earth" as they "desire a better country, that is, an heavenly."

2. In 1518 the heiress Isabel Thwaites was to marry Thomas Fairfax's ancestor, William, but was confined by her guardian, the prioress of Nun-appleton; William obtained an order for her release and then seized her by force and married her.

Discoursing with the subtle nuns.

95 Whence in these words one to her weaved
(As 'twere by chance) thoughts long conceived.

13

"Within this holy leisure we
Live innocently as you see.
These walls restrain the world without,
100 But hedge^o our liberty about. *defend*
These bars inclose that wider den
Of those wild creatures, called men;
The cloister outward shuts its gates,
And, from us, locks on them the grates.

105 "Here we, in shining armor white,^o *nun's habit*
Like virgin amazons do fight:
And our chaste lamps we hourly trim,
Lest the great bridegroom find them dim.³
Our orient^o breaths perfumed are *fresh*
110 With incense of incessant pray'r.
And holy water of our tears
Most strangely our complexion clears:

R5

"Not tears of grief; but such as those
With which calm pleasure overflows;
115 Or pity, when we look on you
That live without this happy vow.
How should we grieve that must be seen
Each one a spouse, and each a queen;
And can in heaven hence behold
120 Our brighter robes and crowns of gold?

16

"When we have prayed all our beads,
Some one the holy legend^o reads; *a saint's life*
While all the rest with needles paint
The face and graces of the saint.
125 But what the linen can't receive
They in their lives do interweave.
This work the saints best represents;
That serves for altar's ornaments.

17

"But much it to our work would add
130 If here your hand, your face we had.
By it we would our Lady touch;⁴
Yet thus she you resembles much.
Some of your features, as we sewed,
Through every shrine should be bestowed:

3. Matthew 25.1—13 contrasts the wise virgins who kept their lamps lit for the bridegroom (Christ) and the foolish ones who did not and so

were excluded from the marriage feast (heaven).
4. We could come close to representing the Virgin Mary in our designs with you as model.

135 And in one beauty we would take
Enough a thousand saints to make.

18

"And (for I dare not quench the fire
That me does for your good inspire)
"Twere sacrilege a man t' admit
140 To holy things, for heaven fit.
I see the angels in a crown
On you the lilies show'ring down;
And round about you glory breaks,
That something more than human speaks.

19

145 "All beauty, when at such a height,
Is so already consecrate.
Fairfax I know; and long ere this
Have marked the youth, and what he is.
But can he such a rival seem
150 For whom you heav'n should disesteem?
Ah, no! and 'twould more honor prove
He your devoto⁰ were, than love.

devotee

20

"Here live beloved, and obeyed,
Each one your sister, each your maid.
155 And, if our rule seem strictly penned,
The rule itself to you shall bend.
Our abbess too, now far in age,
Doth your succession near presage.
How soft the yoke on us would lie,
160 Might such fair hands as yours it tie!

21

"Your voice, the sweetest of the choir,
Shall draw heav'n nearer, raise us higher:
And your example, if our head,
Will soon us to perfection lead.
165 Those virtues to us all so dear,
Will straight⁰ grow sanctity when here:
And that, once sprung, increase so fast
Till miracles it work at last.

immediately

22

"Nor is our order yet so nice,⁰
170 Delight to banish as a vice.
Here pleasure piety doth meet,
One perfecting the other sweet.
So through the mortal fruit we boil
The sugar's uncorrupting oil;
175 And that which perished while we pull,
Is thus preserved clear and full.

precise

23

"For such indeed are all our arts;
 Still handling nature's finest parts.
 Flow'rs dress the altars; for the clothes,
 180 The sea-born amber⁵ we compose;
 Balms for the grieved⁰ we draw; and pastes *injured*
 We mold, as baits for curious tastes.
 What need is here of man? unless
 These as sweet sins we should confess.

24

185 "Each night among us to your side
 Appoint a fresh and virgin bride;
 Whom if our Lord at midnight find,
 Yet neither should be left behind.
 Where you may lie as chaste in bed,
 190 As pearls together billeted,
 All night embracing arm in arm,
 Like crystal pure with cotton warm.

25

"But what is this to all the store
 Of joys you see, and may make more!
 195 Try but a while, if you be wise:
 The trial neither costs, nor ties."
 Now Fairfax seek her promised faith:⁰ *promise to wed*
 Religion that dispensed hath;
 Which she henceforward does begin:⁶
 200 The nun's smooth tongue has sucked her in.

26

Oft, though he knew it was in vain,
 Yet would he valiantly complain:
 "Is this that sanctity so great,
 An art by which you finelier cheat?
 205 Hypocrite witches, hence avaunt,
 Who though in prison yet enchant!
 Death only can such thieves make fast,
 As rob though in the dungeon cast.

"Were there but, when this house was made,
 210 One stone that a just hand had laid,
 It must have fall'n upon her head
 Who first thee from thy faith misled.
 And yet, how well soever meant,
 With them 'twould soon grow fraudulent:
 215 For like themselves they alter all,
 And vice infects the very wall.

5. Ambergris from the sperm whale supplies the rich perfume for our altar cloths.

6. She now begins her "religious" life in the convent.

28

"But sure those buildings last not long,
 Founded by folly, kept by wrong.
 I know what fruit their gardens yield,
 220 When they it think by night concealed.
 Fly from their vices. 'Tis thy state,⁰ *estate*
 Not thee, that they would consecrate.
 Fly from their ruin. How I fear
 Though guiltless lest thou perish there!"

29

225 What should he do? He would respect
 Religion, but not right neglect;
 For first religion taught him right,
 And dazzled not but cleared his sight.
 Sometimes resolved his sword he draws,
 230 But reverenceth then the laws:
 For justice still that courage led;
 First from a judge, then soldier bred.⁷

30

Small honor would be in the storm.⁰ *storming the priory*
 The court him grants the lawful form;
 235 Which licensed either peace or force,
 To hinder the unjust divorce.
 Yet still the nuns his right debarred,
 Standing upon their holy guard.
 Ill-counseled women, do you know
 240 Whom you resist, or what you do?

31

Is not this he whose offspring fierce
 Shall fight through all the universe;
 And with successive valor try
 France, Poland, either Germany;
 245 Till one, as long since prophesied,
 His horse through conquered Britain ride?
 Yet, against fate, his spouse they kept,
 And the great race would intercept.⁸

32

Some to the breach against their foes
 250 Their wooden saints in vain oppose.
 Another bolder stands at push
 With their old holy-water brush.
 While the disjointed⁰ abbess threads *distracted*
 The jingling chain-shot⁹ of her beads.
 255 But their loud'st cannon were their lungs;
 And sharpest weapons were their tongues.

7. His father was judge of the Common Pleas; his maternal grandfather was a heroic soldier.

8. Thomas Fairfax, son of William and Isabel Thwaites, fought in Italy and Germany; his descendants were also honored soldiers; the present Fair-

fax fulfilled the prophecy by his victories in the Civil War.

9. Cannonballs linked in a chain and fired together.

33

But, waving these aside like flies,
 Young Fairfax through the wall does rise.
 Then th' unfrequented vault appeared,
 260 And superstitions vainly feared.
 The relics false were set to view;
 Only the jewels there were true—
 But truly bright and holy Thwaites
 That weeping at the altar waits.

34

265 But the glad youth away her bears
 And to the nuns bequeaths her tears:
 Who guiltily their prize bemoan,
 Like gypsies that a child had stol'n.
 Thenceforth (as when th' enchantment ends
 270 The castle vanishes or rends)
 The wasting cloister with the rest
 Was in one instant dispossessed.¹

35

At the demolishing, this seat
 To Fairfax fell as by escheat.²
 275 And what both nuns and founders willed
 Tis likely better thus fulfilled:
 For if the virgin proved not theirs,
 The cloister yet remained hers;
 Though many a nun there made her vow,
 280 'Twas no religious house till now.

36

From that blest bed the hero came,
 Whom France and Poland yet does fame;
 Who, when retired here to peace,
 His warlike studies could not cease;
 285 But laid these gardens out in sport
 In the just figure of a fort;
 And with five bastions it did fence,
 As aiming one for ev'ry sense.³

37

When in the east the morning ray
 290 Hangs out the colors of the day,
 The bee through these known alleys hums,
 Beating the dian^o with its drums. *reveille*
 Then flow'rs their drowsy eyelids raise,
 Their silken ensigns each displays,
 295 And dries its pan⁴ yet dank with dew,
 And fills its flask^o with odors new. *powder flask*

1. An allusion to Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries.

2. Legally, in the absence of an heir, the property reverted to him as lord of the manor; Henry gave monastery lands to his nobles.

3. The garden's five (seeming) bulwarks or fortifications aim at the five senses.

4. In a musket, the hollow part of the lock that receives the priming.

28

These, as their governor goes by,
 In fragrant volleys they let fly;
 And to salute their governess
 300 Again as great a charge they press:
 None for the virgin nymph;⁵ for she
 Seems with the flow'rs a flow'r to be.
 And think so still! though not compare⁶
 With breath so sweet, or cheek so fair.

39

305 Well shot ye firemen!⁰ Oh how sweet, *shooters*
 And round your equal fires do meet;
 Whose shrill report no ear can tell,
 But echoes to the eye and smell.
 See how the flow'rs, as at parade,
 310 Under their colors stand displayed:
 Each regiment in order grows,
 That of the tulip, pink, and rose.

40

But when the vigilant patrol
 Of stars walks round about the pole,
 315 Their leaves, that to the stalks are curled,
 Seem to their staves the ensigns furled.
 Then in some flow'r's beloved hut
 Each bee as sentinel is shut;
 And sleeps so too: but, if once stirred,
 320 She runs you through, nor asks the word.⁰ *password*

41

Oh thou,⁹ that dear and happy isle *England*
 The garden of the world ere while,
 Thou paradise of four⁷ seas,
 Which heaven planted us to please,
 325 But, to exclude the world, did guard
 With wat'ry if not flaming sword;⁸
 What luckless apple did we taste,
 To make us mortal, and thee waste?

42

Unhappy! shall we never more
 330 That sweet militia restore,
 When gardens only had their tow'rs,
 And all the garrisons were flow'rs;
 When roses only arms might bear,
 And men did rosy garlands wear?
 335 Tulips, in several colors barred,
 Were then the Switzers⁹ of our guard.

5. Mary Fairfax (Maria)—Marvell's pupil at Nunappleton.

6. The imperatives are addressed to the flowers.

7. Pronounced with two syllables.

8. After the Fall, the garden in Eden was guarded by angels with flaming swords.

9. The papal Swiss guards wore multicolored uniforms.

43

The gardener had the soldier's place,
 And his more gentle forts did trace.
 The nursery of all things green
 340 Was then the only magazine.
 The winter quarters were the stoves⁰ *hothouses*
 Where he the tender plants removes.
 But war all this doth overgrow;
 We ordnance plant, and powder sow.

44

345 And yet there walks one on the sod
 Who, had it pleased him and God,
 Might once have made our gardens spring
 Fresh as his own and flourishing.
 But he preferred to the Cinque Ports'
 350 These five imaginary forts;
 And, in those half-dry trenches, spanned⁰ *restrained*
 Pow'r which the ocean might command.

45

For he did, with his utmost skill,
 Ambition weed, but conscience till.
 355 Conscience, that heaven-nursed plant,
 Which most our earthly gardens want.⁰ *lack, need*
 A prickling leaf it bears, and such
 As that which shrinks at every touch;
 But flow'rs eternal, and divine,
 360 That in the crowns of saints do shine.

46

The sight does from these bastions ply
 Th' invisible artillery;
 And at proud Cawood Castle² seems
 To point the batt'ry of its beams,
 365 As if it quarreled in^o the seat *found fault with*
 Th' ambition of its prelate great;
 But o'er the meads below it plays,
 Or innocently seems to gaze.

47

And now to the abyss I pass
 370 Of that unfathomable grass,
 Where men like grasshoppers appear,
 But grasshoppers are giants³ there:
 They, in their squeaking laugh, contemn
 Us as we walk more low than them:
 375 And, from the precipices tall
 Of the green spires, to us do call.

1. The five ports on the southeast coast of England, of which Fairfax was warden for a time; the "imaginary forts" (next line) are the "five bastions" of line 287.

2. Seat of the archbishop of York, two miles from

Appleton House.

3. Cf. Numbers 13.33: "And there we saw the giants . . . and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

28

To see men through this meadow dive,
 We wonder how they rise alive;
 As, underwater, none does know
 380 Whether he fall through it or go;^o *move forward*
 But as the mariners that sound
 And show upon their lead the ground,⁴
 They bring up flow'rs so to be seen,
 And prove they've at the bottom been.

49

No scene^o that turns with engines strange *stage set*
 Does oft'ner than these meadows change:
 For when the sun the grass hath vexed,
 The tawny mowers enter next;
 Who seem like Israelites to be
 390 Walking on foot through a green sea.
 To them the grassy deeps divide
 And crowd a lane to either side.⁵

5°

With whistling scythe and elbow strong,
 These massacre the grass along:
 395 While one, unknowing, carves the rail,⁶
 Whose yet unfeathered quills her fail.
 The edge all bloody from its breast
 He draws, and does his stroke detest;
 Fearing the flesh untimely mowed
 400 To him a fate as black forebode.

5i

But bloody Thestylis⁷ that waits
 To bring the mowing camp their cates,^o *food*
 Greedy as kites^o has trussed it up, *birds of prey*
 And forthwith means on it to sup;
 405 When on another quick she lights,
 And cries, he⁸ called us Israelites;
 But now, to make his saying true,
 Rails rain for quails, for manna dew.⁹

Unhappy birds! what does it boot^o *avail*
 410 To build below the grasses' root,
 When lowness is unsafe as height,

4. Plumb the depths and show the nature of the ground below.

5. The mowers produce a lane in the grassy meadow, like that formed when the Red Sea parted to allow the Israelites passage.

6. The corncrake (land rail), a field bird.

7. A camp follower comically given the name of a classical shepherdess. The harvest activities allude at times to the Civil War.

8. The author, at line 389. The Puritans constantly compared themselves and their revolution to the Israelites battling enemies and wandering in the wilderness en route to Canaan, the Promised Land.

9. Exodus 13-15 describes the quails and manna (left after the dew evaporated) with which the Israelites were miraculously fed after crossing the Red Sea.

And chance o'ertakes what scapeth spite?
 And now your orphan parents' call
 Sounds your untimely funeral.

415 Death-trumpets creak in such a note,
 And 'tis the sourdine¹ in their throat.

53

Or^o sooner hatch or higher build: *either*
 The mower now commands the field;
 In whose new traverse^o seemeth wrought *track*

420 A camp of battle newly fought:
 Where, as the meads with hay, the plain
 Lies quilted o'er with bodies slain;
 The women that with forks it fling,
 Do represent the pillaging.

54

425 And now the careless victors play,
 Dancing the triumphs of the hay;²
 Where every mower's wholesome heat
 Smells like an Alexander's sweat,³
 Their females fragrant as the mead
 430 Which they in fairy circles tread:
 When at their dance's end they kiss,
 Their new-made hay not sweeter is.

55

When after this 'tis piled in cocks,^o *haystacks*
 Like a calm sea it shows the rocks:

435 We wond'ring in the river near
 How boats among them safely steer.
 Or, like the desert Memphis⁴ sand,
 Short pyramids of hay do stand.
 And such the Roman camps do rise⁵
 440 In hills for soldiers' obsequies.

56

This scene^o again withdrawing brings *stage set*
 A new and empty face of things;
 A leveled space, as smooth and plain,
 As cloths for Lely⁶ stretched to stain.

445 The world when first created sure
 Was such a table rase⁷ and pure;
 Or rather such is the toril
 Ere the bulls enter at Madril.⁸

1. A small pipe put into the mouth of a trumpet to produce a low sound.

2. A country dance (with a pun).

3. Plutarch wrote that Alexander the Great's sweat smelled sweet.

4. An ancient Egyptian city near the pyramids.

5. Hillocks that served as burial mounds; they were actually British in origin, not Roman.

6. Canvases for the Dutch portrait painter Sir Peter Lely, who came to England in 1643.

7. *Tabula rasa* (Latin); a clean or blank slate.

8. Madrid. "Toril": bull ring.

57

For to this naked equal flat,
 450 Which Levellers⁹ take pattern at,
 The villagers in common⁰ chase *common pasture*
 Their cattle, which it closer raise;⁰ *crops*
 And what below the scythe increased⁰ *grew*
 Is pinched yet nearer by the beast.
 455 Such, in the painted world, appeared,
 Davenant with th' universal herd.'

58

They seem within the polished grass
 A landscape drawn in looking glass;
 And shrunk in the huge pasture show
 460 As spots, so shaped, on faces do.²
 Such fleas, ere they approach the eye,
 In multiplying⁰ glasses lie. *magnifying*
 They feed so wide, so slowly move,
 As constellations do above.

59

Then, to conclude these pleasant acts,
 Denton sets ope' its cataracts;³
 And makes the meadow truly be
 (What it but seemed before) a sea.
 For, jealous of its lord's long stay,
 It tries t' invite him thus away.
 The river in itself is drowned
 And isles th' astonished cattle round.

60

Let others tell the paradox,
 How eels now bellow in the ox;⁴
 475 How horses at their tails do kick,
 Turned as they hang to leeches quick;⁵
 How boats can over bridges sail,
 And fishes do the stables scale;
 How salmons trespassing are found,
 480 And pikes are taken in the pound.⁰ *cattle pen*

61

But I, retiring from the flood,
 Take sanctuary in the wood;
 And, while it lasts, myself embark
 In this yet green, yet growing ark;

9. A radical faction (actually the Diggers or True Levelers) who sought social and economic equality. A group of Diggers began to put their tenets into practice by taking over and cultivating the land on St. George Hill, part of Fairfax's domain. See Gerrard Winstanley (p. 1751).

1. William Davenant, in his heroic poem *Gondibert* (2.6), describes a painting of creation, where on the sixth day 'an universal herd' of animals

appeared.

2. A landscape (or painted landscape) reflected in a mirror would be reduced in size.

3. Small waterfalls or dams. Denton, also a Fairfax estate (see line 73), was located on the Wharfe River, thirty miles from Nunappleton.

4. Because the ox swallowed them.

5. In popular superstition horse hairs in water became live leeches or eels.

485 Where the first carpenter⁶ might best
 Fit timber for his keel have pressed;⁰ *obtained*
 And where all creatures might have shares,
 Although in armies, not in pairs.

62

The double wood of ancient stocks
 490 Linked in so thick an union locks,
 It like two pedigrees⁷ appears,
 On one hand Fairfax, th' other Vere's:
 Of whom though many fell in war,
 Yet more to heaven shooting are:
 495 And, as they nature's cradle decked,
 Will in green age her hearse expect.

63

When first the eye this forest sees
 It seems indeed as wood not trees;
 As if their neighborhood⁰ so old *nearness*
 500 To one great trunk them all did mold.
 There the huge bulk takes place, as meant
 To thrust up a fifth element;⁸
 And stretches still so closely wedged
 As if the night within were hedged.

64

505 Dark all without it knits; within
 It opens passable and thin;
 And in as loose an order grows
 As the Corinthian porticoes.⁹
 The arching boughs unite between
 510 The columns of the temple green;
 And underneath the winged choirs
 Echo about their tuned fires.

65

The nightingale does here make choice
 To sing the trials of her voice.
 515 Low shrubs she sits in, and adorns
 With music high the squatted thorns.
 But highest oaks stoop down to hear,
 And list'ning elders prick the ear.
 The thorn, lest it should hurt her, draws
 520 Within the skin its shrunken claws.

66

But I have for my music found
 A sadder, yet more pleasing sound:
 The stock doves,⁰ whose fair necks are graced *turtledoves*
 With nuptial rings, their ensigns chaste;

6. Noah, who built an ark to escape a flood that would cover the earth (Genesis 6).

7. Genealogical trees, of the Fairfax and Vere families.

8. The so-called quintessence, beyond and superior to fire, air, water, and earth.

9. The most elaborate order of Greek columns.

525 Yet always, for some cause unknown,
 Sad pair, unto the elms they moan.
 O why should such a couple mourn,
 That in so equal flames do burn!

67

Then as I careless on the bed
 530 Of gelid strawberries do tread,
 And through the hazels thick espy
 The hatching throstle's shining eye,
 The heron from the ash's top
 The eldest of its young lets drop,
 535 As if it stork-like¹ did pretend
 That tribute to its lord to send.

68

But most the hewel's^o wonders are,
 Who here has the holtfelster's^o care.
 He walks still upright from the root,
 540 Meas'ring the timber with his foot;
 And all the way, to keep it clean,
 Doth from the bark the wood-moths glean.
 He, with his beak, examines well
 Which fit to stand and which to fell.

*green woodpecker's
 woodcutter's*

69

545 The good he numbers up, and hacks;
 As if he marked them with the ax.
 But where he, tinkling with his beak,
 Does find the hollow oak² to speak,
 That for his building he designs,
 550 And through the tainted side he mines.
 Who could have thought the tallest oak
 Should fall by such a feeble stroke!

70

Nor would it, had the tree not fed
 A traitor-worm, within it bred.
 555 (As first our flesh corrupt within
 Tempts impotent and bashful sin)
 And yet that worm triumphs not long,
 But serves to feed the hewel's young;
 While the oak seems to fall content,
 560 Viewing the treason's punishment.

71

Thus I, easy philosopher,
 Among the birds and trees confer;
 And little now to make me, wants^o
 Or^o of the fowls, or of the plants.

*lacks
 either*

1. The stork upon leaving a nest was believed to leave behind one of its young as a tribute to the householder.

2. The "royal" oak was traditionally an emblem of monarchy.

565 Give me but wings as they, and I
 Straight floating on the air shall fly:
 Or turn me but, and you shall see
 I was but an inverted tree.³

72

Already I begin to call
 570 In their most learned original:
 And where I language want, my signs
 The bird upon the bough divines;
 And more attentive there doth sit
 Than if she were with lime⁴ twigs knit.
 575 No leaf does tremble in the wind
 Which I returning cannot find.

73

Out of these scattered Sibyl's leaves
 Strange prophecies my fancy weaves:⁵
 And in one history consumes,
 580 Like Mexique paintings, all the plumes.⁰ *feathers*
 What Rome, Greece, Palestine, ere said
 I in this light Mosaic⁶ read.
 Thrice happy he who, not mistook,
 Hath read in nature's mystic book.⁷

74

585 And see how chance's better wit
 Could with a mask⁸ my studies hit!
 The oak-leaves me embroider all,
 Between which caterpillars crawl;
 And ivy, with familiar trails,
 590 Me licks, and clasps, and curls, and hales.
 Under this antic cope⁹ I move
 Like some great prelate of the grove.

75

Then, languishing with ease, I toss
 On pallets swol'n of velvet moss;
 595 While the wind, cooling through the boughs,
 Flatters with air my panting brows.
 Thanks for my rest, ye mossy banks,
 And unto you, cool zephyrs,⁰ thanks, *gentle west winds*
 Who, as my hair, my thoughts too shed,^o *pan*
 600 And winnow from the chaff my head.

3. Originally classical, this is a widely used metaphor in the Renaissance.

4. Birdlime, a sticky substance smeared on twigs to trap birds.

5. The Cumaean Sibyl, in Virgil, committed her prophecies to leaves that Aeneas feared might be scattered (*Aeneid* 6.77).

6. The pattern formed by the trembling leaves;

also the books of Moses, who was thought to have written the first five books of the Bible.

7. The book of the creatures, or the book of God's works.

8. Masque costume or disguise appropriate to the speaker's studies.

9. Comic ecclesiastical vestment.

How safe, methinks, and strong, behind
These trees have I encamped my mind;
Where beauty, aiming at the heart,
Bends in some tree its useless⁰ dart; *harmless*
605 And where the world no certain shot
Can make, or me it toucheth not.
But I on it securely play,
And gall its horsemen all the day.

77
Bind me ye woodbines in your twines,
610 Curl me about ye gadding vines,
And O so close your circles lace,
That I may never leave this place:
But, lest your fetters prove too weak,
Ere I your silken bondage break,
615 Do you, O brambles, chain me too,
And courteous briars, nail me through.¹

78
Here in the morning tie my chain,
Where the two woods have made a lane;
While, like a guard on either side,
620 The trees before their lord divide;
This, like a long and equal thread,
Betwixt two labyrinths does lead.
But, where the floods did lately drown,
There at the evening stake me down.

79
625 For now the waves are fall'n and dried,
And now the meadows fresher dyed;
Whose grass, with moister color dashed,
Seems as green silks but newly washed.
No serpent new nor crocodile
630 Remains behind our little Nile;²
Unless itself you will mistake,
Among these meads⁰ the only snake. *meadows*

80
See in what wanton harmless folds
It ev'rywhere the meadow holds;
635 And its yet muddy back doth lick,
Till as a crystal mirror slick;⁰ *smooth*
Where all things gaze themselves, and doubt
If they be in it or without.
And for his shade⁰ which therein shines, *shadow*
640 Narcissus-like, the sun too pines.³

1. The imagery evokes imprisonment and crucifixion.

2. Our river; serpents and crocodiles were thought to be bred by spontaneous generation from the

mud of the Nile.

3. Narcissus lay beside water, staring at his reflection, pining for himself.

81

Oh what a pleasure 'tis to hedge
 My temples here with heavy sedge;
 Abandoning my lazy side,
 Stretched as a bank unto the tide;
 645 Or to suspend my sliding foot
 On th' osier's undermined root,
 And in its branches tough to hang,
 While at my lines the fishes twang!

82

But now away my hooks, my quills,⁰ floats
 650 And angles, idle utensils.
 The young Maria walks tonight:
 Hide trifling youth thy pleasures slight.
 'Twere shame that such judicious eyes
 Should with such toys a man surprise;
 655 She that already is the law
 Of all her sex, her age's awe.

83

See how loose nature, in respect
 To her, itself doth recollect;
 And everything so whisht⁰ and fine,
 660 Starts forthwith to its bonne mine.⁰ *hushed*
good appearance
 The sun himself, of Her aware,
 Seems to descend with greater care;
 And lest she see him go to bed,
 In blushing clouds conceals his head

84

665 So when the shadows laid asleep
 From underneath these banks do creep,
 And on the river as it flows
 With ebon shuts⁰ begin to close; *black shutters*
 The modest halcyon⁴ comes in sight,
 670 Flying betwixt the day and night;
 And such an horror calm and dumb,
 Admiring nature does benumb.

85 ^

The viscous⁰ air, wheresoe'r she fly, *thick*
 Follows and sucks her azure dye;
 675 The jelling stream compacts⁰ below, *solidifies*
 If it might fix her shadow so;
 The stupid⁰ fishes hang, as plain *stupefied*
 As flies in crystal overta'en;
 And men the silent scene assist,⁰ *attend*
 680 Charmed with the sapphire-winged mist.⁵

4. The kingfisher, who by nesting on the waves
 was believed to bring absolute calm to the sea.

5. The bird in its flight.

86

Maria such, and so^o doth hush
 The world, and through the ev'ning rush. *in like fashion*
 No newborn comet such a train
 Draws through the sky, nor star new-slain.⁶
 665 For straight those giddy rockets⁷ fail,
 Which from the putrid earth exhale,
 But by her flames, in heaven tried,
 Nature is wholly vitrified.^o *turned to glass*

87

Tis she that to these gardens gave
 690 That wondrous beauty which they have;
 She straightness on the woods bestows;
 To her the meadow sweetness owes;
 Nothing could make the river be
 So crystal-pure but only she;
 695 She yet more pure, sweet, straight, and fair,
 Than gardens, woods, meads, rivers are.

88

Therefore what first she on them spent,
 They gratefully again present:
 The meadow, carpets where to tread;
 700 The garden, flow'rs to crown her head;
 And for a glass, the limpid brook,
 Where she may all her beauties look;
 But, since she would not have them seen,
 The wood about her draws a screen.

89

705 For she, to higher beauties raised,
 Disdains to be for lesser praised.
 She counts her beauty to converse
 In all the languages as hers;
 Nor yet in those herself employs
 710 But for the wisdom, not the noise;
 Nor yet that wisdom would affect,
 But as 'tis heaven's dialect.

90

Blest nymph! that couldst so soon prevent
 Those trains^o by youth against thee meant: *anilleiy*
 715 Tears (wat'ry shot that pierce the mind)
 And sighs (love's cannon charged with wind)
 True praise (that breaks through all defense)
 And feigned complying innocence;
 But knowing where this ambush lay,
 720 She scaped the safe, but roughest way.

6. Meteor, or shooting star.

7. Vapors exhaled from the earth.

This 'tis to have been from the first
 In a domestic heaven nursed,
 Under the discipline severe
 Of Fairfax, and the starry Vere;
 725 Where not one object can come nigh
 But pure, and spotless as the eye;
 And goodness doth itself entail
 On females, if there want a male.⁸

92

Go now fond^o sex that on your face *foolish*
 730 Do all your useless study place,
 Nor once at vice your brows dare knit
 Lest the smooth forehead wrinkled sit;
 Yet your own face shall at you grin,
 Thorough^o the black-bag^o of your skin; *through/mask*
 735 When knowledge only could have filled
 And virtue all those furrows tilled.

93

Hence she with graces more divine
 Supplies beyond her sex the line;
 And, like a sprig of mistletoe,
 740 On the Fairfacian oak doth grow;
 Whence, for some universal good,
 The priest shall cut the sacred bud;⁹
 While her glad parents most rejoice,
 And make their destiny their choice.

94

745 Meantime ye fields, springs, bushes, flow'rs,
 Where yet she leads her studious hours
 (Till fate her worthily translates,
 And find a Fairfax for our Thwaites),
 Employ the means you have by her,
 750 And in your kind yourselves prefer;¹
 That, as all virgins she precedes,
 So you all woods, streams, gardens, meads.

95

For you Thessalian Tempe's² seat
 Shall now be scorned as obsolete;
 755 Aranjuez, as less, disdained;
 The Bel-Retiro³ as constrained;
 But name not the Idalian grove,⁴
 For 'twas the seat of wanton Love;

8. Maria was the only child and heir of the Fairfaxes.

9. Maria is, of course, intended for marriage.

1. Make yourselves the best you can.

2. The Vale of Tempe, in Greece, was a kind of

paradise.

3. Spanish palaces.

4. A favorite haunt of Aphrodite (Venus), goddess of love, on Cyprus.

Much less the dead's Elysian Fields,⁵
 760 Yet nor to them your beauty yields.

96

'Tis not, what once it was, the world,
 But a rude heap together hurled;
 All negligently overthrown,
 Gulfs, deserts, precipices, stone.
 765 Your lesser world⁶ contains the same,
 But in more decent order tame;
 You heaven's center, nature's lap,
 And paradise's only map.

97

But now the salmon-fishers moist
 770 Their leathern boats begin to hoist;
 And, like antipodes in shoes,
 Have shod their heads in their canoes.⁷
 How tortoise-like, but not so slow,
 These rational amphibii⁸ go!
 775 Let's in; for the dark hemisphere
 Does now like one of them appear.

1651

1681

5. The pleasant habitation of the good in the classical underworld.

6. Appleton House.

7. The men who dwell at the "antipodes," on the other side of the world are sometimes said to wear

their shoes on their heads; these English fishermen transport their leather boats on their heads.

8. As men, the fishermen are "rational"; and they live in two elements, land and water.

Crisis of Authority

Most of the poets and prose writers who published in the "civil war decades," 1640 to 1660, registered in some way their responses to the conflicts swirling about them. The war and the issues over which it was fought shadow the poetry of Vaughan, Herrick, Lovelace, Suckling, and Marvell and the prose of Thomas Browne and Izaak Walton. Yet often such writers addressed the conflict only obliquely. When Marvell or Herrick celebrates peaceful gardens or fruitful countryside, when Vaughan envisions eternity as a "great ring of pure and endless light" suspended above all mortal turmoil, when Walton rhapsodizes about fishing, they create refuges of the imagination that might partially compensate for the trauma of war. Other writers confronted the issues of the age more straightforwardly. The readings included in this section sample some of this more explicitly political writing and exemplify some of the genres encouraged by the new conditions in which literary materials could be written and circulated.

With the restoration of Charles II in 1660, many of the radical voices of the 1640s and 1650s were muted. Yet the war decades left a lasting imprint upon English literature. They established a tradition of overtly political, often ambitiously literary writing without which it is hard to imagine the works of such authors as Dryden, Swift, and Pope. They established prose as a dominant literary medium, especially for the description and analysis of everyday life. They initiated a tradition of apparently ordinary people's bearing witness in writing to extraordinary events: a vital precedent for the rise of the novel.

This section presents examples of several kinds of writing that flourished during the Civil War and its immediate aftermath: the journalistic reporting of current events; political theory; and careful descriptions of contemporary history, personal experience, and individual character. These excerpts demonstrate a variety of ways in which writers might respond to the disturbing and exciting developments around them: by reporting the details of dramatic, unprecedented occurrences; by analyzing the political and social problems posed by the conflict; by ruminating upon the character of great men; by seizing new opportunities for autobiographical reflection. For other responses to the crisis of the war and other perspectives on the interregnum, go to Norton Literature Online, where you'll find the Leveler John Lilburne's call for a new government founded on popular sovereignty; the Fifth Monarchist Anna Trapnel's report of her visions, her travels, and her critique of Cromwell's government; and the Ranter Abiezer Coppe's radical denunciation of all human laws on the ground that he possesses the Spirit of God.

REPORTING THE NEWS

The following accounts of the king's trial and execution are excerpted from newsbooks, one of the most important new literary forms of the war years. In England the reportage of current events originated in the 1620s, when anxiety over the nation's entanglement in what would become the Thirty Years War on the Continent generated a demand for international news. In addition, in the 1620s and 1630s a few

enterprising individuals provided "corantos," handwritten reports of court goings-on, to wealthy individuals in the provinces; these were technically considered private letters, although they sometimes circulated to several hundred paid subscribers. Yet even these modest ventures were always on legally shaky ground. The printing of domestic news, or commentary thereon, was strictly prohibited by Charles I, as it had been by his forebears.

In the early 1640s, censorship collapsed just when many people urgently wanted information about the momentous events transpiring in England, Scotland, and Ireland. The result was the explosive development of printed news. While in 1640 there were no newsbooks, by 1645 there were 755. Their format varied, but typically they were eight-page cheaply printed pamphlets, issued weekly. Most writers and compilers remained anonymous, though in some cases the identity of the authors was an open secret. Unlike the earlier corantos, the inexpensive newsbooks of the 1640s gave a broad spectrum of readers access to information about current events. Often, simultaneously, they propagandized on behalf of various parties to the developing conflict. The newsbooks thus encouraged an unprecedentedly wide and deep sense of civic involvement, and arguably also had the effect of hardening factional differences.

The newsbooks provided eyewitness, or what purported to be eyewitness, accounts of the king's trial and execution very shortly after they occurred. Both events were highly charged, with important and complex stakes on both sides. In the autumn of 1648, many in Parliament who had initially wanted to restrict the king's powers hesitated to remove him from the throne; they favored a negotiated end to hostilities. Yet the powerful leaders of the New Model Army, including Oliver Cromwell, were convinced that Charles was a threat to a reorganized commonwealth. Even if the king dealt with his opponents in good faith, which they doubted, he would be a constant rallying point for opposition to their policies. Conceivably, the war would never be over.

When Charles seemed to be planning to escape from his relatively light confinement on the Isle of Wight, the army council ordered him seized and brought to London, which the army occupied. Yet what were they to do with their captive? Simply to assassinate him would deprive his killers of any semblance of legitimacy. A formal trial, therefore, seemed necessary; but it was not easy to achieve. First, Parliament had to be purged of more than half its members, who disapproved of putting the king on trial. Once reconstituted so as to exclude opposition, Parliament then had to pass a law redefining treason as a crime against the state, not a crime against the king, of which the king himself could not logically have been guilty.

As in the case of most treason trials in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a guilty verdict was a foregone conclusion. Yet the trial's value as propaganda was unpredictable. The judges and executioners pointedly assumed the regalia and symbolism of state power, and conducted both the trial and the execution with great punctiliousness, in order to bolster the impression of due process in the eyes of onlookers and newsbook readers. Charles's calmly defiant behavior, meanwhile, was not meant to secure his acquittal, which everyone knew would have been unforthcoming anyhow. Rather, he hoped to garner sympathy for his plight, to demonstrate publicly his unwavering adherence to his own principles, and to provoke prosecutors and judges into behaving like rabid zealots. Likewise, his conduct on the scaffold impressed even those who deplored his political position. While his judges and executioners strove to describe him as an overweening tyrant, Charles struggled to appear the heir to a Christian tradition of suffering innocence, a "martyr of the people." In 1660, as soon as the monarchy was restored, Charles I was canonized by the Church of England.

From The Moderate, No. 28

16—23 January 1649

[THE TRIAL OF KING CHARLES I, THE FIRST DAY]

At the high court of justice sitting in the Great Hall of Westminster, Sergeant Bradshaw President,¹ about 70 Members present. Oyez² made thrice, silence commanded. The president had the sword and mace carried before him, attended with Colonel Fox, and twenty other officers and gentlemen with partisans.³ The act of the Commons in Parliament for trial of the king, read. After the court was called, and each member rising up as he was called. The king came into the court, his hat on, and the Commissioners with theirs on also; no congratulation or motion of hats at all.⁴ The Sergeant ushered him in with the mace, Colonel Hacker⁵ and about thirty officers and gentlemen more came as his guard; the president then spake in these words, viz.

"Charles Stuart, King of England, the Commons of England assembled in Parliament being sensible of the great calamities that have been brought upon this nation, of the innocent blood that hath been shed in this nation, which is referred⁶ to you, as the author of it; and according to that duty which they owe to God, to the nation, and themselves, and according to that fundamental power and trust that is reposed in them by the people, have constituted this high court of justice before which you are now brought; and you are to hear the charge upon which the court will proceed."

Mr. Cook Solicitor General.⁷ "My lord, in behalf of the Commons of England, and of all the people thereof, I do accuse Charles Stuart, here present, of high treason and high misdemeanors, and I do in the name of the Commons of England desire that the charge may be read unto him."

King. "Hold a little"—tapping the solicitor general twice on the shoulder with his cane, which drawing towards him again, the head thereon fell off, he stooping for it, put it presently⁸ into his pocket. This is conceived will be very ominous.

Lord President. "Sir, the court commands the charge to be read; if you have any thing to say after, you may be heard."

The charge was read.

The king smiled often during the time, especially at those words therein, viz that Charles Stuart was a tyrant, traitor, murderer, and public enemy of the commonwealth.

1. John Bradshaw (1609-1659), chief justice of Cheshire and Wales, accepted the office of president after others declined. He lost this office after 1653, when he opposed Cromwell's consolidation of personal power. Bradshaw was posthumously convicted of treason at the Restoration in 1660; his body was exhumed and hanged in chains.

2. Hear ye (French).

3. John Fox (1610—1650) was commander of the Lord President's bodyguard, the members of which carried spears with a lobed base ('partisan'). The "sword and mace" symbolizes state power.

4. For either the king or the judges to doff their hats would be to acknowledge the others' superiority. "Congratulation": salutation.

5. Francis Hacker (1618—1660) commanded the soldiers who guarded the king, signed the king's death warrant, and supervised the guard on the scaffold. He was executed after the Restoration.

6. Attributed.

7. John Cook (1608—1660), a radical republican lawyer, served as chief prosecutor. He was executed after the Restoration.

8. Immediately.

Lord President. "Sir, you have now heard your charge read, containing such matter as appears in it: you find that in the close of it, it is prayed to the court in the behalf of all the Commons of England, that you answer to your charge. The court expects your answer."

King. "I would know by what power I am called hither. I was not long ago in the Isle of Wight; how I came hither is a larger story than I think is fit at this time for me to speak of: But there I entered into a treaty with the two Houses of Parliament, with as much public faith as is possibly to be had of any people in the world. I treated there with a number of honorable lords and gentlemen, and treated honestly and uprightly. I cannot say but they did deal very nobly with me. We were upon conclusion of a treaty. Now I would know by what authority—I mean lawful; there are many unlawful authorities in the world, thieves and robbers by the highways—but I would know by what authority I was brought from thence, and carried from place to place; and when I know by what lawful authority, I shall answer."

"Remember, I am your king, your lawful king; and what sin you bring upon your heads, and the judgments of God upon this land, think well upon it; I say think well upon it before you go further, from one sin to a greater.⁹ Therefore let me know by what lawful authority I am seated here, and I shall not be unwilling to answer. In the meantime, I shall not betray my trust. I have a trust committed to me by God, by old and lawful descent. I will not betray it, to answer to a new and unlawful authority. Therefore resolve me that, and you shall hear more of me."

Lord President. "If you had been pleased to have observed what was hinted to you by the court at our first coming hither, you would have known by what authority; which authority requires you in the name of the people of England, of which you are elected king, to answer them."

King. "No sir, I deny that."

Lord President. "If you acknowledge not the authority of the court, they must proceed."

King. "I do tell you so, England was never an elective kingdom, but an hereditary kingdom, for near a thousand years; therefore let me know by what authority I am called hither. I do stand more for the liberty of my people than any here that come to be my pretended judges; and therefore let me know by what lawful authority I am seated here, and I will answer it; otherwise I will not answer it."

Lord President told him he did interrogate the court, which beseemed not one in his condition, and it was known how he had managed his trust.

King. "I desire that you would give me, and all the world, satisfaction in this. For let me tell you, it is not a slight thing you are about. I am sworn to keep the peace by the duty I owe to God and my country; and I will do it to the last breath of my body: And therefore you shall do well to satisfy first God and then the country by what authority you do it; if by a reserved¹ authority, you cannot answer it. There is a God in heaven that will call you, and all that give you power, to an account. Satisfy me in that, and I will answer; otherwise, I betray my trust and the liberties of the people. And therefore think of that, and then I shall be willing. For I do vow, that it is as great a sin to withstand

9. From rebellion to regicide.

1. Unexplained.

lawful authority, as it is to submit to a tyrannical or any otherways unlawful authority, And therefore satisfy me that, and you shall receive my answer."

Lord President. "The court expects a final answer. They are to adjourn till Monday. If you satisfy not yourself, though we tell you our authority, we are satisfied with our authority, and it is upon God's authority and the kingdom's; and that peace you speak of will be kept in the doing of justice; and that is our present work."

The court adjourned till Monday ten of clock to the Painted Chamber, and thence hither.

As the king went away, facing the court, the king said, "I fear not that," looking upon and meaning the sword.

Going down from the court, the people cried, "Justice, justice, justice!"

Jan. 21. The commissioners kept a fast this day in Whitehall. There preached before them Mr. Sprig, whose text was, "He that sheds blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Mr. Foxley's was "Judge not, lest you be judged." And Mr. Peters' was. "I will bind their kings in chains, and their nobles in fetters of iron."² The last sermon made amends for the two former.

1649

From A Perfect Diurnal of Some Passages in Parliament, No. 288

Tuesday, January 30

[THE EXECUTION OF CHARLES I]

This day the king was beheaded over against the Banqueting House by Whitehall.¹ The manner of execution and what passed before his death take thus.² He was brought from Saint James³ about ten in the morning, walking on foot through the park with a regiment of foot for his guard, with colors flying, drums beating, his private guard of partisans,⁴ with some of his gentlemen before, and some behind bareheaded, Dr. Juxon late Bishop of London⁵ next behind him, and Colonel Tomlinson⁶ (who had the charge of him) to the gallery in Whitehall, and so into the Cabinet Chamber where he used to lie, where he continued at his devotion, refusing to dine (having before taken the sacrament) only about 12 at noon he drank a glass of claret wine, and eat a piece of bread. From thence he was accompanied by Dr. Juxon, Colonel Tomlinson, Colonel Hacker,⁷ and the guards before mentioned through the Banqueting House adjoining to which the scaffold was erected between Whitehall Gate and the

2. The biblical texts are Genesis 9.6, Matthew 7.1, and Psalms 149.8. Hugh Peters (1598-1660), Independent preacher to Cromwell's New Model Army, passionately supported the king's execution. He was himself executed after the Restoration.

1. Whitehall Palace was the English monarch's principal residence from 1530 to 1698, when most of it was destroyed by fire. The Banqueting House, designed by Inigo Jones with ceilings painted by Peter Paul Rubens, was built for King James I in 1619-22 and was used to stage court masques. "Over against": just outside.

2. Accept the following account.

3. St. James Palace, near Whitehall.

4. Guards armed with partisans, spears with lobed points or halberds.

5. William Juxon (1582-1663), Charles I's personal chaplain, was bishop of London until 1649, when he was deprived of office. In the late 1630s he had also served as one of the king's financial advisers. After the Restoration he became archbishop of Canterbury.

6. Matthew Tomlinson commanded the guards assigned to Charles. He was tried after the Restoration but was spared because he had been courteous to the king.

7. On Colonel Hacker, see p. 1739, note 5.

gate leading into the gallery from Saint James. The scaffold was hung round with black, and the floor covered with black, and the ax and block laid in the middle of the scaffold. There were divers companies of foot and horse on every side the scaffold, and the multitudes of people that came to be spectators very great. The king making a pass upon⁸ the scaffold, looked very earnestly on the block, and asked Colonel Hacker if there were no higher; and then spake thus, directing his speech to the gentlemen upon the scaffold.

King. "I shall be very little heard of anybody here; I shall therefore speak a word unto you here. Indeed I could hold my peace⁹ very well, if I did not think that holding my peace would make some men think that I did submit to the guilt as well as to the punishment. But I think it is my duty to God first, and to my country, for to clear myself both as an honest man, and a good king, and a good Christian. I shall begin first with my innocency. In troth I think it not very needful for me to insist long upon this, for all the world knows that I never did begin a war with the two Houses of Parliament, and I call God to witness, to whom I must shortly make an account, that I never did intend for to encroach upon their privileges; they began upon me. It is the militia they began upon;¹ they confessed that the militia was mine but they thought it fit to have it from me; and to be short, if anybody will look to the dates of commissions, theirs and mine, and likewise to the declarations,² will see clearly that they began these unhappy troubles, not I. So that as the guilt of these enormous crimes that are laid against me, I hope in God that God will clear me of it. I will not; I am in charity;³ God forbid that I should lay it upon the two Houses of Parliament, there is no necessity of either.⁴ I hope they are free of this guilt; for I do believe that ill instruments⁵ between them and me has been the chief cause of all this bloodshed. So that by way of speaking, as I find myself clear of this, I hope and pray God that they may too. Yet for all this, God forbid that I should be so ill a Christian, as not to say that God's judgments are just upon me. Many times he does pay justice by an unjust sentence; that is ordinary. I only say this, that an unjust sentence (meaning Strafford)⁶ that I suffered for to take effect, is punished now by an unjust sentence upon me. That is, so far I have said, to show you that I am an innocent man.

"Now for to show you that I am a good Christian, I hope there is" (pointing to Dr. Juxon) "a good man that will bear me witness that I have forgiven all the world, and those in particular that have been the chiefcausers of my death. Who they are, God knows; I do not desire to know. I pray God forgive them. But this is not all; my charity must go farther. I wish that they may repent, for indeed they have committed a great sin in that particular. I pray God with Saint Stephen that this be not laid to their charge;⁷ nay, not only so, but that they may take the right way to the peace of the kingdom, for charity commands

8. Traversing.

9. Remain silent. It was customary for condemned prisoners to address onlookers before their public executions. "You here": the small group standing on the scaffold, as distinguished from the large crowd watching the execution.

1. In 1642 Parliament's Militia Ordinance transferred local militias from the king's control to Parliament's. Despite its failure to secure Charles's assent to the measure, Parliament declared it legally binding.

2. "Commissions" and "declarations": warrants for enlisting troops and proclamations of war.

3. Practicing the charity that befits a Christian, I refuse to lay the blame for the war on my enemies.

4. Of blaming either side for the war.

5. Corrupt go-betweens.

6. In an attempt to appease his opponents in Parliament, Charles reluctantly consented to the execution of his adviser Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, for treason in 1641, despite lack of evidence that Strafford had committed any crime.

7. St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, prayed that God not hold his persecutors responsible for their actions; recounted in Acts 7. "Particular" (previous line): regard.

me not only to forgive particular men, but to endeavor to the last gasp the peace of the kingdom. Sirs, I do wish with all my soul, and I do hope there is some here will carry it further, that they may endeavor the peace of the kingdom.

"Now, sirs, I must show you both how you are out of the way, and will put you in a way.⁸ First, you are out of the way, for certainly all the way⁹ you ever have had yet as I could find by anything, is in the way of conquest. Certainly this is an ill way, for conquest, sir, in my opinion is never just, except there be a good just cause, either for matter of wrong or just title, and then if you go beyond it,¹ the first quarrel that you have to it, that makes it unjust at the end that was just at first. But if it be only matter of conquest, then it is a great robbery; as a pirate said to Alexander that he was a great robber, he was but a petty robber. And so, sir, I do think the way that you are in, is much out of the way. Now, sir, for to put you in the way, believe it you never do right, nor God will never prosper you,² until you give Him his due, the king his due (that is, my successors) and the people their due. I am as much for them³ as any of you. You must give God his due by regulating rightly his Church, according to Scripture, which is now out of order. For to set you in a way particularly⁴ now I cannot, but only this, a national synod freely called, freely debating among themselves, must settle this; when that every opinion is freely and clearly heard. For the king, indeed I will not—(Then turning to a gentleman that touched the ax, said, hurt not the ax that may hurt me.)—For the king, the laws of the land will clearly instruct you for that; therefore, because it concerns my own particular I only give you a touch of it.⁵ For the people, and truly I desire their liberty and freedom, as much as anybody whomsoever; but I must tell you, that their liberty and their freedom consists in having of government, those laws by which their life and their goods may be most their own. It is not for having share in government, sir, that is nothing pertaining to them.⁶ A subject and a sovereign are clean⁷ different things; and therefore, until they do that, I mean, that you do put the people in that liberty as I say, certainly they will never enjoy themselves.⁸ Sirs, it was for this⁹ that now I am come here. If I would have given way to an arbitrary way, for to have all laws changed according to the power of the sword, I needed not to have come here; and therefore I tell you, and I pray God it be not laid to your charge, that I am the martyr of the people. In troth sirs, I shall not hold you much longer; for I will only say this to you, that in truth I could have desired some little time longer because that I would have put this that I have said in a little more order and a little better digested¹ than I have done; and therefore I hope you will excuse me. I have delivered² my conscience. I pray God that you do take those courses that are best for the good of the kingdom and your own salvations."

Dr. Juxon. "Will Your Majesty—though it may be very well known Your Majesty's affections to religion—yet it may be expected that you should say somewhat³ for the world's satisfaction."

King. "I thank you very heartily, my lord, for that I had almost forgotten it.

8. Both show you how you are wrong and put you on a correct course.

9. All the rationale.

1. Beyond what is necessary to correct the wrong.

2. Allow you to flourish.

3. On the people's side.

4. In detail.

5. Because it concerns my own situation, I men-

tion it only briefly.

6. Of their concern or responsibility.

7. Completely.

8. Be happy.

9. Because I upheld the liberty of the people.

1. More methodically arranged.

2. Spoken

3. Something.

In troth, sirs, my conscience in religion I think is very well known to the world, and therefore I declare before you all that I die a Christian according to the profession of the Church of England as I found it left me by my father; and this honest man, I think, will witness it." Then turning to the officers said, "sirs, excuse me for this same.⁴ I have a good cause, and I have a gracious God; I will say no more."

Then turning to Colonel Hacker, he said, "Take care that they do not put me to pain; and, sir, this, an it please you."⁵ But then a gentleman coming near the ax, the king said, "Take heed of the ax, pray take heed of the ax." Then the king speaking to the executioner said, "I shall say but very short prayers, and then thrust out my hands."

Then the king called to Dr. Juxon for his nightcap, and having put it on he said to the executioner, "Does my hair trouble you?" Who desired him to put it all under his cap, which the king did accordingly, by the help of the executioner and the bishop. Then the king turning to Dr. Juxon said, "I have a good cause, and a gracious God on my side."

Dr. Juxon, "There is but one stage more. This stage is turbulent and troublesome; it is a short one: But you may consider it will soon carry you a very great way; it will carry you from earth to heaven, and there you shall find a great deal of cordial joy and comfort."

King. "I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can be."

Dr. Juxon. "You are exchanged from a temporal to an eternal crown, a good exchange."

Then the king took off his cloak and his George,⁶ giving his George to Dr. Juxon, saying "Remember" (it is thought for the prince) and some other small ceremonies past. After which the king stooping down laid his neck upon the block, and after a very little pause stretching forth his hands, the executioner at one blow severed his head from his body. Then his body was put in a coffin covered with black velvet, and removed to his lodging chamber in Whitehall.

4. This religious profession. Charles did not accept the radical Protestantism espoused by many of his opponents.

5. As was customary, Charles tips Hacker, the person supervising the execution, in hopes of ensuring a quick death. "An": if.

6. A jeweled pendant representing St. George killing a dragon, worn by Knights of the Garter. The prince (following) is the king's eldest son, later King Charles II, who had escaped to exile in France.

POLITICAL WRITING

Not surprisingly, the tumult of civil war stimulated a great deal of thinking about the nature and ends of government. Along with Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan* (p. 1596), the three excerpts that follow give some idea of the arguments proposed by English political writers between 1630 and 1655.

In *Patriarcha, or The Natural Power of Kings Defended Against the Unnatural Liberty of the People*, the royalist Robert Filmer outlines a theory of monarchical absolutism based on the authority of biblical patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for instance—over their families. God ratified kingly authority, Filmer claims, when he commanded the honoring of parents. Although many royalists retained a larger role for popular consent than Filmer did, Filmer's account of the king's fatherly care of his people, and the people's childlike incompetence to manage political affairs, was

close to the Stuart kings' own views. Like Hobbes in *Leviathan*, Filmer favors royal absolutism, but he works from very different premises, rejecting as unhistorical Hobbes's theory of the state of nature and his speculations on the contractual origin of government. Filmer's recourse to biblical history and to the revealed word of God made his theory more palatable to conservatives than that of Hobbes, who took his methodological premises from geometry and the new science, and his pessimistic assessment of human motives from Machiavelli.

The claims of royalists, who would have concentrated power in the king and deprived the people of any way to get rid of him, came under vigorous attack from the poet John Milton, who during the war years became one of the most effective polemicists for the parliamentary radicals. Milton wrote *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* in 1648, the days leading up to Charles's trial and execution, when many of those who had originally supported limiting the king's power shrank from actually beheading him. Milton decries this hesitation, seeing it as the effect of a misdirected awe for the privileges of monarchs. All political authorities, Milton argues, hold their power in trust from the people, and the people can revoke that trust whenever they choose.

Like Filmer, Milton bases his argument upon biblical history, but he cites very different passages. Filmer emphasizes the importance of fatherly authority in Genesis, which narrates the lives of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph. Milton acknowledges that the fall of Adam and Eve corrupted human nature so that individuals were henceforth unable to govern themselves properly without external discipline. Yet, he insists, since those charged with implementing that discipline are themselves sinners, they must be kept in check by laws and by strict limitations upon their authority. In Milton's account, problems with the exercise of authority became evident only gradually. Unlike Filmer, who assumes that the social arrangements described in Genesis are a pattern for modern political communities, Milton chooses his examples from later eras in Jewish history: for instance, the Book of Samuel, in which God disapproves of the Israelites' desire for a king.

For both Filmer and Milton, the central issue of the conflict between the king and Parliament is, who has ultimate authority, the king or the people? Gerrard Winstanley construes the problem differently, in primarily economic rather than political terms. Winstanley was a well-educated London linen draper who worked as a laborer in the countryside after suffering financial reverses during the war years. In his political writing, he concerns himself less with the way power is allocated than with the equitable distribution of wealth. The ownership of land is especially important to him, since it was the critical asset in a largely agrarian society. Members of the House of Commons, though they considered themselves the representatives of "the people," were actually fairly substantial property owners; indeed, those without land or income were not entitled to vote. In consequence, more than half the male population (and, of course, the entire female population) was denied the franchise. In *A New Year's Gift Sent to the Parliament and Army* (1650), Winstanley accuses Parliament of having merely transferred oppressive power from the king to itself, leaving most of England's population as impoverished and downtrodden as before.

Winstanley suggests a practical means to remedy his society's inequities: "the commons," undeveloped lands used for grazing, should be made available to poor people to farm communally. Since the commons, though traditionally used by all the residents on an estate, were legally the manorial landlord's private property, Winstanley's ideas were highly unpopular among landowners. Moreover, his proposal was not merely a theoretical recommendation. The year before he wrote *A New Year's Gift*, Winstanley and some of his followers, called Diggers, had settled on St. George's Hill in Surrey. They planted twelve acres of grain and built a number of makeshift houses before they were violently evicted.

Like Filmer and Milton, Winstanley turns to the Bible to justify his politics. Yet like them, he chooses passages that suit his argument. He reads contemporary history

through the heady allegories of the Book of Revelation, as a confrontation between the powers of darkness and the powers of light. Jesus's concern for the poor and scorn for the rich loom large to him, and his social vision owes much to biblical accounts of early Christian communities, which held property in common and minimized class differences.

ROBERT FILMER

The eldest of eighteen children, Robert Filmer (1588—1653) attended Trinity College, Cambridge, and inherited his father's estate in Kent in 1629. When war broke out he was too old to participate as a soldier, but he was briefly imprisoned by Parliament as a known supporter of the king, and his property was seized and plundered. After his release, he published a number of treatises arguing for absolute monarchy, among them *The Anarchy of a Limited and Mixed Monarchy* (1648); *The Freeholder's Grand Inquest* (1648), which argued that Parliament could only meet at the will of the king; and a translation of excerpts from the works of the French absolutist Jean Bodin. However, Filmer's most important treatise, *Patriarcha*, was not among these publications. Scholars disagree about when it was written, but Filmer probably composed it in the early 1630s in the wake of Charles's conflicts with Parliament early in his reign. The treatise remained in manuscript until 1680. Printed during a heated debate between Tories (royalists) and Whigs (Parliamentarians) over the right of King Charles II's brother James to inherit the throne, *Patriarcha* was comprehensively savaged by John Locke in his *First Treatise of Government* (1690).

While Filmer's motive in writing *Patriarcha* was undoubtedly close-to-home disputes between the English king and his subjects, his explicit polemical target is not Charles's parliamentary opponents. Rather, Filmer argues against Continental political theorists such as the Jesuit Robert Cardinal Bellarmine, who had written a devastating critique of James I's treatises on monarchy earlier in the century. Bellarmine's aim had been to secure freedom of conscience and worship for Roman Catholic subjects of a Protestant monarch, by arguing that the power of monarchs was constrained by their people. Charles's Puritan opponents would find many aspects of Bellarmine's line of reasoning irresistible. Since in the English-speaking tradition republican concepts eventually came to be strongly associated with Puritan dissent, it is worth remembering that for much of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, it had been Protestants who advocated consolidating secular and spiritual power in the figure of a powerful king, and Catholics who had resisted that consolidation.

From Patriarcha, or The Natural Power of Kings Defended Against the Unnatural Liberty of the People

From *Chapter 1: That the First Kings Were Fathers of Families*

Since the time that school divinity¹ began to flourish there hath been a common opinion maintained, as well by divines as by divers other learned men, which affirms: "Mankind is naturally endowed and born with freedom from all subjection, and at liberty to choose what form of government it please, and that the power which any one man hath over others was at first bestowed

1. Systematic theology, as undertaken by medieval philosophers in the universities ("schools").

according to the discretion of the multitude." This tenet was first hatched in the schools, and hath been fostered by all succeeding Papists for good divinity. The divines, also, of the reformed churches have entertained it, and the common people everywhere tenderly embrace it as being most plausible² to flesh and blood, for that it prodigally distributes a portion of liberty to the meanest of the multitude, who magnify liberty as if the height of human felicity were only to be found in it, never remembering that the desire of liberty was the first cause of the fall of Adam.

But howsoever this vulgar³ opinion hath of late obtained a great reputation, yet it is not to be found in the ancient fathers and doctors of the primitive church. It contradicts the doctrine and history of the holy scriptures, the constant practice of all ancient monarchies, and the very principles of the law of nature. It is hard to say whether it be more erroneous in divinity or dangerous in policy.⁴

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That the patriarchs' . . . were endowed with kingly power, their deeds to testify; for as Adam was lord of his children, so his children under him had a command and power over their own children, but still with subordination to the first parent, who is lord-paramount over his children's children to all generations, as being the grandfather of his people.

I see not then how the children of Adam, or of any man else, can be free from subjection to their parents. And this subjection of children being the fountain of all regal authority, by the ordination of God himself, it follows that civil power not only in general is by divine institution, but even the assignment of it specifically to the eldest parents, which quite takes away that new and common distinction which refers only power universal and absolute to God, but power respective⁶ in regard of the special form of government to the choice of the people.

This lordship which Adam by command had over the whole world, and by right descending from him the patriarchs did enjoy, was as large and ample as the absolutest dominion of any monarch which hath been since the Creation. For dominion of life and death we find that Judah, the father, pronounced sentence of death against Thamar, his daughter-in-law, for playing the harlot. "Bring her forth," saith he, "that she may be burnt."⁷ Touching war, we see that Abraham commanded an army of three hundred and eighteen soldiers of his own family. And Esau met his brother Jacob with four hundred men at arms. For matter of peace, Abraham made a league with Abimelech, and ratified the articles with an oath. These acts of judging in capital crimes, of making war, and concluding peace, are the chiefest marks of sovereignty that are found in any monarch.

. .

It may seem absurd to maintain that kings now are the fathers of their people, since experience shows the contrary. It is true, all kings be not the natural parents of their subjects, yet they all either are, or are to be reputed, the next heirs to those first progenitors who were at first the natural parents

2. Agreeable.

3. Commonly held.

4. The conduct of public affairs.

5. Forefathers of the Jews, including Adam, Noah,

Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jacob's twelve sons.

6. Partial, limited.

7. Genesis 38.24. The examples following also come from Genesis, 14.14, 32.6, and 21.22–27.

of the whole people, and in their right succeed to the exercise of supreme jurisdiction; and such heirs are not only lords of their own children, but also of their brethren, and all others that were subject to their fathers. And therefore we find that God told Cain of his brother Abel, "His desires shall he subject unto thee, and thou shalt rule over him." Accordingly, when Jacob bought his brother's birthright, Isaac blessed him thus: "Be lord over thy brethren, and let the sons of thy mother bow before thee."⁸

As long as the first fathers of families lived, the name of patriarchs did aptly belong unto them; but after a few descents, when the true fatherhood itself was extinct, and only the right of the father descends to the true heir, then the title of prince or king was more significant to express the power of him who succeeds only to the right of that fatherhood which his ancestors did naturally enjoy. By this means it comes to pass that many a child, by succeeding a king, hath the right of a father over many a gray-headed multitude, and hath the title of *pater patriae*.⁹

To confirm this natural right of regal power, we find in the Decalogue¹ that the law which enjoins obedience to kings is delivered in the terms of "Honor thy father," as if all power were originally in the father. If obedience to parents be immediately due by a natural law, and subjection to princes but by the mediation of a human ordinance, what reason is there that the laws of nature should give place to the laws of men, as we see the power of the father over his child gives place and is subordinate to the power of the magistrate?

If we compare the natural rights of a father with those of a king, we find them all one, without any difference at all but only in the latitude or extent of them: as the father over one family, so the king, as father over many families, extends his care to preserve, feed, clothe, instruct, and defend the whole commonwealth. His war, his peace, his courts of justice, and all his acts of sovereignty, tend only to preserve and distribute to every subordinate and inferior father, and to their children, their rights and privileges, so that all the duties of a king are summed up in an universal fatherly care of his people.

1620s—40s

1680

JOHN MILTON¹

From The Tenure² of Kings and Magistrates

If men within themselves would be governed by reason, and not generally give up their understanding to a double tyranny, of custom from without, and blind affections³ within, they would discern better what it is to favor and uphold the tyrant of a nation. But being slaves within doors,⁴ no wonder that they strive so much to have the public state conformably governed to the inward vicious rule by which they govern themselves. For indeed none can

8. The first reference is to Genesis 4.7, which Filmer reads tendentiously as establishing the elder brother Cain's authority over the younger Abel, and the second is to Genesis 27.29.

9. Father of his country.

1. Ten Commandments.

1. See headnote to Milton, p. 1785.

2. Terms of holding office,

3. Impulses, passions.

4. I.e., within their own selves.

love freedom heartily but good men; the rest love not freedom but license; which never hath more scope or more indulgence than under tyrants. Hence it is that tyrants are not oft offended nor stand much in doubt of bad men, as being all naturally servile; but in whom⁵ virtue and true worth most is eminent, them they fear in earnest as by right their masters; against them lies all their hatred and suspicion. Consequently neither do bad men hate tyrants, but have been always readiest with the falsified names of loyalty, and obedience, to color over their base compliances.⁶ And although sometimes for shame, and when it comes to their own grievances, of purse especially, they would seem good patriots and side with the better cause, yet when others for the deliverance of their country, endued with fortitude and heroic virtue to fear nothing by the curse written against those "that do the work of the lord negligently,"⁷ would go on to remove not only the calamities and thralldoms of a people but the roots and causes whence they spring, straight these men and sure helpers at need, as if they hated only the miseries but not the mischiefs,⁸ after they have juggled and paltered⁹ with the world, bandied and borne arms against their king, divested him, disanointed him, nay cursed him all over in their pulpits and their pamphlets, to the engaging of sincere and real men beyond what is possible or honest to retreat from, not only turn revolters from those principles which only could at first move them, but lay the stain of disloyalty and worse on those proceedings which are the necessary consequences of their own former actions; nor disliked by themselves, were they managed to the entire advantages of their own faction; not considering the while that he toward whom they boasted their new fidelity counted them accessory;¹ and by those statutes and laws which they so impotently brandish against others would have doomed them to a traitor's death for what they have done already. Tis true, that most men are apt enough to civil wars and commotions as a novelty, and for a flash hot and active; but through sloth or inconstancy, and weakness of spirit either fainting ere their own pretences,² though never so just, be half attained, or through an inbred falsehood and wickedness, betray oftentimes to destruction with themselves men of noblest temper³ joined with them for causes whereof they in their rash undertakings⁴ were not capable.

* * *

No man who knows aught, can be so stupid to deny that all men naturally were born free, being the image and resemblance of God Himself, and were by privilege above all the creatures born to command and not to obey, and that they lived so. Till from the root of Adam's transgression,⁵ falling among themselves to do wrong and violence, and foreseeing that such courses must needs tend to the destruction of them all, they agreed by common league to bind each other from mutual injury, and jointly to defend themselves against any that gave disturbance or opposition to such agreement. Hence came cities, towns, and commonwealths. And because no faith in all was found sufficiently binding,⁶ they saw it needful to ordain some authority that might restrain by force and punishment what was violated against peace and common right.

5. Those in whom.

6. Make their slavishness look good.

7. Milton apparently refers to Jeremiah 48:10: "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood."

8. The suffering but not its causes.

9. Played fast and loose.

1. Guilty of being accessories to a crime.

2. Purposes.

3. Character.

4. Attempts, enterprises.

5. Adam's fall introduced sin and violence into human life.

6. Because merely trusting people to behave themselves did not suffice to control them.

This authority and power of self-defense and preservation being originally and naturally in every one of them, and unitedly in them all, for ease, for order, and lest each man should be his own partial⁷ judge, they communicated and derived⁸ either to one, whom for the eminence of his wisdom and integrity they chose above the rest, or to more than one whom they thought of equal deserving: the first was called a king, the other magistrates. Not to be their lords and masters (though afterward those names in some places were given voluntarily to such as had been authors⁹ of inestimable good to the people) but to be their deputies and commissioners, to execute, by virtue of their entrusted power, that justice which else every man by the bond of nature and of covenant must have executed for himself and for one another. And to him that shall consider well why among free persons, one man by civil right¹ should bear authority and jurisdiction over another, no other end or reason can be imaginable. These² for a while governed well, and with much equity decided all things at their own arbitrament:³ till the temptation of such a power left absolute in their hands, perverted them at length to injustice and partiality. Then did they who now by trial⁴ had found the danger and inconveniences of committing arbitrary power to any, invent laws either framed or consented to by all, that should confine and limit the authority of whom they chose to govern them: that so man,⁵ of whose failing they had proof, might no more rule over them, but law and reason abstracted as much as might be from personal errors and frailties. While⁶ as the magistrate was set above the people, so the law was set above the magistrate. When this would not serve, but that the law was either not executed or misapplied, they were constrained from that time, the only remedy left them, to put conditions⁷ and take oaths from all kings and magistrates at their first installment to do impartial justice by law: who upon those terms and no other received allegiance from the people, that is to say, bond or covenant to obey them in execution of those laws which they the people had themselves made or assented to. And this oftentimes with express warning, that if the king or magistrate proved unfaithful to his trust, the people would be disengaged.⁸ They added also counselors and parliaments, nor to be only at his beck,⁹ but with him or without him, at set times, or at all times when any danger threatened to have care of the public safety.

It being thus manifest that the power of kings and magistrates is nothing else but what is only derivative, transferred and committed to them in trust from the people, to the common good of them all, in whom the power yet remains fundamentally, and cannot be taken from them without a violation of their natural birthright; and seeing that from hence Aristotle¹ and the best of political writers have defined a king, him who governs to the good and profit of his people and not for his own ends, it follows from necessary causes that the titles of sovereign lord, natural lord, and the like, are either arrogancies or

7. Biased.

8. Delegated.

9. Doers.

1. Law.

2. Kings and magistrates.

3. Judgment.

4. Experience. "They": the people who had delegated power to the kings and magistrates.

5. An individual man.

6. Thus.

7. Specify restrictions on.

8. Freed from having to obey.

9. The king's command. Charles had claimed that Parliament could not assemble unless called into session by the king.

1. In *Nicomachean Ethics* 8.11.1.

flatteries, not admitted² by emperors and kings of best note, and disliked by the church both of Jews, Isaiah 26.13, and ancient Christians, as appears by Tertullian and others.³ Although generally the people of Asia, and with them the Jews also, especially since the time they chose a king against the advice and counsel of God,⁴ are noted by wise authors much inclinable to slavery.

Secondly, that to say, as is usual, the king hath as good right to his crown and dignity as any man to his inheritance, is to make the subject no better than the king's slave, his chattel or his possession that may be bought and sold. And doubtless if hereditary title were sufficiently inquired, the best foundation of it would be found either but in courtesy or convenience. But suppose it to be of right hereditary, what can be more just and legal, if a subject for certain crimes be to forfeit by law from himself, and posterity, all his inheritance to the king,⁵ than that a king for crimes proportional should forfeit all his title and inheritance to the people: unless the people must be thought created all for him, he not for them, and they all in one body inferior to him single, which were a kind of treason against the dignity of mankind to affirm.

Thirdly it follows that to say kings are accountable to none but God is the overturning of all law and government. For if they may refuse to give account, then all covenants made with them at coronation, all oaths are in vain and mere mockeries, all laws which they swear to keep made to no purpose; for if the king fear not God—as how many of them do not?—we hold then our lives and estates by the tenure of his mere grace and mercy, as from a God, not a mortal magistrate, a position that none but court parasites or men besotted would maintain.

It follows lastly, that since the king or magistrate holds his authority of the people, both originally and naturally for their good in the first place, and not his own, then may the people as oft as they shall judge it for the best, either choose him or reject him, retain him or depose him though no tyrant, merely by the liberty and right of freeborn men to be governed as seems to them best.

1649

GERRARD WINSTANLEY

The demand for democratic elections by a political faction called the Levelers raised the fear in Cromwell and his conservative associates that, with unpropertied voters outnumbering the propertied by five to one, they might divide or even abolish private property. That was in fact the program of a small group calling themselves True Levelers or, later, Diggers, who were a group of Christian communists. Their leader was Gerrard Winstanley (1609—1676?), a failed businessman and subsequently a hired laborer, who began to publish tracts in 1648, became notorious in 1649 with

2. Permitted.

3. Isaiah 26.13: "O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name." The Church Father Tertullian wrote against earthly monarchs in *On the Crown*.

4. The Israelites, traditionally governed by judges, demanded a king despite God's warning against monarchy, as conveyed by the prophet Samuel (1 Samuel 8).

5. Convicted felons forfeited their property to the king.

the attempted enactment of the Diggers' program, and lapsed back into obscurity after his last published work in 1652.

In the spring of 1649 the Diggers began to put their ideals into practice, digging up the wasteland of St. George's Hill in Surrey and preparing it for crops. Though this land was not enclosed, all over England landowners claimed property rights in such common land, and the Diggers' gesture of cultivation here and in a few other Digger communities made a threatening counterclaim on behalf of the poor and propertyless. Their aim was at one level practical: at least one-third of England, they claimed, was barren waste, and if properly cultivated it could vastly increase the quantity and lower the price of food, to the great benefit of the poor. At another level it was ideological, a fundamental challenge to the very concept of private ownership of land, as the tract excerpted here argues—at least in regard to the common land. The army and the civil authorities were not very hard on the Diggers, but the local landholders were, beating them up, expelling them, and destroying their several settlements. But their often-eloquent tracts survived to inspire later communes.

From A New Year's Gift¹ Sent to the Parliament and Army

Gentlemen of the Parliament and army: you and the common people have assisted each other to cast out the head of oppression which was kingly power seated in one man's hand, and that work is now done; and till that work was done you called upon the people to assist you to deliver this distressed, bleeding, dying nation out of bondage; and the people came and failed you not, counting neither purse nor blood too dear to part with to effect this work.

The Parliament after this have made an act to cast out kingly power, and to make England a free commonwealth. These acts the people are much rejoiced with, as being words forerunning their freedom, and they wait for their accomplishment that their joy may be full; for as words without action are a cheat and kills the comfort of a righteous spirit, so words performed in action does comfort and nourish the life thereof.

Now, sirs, wheresoever we spy out kingly power, no man I hope shall be troubled to declare it, nor afraid to cast it out, having both act of Parliament, the soldiers' oath, and the common people's consent on his side; for kingly power is like a great spread tree, if you lop the head or top bough, and let the other branches and root stand, it will grow again and recover fresher strength.

If any ask me what kingly power is, I answer, there is a twofold kingly power. The one is the kingly power of righteousness, and this is the power of almighty God, ruling the whole creation in peace and keeping it together. And this is the power of universal love, leading people into all truth, teaching everyone to do as he would be done unto: now once more striving with flesh and blood, shaking down everything that cannot stand, and bringing everyone into the unity of himself, the one spirit of love and righteousness, and so will work a thorough restoration. But this kingly power is above all and will tread all covetousness, pride, envy, and self-love, and all other enemies whatsoever, under his feet, and take the kingdom and government of the creation out of the hand of self-seeking and self-honoring flesh,² and rule the alone king of righteous-

1. In 17th-century England, gifts were customarily exchanged on New Year's Day, not at Christmas.

2. "Flesh" is imagined as everything mortal and fallible, that which rebels against divine righteousness.

ness in the earth; and this indeed is Christ himself, who will cast out the curse.³ But this is not that kingly power intended by that act of Parliament to be cast out, but pretended to be set up, though this kingly power be much fought against both by Parliament, army, clergy, and people; but when they are made to see him, then they shall mourn because they have persecuted him.⁴

But the other kingly power is the power of unrighteousness, which indeed is the devil. And O, that there were such a heart in Parliament and army as to perform your own act.⁵ Then people would never complain of you for breach of covenant, for your covetousness, pride, and too much self-seeking that is in you. And you on the other side would never have cause to complain of the people's murmurings against you. Truly this jarring that is between you and the people is the kingly power; yea that very kingly power which you have made an act to cast out. Therefore see it be fulfilled on your part; for the kingly power of righteousness expects it, or else he will cast you out for hypocrites and unsavory salt;⁶ for he looks upon all your actions, and truly there is abundance of rust about your actings, which makes them that they do not shine bright.

This kingly power is covetousness in his branches,⁷ or the power of self-love ruling in one or in many men over others and enslaving those who in the creation are their equals; nay, who are in the strictness of equity rather their masters. And this kingly power is usually set in the chair of government under the name of prerogative⁸ when he rules in one over other: and under the name of state privilege of Parliament when he rules in many over others: and this kingly power is always raised up and established by the sword, and therefore he is called the murderer, or the great red dragon which fights against Michael,⁹ for he enslaves the weakness of the people under him, denying an equal freedom in the earth to everyone, which the law of righteousness gave every man in his creation. This I say is kingly power under darkness; and as he rules in men, so he makes men jar one against another, and is the cause of all wars and complainings. He is known by his outward actions, and his action at this very day fills all places; for this power of darkness rules, and would rule, and is that only enemy that fights against creation and national freedom. And this kingly power is he which you have made an act of Parliament to cast out. And now, you rulers of England, play the men and be valiant for the truth, which is Christ: for assure yourselves God will not be mocked, nor the devil will not be mocked. For first you say and profess you own¹ the scriptures of prophets and apostles, and God looks that you should perform that word in action. Secondly you have declared against the devil, and if you

3. The curse upon mankind that was the punishment of Adam's fall.

4. I.e., Parliament and the army do not expressly intend to cast out God's kingly power, but rather they act as if they are conforming to God's teachings, and yet often they resist God until they are brought to recognize him.

5. Enforce the act already passed by Parliament.

6. Matthew 5.13: "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men."

7. I.e., covetousness is one manifestation of

unrighteous kingly power.

8. The monarch's special powers.

9. Revelation 12.3—9: "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. . . . And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, / and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. / And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world."

1. Acknowledge.

do not now go through with your work but slack your hand by hypocritical self-love, and so suffer this dark kingly power to rise higher and rule, you shall find he will maul both you and yours to purpose.²

In the time of the kings, who came in as conquerors and ruled by the power of the sword, not only the common land but the enclosures³ also were captivated under the will of those kings, till now of late that our later kings granted more freedom to the gentry than they had presently after the Conquest:⁴ yet under bondage still. For what are prisons, whips, and gallows in the times of peace but the laws and power of the sword, forcing and compelling obedience, and so enslaving as if the sword raged in the open field? England was in such a slavery under the kingly power that both gentry and commonalty⁵ groaned under bondage; and to ease themselves, they endeavored to call a parliament, that by their counsels and decrees they might find some freedom.

But Charles the then king perceiving that the freedom they strove for would derogate from his prerogative tyranny,⁶ thereupon he goes into the north to raise a war against the Parliament; and took William the Conqueror's sword into his hand again, thereby to keep under the former conquered English, and to uphold his kingly power of self-will and prerogative, which was the power got by former conquests; that is, to rule over the lives and estates of all men at his will, and so to make us pure slaves and vassals.

Well, this Parliament, that did consist of the chief lords, lords of manors, and gentry, and they seeing that the king, by raising an army, did thereby declare his intent to enslave all sorts to him by the sword; and being in distress and in a low ebb, they call upon the common people to bring in their plate, monies, taxes, free-quarter, excise,⁷ and to adventure their lives with them, and they would endeavor to recover England from that Norman yoke and make us a free people. And the common people assent hereunto, and call this the Parliament's cause, and own it and adventure person and purse to preserve it; and by the joint assistance of Parliament and people the king was beaten in the field, his head taken off, and his kingly power voted down. And we the commons thereby virtually have recovered ourselves from the Norman conquest; we want nothing but possession of the spoil,⁸ which is a free use of the land for our livelihood.

And from hence we the common people, or younger brothers,⁹ plead our property in the common land as truly our own by virtue of this victory over the king, as our elder brothers can plead property in their enclosures; and that for three reasons in England's law.

First, by a lawful purchase or contract between the Parliament and us; for they were our landlords and lords of manors, that held the freedom of the commons from us' while the king was in his power; for they held title there-

2. Thoroughly.

3. Privately held land.

4. The conquest of England by the Norman William the Conqueror in 1066. Winstanley argued that the oppression of the poor and the landless was a consequence of nearly six centuries of occupation of England by a foreign power.

5. Common people.

6. Absolute rule.

7. A tax on domestically manufactured goods, first

imposed by Parliament in 1643 to finance the war against the king. "Plate": silver plate. "Free-quarter": free room and board for soldiers, or its monetary equivalent imposed as a tax.

8. Reward of victory.

9. Estates commonly passed to the eldest brother, leaving the younger brothers landless.

1. Kept the right to use the common lands from us, the common people.

unto from him,² he being the head and they branches of the kingly power that enslaved the people by that ancient conqueror's sword, that was the ruling power. For they said, "Come and help us against the king that enslaves us, that we may be delivered from his tyranny, and we will make you a free people."

Now they cannot make us free unless they deliver us from the bondage³ which they themselves held us under; and that is, they held the freedom of the earth from us: for we in part with them have delivered ourselves from the king. Now we claim freedom from that bondage you have and yet do hold us under, by the bargain and contract between Parliament and us, who, I say, did consist of lords of manors and landlords, whereof Mr. Drake,⁴ who hath arrested me for digging upon the common, was one at that time. Therefore by the law of bargain and sale we claim of them our freedom, to live comfortably with them in this land of our nativity; and this we cannot do so long as we lie under poverty, and must not be suffered to plant the commons and wasteland for our livelihood. For take away the land from any people, and those people are in a way of continual dearth and misery; and better not to have had a body, than not to have food and raiment for it. But, I say, they have sold us our freedom in the common, and have been largely paid for it; for by means of our bloods and money they sit in peace: for if the king had prevailed, they had lost all, and been in slavery to the meanest cavalier, if the king would.⁵ Therefore we the commons say, give us our bargain: if you deny us our bargain, you deny God, Christ, and scriptures; and all your profession⁶ then is and hath been hypocrisy.

Secondly, the commons and crown land is our property by equal conquest over the kingly power: for the Parliament did never stir up the people by promises and covenant to assist them to cast out the king and to establish them in the king's place and prerogative power. No, but all their declarations were for the safety and peace of the whole nation.

Therefore the common people being part of the nation, and especially they that bore the greatest heat of the day in casting out the oppressor; and the nation cannot be in peace so long as the poor oppressed are in wants and the land is entangled and held from them by bondage.

But the victory being obtained over the king, the spoil, which is properly the land, ought in equity to be divided now between the two parties, that is Parliament and common people. The Parliament, consisting of lords of manors and gentry, ought to have their enclosure lands free to them without molestation. . . . And the common people, consisting of soldiers and such as paid taxes and free-quarter, ought to have the freedom of all waste and common land and crown land equally among them. The soldiery ought not in equity to have all, nor the other people that paid them to have all; but the spoil ought to be divided between them that stayed at home and them that went to war; for the victory is for the whole nation.

And as the Parliament declared they did all for the nation, and not for themselves only; so we plead with the army, they did not fight for themselves, but for the freedom of the nation: and I say, we have bought our freedom of

2. Under the feudal system, the great lords held their lands on grant from the king, in return for their allegiance.

3. Technically bondage refers to the services and goods legally required by feudal landowners of their tenants.

4. Sir Francis Drake, a member of Parliament who

owned St. George's Hill, on which Winstanley and his followers had established a commune. At first sympathetic to the Diggers, Drake eventually took legal action to have them evicted.

5. To the lowest soldier of the king, if the king so commanded.

6. Statement of principles.

them likewise by taxes and free-quarter. Therefore we claim an equal freedom with them in this conquest over the king.

Thirdly, we claim an equal portion in the victory over the king by virtue of the two acts of Parliament: the one to make England a free commonwealth, the other to take away kingly power. Now the kingly power, you have heard, is a power that rules by the sword in covetousness and self, giving the earth to some and denying it to others: and this kingly power was not in the hand of the king alone, but lords, and lords of manors, and corrupt judges and lawyers especially held it up likewise. For he was the head and they, with the tithing priests,⁷ are the branches of that tyrannical kingly power; and all the several limbs and members must be cast out before kingly power can be pulled up root and branch. Mistake me not, I do not say, cast out the persons of men. No, I do not desire their fingers to ache;⁸ but I say, cast out their power whereby they hold the people in bondage, as the king held them in bondage. And I say, it is our own freedom we claim, both by bargain and by equality in the conquest; as well as by the law of righteous creation which gives the earth to all equally.

And the power of lords of manors lies in this: they deny the common people the use and free benefit of the earth, unless they give them leave and pay them for it, either in rent, in fines, in homages or heriots.⁹ Surely the earth was never made by God that the younger brother should not live in the earth unless he would work for and pay his elder brother rent for the earth. No, this slavery came in by conquest, and it is part of the kingly power; and England cannot be a free commonwealth till this bondage be taken away. You have taken away the king; you have taken away the House of Lords. Now step two steps further, and take away the power of lords of manors and of tithing priests, and the intolerable oppressions of judges by whom laws are corrupted; and your work will be honorable.

Fourthly, if this freedom be denied the common people, to enjoy the common land; then Parliament, army, and judges will deny equity and reason, whereupon the laws of a well-governed commonwealth ought to be built. And if this equity be denied, then there can be no law but club law¹ among the people: and if the sword must reign, then every party will be striving to bear the sword; and then farewell peace; nay, farewell religion and gospel, unless it be made use of to entrap one another, as we plainly see some priests and others make it a cloak for their knavery. If I adventure my life and fruit of my labor equal with you, and obtain what we strive for; it is both equity and reason that I should equally divide the spoil with you, and not you to have all and I none. And if you deny us this, you take away our property from us, our monies and blood, and give us nothing for it.

Therefore, I say, the common land is my own land, equal with my fellow-commoners, and our true property, by the law of creation. It is everyone's, but not one single one's. . . . True religion and undefiled is this, to make restitution of the earth, which hath been taken and held from the common people by the power of conquests formerly, and so set the oppressed free. Do not all strive to enjoy the land? The gentry strive for land, the clergy strive for land, the

7. Priests of the Church of England were legally entitled to a tenth, or "tithe," of every parishioner's goods; those people who wished to separate from the established church fiercely resented the involuntary nature of the tithe.

8. Wish the least physical harm to them.

9. Fees or goods paid by tenants to landlords in addition to rent.

1. That is, might makes right.

common people strive for land; and buying and selling is an art whereby people endeavor to cheat one another of the land. Now if any can prove from the law of righteousness that the land was made peculiar to him and his successively,² shutting others out, he shall enjoy it freely for my part. But I affirm it was made for all; and true religion is to let everyone enjoy it. Therefore, you rulers of England, make restitution of the lands which the kingly power holds from us: set the oppressed free, and come in and honor Christ, who is the restoring power, and you shall find rest.

1650

2. By inheritance.

WRITING THE SELF

The seventeenth century saw an explosion of interest in the differences among persons, in the intimate texture of day-to-day experience, in the sometimes surprising twists and turns of individual lives, in the relationship between character and destiny. Of course, such concerns were not entirely new: Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* had dwelt lovingly upon the quirky diversity of its pilgrims. Some seventeenth-century writers looked back as well to classical or foreign precedents: the *Lives* of the late-classical biographer Plutarch, with its marvelously revelatory anecdotes and shrewd assessments of human moral complexity, the essays of the French Michel de Montaigne, who described his own opinions and experiences in frank detail. Both Plutarch and Montaigne profoundly influenced William Shakespeare, whose unparalleled gift for delineating character has led one recent critic to credit him with having "invented the human." Among writers later in the century, Thomas Browne, in *Religio Medici* (p. 1582), follows perhaps most obviously in Montaigne's footsteps. Other writers, particularly religious ones, owed much to the medieval tradition of hagiography, or the narrating of the lives of saints and martyrs as models for the faithful to admire and imitate. Isaak Walton, in biographies of John Donne, George Herbert, and other worthies that draw upon his personal experience with them as well as upon his research, was one practitioner in a Protestant hagiographic tradition (p. 1309). Other Protestants directed their gaze inward, convinced of the importance of spiritual self-scrutiny unmediated by ritual or clergyman. Many Puritans kept spiritual accountings in writing—part diaries, part prayers—that effectively substituted for the Catholic practice of oral confession to a priest.

During the civil war and its aftermath, interest in "writing the self" only intensified. For the autobiographically inclined, the physical and ideological turmoil of midcentury could intensify a sense of the individual's isolation and uniqueness, forcing (or permitting) him to experience a range of events for which his upbringing could not have prepared him. Those who reflected upon the history of the period, as Lucy Hutchinson and Edward Hyde did, were often enthralled by the clash of strong personalities as well as the struggle between political principles, social trends, or cultural movements. Both Hutchinson and Hyde, from their different ends of the political spectrum, saw Cromwell and Charles I as locked in a fateful rivalry, each leader a complex mixture of personal strengths and failings.

The prominence of women writers in this section is no accident. Even though women were excluded from formal political participation, the war contributed to the development of their political interests and consciousness, and sometimes allowed them to play important informal or improvised roles in momentous events. The

resourceful, adventurous Anne Halkett obviously relished her daring contribution to the rescue of the Duke of York. Some women writers explicitly eschewed a feminist agenda: Lucy Hutchinson's trenchant historical analysis coexists with thoroughly traditional beliefs about the proper submission of wife to husband and about the danger of women with political ambition, notably Charles I's queen. She excuses her own writing, to others and perhaps also to herself, by casting her work as a tribute to her beloved husband. In other cases, a challenge to political authority is inextricable from an assault on male privilege. Dorothy Waugh, a Quaker, refused like others of her faith to defer to political or religious authorities and insisted on the spiritual equality between women and men. Waugh suffered as much on account of her sex as on account of her religion, for she describes how the mayor of Carlisle is outraged not only by her unauthorized preaching but by the fact that the preacher is female. She is punished by being forced to wear a "scold's bridle," a traditional humiliation meted out to outspoken, argumentative women who refused to obey their husbands.

LUCY HUTCHINSON

Lucy Hutchinson, nee Apsley (1620—1681), whose life centered in the North Country city of Nottingham, was a staunch republican, memoirist, poet, translator of Lucretius, and biographer and historian of the revolutionary period. In a fragmentary autobiography, she relates that she could read English perfectly by the age of four, and that "having a great memory, I was carried to sermons, and while I was very young could remember and repeat them . . . exactly." Her parents allowed her to receive at home as good an education as her brothers got at school (for an account of that education and its strains, go to Norton Literature Online). She reports that her future husband learned of her existence by noticing some of her Latin books. She was married at eighteen to John Hutchinson, a man of unyielding conviction and courage: he fought in the Puritan armies, served as governor of Nottingham Castle, sat in the Long Parliament, voted for the execution of Charles I, supported the republican commonwealth (1649—53), and withdrew support from Cromwell when he overrode and dismissed parliaments. Hutchinson was arrested after the Restoration and died in prison in 1664. After his death his devoted wife of twenty-six years wrote her *Memoirs of the Life of Colonel John Hutchinson*, purportedly to preserve his memory for her children. But within that memoir and eyewitness account of the remarkable period they had lived through, she enfolded a broad history of and commentary upon the Puritan movement and the revolution (for her account of the cultural crisis over sports, masques, and recreation, go to Norton Literature Online). Almost certainly she hoped for a broader audience of nonconformists and republicans who might someday revive the "Good Old Cause," though because of its politics this work was not published until 1806. Also unpublished in her lifetime were several recently uncovered elegiac and satiric poems, as well as most of a long but unfinished epic poem, *Order and Disorder*, which treats biblical history from the Creation to the story of Jacob in twenty cantos, the first five of which were published in 1679. Much of the poem is indebted to *Paradise Lost*.

From Memoirs of the Life of Colonel John Hutchinson

[CHARLES I AND HENRIETTA MARIA]

The face of the court was much changed in the change of the king; for King Charles was temperate, chaste, and serious, so that the fools and bawds, mimics and catamites' of the former court grew out of fashion; and the nobility and courtiers, who did not quite abandon their debaucheries, yet so revered the king as to retire into corners to practice them. Men of learning and ingenuity in all arts were in esteem, and received encouragement from the king, who was a most excellent judge and great lover of paintings, carvings, gravings,² and many other ingenuities, less offensive than the bawdry and profane abusive* wit which was the only exercise of the other court. But, as in the primitive times,⁴ it is observed that the best emperors were some of them stirred up by Satan to be the bitterest persecutors of the church, so this king was a worse encroacher upon the civil and spiritual liberties of his people by far than his father. He married a papist,¹ a French lady of a haughty spirit, and a great wit and beauty, to whom he became a most uxorious husband. By this means the court was replenished with papists, and many who hoped to advance themselves by the change, turned to that religion. All the papists in the kingdom were favored, and, by the king's example, matched into the best families. The puritans were more than ever discountenanced⁶ and persecuted, insomuch that many of them chose to abandon their native country and leave their dearest relations, to retire into any foreign soil or plantation⁷ where they might amidst all outward inconveniences enjoy the free exercise of God's worship. Such as could not flee were tormented in the bishops' court,⁸ fined, whipped, pilloried, imprisoned, and suffered to enjoy no rest, so that death was better than life to them; and notwithstanding their patient sufferance of all these things, yet was not the king satisfied till the whole land was reduced to perfect slavery. The example of the French king⁹ was propounded to him, and he thought himself no monarch so long as his will was confined to the bounds of any law; but knowing that the people of England were not pliable to an arbitrary rule, he plotted to subdue them to his yoke by a foreign force;¹ and till he could effect it made no conscience of granting anything to the people, which he resolved should not oblige him longer than it served his turn; for he was a prince that had nothing of faith or truth, justice or generosity in him. He was the most obstinate person in his self-will that ever was, and so bent upon being an absolute, uncontrollable sovereign that he was resolved either to be such a king or none. His firm adherence to prelacy² was not for conscience of one religion more than another, for it was his principle that an honest man might be saved in any profession; but he had a mistaken principle that kingly government in the state could not stand without episcopal govern-

1. Clowns and homosexuals.

2. Engravings.

3. Satiric.

4. Early Christian period.

5. Roman Catholic.

6. Thwarted, out of favor.

7. Colony, such as the Massachusetts Bay Colony, founded in 1630. "Inconveniencs" (following): misfortunes.

8. Courts administered by the Church of England

tried and punished those who refused to attend church services, frequented alternative religious gatherings, or disputed church doctrines or policies.

9. The French king reigned without a parliament.

1. Puritans suspected that Charles planned to invite Catholic forces to invade his realm in order to consolidate his own power.

2. Rule of the church by bishops.

ment in the church; and therefore, as the bishops flattered him with preaching up his prerogative,³ and inveighing against the puritans as factious and disloyal, so he protected them in their pomp and pride and insolent practices against all the godly and sober people of the land.

~ * ~

But above all these the king had another instigator of his own violent purpose, more powerful than all the rest; and that was the queen, who, grown out of her childhood, began to turn her mind from those vain extravagancies she lived in at first to that which did less become her, and was more fatal to the kingdom; which is never in any place happy where the hands which were made only for distaffs affect⁴ the management of scepters. If any one object the fresh example of Queen Elizabeth, let them remember that the felicity of her reign was the effect of her submission to her masculine and wise counselors; but wherever male princes are so effeminate as to suffer women of foreign birth and different religions to intermeddle with the affairs of state, it is always found to produce sad desolations; and it hath been observed that a French queen never brought any happiness to England. Some kind of fatality⁵ too the English imagined to be in her name of Marie, which, it is said, the king rather chose to have her called by than her other, Henrietta, because the land should find a blessing in that name which had been more unfortunate;⁶ but it was not in his power, though a great prince, to control destiny. This lady being by her priests affected with the meritoriousness of advancing her own religion, whose principle it is to subvert all other, applied that way her great wit and parts,⁷ and the power her haughty spirit kept over her husband, who was enslaved in his affection only to her, though she had no more passion for him than what served to promote her design. Those brought her into a very good correspondence with the archbishop⁸ and his prelatial crew, both joining in the cruel design of rooting the godly out of the land. . . . But how much soever their designs were framed in the dark, God revealed them to his servants, and most miraculously ordered providences for their preservation.

1806

3. Kingly powers.

4. Aspire to. "Distaff": spinning staff, emblem of female household management.

5. Fatefulness.

6. "Bloody Mary" Tudor, queen of England from 1553 to 1558, reintroduced Roman Catholicism to England and burned many Protestants for heresy; the Scottish Mary, Queen of Scots, also Catholic,

was executed in 1587 for plotting to assassinate Elizabeth I.

7. Abilities.

8. William Laud, archbishop of Canterbury, favored a highly ritualized form of worship that Puritans considered tantamount to Roman Catholicism. He was executed by the Parliamentarians in 1645.

EDWARD HYDE, EARL OF CLARENDON

Edward Hyde (1609—1674) was educated at Oxford and during the 1630s practiced law. From about 1641 onward, he was among the chief supporters and advisers of Charles I; he went into exile with the boy who was to become Charles II and was privy to the various plots and plans of the royalists to restore him to power. After the Restoration he became lord chancellor and prime minister to Charles II, and he was instrumental in enacting the so-called Clarendon Code, a series of harsh laws against

all nonconformists to the reestablished Church of England. He was impeached in 1667, owing partly to England's ill success in the Dutch War, and spent the last seven years of his life in France.

Clarendon wrote part of his great *History of the Rebellion* amid the events it describes. For the Muse of History such a short view can be a mixed blessing. But Clarendon's learning—legal, classical, and historical—and the formality of his method save him from many of the failings of partisanship. He wrote with dignity and for posterity. His *History*, which first appeared in print thirty years after his death, was remarkable not only for the largeness of its canvas but also for the force and coherence of the conservative social philosophy informing it. As a historian and rhetorician Clarendon invites comparison with his classical models, Thucydides and Tacitus. As an evaluator of character he invites comparison with Plutarch, whose judiciousness he shares.

From The History of the Rebellion

[THE CHARACTER OF OLIVER CROMWELL.]'

About the middle of August he was seized on by a common tertian ague,² from which he believed a little ease and divertissement at Hampton Court³ would have freed him; but the fits grew stronger and his spirits much abated, so that he returned again to Whitehall,⁴ when his physicians began to think him in danger, though the preachers who prayed always about him and told God Almighty what great things he had done for Him, and how much more need He had still of his service, declared as from God that he should recover, and he himself did not think he should die, till even the time that his spirits failed him, and then declared to them that he did appoint his son to succeed him, his eldest son Richard. And so expired upon the third day of September (a day he thought always very propitious to him, and on which he had triumphed for several victories),⁵ 1658, a day very memorable for the greatest storm of wind that had been ever known for some hours before and after his death, which overthrew trees, houses, and made great wrecks at sea, and was so universal that there were terrible effects of it both in France and Flanders, where all people trembled at it, besides the wrecks all along the coast, many boats having been cast away in the very rivers; and within few days after, that circumstance of his death that accompanied that storm was known.

He was one of those men *quos vituperare ne inimici quidem possunt, nisi lit simul laudent*,⁶ for he could never have done half that mischief without great parts of courage and industry and judgment, and he must have had a wonderful understanding in the natures and humors of men, and as great a dexterity in the applying them, who from a private and obscure birth (though of a good family), without interest of estate, alliance, or friendships, could raise himself to such a height, and compound and knead such opposite and contradictory

1. After the manner of ancient historians, Clarendon describes the last days, sickness, and death of Cromwell, then summarizes his character. The Protector, who had been depressed for some time by the death of a favorite daughter, first grew ill in the summer of 1658.

2. An acute fever, with paroxysms recurring every third day.

3. Hampton Court, built by Cardinal Wolsey and ceded by him to Henry VIII, is a splendid old pal-

ace up the Thames from London. "Divertissement": diversion.

4. Whitehall, in London, was the traditional residence of the head of state.

5. Dunbar and Worcester were important battles that Cromwell had won on September 3.

6. "Whom not even his enemies could curse without praising him." The source of the phrase is unknown.

tempers, humors, and interests into a consistence that contributed to his designs and to their own destruction, whilst himself grew insensibly powerful enough to cut off those by whom he had climbed, in the instant that they projected to demolish their own building.⁷ What Velleius Paterculus said of Cinna may very justly be said of him, *Ausum emu quae nemo auderet bonus, petfecisse quae a nidlo nisi fortissimo perfici possunt.*⁸ Without doubt no man with more wickedness ever attempted anything, or brought to pass what he desired more wickedly, more in the face and contempt of religion and moral honesty; yet wickedness as great as his could never have accomplished those trophies without the assistance of a great spirit, an admirable circumspection and sagacity, and a most magnanimous resolution. When he appeared first in the Parliament he seemed to have a person in no degree gracious, no ornament of discourse, none of those talents which use to reconcile the affections of the standers-by; yet as he grew into place and authority, his parts⁹ seemed to be renewed, as if he had concealed faculties till he had occasion to use them, and when he was to act the part of a great man, he did it without any indecency¹ through the want of custom.

After he was confirmed and invested Protector by the Humble Petition and Advice,² he consulted with very few upon any action of importance, nor communicated any enterprise he resolved upon with more than those who were to have principal parts in the execution of it, nor to them sooner than was absolutely necessary. What he once resolved, in which he was not rash, he would not be dissuaded from, nor endure any contradiction of his power and authority, but extorted obedience from them who were not willing to yield it.

When he had laid some very extraordinary tax upon the city, one Cony, an eminent fanatic,³ and one who had heretofore served him very notably, positively refused to pay his part and loudly dissuaded others from submitting to it, as an imposition notoriously against the law and the property of the subject, which all honest men were bound to defend. Cromwell sent for him and cajoled him with the memory of the old kindness and friendship that had been between them, and that of all men he did not expect this opposition from him in a matter that was so necessary for the good of the commonwealth. But it was always his fortune to meet with the most rude and obstinate behavior from those who had formerly been absolutely governed by him, and they commonly put him in mind of some expressions and sayings of his own in cases of the like nature. So this man remembered⁴ him how great an enemy he had expressed himself to such grievances, and declared that all who submitted to them and paid illegal taxes were more to blame, and greater enemies to their country, than they who imposed them; and that the tyranny of princes could never be grievous but by the tameness and stupidity of the people.

When Cromwell saw that he could not convert him, he told him that he had a will as stubborn as his, and he would try which of them two should be master, and thereupon with some terms of reproach and contempt he com-

7. Clarendon's judgment can be compared with that of Marvell in "An Horatian Ode" (p. 0000). "Insensibly": imperceptibly.

8. "He dared undertake what no good man would have tried and triumphed where only the strongest of men could have succeeded." Velleius Paterculus (died 30 c.E.) wrote a concise *History of Rome*; the quotation is from 2.24.

9. Personal qualities.

1. Indecorum.

2. In December 1653, Cromwell was invested as Protector under a written constitution called the Instrument of Government. In 1657 another constitution, the Humble Petition and Advice, invested him with quasi-monarchical powers and restored the House of Lords.

3. In Clarendon's vocabulary, a radical Puritan. "The city": the City of London.

4. Reminded.

mitted the man to prison—whose courage was nothing abated by it, but as soon as the term came, he brought his *habeas corpus* in the King's Bench, which they then called the Upper Bench. Maynard, who was of counsel with the prisoner, demanded his liberty with great confidence, both upon the illegality of the commitment and the illegality of the imposition,⁶ as being laid without any lawful authority. The judges could not maintain or defend either, but enough declared what their sentence would be, and therefore the Protector's attorney required a further day to answer what had been urged. Before that day, Maynard was committed to the Tower for presuming to question or make doubt of his authority, and the judges were sent for and severely reprehended for suffering that license; and when they with all humility mentioned the law, and Magna Carta, Cromwell told them their Magna Carta should not control his actions, which he knew were for the safety of the commonwealth. He asked them who made them judges; whether they had any authority to sit there but what he gave them, and that if his authority were at an end, they knew well enough what would become of themselves. And therefore advised them to be more tender of that which could only preserve them, and so dismissed them with caution that they should not suffer the lawyers to prate what it would not become them to hear.

Thus he subdued a spirit that had been often troublesome to the most sovereign power, and made Westminster Hall⁷ as obedient and subservient to his commands as any of the rest of his quarters. In all other matters which did not concern the life of his jurisdiction, he seemed to have great reverence for the law, and rarely interposed between party and party; and as he proceeded with this kind of indignation and haughtiness with those who were refractory and dared to contend with his greatness, so towards those who complied with his good pleasure and courted his protection he used a wonderful civility, generosity, and bounty.

To reduce three nations which perfectly hated him to an entire obedience to all his dictates, to awe and govern those nations by an army that was ind devoted to him and wished his ruin, was an instance of a very prodigious address;⁸ but his greatness at home was but a shadow of the glory he had abroad. It was hard to discover which feared him most, France, Spain, or the Low Countries, where his friendship was current at the value he put upon it; and as they did all sacrifice their honor and their interest to his pleasure, so there is nothing he could have demanded that either of them would have denied him.

> * s

He was not a man of blood, and totally declined Machiavel's method, which prescribes upon any alteration of a government, as a thing absolutely necessary, to cut off all the heads of those, and extirpate their families, who are friends to the old;⁹ and it was confidently reported in the Council of Officers, it was more than once proposed that there might be a general massacre of all the royal party as the only expedient to secure the government, but Cromwell would never consent to it, it may be out of too much contempt of his enemies. In a word, as he had all the wickednesses against which damnation is

5. Writ to release a prisoner.

6. I.e., the original tax.

7. The center of the law courts and legal profession. Clarendon never tells us what happened to poor George Cony; the lawyer and judges made their submission and got off, but the fate of the

plaintiff remains obscure.

8. Skill. "Indevoted": Clarendon's word, carefully coined to express the far from unanimous feelings of the army.

9. See *The Prince*, chapters 3 and 7.

denounced and for which hellfire is prepared, so he had some virtues which have caused the memory of some men in all ages to be celebrated, and he will be looked upon by posterity as a brave, bad man.

1 7 0 2 - 4

LADY ANNE HALKETT

Lady Anne Halkett, nee Anne Murray (1622—1699), was born into a family of the royal household; her father was a tutor to Prince Charles, later Charles I. Her allegiance to the royalist cause was an attachment by comparison with which her several love affairs were mere incidents. Halkett was a tough and active partisan who, more directly than most women of her day, engaged in the intrigues of the civil wars. With one of her particular admirers, Colonel Bamfield, she assisted the young Duke of York (future King James II of England) in making his escape from parliamentary custody. Her account of this adventure appeared in her memoirs, published many years later. We pick up the story in April 1648 with the question of Colonel Bamfield's intentions.

From The Memoirs

[SPRINGING THE DUKE]

This gentleman came to see me sometimes in the company of ladies who had been my mother's neighbors in St. Martin's Lane, and sometimes alone, but whenever he came his discourse was serious, handsome, and tending to impress the advantages of piety, loyalty, and virtue; and these subjects were so agreeable to my own inclination that I could not but give them a good reception, especially from one that seemed to be so much an owner of them himself. After I had been used to freedom of discourse with him, I told him I approved much of his advice to others, but I thought his own practice contradicted much of his profession, for one of his acquaintance had told me he had not seen his wife in a twelvemonth, and it was impossible in my opinion for a good man to be an ill husband; and therefore he must defend himself from one before I could believe the other of him. He said it was not necessary to give everyone that might condemn him the reason of his being so long from her, yet to satisfy me he would tell me the truth, which was that, he being engaged in the king's service,¹ he was obliged to be at London where it was not convenient for her to be with him, his stay in any place being uncertain; besides, she lived amongst her friends who, though they were kind to her, yet were not so to him, for most of that country had declared for the Parliament and were enemies to all that had or did serve the king, and therefore his wife, he was sure, would not condemn him for what he did by her own consent. This seeming reasonable, I did insist no more upon that subject.

At this time he had frequent letters from the king, who employed him in

1. The service of Charles I, then a close prisoner of the parliamentary army under Cromwell. In less than a year he would be executed.

several affairs, but that of the greatest concern which he was employed in was to contrive the Duke of York's escape out of St. James² (where His Highness and the Duke of Gloucester and the Princess Elizabeth lived under the care of the Earl of Northumberland and his lady). The difficulties of it was represented by Colonel Bamfield; but His Majesty still pressed it, and I remember this expression was in one of the letters: "I believe it will be difficult, and if he miscarry in the attempt, it will be the greatest affliction that can arrive to me; but I look upon James's escape as Charles's preservation,³ and nothing can content me more; therefore be careful what you do."

This letter, amongst others, he showed me, and where the king approved of his choice of me to entrust with it, for to get the duke's clothes made and to dress him in his disguise. So now all Colonel Bamfield's business and care was how to manage this business of so important concern, which could not be performed without several persons' concurrence in it, for he being generally known as one whose stay at London was in order to serve the king, few of those who were entrusted by the Parliament in public concerns durst own converse or hardly civility to him, lest they should have been suspect by their party, which made it difficult for him to get access to the duke. But, to be short, having communicated the design to a gentleman attending His Highness who was full of honor and fidelity, by his means he had private access to the duke, to whom he presented the king's letter and order to His Highness for consenting to act what Colonel Bamfield should contrive for his escape, which was so cheerfully entertained and so readily obeyed, that being once designed there was nothing more to do than to prepare all things for the execution. I had desired him to take a ribbon with him and bring me the bigness of the duke's waist and his length, to have clothes made fit for him. In the meantime, Colonel Bamfield was to provide money for all necessary expense, which was furnished by an honest citizen. When I gave the measure to my tailor to inquire how much mohair would serve to make a petticoat and waistcoat to a young gentlewoman of that bigness and stature, he considered it a long time, and said he had made many gowns and suits, but he had never made any to such a person in his life. I thought he was in the right; but his meaning was he had never seen any woman of so low a stature have so big a waist. However, he made it as exactly fit as if he had taken the measure himself. It was a mixed mohair of a light hair color and black, and the under-petticoat was scarlet.

All things being now ready, upon the 20th of April 1648 in the evening was the time resolved for the duke's escape. And in order to that, it was designed for a week before every night as soon as the duke had supped he and those servants that attended His Highness (till the Earl of Northumberland and the rest of the house had supped) went to a play called *hide and seek*,⁴ and sometimes he would hide himself so well that in half an hour's time they could not find him. His Highness had so used them to this that when he went really away they thought he was but at the usual sport. A little before the duke went

2. St. James's Palace, the royal residence. The two named below were other children of Charles I.

3. Charles I must have feared the capture or assassination of the heir apparent. Prince Charles, then in France with his mother, Queen Henrietta Maria. If the younger son, James, were alive and

at liberty, there would be no point in such an attempt to cut off the succession.

4. As a boy of fourteen, James could play such a game without arousing suspicion and could be disguised without too much difficulty in women's clothes.

to supper that night, he called for the gardener, who only had a treble key besides that which the duke had, and bid him give him that key till his own was mended, which he did. And after His Highness had supped, he immediately called to go to the play, and went down the privy stairs into the garden, and opened the gate that goes into the park, treble locking all the doors behind him. And at the garden gate Colonel Bamfield waited for His Highness, and putting on a cloak and periwig, hurried him away to the park gate, where a coach waited that carried them to the waterside, and, taking the boat that was appointed for that service, they rowed to the stairs next the bridge, where I and Miriam⁵ waited in a private house hard by that Colonel Bamfield had prepared for dressing His Highness, where all things were in a readiness. But I had many fears, for Colonel Bamfield had desired me, if they came not there precisely by ten o'clock, to shift for myself, for then I might conclude they were discovered, and so my stay there could do no good but prejudice myself. Yet this did not make me leave the house though ten o'clock did strike, and he that was entrusted often went to the landing place and saw no boat coming was much discouraged, and asked me what I would do. I told him I came there with a resolution to serve His Highness, and I was fully determined not to leave that place till I was out of hopes of doing what I came there for, and would take my hazard. He left me to go again to the waterside, and while I was fortifying myself against what might arrive to me, I heard a great noise of many as I thought coming upstairs, which I expected to be soldiers to take me, but it was a pleasing disappointment, for the first that came in was the duke, who with much joy I took in my arms and gave God thanks for his safe arrival. His Highness called "Quickly, quickly, dress me!"; and, putting off his clothes, I dressed him in the women's habit that was prepared, which fitted His Highness very well, and was very pretty in it.

After he had eaten something I made ready while I was idle, lest His Highness should be hungry, and having sent for a Wood Street cake (which I knew he loved) to take in the barge, with as much haste as could be His Highness went cross the bridge to the stairs where the barge lay, Colonel Bamfield leading him; and immediately the boatmen plied the oar so well that they were soon out of sight, having both wind and tide with them. But I afterwards heard the wind changed, and was so contrary that Colonel Bamfield told me he was terribly afraid they should have been blown back again. And the duke said, "Do anything with me rather than let me go back again," which put Colonel Bamfield to seek help where it was only to be had, and, after he had most fervently supplicated assistance from God, presently the wind blew fair, and they came safely to their intended landing place. But I heard there was some difficulty before they got to the ship at Gravesend, which had like to have discovered them had not Colonel Washington's lady⁶ assisted them.

After the duke's barge was out of sight of the bridge, I and Miriam went where I appointed the coach to stay for me, and made drive as fast as the coachman could to my brother's house, where I stayed. I met none in the way that gave me any apprehension that the design was discovered, nor was it noised abroad till the next day, for (as I related before) the duke having used to play at hide and seek, and to conceal himself a long time, when they missed

5. Anne Murray's personal maidservant.
6. Most likely, the wife of Colonel Henry Wash-

ington, a royalist soldier (and distant relative of George Washington).

him at the same play, thought he would have discovered himself as formerly when they had given over seeking him. But a much longer time being passed than usually was spent in that divertissement, some began to apprehend that His Highness was gone in earnest past their finding, which made the Earl of Northumberland (to whose care he was committed), after strict search made in the house of St. James and all thereabouts to no purpose, to send and acquaint the Speaker of the House of Commons that the duke was gone, but how or by what means he knew not, but desired that there might be orders sent to the Cinque Ports⁷ for stopping all ships going out till the passengers were examined and search made in all suspected places where His Highness might be concealed.

Though this was gone about with all the vigilancy imaginable, yet it pleased God to disappoint them of their intention by so infatuating those several persons who were employed for writing orders that none of them were able to write one right, but ten or twelve of them were cast by before one was according to their mind. This account I had from Mr. N. who was mace-bearer to the Speaker all that time and a witness of it. This disorder of the clerks contributed much to the duke's safety, for he was at sea before any of the orders came to the ports, and so was free from what was designed if they had taken His Highness. Though several were suspected for being accessory to the escape, yet they could not charge any with it but the person who went away, and he being out of their reach, they took no notice as either to examine or imprison others.⁸

1778

7. A group of channel ports, originally five in number (*cinque* is French for "five"); most English shipping to or from the Continent passed through them.

8. Despite this romantic beginning to their friend-

ship. Colonel Bamfield and Murray never did get together, because Bamfield's estranged wife was still living. In 1656, Murray married Sir James Halkett.

DOROTHY WAUGH

Around 1647, a group of disciples began forming around the charismatic itinerant preacher George Fox. Like many religious radicals of the period, Fox taught the importance of relying upon the Inner Light—one's own conscience as guided by the Holy Spirit—in preference to human law or holy writ. Fox believed that the days of prophecy and revelation had not ended in biblical times but were ongoing, so that the teachings of Scripture were open to revision. Moreover, sacred illumination was available to all sincere believers regardless of sex, education, or social rank. Fox's followers were derisively called "Quakers" because, in the grip of a visitation by the Holy Spirit, they would suffer paroxysms similar to epileptic convulsions.

Because Quakers believed all human beings to be spiritually equal, they refused to perform the acts of deference that permeated social life in seventeenth-century England—bowing before and doffing the hat to superiors or addressing them with the honorific "you" rather than the familiar "thou." They felt called upon to testify to their beliefs wherever, and whenever, the Inner Light prompted, answering back to ministers in the pulpit, inveighing against what they considered social injustices,

and sermonizing without a license in public places. Often, their outspokenness enraged secular and ecclesiastical authorities.

Dorothy Waugh (ca. 1636–?) worked as a maidservant in Preston Patrick, in north-west England, a hotbed of Quaker activity. She probably became one of Fox's followers in the early 1650s, when she was still a teenager. Like Fox and a number of other missionary spirits, sometimes called "the Valiant Sixty," she traveled through England on foot, spreading the Quaker message to all who would listen. In 1656, aged about twenty, she was one of the Friends who arrived in Boston, Massachusetts, aboard the *Speedwell*: the party was imprisoned for ten days by the staunch Puritan governor John Endicott, and then forced to return to England. Undaunted, Waugh embarked for the colonies again, with another small group of missionary Quakers, the following year, this time landing in New Amsterdam (modern New York). They were no more welcome here than they had been in Boston. After a brief imprisonment they were shipped in shackles to the colony of Rhode Island, where complete religious toleration was the rule. In the late 1650s, probably between voyages to the New World, Waugh married William Lotherington of Yorkshire, but nothing is known about her later life or the circumstances of her death. Other Quakers traveled even further than Waugh on missionary expeditions; one woman made it as far as the Ottoman Empire and gave a sermon before the Grand Turk; when she failed to convert him, she walked back home to England.

Waugh's account of her treatment in Carlisle was published in *The Lamb's Defence Against Lies*, a collection in which various Quakers testified to their maltreatment by secular and religious authorities. Although the Friends were pacifists who refused to retaliate physically or verbally against their persecutors, they were fully aware of the propaganda value of unmerited suffering—indeed, their enemies believed that they deliberately courted abuse as a publicity stunt. More probably, their bad reception only reinforced their conviction that they constituted a tiny remnant of holiness, bravely resisting the overwhelming powers of worldliness and evil. The Quakers' published accounts of their victimization, typically reported in understated, factual, but gruesome detail, owed much to the sixteenth-century writer John Foxe's influential tales of Protestant martyrdom under the Catholic queen "Bloody Mary" Tudor. In the years between 1650 and 1700, numerous male and female Friends published memoirs of their arduous lives, producing some of the first printed autobiographical writing in English by women and by people of humble status.

A Relation Concerning Dorothy Waugh's Cruel Usage by the Mayor of Carlisle

Upon a seventh day about the time called Michaelmas in the year of the world's account 1655¹ I was moved of the Lord to go into the market of Carlisle, to speak against all deceit and ungodly practices, and the mayor's officer came and violently haled me off the cross² and put me in prison, not having anything to lay to my charge. And presently the mayor came up where I was, and asked me from whence I came; and I said, "Out of Egypt,³ where thou lodgest." But after these words, he was so violent and full of passion he scarce asked me any more questions, but called to one of his followers to bring the

1. Quakers saw themselves as separated from "the world" and its conventional means of marking dates, particularly objecting to terms left over from medieval Catholicism, like "Michaelmas," or the Mass of the Archangel Michael, celebrated on September 29. "Seventh day": Sabbath.

2. A large stone cross marked the main intersection of most English towns; public speakers could mount the steps in order to be heard better.

3. In the Bible, the place where God's chosen people were enslaved and where most of the population worshipped false gods.

bridle⁴ as he called it to put upon me, and was to be on three hours. And that which they called so was like a steel cap and my hat being violently plucked off which was pinned to my head whereby they tore my clothes to put on their bridle as they called it, which was a stone weight of iron by the relation of their own generation,⁵ and three bars of iron to come over my face, and a piece of it was put in my mouth, which was so unreasonable big a thing for that place as cannot be well related, which was locked to my head. And so I stood their time with my hands bound behind me, with the stone weight of iron upon my head and the bit in my mouth to keep me from speaking. And the mayor said he would make me an example to all that should ever come in that name.⁶ And the people to see me so violently abused were broken into tears, but he cried out on them and said, "For foolish pity, one may spoil a whole city." And the man that kept the prison door demanded two pence of everyone that came to see me while their bridle remained upon me. Afterwards it was taken off and they kept me in prison for a little season, and after a while the mayor came again and caused it to be put on again, and sent me out of the city with it on, and gave me very vile and unsavory words, which were not fit to proceed out of any man's mouth, and charged the officer to whip me out of the town, from constable to constable to send me till I came to my own home, whenas⁷ they had not anything to lay to my charge.

1656

4. An instrument of torture and humiliation, typically used to punish women who "scolded" their husbands or neighbors in public.

5. By their own report.

6. As professed Friends, or Quakers.

7. Inasmuch as.

THOMAS TRAHERNE

1637-1674

Thomas Traherne's most remarkable works—his stanzaic poems, free verse *Thanksgivings*, and the brilliant prose meditative sequence *Centuries of Meditations*—were lost for over two centuries. With them was lost a unique religious and aesthetic sensibility that conceives of heavenly felicity as a state that can be enjoyed in this world by recovering the perspective of lost childhood innocence. In 1673 Traherne published a polemic against Roman Catholics (*Roman Forgeries*), and some works of moral philosophy, meditation, and devotion received posthumous publication over the next several years. But his poems and the *Centuries* were discovered in manuscript only in 1896–97, and at first his poems were attributed to Henry Vaughan. Little is known of Traherne's life. The son of a Herefordshire shoemaker, he received a degree from Brasenose College, Oxford; took orders and became rector of Credenhill in Herefordshire in 1661; became chaplain about 1660 to Sir Orlando Bridgeman, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal; and spent his last years in and near London. The *Centuries* consists of four books of one hundred items each and a fifth unfinished. They contain prose meditations (which are often ecstatic prose poems) and some interpolated poems; the work was addressed to Traherne's good friend Mrs. Susanna Hopton, to help her attain "felicity." The poems render moments of spiritual experience: the speaker's enjoyment of a wondrous heavenly felicity in childhood, his painful loss of it in maturity, and his successful efforts to recover that heavenly perspective.

From Centuries of Meditations

From *The Third Century*

3

The Corn¹ was Orient and Immortal Wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The Dust and Stones of the Street were as Precious as GOLD. The Gates were at first the End of the World, The Green Trees when I saw them first through one of the Gates Transported and Ravished me; their Sweetness and unusual Beauty made my Heart to leap, and almost mad with Extasy, they were such strange and Wonderful Things. The Men! O what Venerable and Reverend Creatures did the Aged seem! Immortal Cherubims! And young Men Glittering and Sparkling Angels and Maids strange Seraphic Pieces of Life and Beauty! Boys and Girls Tumbling in the Street, and Playing, were moving Jewels. I knew not that they were Born or should Die. But all things abided Eternally as they were in their Proper Places. Eternity was Manifest in the Light of the Day, and something infinite Behind every thing appeared: which talked with my Expectation and moved my Desire. The City seemed to stand in Eden, or to be Built in Heaven. The Streets were mine, the Temple was mine, the People were mine, their Clothes and Gold and Silver was mine, as much as their Sparkling Eyes Fair Skins and ruddy faces. The Skies were mine, and so were the Sun and Moon and Stars, and all the World was mine, and I the only Spectator and Enjoyer of it. I knew no Churlish Proprieties,² nor Bounds nor Divisions: but all Proprieties and Divisions were mine: all Treasures and the Possessors of them. So that with much ado I was corrupted; and made to learn the Dirty Devices of this World. Which now I unlearn, and become as it were a little Child again, that I may enter into the Kingdom of GOD.

1908

Wonder

How like an angel came I down!
 How bright are all things here!
 When first among his works I did appear,
 O how their glory me did crown!
 5 The world resembled his eternity,
 In which my soul did walk,
 And everything that I did see
 Did with me talk.

The skies in their magnificence,
 10 The lively, lovely air;
 O how divine, how soft, how sweet, how fair!
 The stars did entertain my sense,¹
 And all the works of God so bright and pure,

1. We have retained Traherne's capitals throughout, as they seem to register his ecstatic apprehension of common things transformed.

2. Private property rights,
 1. Sight,

15 So rich and great did seem,
 As if they ever must endure,
 In my esteem.

 A native health and innocence
 Within my bones did grow,
 And while my God did all his glories show,
 20 I felt a vigor in my sense
 That was all Spirit. I within did flow
 With seas of life like wine;
 I nothing in the world did know
 But 'twas divine.

25 Harsh ragged objects were concealed,
 Oppression's tears and cries,
 Sins, griefs, complaints, dissensions, weeping eyes,
 Were hid; and only things revealed
 Which heavenly spirits and the angels prize.
 30 The state of innocence
 And bliss, not trades and poverties,
 Did fill my sense.

 The streets were paved with golden stones,
 The boys and girls were mine,
 35 O how did all their lovely faces shine!
 The sons of men were holy ones.
 Joy, beauty, welfare did appear to me
 And everything which here I found
 While like an angel I did see,
 40 Adorned the ground.

 Rich diamond and pearl and gold
 In ever' place was seen;
 Rare splendors, yellow, blue, red, white, and green,
 Mine eyes did everywhere behold.
 45 Great wonders clothed with glory did appear,
 Amazement was my bliss.
 That and my wealth was everywhere:

*No joy to this!*⁰

compared to this

 Cursed and devised proprieties,²
 50 With envy, avarice,
 And fraud, those fiends that spoil even paradise,
 Fled from the splendor of mine eyes.
 And so did hedges, ditches, limits, bounds:
 I dreamed not aught of those,
 55 But wandered over all men's grounds,
 And found repose.

 Proprieties themselves were mine,
 And hedges ornaments;
 Walls, boxes, coffers, and their rich contents

60 Did not divide my joys, but shine.
 Clothes, ribbons, jewels, laces, I esteemed
 My joys by others worn;
 For me they all to wear them seemed
 When I was born.

1903

On Leaping over the Moon

I saw new worlds beneath the water lie,
 New people, and another sky
 And sun, which seen by day
 Might things more clear display.
 5 Just such another¹
 Of late my brother²
 Did in his travel see, and saw by night,
 A much more strange and wondrous sight;
 Nor could the world exhibit such another
 io So great a sight, but in a brother.

Adventure strange! no such in story we
 New or old, true or feigned see.
 On earth he seemed to move,
 Yet heaven went above;³
 15 Up in the skies
 His body flies,
 In open, visible, yet magic sort:
 As he along the way did sport,
 Like Icarus⁴ over the flood he soars
 20 Without the help of wings or oars.

As he went tripping o'er the king's highway,
 A little pearly river lay
 O'er which, without a wing
 Or oar, he dared to swim,
 25 Swim through the air
 On body fair;
 He would not use nor trust Icarian wings⁵
 Lest they should prove deceitful things;
 For had he fallen, it had been wondrous high,
 30 Not from, but from above, the sky.

He might have dropped through that thin element
 Into a fathomless descent
 Unto the nether sky
 That did beneath him lie
 35 And there might tell

1. Another world.

2. Traherne's brother Philip.

3. I.e., yet went above the heavens.

4. Icarus soared on waxen wings.

5. Icarus's wings melted in the sun, and he fell into the sea.

What wonders dwell
 On earth above. Yet bold he briskly runs,
 And soon the danger overcomes,
 Who, as he leapt, with joy related soon
 40 How happy he o'erleaped the moon.

What wondrous things upon the earth are done
 Beneath and yet above the sun!
 Deeds all appear again
 In higher spheres; remain
 45 In clouds as yet:
 But there they get
 Another light, and in another way
 Themselves to us above display.
 The skies themselves this earthly globe surround;
 so We're even here within them found.

On heavenly ground within the skies we walk,
 And in this middle center talk:
 Did we but wisely move
 On earth in heaven above,
 55 We then should be
 Exalted high
 Above the sky: from whence whoever falls,
 Through a long dismal precipice,^o *headlong fall*
 Sinks to the deep abyss where Satan crawls,
 60 Where horrid death and despair lies.

As much as others thought themselves to lie
 Beneath the moon, so much more high
 Himself he thought to fly
 Above the starry sky,
 65 As that he spied
 Below the tide.
 Thus did he yield me in the shady night
 A wondrous and instructive light,
 Which taught me that under our feet there is,
 70 As o'er our heads, a place of bliss.

MARGARET CAVENDISH
 1623-1673

Margaret (Lucas) Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, wrote and published numerous works during the Interregnum and Restoration era, in a great variety of genres: poetry (*Poems and Fancies*, 1653); essays (*Philosophical Fancies*, 1653; *The World's Olio*, 1655), short fiction (*Nature's Pictures*, 1656), autobiography (*A True Relation of My Birth, Breeding, and Life*, 1656), Utopian romance (*The Blazing World*, 1666), sci-

entific essays chiefly critical of the new science, letters, a biography of her husband (*The Life of . . . William Cavendish*, 1667), and some eighteen plays, of which one, *The Forced Marriage*, was produced in 1670. Most were published in lavish editions at the Newcastles' own expense. At the time they elicited more derision than praise: for a woman, especially an aristocratic woman, to publish works dealing so intimately with her desires, opinions, personal circumstances, and aspirations to fame and authorship seemed to many disgraceful. Samuel Pepys concluded, after reading her life of her husband the duke, that she was "a mad, conceited, ridiculous woman, and he an ass to suffer [her] to write what she writes to him and of him." Her fantastic dress and sometimes idiosyncratic behavior abetted that characterization: she took pride in "singularity" and even paid a visit to the all-male Royal Society. But the philosopher Thomas Hobbes thought well of her, and her rediscoverers in recent decades have praised her works and her self-construction as a female author.

Cavendish's autobiography analyzes her responses to the circumstances of her life. Born into a wealthy royalist family that encouraged her disposition to read and write, she became maid of honor to Queen Henrietta Maria, whom she followed into exile in Paris. There she married, in 1645, the widowed William Cavendish, thirty years her senior, who was one of Charles I's generals and later Duke of Newcastle. Exiled for fifteen years on the Continent, where (his estates having been sequestered) they ran up exorbitant debts, they were restored to status and fortune after the Restoration. The duke, who was himself a poet, playwright, and philosopher, supported and promoted Margaret's literary endeavors, for which she was profoundly grateful. In polemical prefaces to her several works, she develops a fragmentary poetics, trenchantly defends her right to publish and to participate in contemporary intellectual exchange, defends women's rational powers, and decries their educational disadvantages and exclusion from the public domain.

FROM POEMS AND FANCIES

The Poetess's Hasty Resolution

Reading my verses, I liked them so well,
 Self-love did make my judgment to rebel.
 Thinking them so good, I thought more to write;
 Considering not how others would them like.

5 I writ so fast, I thought, if I lived long,
 A pyramid of fame¹ to build thereon.
 Reason observing which way I was bent,
 Did stay my hand, and asked me what I meant;
 Will you, said she, thus waste your time in vain,

io On that which in the world small praise shall gain?
 For shame, leave off, said she, the printer spare,
 He'll lose by your ill poetry, I fear.
 Besides the world hath already such a weight
 Of useless books, as it is overfraught.²

is Then pity take, do the world a good turn,
 And all you write cast in the fire, and burn.

1. A poetic monument.

2. Like a ship with too heavy a cargo, in danger of sinking.

Angry I was, and Reason struck away,
 When I did hear, what she to me did say.
 Then all in haste I to the press it sent,
 20 Fearing persuasion might my book prevent.
 But now 'tis done, with grief repent do I,
 Hang down my head with shame, blush, sigh, and cry.
 Take pity, and my drooping spirits raise,
 Wipe off my tears with handkerchiefs of praise.

1653

The Hunting of the Hare

Betwixt two ridges of plowed land lay Wat,¹
 Pressing his body close to earth lay squat.
 His nose upon his two forefeet close lies,
 Glazing obliquely with his great gray eyes,
 s His head he always sets against the wind,
 If turn his tail, his hairs blow up behind:
 Which he too cold will grow, but he is wise,
 And keeps his coat still⁰ down, so warm he lies. *constantly*
 Then resting all the day, till, sun doth set,
 10 Then riseth up, his relief for to get.
 Walking about until the sun doth rise,
 Then back returns, down in his form⁰ he lies. *nest*
 At last, poor Wat was found, as he there lay,
 By huntsmen, with their dogs which came that way.
 15 Seeing, gets up, and fast begins to run,
 Hoping some ways the cruel dogs to shun.
 But they by nature have so quick a scent,
 That by their nose they trace what way he went.
 And with their deep, wide mouths set forth a cry,
 20 Which answered was by echoes in the sky.
 Then Wat was struck with terror, and with fear,
 Thinks every shadow still the dogs they were.
 And running out some distance from the noise,
 To hide himself, his thoughts he new employs.
 25 Under a clod of earth in sand pit wide,
 Poor Wat sat close, hoping himself to hide.
 There long he had not sat, but straight⁰ his ears *immediately*
 The winding⁰ horns and crying dogs he hears: *blowing*
 Staring with fear, up leaps, then doth he run,
 30 And with such speed, the ground scarce treads upon.
 Into a great thick wood he straightway gets.
 Where underneath a broken bough he sits.
 At every leaf that with the wind did shake,
 Did bring such terror, made his heart to ache.
 35 That place he left, to champaign⁰ plains he went, *open*
 Winding about, for to deceive their scent.

1. Conventional name for a hare.

And while they snuffling were, to find his track,
 Poor Wat, being weary, his swift pace did slack.
 On his two hinder legs for ease did sit,
 40 His forefeet rubbed his face from dust, and sweat.
 Licking his feet, he wiped his ears so clean,
 That none could tell that Wat had hunted been.
 But casting round about his fair great eyes,
 The hounds in full career he near him spies:
 45 To Wat it was so terrible a sight,
 Fear gave him wings, and made his body light.
 Though weary was before, by running long,
 Yet now his breath he never felt more strong.
 Like those that dying are, think health returns,
 50 When 'tis but a faint blast, which life out burns.
 For spirits seek to guard the heart about,
 Striving with death, but death doth quench them out.
 Thus they so fast came on, with such loud cries,
 That he no hopes hath left, nor help espies.
 55 With that the winds did pity poor Wat's case,
 And with their breath the scent blew from the place.
 Then every nose is busily employed,
 And every nostril is set open wide,
 And every head doth seek a several⁰ way, *different*
 60 To find what grass, or track, the scent on lay.
 Thus quick industry⁰ that is not slack, *clever work*
 Is like to witchery,⁰ brings lost things back. *witchcraft*
 For though the wind had tied the scent up close,
 A busy dog thrust in his snuffling nose
 65 And drew it out, with it did foremost run,
 Then horns blew loud, for th'rest to follow on.
 The great slow hounds, their throats did set a bass,
 The fleet swift hounds, as tenors next in place,
 The little beagles they a treble sing,
 70 And through the air their voices round did ring.
 Which made a consort, as they ran along;
 If they but words could speak, might sing a song.
 The horns kept time, the hunters shout for joy,
 And valiant seem, poor Wat for to destroy:
 75 Spurring their horses to a full career,
 Swim rivers deep, leap ditches without fear;
 Endanger life and limbs so fast will ride,
 Only to see how patiently Wat died.
 At last,² the dogs so near his heels did get,
 80 That they their sharp teeth in his breech did set;
 Then tumbling down, did fall with weeping eyes,
 Gives up his ghost, and thus poor Wat he dies.
 Men whooping loud, such acclamations make,
 As if the Devil they did prisoner take.
 85 When they do but a shiftless⁰ creature kill; *helpless*
 To hunt, there needs no valiant soldier's skill.
 But man doth think that exercise and toil,

2. From the 1664 edition; 1653 has "For why."

To keep their health, is best, which makes most spoil.
 Thinking that food and nourishment so good,
 90 And appetite, that feeds on flesh and blood.
 When they do lions, wolves, bears, tigers see,
 To kill poor sheep, straight say, they cruel be,
 But for themselves all creatures think too few
 For luxury, wish God would make them new.
 95 As if that God made creatures for man's meat,
 To give them life and sense, for man to eat;
 Or else for sport, or recreation's sake,
 Destroy those lives that God saw good to make:
 Making their stomachs, graves, which full they fill
 100 With murdered bodies that in sport they kill.
 Yet man doth think himself so gentle, mild,
 When he of creatures is most cruel wild.
 And is so proud, thinks only he shall live,
 That God a godlike nature did him give.
 105 And that all creatures for his sake alone
 Was made for him, to tyrannize upon.

1653, 1664

*From A True Relation of My Birth, Breeding, and Life*¹

As for my breeding, it was according to my birth and the nature of my sex, for my birth was not lost in my breeding; for as my sisters had been bred, so was I in plenty, or rather with superfluity. . . . 'Tis true my mother might have increased her daughters' portions by a thrifty sparing, yet she chose to bestow it on our breeding, honest pleasures, and harmless delight, out of an opinion that if she bred us with needy necessity it might chance to create in us shark-ing² qualities, mean thoughts, and base actions, which she knew my father as well as herself did abhor. Likewise we were bred tenderly, for my mother naturally did strive to please and delight her children, not to cross or torment them, terrifying them with threats or lashing them with slavish whips. But instead of threats, reason was used to persuade us, and instead of lashes, the deformities of vices was discovered,³ and the graces and virtues were presented unto us.

. . .

After the Queen went from Oxford, and so out of England, I was parted from them.⁴ For when the Queen was in Oxford I had a great desire to be one of her maids of honor. . . . And though I might have learned more wit, and advanced my understanding by living in a court, yet being dull, fearful, and

1. Cavendish's autobiography is a concise account, factual and at times self-reflective, of her early life. It comprises the final section of *Nature's Pictures* (1656), a collection of her fiction written during the Newcastle's exile in Antwerp during the Cromwell regime. "Breeding": upbringing.

2. Greedy.

3. Shown.

4. Her mother and family; her father had died when she was two years old. In 1643 Charles I moved his family and court to Oxford, where Margaret became maid of honor to Queen Henrietta Maria; in 1644 the queen fled with some supporters, Margaret among them, to her native Paris, to urge support for the royalist cause.

bashful, I neither heeded what was said or practiced, but just what belonged to my loyal duty and my own honest reputation. And indeed I was so afraid to dishonor my friends and family by my indiscreet actions that I rather chose to be accounted a fool than to be thought rude or wanton. In truth my bashfulness and fears made me repent my going from home to see the world abroad. . . .

So I continued almost two years, until such time as I was married from thence. For my Lord the Marquis of Newcastle did approve of those bashful fears which many condemned, and would choose such a wife as he might bring to his own humors,⁵ and not such an one as was wedded to self-conceit, or one that had been tempered to the humors of another, for which he wooed me for his wife. And though I did dread marriage, and shunned men's companies as much as I could, yet I could not nor had not the power to refuse him, by reason my affections were fixed on him, and he was the only person I ever was in love with. Neither was I ashamed to own it, but gloried therein, for it was not amorous love. I never was infected therewith—it is a disease, or a passion, or both, I know by relation, not by experience. Neither could title, wealth, power, or person entice me to love. But my love was honest and honorable, being placed upon merit; which affection joyed at the fame of his worth, pleased with delight in his wit, proud of the respects he used to me, and triumphing in the affections he professed for me. . . . And though my lord hath lost his estate, and banished out of his country for his loyalty to his king and country, yet neither despised poverty nor pinching necessity could make him break the bonds of friendship, or weaken his loyal duty to his king or country.

. . .

When I am writing any sad feigned stories or serious humors or melancholy passions, I am forced many times to express them with the tongue before I can write them with the pen, by reason those thoughts that are sad, serious, and melancholy are apt to contract and to draw back too much, which oppression doth as it were overpower or smother the conception in the brain. But when some of those thoughts are sent out in words, they give the rest more liberty to place themselves in a more methodical order, marching more regularly with my pen on the ground of white paper. But my letters seem rather as a ragged rout, than a well-armed body, for the brain being quicker in creating than the hand in writing, or the memory in retaining, many fancies are lost by reason they oftentimes outrun the pen. Where I, to keep speed in the race, write so fast as I stay not so long as to write my letters plain, insomuch as some have taken my handwriting for some strange character.⁶ . . . My only trouble is lest my brain should grow barren, or that the root of my fancies should become insipid, withering into a dull stupidity, for want of maturing subjects to write on.

s s s

Since I have writ in general thus far of my life, I think it fit, I should speak something of my humor, particular practice, and disposition. As for my humor, I was from my childhood given to contemplation, being more taken or

5. Disposition. William Cavendish (1593–1676), a general in the king's army, fled to the Continent in 1644. Margaret was his second wife, whom he

married in 1645 in Paris,
6. Alphabet,

delighted with thoughts than in conversation with a society, in so much as I would walk two or three hours, and never rest, in a musing, considering, contemplating manner, reasoning with myself of everything my senses did present. . . . Likewise I had a natural stupidity towards the learning of any other language than my native tongue, for I could sooner and with more facility understand the sense than remember the words, and for want of such memory makes me so unlearned in foreign languages as I am: as for my practice,⁷ I was never very active, by reason I was given so much to contemplation. . . . As for my study of books it was little, yet I chose rather to read, than to employ my time in any other work, or practice, and when I read what I understood not, I would ask my brother, the lord Lucas, he being learned, the sense of meaning thereof; but my serious study could not be much, by reason I took great delight in attiring, fine dressing, and fashions, especially such fashions as I did invent myself, not taking that pleasure in such fashions as was invented by others: also I did dislike any should follow my fashions, for I always took delight in a singularity, even in the accoutrements of habits, but whatsoever I was addicted to, either in fashion of clothes, contemplations of thoughts, actions of life, they were lawful, honorable, and modest, of which I can avouch to the world with a great confidence, because it is a pure truth.

I am a great emulator; for though I wish none worse than they are, yet it is lawful for me to wish myself the best, and to do my honest endeavor thereunto; for I think it no crime to wish myself the exactest⁸ of Nature's works, my thread of life the longest, my chain of destiny the strongest, my mind the peaceablest, my life the pleasantest, my death the easiest, and the greatest saint in heaven. Also to do my endeavor, so far as honor and honesty doth allow of, to be the highest on fortune's wheel, and to hold the wheel from turning if I can; and if it be commendable to wish another's good, it were a sin not to wish my own; for as envy is a vice, so emulation is a virtue, but emulation is in the way to ambition, or indeed it is a noble ambition. But I fear my ambition inclines to vainglory, for I am very ambitious; yet 'tis neither for beauty, wit, titles, wealth, or power, but as they are steps to raise me to fame's tower, which is to live by remembrance on after-ages. . . . But I hope my readers will not think me vain for writing my life, since there have been many that have done the like, as Caesar, Ovid,⁹ and many more, both men and women, and I know no reason I may not do it as well as they: but I verily believe some censuring readers will scornfully say, Why hath this lady writ her own life? since none cares to know whose daughter she was, or whose wife she is, or how she was bred, or what fortunes she had, or how she lived, or what humor or disposition she was of? I answer that it is true, that 'tis to no purpose to the readers, but it is to the authoress, because I write it for my own sake, not theirs; neither did I intend this piece for to delight, but to divulge; not to please the fancy but to tell the truth, lest after-ages should mistake, in not knowing I was daughter to one Master Lucas¹ of St. Johns, near Colchester, in Essex, second wife to the Lord

7. Refers, probably, to practicing a musical instrument, music being an accomplishment cultivated by highborn young ladies.

8. Most perfect.

9. Julius Caesar wrote an account of his military campaigns (*Commentaries*); the Roman poet Ovid wrote poems ostensibly about his own life and

loves.

1. Thomas Lucas (ca. 1573—1625), a gentleman of large fortune and estates. Margaret describes him as "not a peer of the realm, yet there were few peers who had much greater estates, or lived more noble therewith."

Marquis of Newcastle; for my lord having had two wives, I might easily have been mistaken, especially if I should die and my lord marry again.

1656

The Blazing World Part romance, part Utopia, and part science fiction, *The Blazing World* is also an idealized version of Cavendish's own ideas and fantasies in that it portrays the effortless rise of a woman to absolute power. It begins in the vein of romance: a young woman is abducted and miraculously saved as a tempest carries the abductors' boat to the North Pole and on to another universe, the Blazing World, whose emperor promptly marries her and turns over the entire government of the realm to her. It takes on a Utopian character, as the new empress learns from the fantastically diverse inhabitants about their numerous scientific experiments and about the royalist politics and religious uniformity of the place. She then brings Margaret Cavendish to be her scribe and returns with Margaret (in the state of disembodied spirits and Platonic friends) to visit and learn about Margaret's world and Margaret's husband, the duke; she also puts down a rebellion at home and subjects other nations to her beneficent rule. Cavendish's preface makes a bold claim for authorial self-sufficiency, equating her creation of and rule over her textual world with the conquering and ruling of empires by Caesar and Alexander. She emphasizes the satisfactions of authorship, but in doing so she also underscores the social and political restrictions on women that have confined her sphere of action to an imagined world.

The Description of a New World, Called The Blazing World¹

To the Reader

* * 'This is the reason, why I added this piece of fancy to my philosophical observations, and joined them as two worlds at the ends of their poles; both for my own sake, to divert my studious thoughts, which I employed in the contemplation thereof, and to delight the reader with variety, which is always pleasing. But lest my fancy should stray too much, I chose such a fiction as would be agreeable to the subject treated of in the former parts; it is a description of a new world, not such as Lucian's or the French-man's world in the moon;² but a world of my own creating, which I call the Blazing World: the first part whereof is romancical, the second philosophical, and the third is merely fancy, or (as I may call it) fantastical, which if it add any satisfaction to you, I shall account myself a happy creatoress; if not, I must be content to live a melancholy life in my own world; I cannot call it a poor world, if poverty be only want of gold, silver, and jewels; for there is more gold in it than all the chemists ever did, and (as I verily believe) will ever be able to make. As for the rocks of diamonds, I wish with all my soul they might be shared amongst

1. *The Blazing World* was published in 1666 and 1668, together with Newcastle's *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy*, a critique of the new science emphasizing the limitations of experiment founded on human perception and such instruments as the microscope and the telescope.

2. Cyrano de Bergerac (1619—1655), author of *Histoire comique lies etats et empires de la lune* (1656). The Greek satirist Lucian of Samosata (125—200? C.E.) wrote dialogues about an imaginary voyage, translated in 1634.

my noble female friends, and upon that condition, I would willingly quit my part; and of the gold I should only desire so much as might suffice to repair my noble lord and husband's losses:³ for I am not covetous, but as ambitious as ever any of my sex was, is, or can be; which makes, that though I cannot be Henry the Fifth, or Charles the Second, yet I endeavor to be Margaret the First; and although I have neither power, time nor occasion to conquer the world as Alexander and Caesar did; yet rather than not to be mistress of one, since-fortune and the fates would give me none, I have made a world of my own: for which nobody, I hope, will blame me, since it is in everyone's power to do the like.

* * * No sooner was the lady brought before the emperor, but he conceived her to be some goddess, and offered to worship her; which she refused, telling him, (for by that time she had pretty well learned their language) that although she came out of another world, yet was she but a mortal; at which the emperor rejoicing, made her his wife, and gave her an absolute power to rule and govern all that world as she pleased. But her subjects, who could hardly be persuaded to believe her mortal, tendered her all the veneration and worship due to a deity. . . .

Their priests and governors were princes of the imperial blood, and made eunuchs for that purpose; and as for the ordinary sort of men in that part of the world where the emperor resided, they were of several complexions; not white, black, tawny, olive or ash-colored; but some appeared of an azure, some of a deep purple, some of a grass-green, some of a scarlet, some of an orange color, etc. Which colors and complexions, whether they were made by the bare reflection of light, without the assistance of small particles, or by the help of well-ranged and ordered atoms; or by a continual agitation of little globules; or by some pressing and reacting motion, I am not able to determine. The rest of the inhabitants of that world, were men of several different sorts, shapes, figures, dispositions, and humors, as I have already made mention heretofore; some were bear-men, some worm-men, some fish- or mear-men,⁴ otherwise called sirens; some bird-men, some fly-men, some ant-men, some geese-men, some spider-men, some lice-men, some fox-men, some ape-men, some jackdaw-men, some magpie-men, some parrot-men, some satyrs, some giants, and many more, which I cannot all remember; and of these several sorts of men, each followed such a profession as was most proper for the nature of their species, which the empress encouraged them in, especially those that had applied themselves to the study of several arts and sciences; for they were as ingenious and witty in the invention of profitable and useful arts, as we are in our world, nay, more; and to that end she erected schools, and founded several societies. The bear-men were to be her experimental philosophers, the bird-men her astronomers, the fly-, worm-, and fish-men her natural philosophers, the ape-men her chemists, the satyrs her Galenic physicians, the fox-men her politicians, the spider- and lice-men her mathematicians, the jackdaw-, magpie-, and parrot-men her orators and logicians, the giants her architects, etc. But before all things, she having got a sovereign power from

3. Cavendish's husband, William, was formally banished from England and his estates confiscated in 1649; they were all restored after the Restoration. During his banishment Margaret estimated

that he suffered financial losses of around £940,000.

4. Mermen, the male counterparts of mermaids.

the emperor over all the world, desired to be informed both of the manner of their religion and government, and to that end she called the priests and statesmen, to give her an account of either. Of the statesmen she inquired, first, why they had so few laws? To which they answered, that many laws made many divisions, which most commonly did breed factions, and at last break out into open wars. Next, she asked, why they preferred the monarchical form of government before any other? They answered, that as it was natural for one body to have "but one head, so it was also natural for a politic body to have but one governor; and that a commonwealth, which had many governors, was like a monster with many heads: besides, said they, a monarchy is a divine form of government, and agrees most with our religion; for as there is but one God, whom we all unanimously worship and adore with one faith, so we are resolved to have but one emperor, to whom we all submit with one obedience.

Then the empress seeing that the several sorts of her subjects had each their churches apart, asked the priests whether they were of several religions? They answered Her Majesty, that there was no more but one religion in all that world, nor no diversity of opinions in that same religion; for though there were several sorts of men, yet had they all but one opinion concerning the worship and adoration of God. The empress asked them, whether they were Jews, Turks, or Christians? We do not know, said they, what religions those are; but we do all unanimously acknowledge, worship, and adore the only, omnipotent, and eternal God, with all reverence, submission, and duty. Again, the empress inquired, whether they had several forms of worship? They answered, no: for our devotion and worship consists only in prayers, which we frame according to our several necessities, in petitions, humiliations, thanksgiving, etc. Truly, replied the empress, I thought you had been either Jews, or Turks, because I never perceived any women in your congregations; but what is the reason, you bar them from your religious assemblies? It is not fit, said they, that men and women should be promiscuously together in time of religious worship; for their company hinders devotion, and makes many, instead of praying to God, direct their devotion to their mistresses. But, asked the empress, have they no congregation of their own, to perform the duties of divine worship, as well as men? No, answered they: but they stay at home, and say their prayers by themselves in their closets.⁵ Then the empress desired to know the reason why the priests and governors of their world were made eunuchs? They answered, to keep them from marriage: for women and children most commonly make disturbance both in church and state. But, said she, women and children have no employment in church or state. 'Tis true, answered they; but although they are not admitted to public employments, yet are they so prevalent⁶ with their husbands and parents, that many times by their importunate persuasions, they cause as much, nay, more mischief secretly, than if they had the management of public affairs.

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[THE EMPRESS BRINGS THE DUCHESS OF NEWCASTLE TO THE
BLAZING WORLD]

After some time, when the spirits had refreshed themselves in their own vehicles, they sent one of their nimblest spirits, to ask the empress, whether

5. Private chambers.

6. I.e., they prevail so much.

she would have a scribe.* * * Then the spirit asked her, whether she would have the soul of a living or a dead man? Why, said the empress, can the soul quit a living body, and wander or travel abroad? Yes, answered he, for according to Plato's doctrine, there is a conversation of souls, and the souls of lovers live in the bodies of their beloved. Then I will have, answered she, the soul of some ancient famous writer, either of Aristotle, Pythagoras, Plato, Epicurus,⁷ or the like. The spirit said, that those famous men were very learned, subtle, and ingenious writers, but they were so wedded to their own opinions, that they would never have the patience to be scribes. Then, said she, I'll have the soul of one of the most famous modern writers, as either of Galileo, Gassendus, Descartes, Helmont, Hobbes, H. More,⁸ etc. The spirit answered, that they were fine ingenious writers, but yet so self-conceited, that they would scorn to be scribes to a woman. But, said he, there's a lady, the Duchess of Newcastle, which although she is not one of the most learned, eloquent, witty, and ingenious, yet is she a plain and rational writer, for the principle of her writings, is sense and reason, and she will without question, be ready to do you all the service she can. This lady then, said the empress, will I choose for my scribe, neither will the emperor have reason to be jealous, she being one of my own sex. In truth, said the spirit, husbands have reason to be jealous of platonic lovers, for they are very dangerous, as being not only very intimate and close, but subtle and insinuating. You say well, replied the empress; wherefore I pray send me the Duchess of Newcastle's soul; which the spirit did; and after she came to wait on the empress, at her first arrival the empress embraced and saluted her with a spiritual kiss.

[THE DUCHESS WANTS A WORLD TO RULE]

Well, said the duchess, setting aside this dispute, my ambition is, that I would fain be as you are, that is, an empress of a world, and I shall never be at quiet until I be one. I love you so well, replied the empress, that I wish with all my soul, you had the fruition of your ambitious desire, and I shall not fail to give you my best advice how to accomplish it; the best informers are the immaterial spirits, and they'll soon tell you, whether it be possible to obtain your wish. But, said the duchess, I have little acquaintance with them, for I never knew any before the time you sent for me. They know you, replied the empress; for they told me of you, and were the means and instrument of your coming hither: wherefore I'll confer with them, and inquire whether there be not another world, whereof you may be empress as well as I am of this. No sooner had the empress said this, but some immaterial spirits came to visit her, of whom she inquired, whether there were but three worlds in all, to wit, the Blazing World where she was in, the world which she came from, and the world where the duchess lived? The spirits answered, that there were more numerous worlds than the stars which appeared in these three mentioned worlds. Then the empress asked, whether it was not possible, that her dearest

7. Classical philosophers and founders, respectively, of schools of philosophy: the Peripatetics, the Pythagoreans, the Academics, the Epicureans.
8. Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), Italian astronomer and defender of the Copernican system; Pierre Gassendi (1592—1655), proponent of a mechanistic theory of matter; Rene Descartes (1596—1650),

French mathematician and philosopher who had a major influence on the new science; Jan Baptista van Helmont (1579-1644), Flemish chemist; Thomas Hobbes, English mechanistic philosopher and political scientist, author of *Leviathan*; Henry More (1614-1687), one of the antimaterialist Cambridge Platonists.

friend the Duchess of Newcastle, might be empress of one of them.⁹ Although there be numerous, nay, infinite worlds, answered the spirits, yet none is without government. But is none of these worlds so weak, said she, that it may be surprised or conquered? The spirits answered, that Lucian's world of lights, had been for some time in a snuff,¹ but of late years one Helmont had got it, who since he was emperor of it, had so strengthened the immortal parts thereof with mortal outworks, as it was for the present impregnable. Said the empress, if there be such an infinite number of worlds, I am sure, not only my friend, the duchess, but any other might obtain one. Yes, answered the spirits, if those worlds were uninhabited; but they are as populous as this, your majesty governs. Why, said the empress, it is not impossible to conquer a world. No, answered the spirits, but, for the most part, conquerors seldom enjoy their conquest, for they being more feared than loved, most commonly come to an untimely end. If you will but direct me, said the duchess to the spirits, which world is easiest to be conquered, her Majesty will assist me with means, and I will trust to fate and fortune; for I had rather die in the adventure of noble achievements, than live in obscure and sluggish security; since by the one, I may live in a glorious fame, and by the other I am buried in oblivion. The spirits answered, that the lives of fame were like other lives; for some lasted long, and some died soon. Tis true, said the duchess; but yet the shortest-lived fame lasts longer than the longest life of man. But, replied the spirits, if occasion does not serve you, you must content yourself to live without such achievements that may gain you a fame: but we wonder, proceeded the spirits, that you desire to be empress of a terrestrial world, whenas you can create yourself a celestial world if you please. What, said the empress, can any mortal be a creator? Yes, answered the spirits; for every human creature can create an immaterial world fully inhabited by immaterial creatures, and populous of immaterial subjects, such as we are, and all this within the compass of the head or skull; nay, not only so, but he may create a world of what fashion and government he will, and give the creatures thereof such motions, figures, forms, colors, perceptions, etc. as he pleases, and make whirlpools, lights, pressures, and reactions, etc. as he thinks best; nay, he may make a world full of veins, muscles, and nerves, and all these to move by one jolt or stroke: also he may alter that world as often as he pleases, or change it from a natural world, to an artificial; he may make a world of ideas, a world of atoms, a world of lights, or whatsoever his fancy leads him to. And since it is in your power to create such a world, what need you to venture life, reputation and tranquility, to conquer a gross material world? . . . You have converted me, said the duchess to the spirits, from my ambitious desire; wherefore I'll take your advice, reject and despise all the worlds without me, and create a world of my own.

* * #

The Epilogue to the Reader

By this poetical description, you may perceive, that my ambition is not only to be empress, but authoress of a whole world; and that the worlds I have made, both the Blazing and the other Philosophical World, mentioned in the first part of this description, are framed and composed of the most pure, that

9. Speculation about multiple inhabited worlds was an occasional topic in texts on the new astronomy. Milton's Raphael introduces the idea to

Adam (*Paradise Lost* 8.140–58).

1. On the point of extinction,

is, the rational parts of matter, which are the parts of my mind; which creation was more easily and suddenly effected, than the conquests of the two famous monarchs of the world, Alexander and Caesar:² neither have I made such disturbances, and caused so many dissolutions of particulars, otherwise named deaths, as they did; for I have destroyed but some few men in a little boat, which died through the extremity of cold, and that by the hand of justice, which was necessitated to punish their crime of stealing away a young and beautiful lady.³ And in the formation of those worlds, I take more delight and glory, than ever Alexander or Caesar did in conquering this terrestrial world; and though I have made my Blazing World, a peaceable world, allowing it but one religion, one language, and one government; yet could I make another world, as full of factions, divisions, and wars, as this is of peace and tranquility; and the rational figures of my mind might express as much courage to fight, as Hector and Achilles had; and be as wise as Nestor, as eloquent as Ulysses, and as beautiful as Helen.⁴ But I esteeming peace before war, wit before policy,⁵ honesty before beauty; instead of the figures of Alexander, Caesar, Hector, Achilles, Nestor, Ulysses, Helen, etc. chose rather the figure of honest Margaret Newcastle, which now I would not change for all this terrestrial world; and if any should like the world I have made, and be willing to be my subjects, they may imagine themselves such, and they are such, I mean, in their minds, fancies, or imaginations; but if they cannot endure to be subjects, they may create worlds of their own, and govern themselves as they please: but yet let them have a care, not to prove unjust usurpers, and to rob me of mine; for concerning the Philosophical World, I am empress of it myself; and as for the Blazing World, it having an empress already, who rules it with great wisdom and conduct, which empress is my dear platonic friend; I shall never prove so unjust, treacherous, and unworthy to her, as to disturb her government, much less to depose her from her imperial throne, for the sake of any other; but rather choose to create another world for another friend.

1666, 1668

2. Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar were both famed as conquerors of much of the world known to them.

3. A reference to the romancelike incident with which *The Blazing World* begins, the abduction of a young woman by a party of adventurers whose boat is blown in a tempest to the North Pole, where they perish (except for the woman, who enters into

the Blazing World).

4. Hector the Trojan and Achilles the Greek are the principal heroes of Homer's *Iliad*; Nestor, wise adviser to the Greeks; Ulysses, hero of Homer's *Odyssey*, Helen, the one whose beauty caused the Trojan War, as it prompted the Trojan Paris to steal her away from her Greek husband, Menelaus.

5. Intelligence before cunning.

JOHN MILTON

1608-1674

As a young man, John Milton proclaimed himself the future author of a great English epic. He promised a poem devoted to the glory of the nation, centering on the deeds of King Arthur or some other ancient hero. When Milton finally published his epic thirty years later, readers found instead a poem about the Fall of Satan and humankind, set in Heaven, Hell, and the Garden of Eden, in which traditional heroism is denigrated and England not once mentioned. What lay between the youthful promise and the eventual fulfillment was a career marked by private tragedy and public controversy.

In his poems and prose tracts Milton often explores or alludes to crises in his own life: worries about fleeting time, the choice of a vocation and early death, painful disappointment in marriage, and the catastrophe of blindness, manifesting in this the heightened seventeenth-century concern with the self. At the same time, no other major English poet has been so deeply involved in the great questions and political crises of his times. His works inscribe and help construct some basic Western institutions, concepts, and attitudes that were taking on modern form in his lifetime: companionate marriage, the new science and the new astronomy, freedom of the press, religious liberty and toleration, republicanism, and more. It is scarcely possible to treat Milton's career separately from the history of England in his lifetime, not only because he was an active participant in affairs of church and state, but also because when he signed himself, as he often did, "John Milton, Englishman," he was presenting himself as England's prophetic bard, the spokesman for the nation as a whole even when he found himself in a minority of one.

As well, no English poet before Milton fashioned himself quite so self-consciously as an author. The young Milton deliberately set out to follow the steps of the ideal poetic career—beginning with pastoral (the mode prominent in several of his early English poems) and ending with epic. His models for this progression were Virgil and Spenser: he called the latter "a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas." In this approach to his vocation he stood at the opposite end of the spectrum from such Cavalier contemporaries as John Suckling and Richard Lovelace, who turned to verse with an air of studied carelessness. Milton resembles Spenser especially in his constant use of myth and archetype and also in his readiness to juxtapose biblical and classical stories. He is everywhere concerned with the conventions of genre, yet he infused every genre he used with new energy, transforming it for later practitioners. The Western literary and intellectual heritage impinged on his writing as immediately and directly as the circumstances of his own life, but he continually reconceived the ideas, literary forms, and values of this heritage to make them relevant to himself and to his age.

Milton's family was bourgeois, cultured, and staunchly Protestant. His father was a scrivener—a combination of solicitor, investment adviser, and moneylender—as well as an amateur composer with some reputation in musical circles. Milton had a younger brother, Christopher, who practiced law, and an elder sister, Anne. At age seventeen he wrote a funeral elegy for the death of Anne's infant daughter and later educated her two sons, Edward and John (Edward wrote his biography). Milton had private tutors at home and also attended one of the finest schools in the land, St. Paul's. At school he began a long and close friendship with Charles Diodati, with whom he exchanged Latin poems and letters over several years, and for whose death in 1638 he wrote a moving Latin elegy. Milton was deeply grateful to his father for his excellent early education, especially in languages (Latin, Greek, Hebrew and its dialects, Italian, and French: later he learned Spanish and Dutch).

In 1625 Milton entered Christ's College, Cambridge. He was briefly suspended during his freshman year over some dispute with his tutor, but he graduated in 1629 and was made Master of Arts three years later. As his surviving student orations indicate, he was profoundly disappointed in his university education, reviling the scholastic logic and Latin rhetorical exercises that still formed its core as "futile and barren controversies and wordy disputes" that "stupify and benumb the mind." He went to university with the serious intention of taking orders in the Church of England—the obvious vocation for a young man of his scholarly and religious bent—but became increasingly disenchanted with the lack of reformation in the church under Archbishop William Laud, and in the hindsight of 1642 he proclaimed himself "church-outed by the prelates." No doubt his change of direction was also linked to the fastidious contempt he expressed for the ignorant and clownish clergymen-in-the-making who were his fellow students at Cambridge: "They thought themselves gallant men, and I thought them fools." Those students retaliated by dubbing Milton "the Lady of Christ's College."

Above all, Milton came to believe more and more strongly that he was destined to

serve his language, his country, and his God as a poet. He began by writing occasional poetry in Latin, the usual language for collegiate poets and for poets who sought a European audience. Milton wrote some of the century's best Latin poems, but as early as 1628 he announced to a university audience his determination to glorify England and the English language in poetry. In his first major English poem (at age twenty-one), the hymn "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity," Milton already portrayed himself as a prophetic bard. This poem is very different from Richard Crashaw's Nativity hymn, with its Spenserian echoes, its allusion to Roman Catholic and Laudian "idolatry" in the long passage on the expulsion of the pagan gods, and its stunning moves from the Creation to Doomsday, from the manger at Bethlehem to the cosmos, and from the shepherd's chatter to the music of the spheres. Two or three years later, probably, Milton wrote the companion poems "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," achieving a stylistic tour de force by creating from the same meter (octosyllabic couplets) entirely different sound qualities, rhythmic effects, and moods. These poems celebrate, respectively, Mirth and Melancholy, defining them by their ancestry, lifestyles, associates, landscapes, activities, music, and literature. In 1634, at the invitation of his musician friend Henry Lawes, he wrote the masque called *Comms*, in which the villain is portrayed as a refined, seductive, and dissolute Cavalier, and which challenges the absolutist politics of court masques like Ben Jonson's *Masque of Blackness* or Thomas Carew's *Coelum Britannicum* by locating true virtue and good pleasure in the households of the country aristocracy rather than at court.

After university, as part of his preparation for a poetic career, Milton undertook a six-year program of self-directed reading in ancient and modern theology, philosophy, history, science, politics, and literature. He was profoundly grateful to his father for sparing him the grubby business of making money and also for financing these years of private study, followed by a fifteen-month "grand tour" of France, Italy, and Switzerland. In 1638 Milton contributed the pastoral elegy "Lycidas" to a Cambridge volume lamenting the untimely death of a college contemporary. This greatest of English funeral elegies explores Milton's deep anxieties about poetry as a vocation, confronts the terrors of mortality in language of astonishing resonance and power, and incorporates a furious apocalyptic diatribe on the corrupt Church of England clergy. Nonetheless, while he was in Italy he exchanged verses and learned compliments with various Catholic intellectuals and men of letters, some of whom became his friends. Milton could always maintain friendships and family relationships across ideological divides. In 1645 his English and Latin poems were published together in a two-part volume. *Poems of Mr. John Milton.*

Upon his return to England, Milton opened a school and was soon involved in Presbyterian efforts to depose the bishops and reform church liturgy, writing five "antiprelatical tracts" denouncing and satirizing bishops. These were the first in a series of political interventions Milton produced over the next twenty years, characterized by remarkable courage and independence of thought. He wrote successively on church government, divorce, education, freedom of the press, regicide, and republicanism. From the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642 until his death, Milton allied himself with the Puritan cause, but his religious opinions developed throughout his life, from relative orthodoxy in his youth to ever more heretical positions in his later years. And while his family belonged to the class that benefited most directly from Europe's first bourgeois revolution, his brother, Christopher, fought on the royalist side. The Milton brothers, like most of their contemporaries, did not see these wars as a confrontation of class interests, but as a conflict between radically differing theories of government and, above all, religion.

Some of Milton's treatises were prompted by personal concerns or crises. He interrupted his polemical tract, *The Reason of Church Government Urged Against Prelaty* (1642), to devote several pages to a discussion of his poetic vocation and the great works he hoped to produce in the future. His tracts about divorce, which can hardly have seemed the most pressing of issues in the strife-torn years 1643–45, were motivated by his personal experience of a disastrous marriage. Aged thirty-three, inexpe-

rienced with women, and idealistic about marriage as in essence a union of minds and spirits, he married a young woman of seventeen, Mary Powell, who returned to her royalist family just a few months after the marriage. In response, Milton wrote several tracts vigorously advocating divorce on the grounds of incompatibility and with the right to remarry—a position almost unheard of at the time and one that required a boldly antiliteral reading of the Gospels. The fact that these tracts could not be licensed and were roundly denounced in Parliament, from pulpits, and in print prompted him to write *Areopagitica* (1644), an impassioned defense of a free press and the free commerce in ideas against a Parliament determined to restore effective censorship. He saw these personal issues—reformed poetry, domestic liberty achieved through needful divorce, and a free press—as vital to the creation of a reformed English culture.

In 1649, just after Charles I was executed, Milton published *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (go to page 1748 and to Norton Literature Online for extracts from the *Tenure*), which defends the revolution and the regicide and was of considerable importance in developing a "contract theory" of government based on the inalienable sovereignty of the people—a version of contract very different from that of Thomas Hobbes. Milton was appointed Latin Secretary to the Commonwealth government (1649–53) and to Oliver Cromwell's Protectorate (1654–58), which meant that he wrote the official letters—mostly in Latin—to foreign governments and heads of state. He also wrote polemical defenses of the new government: *Eikonoklastes* (1649), to counter the powerful emotional effect of *Eikon Basilike*, supposedly written by the king just before his death (an excerpt is included on Norton Literature Online), and two Latin *Defenses* upholding the regicide and the new republic to European audiences.

During these years Milton suffered a series of agonizing tragedies. Mary Powell returned to him in 1645 but died in childbirth in 1652, leaving four children; the only son, John, died a few months later. That same year Milton became totally blind; he thought his boyhood habit of reading until midnight had weakened his eyesight and that writing his first *Defense* to answer the famous French scholar Claudius Salmasius had destroyed it. Milton married again in 1656, apparently happily, but his new wife, Katherine Woodcock, was dead two years later, along with their infant daughter. Katherine is probably the subject of his sonnet "Methought I Saw My Late Espoused Saint," a moving dream vision poignant with the sense of loss—both of sight and of love. Milton had little time for poetry in these years, but his few sonnets revolutionized the genre, overlaying the Petrarchan metrical structure with an urgent rhetorical voice and using the small sonnet form, hitherto confined mainly to matters of love, for new and grand subjects: praises of Cromwell and other statesmen mixed with admonition and political advice; a prophetic denunciation calling down God's vengeance for Protestants massacred in Piedmont; and an emotion-filled account of his continuing struggle to come to terms with his blindness as part of God's providence.

Cromwell's death in 1658 led to mounting chaos and a growing belief that a restored Stuart monarchy was inevitable. Milton held out against that tide. His several tracts of 1659–60 developed radical arguments for broad toleration, church disestablishment, and republican government. And just as he was among the first to attack the power of the bishops, so he was virtually the last defender of the "Good Old Cause" of the Revolution; the second edition of his *Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* appeared in late April 1660, scarcely two weeks before the Restoration, when the monarchy was restored. For several months after that event, Milton was in hiding, his life in danger. Friends, especially the poet Andrew Marvell, managed to secure his pardon and later his release from a brief imprisonment. He lived out his last years in reduced circumstances, plagued by ever more serious attacks of gout but grateful for the domestic comforts provided by his third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, whom he married in 1663 and who survived him.

In such conditions, dismayed by the defeat of his political and religious cause, totally blind and often ill, threatened by the horrific plague of 1665 and the great fire

of 1666, and entirely dependent on amanuenses and friends to transcribe his dictation, he completed his great epic poem. *Paradise Lost* (1667/74) radically reconceives the epic genre and epic heroism, choosing as protagonists a domestic couple rather than martial heroes and degrading the military glory celebrated in epic tradition in favor of "the better fortitude / Of patience and heroic martyrdom." It offers a sweeping imaginative vision of Hell, Chaos, and Heaven; prelapsarian life in Eden; the power of the devil's political rhetoric; the psychology of Satan, Adam, and Eve; and the high drama of the Fall and its aftermath.

In his final years, Milton published works on grammar and logic chiefly written during his days as a schoolmaster, a history of Britain (1670) from the earliest times to the Norman Conquest, and a treatise urging toleration for Puritan dissenters (1673). He also continued work on his *Christian Doctrine*, a Latin treatise that reveals how far he had moved from the orthodoxies of his day. The work denies the Trinity (making the Son and the Holy Spirit much inferior to God the Father), insists upon free will against Calvinist predestination, and privileges the inspiration of the Spirit even above the Scriptures and the Ten Commandments. Such radical and heterodox positions could not be made public in his lifetime, certainly not in the repressive conditions of the Restoration, and Milton's *Christian Doctrine* was subsequently lost to view for over 150 years.

In 1671 Milton published two poems that resonated with the harsh repression and the moral and political challenges all Puritan dissenters faced after the Restoration. *Paradise Regained*, a brief epic in four books, treats Jesus' Temptation in the Wilderness as an intellectual struggle through which the hero comes to understand both himself and his mission and through which he defeats Satan by renouncing the whole panoply of false or faulty versions of the good life and of God's kingdom. *Samson Agonistes*, a classical tragedy, is the more harrowing for the resemblances between its tragic hero and its author. The deeply flawed, pain-wracked, blind, and defeated Samson struggles, in dialogues with his visitors, to gain self-knowledge, discovering at last a desperate way to triumph over his captors and offer his people a chance to regain their freedom. (The tragedy in its entirety is available on Norton Literature Online.) In these last poems Milton sought to educate his readers in moral and political wisdom and virtue. Only through such inner transformation, Milton now firmly believed, would men and women come to value—and so perhaps reclaim—the intellectual, religious, and political freedom he so vigorously promoted in his prose and poetry.

FROM POEMS

On the Morning of Christ's Nativity¹

1

This is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the son of Heaven's eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;

1. This ode was written on Christmas] 629, a few weeks after Milton's twenty-first birthday. He placed it first in the 1645 edition of his poems, claiming in it his vocation as inspired poet. The poem often looks back to Spenser: the first four stanzas are an adaptation of the Spenserian stanza;

there are several Spenserian archaisms (]- prefixes) and some Spenser-like onomatopoeia (lines 156, 172). Comparison with Crashaw's Nativity poem (p. 1645) will highlight some important differences between Roman Catholic and Puritan aesthetics in this period.

5 For so the holy sages once did sing,
 That he our deadly forfeit² should release,
 And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

2

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,⁰ *unable to be endured*
 And that far-beaming blaze of majesty
 io Wherewith he wont⁰ at Heaven's high council-table *was accustomed*
 To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,³
 He laid aside; and here with us to be,
 Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
 And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

3

15 Say, heavenly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
 Afford a present to the infant God?
 Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
 To welcome him to this his new abode,
 Now while the heaven by the sun's team untrod⁴
 20 Hath took no print of the approaching light,
 And all the spangled host⁰ keep watch in squadrons bright? *angels*

4

See how from far upon the eastern road
 The star-led wizards⁵ haste with odors sweet:
 O run, prevent⁰ them with thy humble ode, *anticipate*
 25 And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;
 Have thou the honor first thy Lord to greet,
 And join thy voice unto the angel choir,
 From out His secret altar touched with hallowed fire.⁶

The Hymn

1

It was the winter wild
 30 While the Heaven-born child
 All meanly wrapped in the rude manger lies;
 Nature in awe to him
 Had doffed her gaudy trim⁷
 With her great Master so to sympathize;
 35 It was no season then for her
 To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

2. The sentence of death consequent on the Fall. "Holy sages": for example, the prophet Isaiah (chaps. 9 and 40) and Job (chap. 19) were thought to have foretold Christ as Messiah.

3. The Trinity: Father, Son (incarnate in Christ), and Holy Ghost.

4. In classical myth, the sun (Phoebus Apollo)

drove across heaven in a chariot drawn by horses.

5. The Magi who followed the star of Bethlehem to find and adore the infant Christ.

6. Isaiah's lips were touched by a burning coal from the altar, purifying him and confirming him as a prophet (Isaiah 6.7).

7. Put off her garments of leaves and flowers.

2

Only with speeches fair
 She woos the gentle air
 To hide her guilty front⁰ with innocent snow, *brow*
 40 And on her naked shame,
 Pollute with sinful blame,
 The saintly veil of maiden white to throw,⁸
 Confounded that her Maker's eyes
 Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

3

45 But he her fears to cease
 Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
 She, crowned with olive green, came softly sliding
 Down through the turning sphere,⁹
 His ready harbinger,⁰ *forerunner*
 so With turtle¹ wing the amorous clouds dividing,
 And waving wide her myrtle wand,
 She strikes a universal peace through sea and land.

4

No war or battle's sound
 Was heard the world around;²
 55 The idle spear and shield were high up-hung;
 The hooked chariot³ stood
 Unstained with hostile blood,
 The trumpet spake not to the armed throng,
 And kings sat still with awful⁰ eye, *filled* *with awe*
 60 As if they surely knew their sovereign Lord was by.

5

But peaceful was the night
 Wherein the Prince of Light
 His reign of peace upon the earth began:
 The winds, with wonder whist,⁰ *hushed*
 65 Smoothly the waters kissed,
 Whispering new joys to the mild ocean,
 Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
 While birds of calm⁴ sit brooding on the charmed wave.

The stars with deep amaze
 70 Stand fixed in steadfast gaze,

8. Nature fell also with the Fall, so she is a harlot (line 36), not a pure maiden, despite her white garment of snow.

9. The Ptolemaic spheres, revolving around the earth.

1. Like a turtledove, which, like the myrtle (next line), is an emblem of Venus (Love), as the olive crown is of peace.

2. Around the time of Christ's birth, the "Peace of Augustus" held, during which no major wars disturbed the Roman Empire; that peace was sometimes attributed to Christ.

3. War chariots were built with scythelike hooks on the axles, to wound and kill.

4. Kingfishers (halcyons) were thought to calm the seas during the time they nested on its waves.

Bending one way their precious influence,
 And will not take their flight
 For all the morning light,
 Or Lucifer⁵ that often warned them thence;
 75 But in their glimmering orbs did glow
 Until their Lord himself bespake,⁰ and bid them go. *spoke out*

And though the shady gloom
 Had given day her room,
 The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
 And hid his head for shame
 As⁰ his inferior flame *as if*
 The new-enlightened world no more should need;
 He saw a greater Sun⁶ appear
 Than his bright throne or burning axletree⁰ could bear. *chariot axle*

The shepherds on the lawn
 Or ere the point of³ dawn *just before*
 Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;
 Full little thought they than⁰ *then*
 That the mighty Pan⁷
 Was kindly⁸ come to live with them below;
 Perhaps their loves or else their sheep
 Was all that did their silly⁰ thoughts so busy keep. *simple, humble*

9

When such music sweet
 Their hearts and ears did greet
 95 As never was by mortal finger struck,
 Divinely warbled voice
 Answering the stringed noise,
 As all their souls in blissful rapture took;
 The air, such pleasure loath to lose,
 100 With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly close.⁰ *cadence*

10

Nature that heard such sound
 Beneath the hollow round
 Of Cynthia's seat,⁹ the airy region thrilling,⁰ *piercing, delighting*
 Now was almost won
 105 To think her part was done,
 And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
 She knew such harmony alone
 Could hold all heaven and earth in happier union.

5. Not Satan but the morning star, Venus.

6. The familiar Son/sun pun.

7. Pan, patron of shepherds, is a merry, goat-footed god, but he was often conceived in more exalted terms and identified with Christ, because his name in Greek means "all."

8. By nature; also, benevolently.

9. Cynthia is the moon. Nature rules below the moon (the region of the four elements and subject to decay). The unchanging, perfect region above the moon is normally the only place one could hear either angels' hymnody or the music of the spheres.

11

At last surrounds their sight
no A globe of circular light
That with long beams the shamefaced night arrayed;⁰ *adorned with rays*
The helmed cherubim
And sworded seraphim¹
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,
115 Harping in loud and solemn choir
With unexpressive⁰ notes to Heaven's newborn heir. *inexpressible*

12

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,²
120 While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanced world on hinges⁰ hung, *the two poles*
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the welt'ring waves their oozy channel keep.

13

125 Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears
(If ye have power to touch our senses so),
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time,
130 And let the bass of Heaven's deep organ blow;
And with your ninefold harmony³
Make up full consort to th' angelic symphony.

14

For if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
135 Time will run back and fetch the age of gold;⁴
And speckled vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous sin will melt from earthly mold,
And Hell itself will pass away,
140 And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

15

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,

1. Seraphim and cherubim are the highest of the traditional nine orders of angels; they are often portrayed in martial attire.

2. Job 38.4–7: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? . . . / When the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

3. In Pythagorean theory, each of the nine moving

spheres sounds a distinctive note (the tenth, the primum mobile, does not move). It was supposed that, after the Fall, this harmonious music of the spheres could not be heard on earth. Earth would be the "bass" of the cosmic organ, sounding under that planetary harmony.

4. The first age, of human innocence, classical mythology's equivalent to the Garden of Eden.

Th' enameled arras⁰ of the rainbow wearing, *brightly colored fabric*
 And Mercy set between,⁵
 145 Throned in celestial sheen,
 With radiant feet the tissued⁶ clouds down steering;
 And Heaven, as at some festival,
 Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

16

But wisest Fate says no,
 150 This must not yet be so;
 The Babe lies yet in smiling infancy⁷
 That on the bitter cross
 Must redeem our loss,
 So both himself and us to glorify;
 155 Yet first to those ychained" in sleep
 The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep,

17

With such a horrid clang
 As on Mount Sinai rang
 While the red fire and smoldering clouds outbrake;
 160 The aged earth, aghast
 With terror of that blast,
 Shall from the surface to the center shake,
 When at the world's last session,
 The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread His throne.⁹

18

165 And then at last our bliss
 Full and perfect is,
 But now begins; for from this happy day
 Th' old dragon under ground,¹
 In straiter limits bound,
 170 Not half so far casts his usurped sway,
 And wroth to see his kingdom fail,
 Swinges⁰ the scaly horror of his folded tail. *lashes*

19

The oracles are dumb;²
 No voice or hideous hum
 Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.

5. This allegorical scene, suggesting a masque descent, alludes to Psalm 85.10, part of the liturgy for Christmas: "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." Peace, in the poem, has already descended (lines 45–52). The lines also evoke the flight of Astraea, the classical goddess of justice, at the end of the Golden Age, and her return with its restoration, celebrated by Virgil in his fourth eclogue, applied by him to the birth of Pollio but by Christians to Christ.

6. Cloth woven with silver and gold.

7. The Latin word, *infans*, means, literally, "non-speaking."

8. One of Spenser's archaic *y-* prefixes.

9. Moses received the Ten Commandments amid thunder and lightning atop Mount Sinai (Exodus 19); the Last Judgment will take place amid similar uproar. "Session": court proceeding.

1. The devil (Revelation 20.2).

2. An ancient tradition held that pagan oracles ceased with the coming of Christ; another identified the pagan gods with the fallen angels.

Apollo from his shrine
 Can no more divine,
 With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving,³
 No nightly trance or breathed spell
 180 Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell.

20

The lonely mountains o'er
 And the resounding shore
 A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
 From haunted spring and dale
 185 Edged with the poplar pale,
 The parting genius⁴ is with sighing sent;
 With flower-in-woven tresses torn
 The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

21

In consecrated earth
 190 And on the holy hearth,
 The lars and lemures⁵ moan with midnight plaint;
 In urns and altars round
 A drear and dying sound
 Affrights the flamens⁶ at their sendee quaint;
 195 And the chill marble seems to sweat,
 While each peculiar power forgoes his wonted seat.

22

Peor and Baalim'
 Forsake their temples dim,
 With that twice-battered god of Palestine,⁸
 200 And mooned Ashtaroth,⁹
 Heaven's queen and mother both,
 Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
 The Libyc Hammon' shrinks⁰ his horn;
 In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.²

draws in

23

205 And sullen Moloch,³ fled,
 Hath left in shadows dread
 His burning idol all of blackest hue;
 In vain with cymbals' ring

3. Apollo's main shrine was at Delphi, on the slopes of Mount Parnassus.

4. A local deity guarding a particular place.

5. Spirits of the dead. "Lars": household gods.

6. Roman priests.

7. Other manifestations of Baal, a Canaanite sun god.

8. Dagon, the Philistine god whose image at Ashdod was twice thrown down when the Ark of the Covenant was placed beside it (1 Samuel 5.2—4).

9. Ashtaroth, also known as Astarte, was a Phoenician fertility goddess identified with the moon.

1. Hammon, also Ammon, an Egyptian and Libyan god, depicted as a ram.

2. Thammuz, lover of Ashtaroth, was killed by a boar and lamented by the Phoenician women; he was taken into the Greek pantheon as Adonis.

3. Moloch was a Phoenician fire god, a brazen idol with a human body and a calf's head; the statue ("his burning idol," line 207) was heated flaming hot and children were thrown into its embrace, with cymbals drowning out their cries (2 Kings 22.10).

They call the grisly Icing
 210 In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
 The brutish gods of Nile as fast,⁴
 Isis and Orus and the dog Anubis haste.

24

Nor is Osiris seen
 In Memphian grove or green,
 215 Trampling the unshowered^o grass with lowings loud, *rainless*
 Nor can he be at rest
 Within his sacred chest;
 Naught but profoundest Hell can be his shroud.
 In vain with timbrelled anthems dark
 220 The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipped ark.⁵

25

He feels from Judah's land
 The dreaded Infant's hand,
 The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyne;^o *eyes*
 Nor all the gods beside
 225 Longer dare abide,
 Not Typhon huge, ending in snaky twine;
 Our Babe, to show his godhead true,
 Can in his swaddling bands control the damned crew.⁶

26

So when the sun in bed,
 230 Curtained with cloudy red,
 Pillows his chin upon an orient^o wave, *eastern, bright*
 The flocking shadows pale
 Troop to th' infernal jail;
 Each fettered ghost slips to his several^o grave; *separate*
 235 And the yellow-skirted fays
 Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze.⁷

27

But see! the Virgin blessed
 Hath laid her Babe to rest.
 Time is our tedious song should here have ending.
 240 Heaven's youngest-teemed^o star *latest bom*
 Hath fixed her polished car,^o *gleaming chariot*
 Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending:
 And all about the courtly stable
 Bright-harnessed^o angels sit in order serviceable. *bright-armed*

1629

1645

4. Egyptian gods had some features of animals: Isis (next line) was represented with cow's horns, Orus, or Horus, with a hawk's head; Osiris (lines 213–15) sometimes had the shape of a bull.

5. Osiris's image was carried from temple to temple in a wooden chest, and his priests accompanied it with tambourines ("timbrels").

6. Typhon was a hundred-headed monster who was a serpent below the waist, a figure for the devil. The infant Christ controlling him calls up (as a foreshadowing) the story of the infant Hercules strangling two giant serpents in his cradle.

7. Fairy rings. "Night-steeds": horses drawing Night's chariot.

On Shakespeare¹

What needs my Shakespeare for his honored bones
 The labor of an age in piled stones,
 Or that his hallowed relics should be hid
 Under a star-ypointing² pyramid?
 Dear son of memory,³ great heir of fame,
 What⁰ need'st thou such weak witness of thy name? *why*
 Thou in our wonder and astonishment
 Hast built thyself a livelong⁰ monument. *enduring*
 For whilst to th' shame of slow-endeavoring art
 Thy easy numbers⁰ flow, and that each heart
 Hath from the leaves of thy unvalued⁰ book *invaluable*
 Those Delphic⁴ lines with deep impression took,
 Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
 Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;⁵
 And so sepulchered in such pomp dost lie,
 That kings for such a tomb would wish to die.

1630

1632

L'Allegro¹

Hence loathed Melancholy,²
 Of Cerberus³ and blackest midnight born,
 In Stygian⁴ cave forlorn
 'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy,
 5 Find out some uncouth⁰ cell, *desolate*
 Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
 And the night raven sings;
 There under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,
 As ragged as thy locks,
 10 In dark Cimmerian⁵ desert ever dwell.
 But come thou goddess fair and free,
 In heaven yclept Euphrosyne,⁶

1. This tribute, Milton's first published poem, appeared in the Second Folio of Shakespeare's plays (1632).

2. A Spenserian archaism.

3. As "son of memory" Shakespeare is a brother of the Muses, who are the daughters of Mnemosyne (Memory).

4. Apollo, god of poetry, had his oracle at Delphi.

5. Shakespeare's mesmerized readers are themselves his ("marble") monument.

1. The companion poems "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso" are both written in tetrameter couplets, except for the first ten lines, but Milton's virtuosity produces entirely different tempos and sound qualities in the two poems. The Italian titles name, respectively, the cheerful, mirthful man and the melancholy, contemplative man. The poems are carefully balanced and their different values celebrated, though "Il Penseroso's" greater length and final coda may intimate that life's superiority. Mirth, the presiding deity of "L'Allegro," is

described in terms that evoke Botticelli's presentation of the Grace Euphrosyne (youthful mirth) and her sisters in his *Primavera*.

2. The black melancholy recognized and here exorcized by Mirth's man is a disease leading to madness. "Il Penseroso" celebrates "white" melancholy as the temperament of the scholarly, contemplative man, represented in Durer's famous engraving *Melancholy*. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* treats the entire range of possibilities.

3. The three-headed hellhound of classical mythology.

4. Near the river Styx, in the underworld.

5. Homer's Cimmereans (*Odyssey* 11.13–19) live on the outer edge of the world, in perpetual darkness.

6. The three Graces—Euphrosyne (four syllables) figuring Youthful Mirth; Aglaia, Brilliance; and Thalia, Bloom—were commonly taken to be offspring of Venus (Love and Beauty) and Bacchus (god of wine). Milton proceeds, however, to devise

And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
 Whom lovely Venus at a birth
 With two sister Graces more
 To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore;
 Or whether (as some sager sing)
 The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
 Zephyr with Aurora playing,
 As he met her once a-Maying,
 There on beds of violets blue,
 And fresh-blown^o roses washed in dew, *newly opened*
 Filled her with thee a daughter fair, ,
 So buxom,^o blithe, and debonair. *lively*
 Haste thee nymph, and bring with thee
 Jest and youthful Jollity,
 Quips^o and Cranks," and wanton Wiles, *witty sayings / jokes*
 Nods, and Becks,^o and wreathed Smiles, *beckoninas*
 Such as hang on Hebe's⁷ cheek,
 And love to live in dimple sleek;
 Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
 And Laughter holding both his sides.
 Come, and trip it^o as ye go *dance*
 On the light fantastic toe,
 And in thy right hand lead with thee
 The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
 And if I give thee honor due,
 Mirth, admit me of thy crew
 To live with her and live with thee,
 In unproved^o pleasures free; *irreproachable*
 To hear the lark begin his flight,
 And, singing, startle the dull night,
 From his watchtower in the sides,
 Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
 Then to come in spite oP sorrow, *in defiance of*
 And at my window bid good morrow,
 Through the sweetbriar or the vine,
 Or the twisted eglantine.
 While the cock with lively din
 Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
 And to the stack or the barn door,
 Stoutly struts his dames before;
 Oft listening how the hounds and horn
 Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
 From the side of some hoar^o hill,
 Through the high wood echoing shrill.
 Sometime walking not unseen
 By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
 Right against the eastern gate,
 Where the great sun begins his state,⁸

another, more innocent parentage for Euphrosyne (ascribing it to "some sager," lines 17-24): Zephyr, the West Wind, and Aurora, goddess of the Dawn.

7. Goddess of youth and cupbearer to the gods,

8. Stately procession, as by a monarch,

Robed in flames and amber light,
 The clouds in thousand liveries dight;^o *dressed*
 While the plowman near at hand
 Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
 65 And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
 And the mower whets his scythe,
 And every shepherd tells his tale
 Under the hawthorn in the dale.
 Straight^o mine eye hath caught new pleasures *immediately*
 70 Whilst the landscape round it measures,
 Russet lawns and fallows^o gray, *-plowed land*
 Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
 Mountains on whose barren breast
 The laboring clouds do often rest;
 75 Meadows trim with daisies pied,^o *multicolored*
 Shallow brooks, and rivers wide.
 Towers and battlements it sees
 Bosomed high in tufted trees,
 Where perhaps some beauty lies,
 80 The cynosure^o of neighboring eyes.
 Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
 From betwixt two aged oaks,
 Where Corydon and Thyrsis met
 Are at their savory dinner set
 85 Of herbs and other country messes,
 Which the neat-handed^o Phyllis dresses; *dexterous*
 And then in haste her bower she leaves,
 With Thestylis¹ to bind the sheaves;
 Or if the earlier season lead
 90 To the tanned^o haycock in the mead. *sun-dried*
 Sometimes with secure^o delight *careless*
 The upland hamlets will invite,
 When the merry bells ring round
 And the jocund rebecks² sound
 95 To many a youth and many a maid,
 Dancing in the checkered shade;
 And young and old come forth to play
 On a sunshine holiday,
 Till the livelong daylight fail;
 100 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
 With stories told of many a feat,
 How fairy Mab the junkets³ eat;
 She was pinched and pulled, she said,
 And he, by friar's lantern led,
 105 Tells how the drudging goblin⁴ sweat
 To earn his cream bowl duly set,

9. Literally, the bright poiestar, or North Star, by which mariners steer; here, a splendid object, much gazed at.

1. Milton uses traditional names from classical pastoral—Corydon, Thyrsis, Phyllis, Thestylis—for his rustic English shepherds.

2. A small three-stringed fiddle. "Jocund": merry,

sprightly.

3. Sweetmeats, especially with cream. Queen Mab is the fairy queen, consort of Oberon. "She" and "he" in the next two lines are country folk telling of their experiences with fairies.

4. Robin Goodfellow, alias Puck, Pook, or Hobgoblin. "Friar's lantern": will-o'-the-wisp.

When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
 That ten day laborers could not end;
 Then lies him down the lubber fiend,⁵
 And stretched out all the chimney's⁰ length, *fireplace's*
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
 And crop-full⁰ out of doors he flings *satiated*
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.
 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
 By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
 Towered cities please us then,
 And the busy hum of men,
 Where throngs of knights and barons bold
 In weeds of peace high triumphs⁶ hold,
 With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
 Rain influence,⁷ and judge the prize
 Of wit or arms, while both contend
 To win her grace, whom all commend.
 There let Hymen⁸ oft appear
 In saffron robe, with taper clear,
 And pomp and feast and revelry,
 With masque and antique⁰ pageantry; *ancient, also antic*
 Such sights as youthful poets dream
 On summer eves by haunted stream.
 Then to the well-trod stage anon,
 If Jonson's learned sock be on,
 Or sweetest Shakespeare, fancy's child,
 Warble his native woodnotes wild."¹
 And ever against eating cares;¹
 Lap me in soft Lydian airs,²
 Married to immortal verse
 Such as the meeting soul may pierce
 In notes with many a winding bout^o
 Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
 With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
 The melting voice through mazes running,
 Untwisting all the chains that tie
 The hidden soul of harmony;
 That Orpheus' self may heave his head
 From golden slumber on a bed
 Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
 Such strains as would have won the ear
 Of Pluto, to have quite set free

5. Puck, here identified with the folktale goblin, *Lob-lie-by-the-fire*. Robin traditionally did all manner of drudging work for people, to be rewarded with a bowl of cream.

6. Pageants. "Weeds of peace": courtly raiment.

7. The ladies' eyes are stars and so have astrological influence over the men.

8. Roman god of marriage. An orange-yellow ("saffron") robe and a torch are his attributes.

9. It was conventional to contrast Jonson as a "learned" poet and Shakespeare as a "natural" one,

but L'Allegro's views and choices of literature also suits with his nature. "Sock": the comedian's low-heeled slipper, contrasted with the tragedian's buskin, a high-heeled boot.

1. "Eating cares" (Horace, *Odes* 2.11.18) is one of many classical echoes in the poem.

2. Plato considered "Lydian airs" to be enervating, soft, and sensual; he preferred the solemn Doric mode. Some others thought Lydian airs relaxing and delightful.

150 His half-regained Eurydice,³
 These delights if thou canst give,
 Mirth, with thee I mean to live.⁴

ca. 1631

1645

II Penseroso¹

Hence vain deluding joys,²
 The brood of Folly without father bred,
 How little you bestead,⁰ *avail*
 Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys⁰ *trifles*
 5 Dwell in some idle brain,
 And fancies fond^o with gaudy shapes possess, *foolish*
 As thick and numberless
 As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
 Or likest hovering dreams,
 10 The fickle pensioners of Morpheus'³ train.
 But hail thou Goddess sage and holy,
 Hail, divinest Melancholy,
 Whose saintly visage is too bright
 To hit^o the sense of human sight, *suit*
 15 And therefore to our weaker view
 O'erlaid with black, staid wisdom's hue;⁴
 Black, but such as in esteem,
 Prince Memnon's sister⁵ might beseem,
 Or that starred Ethiope queen⁶ that strove
 20 To set her beauty's praise above
 The sea nymphs, and their powers offended.
 Yet thou art higher far descended;
 Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore
 To solitary Saturn bore;⁷
 25 His daughter she (in Saturn's reign
 Such mixture was not held a stain).
 Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
 He met her, and in secret shades

3. Orpheus's music so moved Pluto that he agreed to release Orpheus's dead wife Eurydice (four syllables, accent on the second) from the underworld (Elysium), but he violated the condition set—that he not look back at her—and so lost her again. Milton often uses Orpheus as a figure for the poet.

4. The final lines echo Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" (p. 1274): "If these delights thy mind may move, / Then live with me and be my love."

1. II Penseroso whose name is Italian for "the thoughtful one," celebrates a melancholy that does not produce madness but the scholarly temperament, ruled by Saturn. See note 2 on p. 1797 to "L' Ailegro."

2. In "II Penseroso," Mirth is not the innocent joys of "L'Allegro," but "vain deluding joys."

3. Morpheus is the god of sleep. "Pensioners": followers.

4. The melancholy humor, caused by black bile, was thought to make the face dark or saturnine—from the ancient god Saturn, allegorized in Neoplatonic philosophy as "the collective angelic mind."

5. Memnon, in *Odyssey* 11, was a handsome Ethiopian prince; his sister Himera's beauty was mentioned by later commentators. Cf. Song of Solomon 1.5, "I am black but comely."

6. Cassiopeia was turned into a constellation ("starred") for bragging that she was more beautiful than the sea nymphs.

7. Vesta, daughter of Saturn, was goddess of the household and a virgin, as were her priestesses. Milton invented the story of her sexual congress with Saturn on Mount Ida, resulting in Melancholy's birth. Saturn ruled the gods and the world during the Golden Age, which ended when he was murdered by his son Jove.

Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
 30 While yet there was no fear of Jove.
 Come pensive nun, devout and pure,
 Sober, steadfast, and demure,
 All in a robe of darkest grain,⁰ color
 Flowing with majestic train,
 35 And sable stole⁸ of cypress lawn
 Over thy decent⁰ shoulders drawn. comely, modestly covered
 Come, but keep thy wonted⁰ state,⁰ usual / dignity
 With even step and musing gait,
 And looks commercing with the skies,
 40 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
 There held in holy passion still,
 Forget thyself to marble,⁹ till
 With a sad⁰ leaden downward cast⁰ grave, dignified I glance
 Thou fix them on the earth as fast.
 45 And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
 Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
 And hears the Muses in a ring
 Aye⁰ round about Jove's altar sing. continually
 And add to these retired Leisure,
 50 That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
 But first, and chiefest, with thee bring
 Him that yon soars on golden wing,
 Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
 The cherub Contemplation;¹
 55 And the mute Silence hist⁰ along, summon
 'Less Philomel² will deign a song,
 In her sweetest, saddest plight,⁰ mood
 Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
 While Cynthia³ checks her dragon yoke
 60 Gently o'er th' accustomed oak;
 Sweet bird that shunn'st the noise of folly,
 Most musical, most melancholy!
 Thee chantress oft the woods among
 I woo to hear thy evensong;⁴
 65 And missing thee, I walk unseen
 On the dry smooth-shaven green,
 To behold the wandering moon,
 Riding near her highest noon,
 Like one that had been led astray
 70 Through the heaven's wide pathless way;
 And oft as if her head she bowed,
 Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
 Oft on a plat⁰ of rising ground, plot, open field

8. A delicate black cloth.

9. Still as a statue.

1. The special function of cherubim is contemplation of God; Milton alludes also (line 53) to their identification with the wheels of the mystical chariot/throne of God described by Ezekiel (Ezekiel 10).

2. The nightingale (the bird into which Philomela was transformed after her rape by her brother-in-

law Tereus) traditionally sings a mournful song. " 'Less': unless.

3. Goddess of the moon, also associated with Hecate, goddess of the underworld, who drives a pair of sleepless dragons.

4. The evening liturgy traditionally sung by cloistered monks and nuns ("chantress" evokes such a singer); "L'Allegro's" cock, by contrast, calls hearers to the morning liturgy, "matins" (line 114).

I hear the far-off curfew sound
75 Over some wide-watered shore,
Swinging slow with sullen" roar; *deep, mournful*
Or if the air will not permit,
Some still removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
so Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the bellman's' drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm;
85 Or let my lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,⁶
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato⁷ to unfold
90 What words or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook;
And of those demons⁸ that are found
In fire, air, flood, or underground,
95 Whose power hath a true consent⁰ *agreement*
With planet, or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In sceptered pall⁹ come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
∞ Or the tale of Troy divine,¹
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskined² stage.
But, O sad virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musaeus³ from his bower,
105 Or bid the soul of Orpheus⁴ sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek.
Or call up him⁵ that left half told
110 The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball and of Algarsife,
And who had Canacee to wife,
That owned the virtuous⁰ ring and glass, *having magical powers*
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
115 On which the Tartar king did ride;

5. Night watchman who rang a bell to mark the hours.

6. The Great Bear constellation never sets in northern skies.

7. Various esoteric books (actually written in the 3rd and 4th centuries) were attributed to an ancient Egyptian, Hermes Trismegistus ("thrice great"). Neoplatonists made him the father of all knowledge; later he became a patron of magicians and alchemists. To "unsphere" Plato is to bring him magically back to earth from whatever sphere he now inhabits—in practical terms, by reading his books.

8. Demons (daemons), halfway between gods and

men, preside over the four elements.

9. Royal robe, worn by tragic actors.

1. Tragedies about Thebes include Sophocles' *Oedipus* cycle, those about the line of Pelops, Aeschylus's *Oresteia*, and those about Troy, Euripides' *Trojan Women*.

2. The buskin (high boot) of tragedy, contrasted with the "sock" of comedy ("L'Allegro," line 132).

3. Mythical poet-priest of the pre-Homeric age, supposedly a son or pupil of Orpheus.

4. For the story of Orpheus, see "L'Allegro," line 145, and note 5 (on line 150).

5. Chaucer, whose *Squire's Tale* is unfinished.

And if aught⁰ else great bards beside *anything*
 In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
 Of tourneys and of trophies hung,
 Of forests and enchantments drear,
 120 Where more is meant than meets the ear.⁶
 Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
 Till civil-suited Morn appear,
 Not tricked and frownced as she was wont
 With the Attic boy to hunt,⁷
 125 But kerchiefed in a comely cloud,
 While rocking winds are piping loud,
 Or ushered with a shower still,⁰ *gentle*
 When the gust hath blown his fill,
 Ending on the rustling leaves,
 130 With minute drops from off the eaves.
 And when the sun begins to fling
 His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
 To arched walks of twilight groves,
 And shadows brown that Sylvan⁸ loves
 135 Of pine or monumental oak,
 Where the rude ax with heaved stroke
 Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
 Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
 There in close covert⁰ by some brook, *hidden place*
 140 Where no profaner eye may look,
 Hide me from day's garish eye,
 While the bee with honeyed thigh,
 That at her flowery work doth sing,
 And the waters murmuring
 145 With such consort⁰ as they keep, *musical harmony*
 Entice the dewy-feathered sleep;
 And let some strange mysterious dream
 Wave at his wings in airy stream
 Of lively portraiture displayed
 150 Softly on my eyelids laid.
 And as I wake, sweet music breathe
 Above, about, or underneath,
 Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
 Or th' unseen genius⁰ of the wood. *guardian deity*
 155 But let my due feet never fail
 To walk the studious cloister's pale,⁰ *enclosure*
 And love the high embowed roof,
 With antic pillars massy proof,⁹
 And storied windows richly dight,¹
 160 Casting a dim religious light.
 There let the pealing organ blow
 To the full-voiced choir below,
 In service high and anthems clear,

6. A capsule definition of allegory.

7. The now soberly dressed Aurora, goddess of the dawn, once fell in love with Cephalus ("the Attic boy") and hunted with him. "Tricked and frownced": adorned and with frizzled hair.

8. Roman god of woodlands.

9. Massive and strong. "Antic": covered with quaint or grotesque carvings, also antique.

1. Dressed. "Storied windows": stained-glass windows depicting biblical stories.

As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
 165 Dissolve me into ecstasies,
 And bring all heaven before mine eyes.
 And may at last my weary age
 Find out the peaceful hermitage,
 The hairy gown and mossy cell,
 170 Where I may sit and rightly spell^o study
 Of every star that heaven doth shew,
 And every herb that sips the dew,
 Till old experience do attain
 To something like prophetic strain.
 175 These pleasures, Melancholy, give,²
 And I with thee will choose to live.

ca. 1631

1645

Lycidas Milton wrote this pastoral elegy for a volume of Latin, Greek, and English poems, *Iusta Eduourdo King Naufrago* (1638), commemorating the death by shipwreck of his college classmate Edward King, three years younger than himself. King was not a close friend, but Milton's deepest emotions, anxieties, and fears are engaged here because, as poet and minister, King could serve Milton as a kind of alter ego. Still engaged in preparing himself, at the age of twenty-nine, for his projected poetic career, Milton was forced to recognize the uncertainty of all human endeavors. King's death posed the problem of mortality in its most agonizing form: the death of the young, the unfulfilled, the good seems to deny all meaning to life, to demonstrate the uselessness of exceptional talent, lofty ambition, and noble ideals of service to God.

While the poem expresses Milton's anxieties, it also serves as an announcement of his grand ambitions. Like Edmund Spenser, Milton saw mastery of the pastoral mode as the first step in a great poetic career. In "Lycidas" that mastery is complete. In the tradition that Milton received from classical and Renaissance predecessors, including Theocritus, Virgil, Petrarch, and Spenser, the pastoral landscape was invested with profound significances that had little indeed to do with the hard life of agricultural labor. In lines 25–36, Milton evokes the conventional pastoral topic of carefree shepherds who engage in singing contests, watch contentedly over their grazing sheep, fall in love, and write poetry, offering an image of human life in harmony with nature and the seasonal processes of fruition and mellowing before the winter of death. That classical image of the shepherd as poet is mingled with the Christian understanding of the shepherd as pastor (Christ is the Good Shepherd), and sometimes as the prophet called to his mission from the fields, like David or Isaiah. Milton calls on all these associations, along with other motifs specific to pastoral funeral elegy: the recollection of past friendship, a questioning of destiny for cutting short this life, a procession of mourners (often mythological figures), and a "flower passage" in which nature pays tribute to the dead shepherd.

"Lycidas" uses but continually tests and challenges the assumptions and conventions of pastoral elegy, making for profound tensions and clashes of tone. The pastoral "oaten flute" is interrupted by divine pronouncements and bitter invective; nature seems rife with examples of meaningless waste and early death; the "blind Fury" often cuts off the poet's "thin-spun life" before he can win fame; good pastors die young

2. Compare "L'Allegro," lines 151–52 (p. 1801), and the final lines of Marlowe's "Passionate Shepherd" (p. 1274).

while corrupt "Blind mouths" remain; and Nature cannot even pay her tribute of flowers to Lycidas's funeral bier since he welters in the deep, his bones hurled to the "bottom of the monstrous world." In response to these fierce challenges come pronouncements by Apollo and St. Peter, and images of protection and resurrection in nature and myth, culminating in a new vision of pastoral: in heaven Lycidas enjoys a perfected pastoral existence, and in the coda the consoled shepherd arises and carries his song to "pastures new." Milton's questioning leads to a final reassertion of confidence in his calling as national poet. Moreover, in the headnote added in the 1645 volume of his *Poems*, he lays claim to prophetic authority, for the Church of England clergy he denounced as corrupt in 1638 had mostly been expelled from their livings by Puritan reformers in 1645.

Lycidas

In this monody¹ the author bewails a learned friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish seas, 1637. And by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their height.

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more
 Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,²
 I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude," *unripe*
 And with forced fingers rude," *unskilled*
 5 Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
 Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,⁰ *heartfelt, also dire*
 Compels me to disturb your season due;
 For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,³
 Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
 10 Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew
 Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.⁴
 He must not float upon his watery bier
 Unwept, and welter⁰ to the parching wind, *he tossed about*
 Without the meed⁰ of some melodious tear.⁰ *reward/elegy*
 15 Begin then, sisters of the sacred well⁵
 That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring,
 Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
 Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse;
 So may some gentle muse⁶
 20 With lucky words favor my destined urn,
 And as he passes turn,
 And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
 For we were nursed upon the selfsame hill,
 Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill.
 25 Together both, ere the high lawns⁰ appeared *upland pastures*
 Under the opening eyelids of the morn,

1. A dirge sung by a single voice, though this one incorporates several other voices. Milton added this headnote in the edition of 1645; it identifies Milton as a prophet in the passage denouncing the clergy in this 1638 poem (lines 112–31) and invites the reader to remember Milton's 1641–42 polemics against the English bishops and church government (now dismantled).

2. "Laurels," associated with Apollo and poetry; "myrtle," associated with Venus and love; "ivy,"

associated with Bacchus and frenzy (also learning). All three are evergreens ("never sere") linked to poetic inspiration.

3. King was twenty-five.

4. King had written several poems of compliment in the patronage mode, chiefly on members of the royal family.

5. The nine (sister) Muses called (probably) from the fountain Aganippe, near Mount Helicon.

6. Here, some kindly poet.

We drove afield, and both together heard
 What time the grayfly winds her sultry horn,⁷
 Battening⁰ our flocks with the fresh dews of night, *feeding fat*
 30 Oft till the star that rose at evening bright⁸
 Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel.
 Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
 Tempered to th' oaten flute,⁹
 Rough satyrs danced, and fauns with cloven heel
 35 From the glad sound would not be absent long,
 And old Damoetas¹ loved to hear our song.
 But O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
 Now thou art gone, and never must return!
 Thee, shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
 40 With wild thyme and the gadding⁰ vine o'ergrown, *wandering*
 And all their echoes mourn.
 The willows and the hazel copses⁰ green *thickets of trees*
 Shall now no more be seen,
 Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
 45 As killing as the canker" to the rose, *cankerworm*
 Or taint-worm² to the weanling herds that graze,
 Or frost to flowers that their gay wardrobe wear
 When first the white-thorn blows;³
 Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.
 50 Where were ye, nymphs,⁴ when the remorseless deep
 Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?
 For neither were ye playing on the steep
 Where your old bards, the famous Druids,⁵ lie,
 Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
 55 Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:⁶
 Ay me! I fondly dream—
 Had ye been there—for what could that have done?
 What could the Muse⁷ herself that Orpheus bore,
 The Muse herself, for her enchanting⁸ son
 60 Whom universal Nature did lament,
 When by the rout that made the hideous roar
 His gory visage down the stream was sent,
 Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?⁹
 Alas! What boots⁰ it with incessant care *profits*
 65 To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,
 And strictly meditate the thankless muse?¹

7. I.e., heard the grayfly when she buzzes.

8. Hesperus, the evening star.

9. Panpipes, played traditionally by shepherds in pastoral.

1. A type name from pastoral poetry, possibly referring to some particular tutor at Cambridge. "Satyrs": goat-legged woodland creatures, Pan's boisterous attendants.

2. Internal parasite fatal to newly weaned lambs.

3. Hawthorn blooms.

4. Nature deities.

5. Priestly poet-kings of Celtic Britain, who worshipped the forces of nature. They are buried on the mountain ("steep") Kerig-y-Druidion in Wales.

6. Mona is the island of Anglesey. Deva, the river Dee in Cheshire, was magic ("wizard") because its

shifting stream foretold prosperity or dearth for the land. All these places are in the West Country, near where King drowned.

7. Calliope, Muse of epic poetry, was the mother of Orpheus.

8. Implies both song and magic; the root word survives in "incantation."

9. Orpheus's song was drowned out by the screams of a mob ("rout") of Thracian women, the Bacchantes, who then were able to tear him to pieces and throw his gory head into the river Hebrus, which carried it—still singing—to the island of Lesbos, bringing that island the gift of poetry.

1. I.e., study to write poetry (a Virgilian phrase).

Were it not better done as others use,
 To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
 Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair?²
 Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
 (That last infirmity of noble mind)
 To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
 But the fair guerdon⁰ when we hope to find,
 And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
 Comes the blind Fury³ with th' abhorred shears,
 And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"
 Phoebus replied, and touched my trembling ears;⁴
 "Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
 Nor in the glistening foil⁵
 Set off to th' world, nor in broad rumor lies,
 But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
 And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
 As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
 Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."⁰

*reivard**reward*

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honored flood,
 Smooth-sliding Mincius, crowned with vocal reeds,
 That strain I heard was of a higher mood.⁶
 But now my oat^c proceeds,
 And listens to the herald of the sea⁷
 That came in Neptune's plea.
 He asked the waves, and asked the felon⁰ winds,
 "What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?"
 And questioned every gust of rugged⁰ wings
 That blows from off each beaked promontory;
 They knew not of his story,
 And sage Hippotades⁸ their answer brings,
 That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed;
 The air was calm, and on the level brine,
 Sleek Panope⁹ with all her sisters played.
 It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
 Built in th' eclipse,¹ and rigged with curses dark,
 That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

*pastoral flute**savage**shepherd**stormy*

Next Camus,² reverend sire, went footing slow,
 His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,⁰
 Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
 Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.³
 "Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"

formed of reeds

2. "Amaryllis" and "Neaera" (*Nee-eye-ra*), conventional names for pretty shepherdesses wooed in song by pastoral shepherds.

3. Atropos, one of the three Fates, whose scissors cuts the thread of human life after her sisters spin and measure it. Milton makes her a savage, and blind, Fury.

4. Phoebus Apollo, god of poetic inspiration. In *Eclogue* 6.3—4 he plucked Virgil's ears, warning him against impatient ambition.

5. Flashy, glittering metal foil, set under a gem to enhance its brilliance.

6. Arethusa was a fountain in Sicily associated with Greek pastoral poetry (Theocritus), Mincius

a river in Lombardy associated with Latin pastoral (Virgil); Milton invokes them as a return to the pastoral after the "higher mood" of Apollo's speech.

7. Triton, who comes gathering evidence about the accident for Neptune's court.

8. Aeolus, god of winds.

9. The chief Nereid, or sea nymph.

1. Eclipses were taken as evil omens.

2. God of the river Cam, representing Cambridge University.

3. Like the *AI AI* cry of grief supposedly found on the hyacinth, a "sanguine flower" sprung from the blood of the youth Hyacinthus, beloved of Apollo and accidentally killed by him.

Last came and last did go
 The pilot of the Galilean lake;⁴
 110 Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
 (The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).⁰ *forever*
 He shook his mitered locks, and stern bespake:
 "How well could I have spared for^o thee, young swain, *in place of*
 Enow^o of such as for their bellies' sake *enough (plural)*
 ii5 Creep and intrude and climb into the fold!⁵
 Of other care they little reckoning make,
 Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,⁶
 And shove away the worthy bidden guest.
 Blind mouths!⁷ that scarce themselves know how to hold
 120 A sheep-hook, or have learned aught else the least
 That to the faithful herdsman's art belongs!
 What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;⁸
 And when they list,⁰ their lean⁰ and flashy songs *choose / meager*
 Grate on their scrannel⁰ pipes of wretched straw. *harsh, thin*
 125 The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
 But swol'n with wind, and the rank mist they draw,⁰ *inhale*
 Rot inwardly,⁹ and foul contagion spread,
 Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw¹
 Daily devours apace, and nothing said.
 130 But that two-handed engine at the door²
 Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."
 Return, Alpheus,³ the dread voice is past,
 That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian muse,
 And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
 135 Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.⁴
 Ye valleys low where the mild whispers use,⁰ *frequent*
 Of shades and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
 On whose fresh lap the swart star⁵ sparely looks,
 Throw hither all your quaint enameled eyes,⁶
 HO That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers,
 And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.

4. St. Peter, originally a fisherman on the sea of Galilee, was Christ's chief apostle; his keys open and shut the gates of heaven. He wears a bishop's miter (line 112): Milton in his "antiprelatical tracts" allows for a special role for apostles but denies any distinction in office between bishops and ministers in the later church.

5. Cf. John 10.1: "He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

6. Festive suppers for the sheepshearers (hence, the material rewards of their ministry). "Worthy bidden guest" (next line): cf. Matthew 22.8, the parable of the marriage feast, "they which were bidden were not worthy."

7. Collapsing blindness with greed, this audacious metaphor accuses churchmen of shirking oversight (*episcopus*, bishop, means "supervision") and of glutting themselves, although pastors ought to feed their flocks. "Sheep-hook" (next line): the bishop's staff is in the form of a shepherd's crook.

8. Provided for. "What recks it them?": what do they care?

9. Sheep rot is used as an allegory of church cor-

ruption by both Petrarch and Dante.

1. I.e., Roman Catholicism, whose agents operated in secret ("privy"). Conversions in the court of the Roman Catholic queen Henrietta Maria were notorious.

2. A celebrated crux, variously explained as the two houses of Parliament, St. Peter's keys, the two-edged sword of the Book of Revelation, a sword wielded by two hands, and by other guesses; what is clear is the denunciation of impending, apocalyptic vengeance. In Matthew 24.33 the Last Judgment is said to be "even at the doors."

3. A river in Arcadia, fabled to pass unmixed through the sea before mixing its waters with the "fountain Arethuse" in Sicily, again reviving the pastoral mode after the fierce denunciation of Peter (see lines 85-87).

4. A catalogue of flowers was a common pastoral topic. "Bells": bell-shaped flowers.

5. The Dog Star, Sirius, associated with the heats of late summer.

6. Flowers curiously patterned and adorned with many colors.

Bring the rathe⁰ primrose that forsaken dies, *early*
 The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,⁷
 The white pink, and the pansy freaked⁰ with jet, *flecked*.
 The glowing violet,
 The musk rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
 With cowslips wan^o that hang the pensive head, *pale*
 And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
 Bid amaranthus⁸ all his beauty shed,
 And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
 To strew the laureate hearse⁰ where Lycid lies. *laurel-decked bier*
 For so to interpose a little ease,
 Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.⁹
 Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
 Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled,
 Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,¹
 Where thou perhaps under the whelming⁰ tide *roaring, overwhelming*
 Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
 Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
 Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,²
 Where the great vision of the guarded mount
 Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold;³
 Look homeward angel now, and melt with ruth:^o *pity*
 And, O ye dolphins,⁴ waft the hapless youth.
 Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
 For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
 Sunk though he be beneath the wat'ry floor;
 So sinks the daystar⁰ in the ocean bed, *the sun*
 And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
 And tricks⁰ his beams, and with new-spangled ore *adorns, trims*
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
 Through the dear might of him that walked the waves,⁵
 Where, other groves and other streams along,⁶
 With nectar pure his oozy^o locks he laves, *moist*
 And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,⁷
 In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
 There entertain him all the saints above,
 In solemn troops and sweet societies
 That sing, and singing in their glory move,

7. White jasmine. "Tufted crow-toe": hyacinth or buttercup, growing in clusters. "Woodbine" (line 146): honeysuckle.

8. In Greek, "unfading," a legendary flower of immortality, one that never fades.

9. False, because Lycidas's body is not here to receive floral and poetic tributes.

1. Islands off the coast of Scotland, the northern terminus of the Irish Sea.

2. A fabulous giant invented by Milton as the origin of the Latin name for Land's End in Cornwall, *Bellerium*. "Monstrous world" (line 158): filled with monsters, also, immense.

3. "The guarded mount" is St. Michael's Mount in Cornwall, where the archangel was said to have appeared to fishermen in 495, and from which he

is envisioned as looking over the Atlantic toward a region and fortress ("Bayona's hold") in northern Spain, thereby guarding Protestant England against the continuing Roman Catholic threat.

4. Dolphins brought the Greek poet Arion safely ashore, for love of his verse, and also performed other sea rescues.

5. Christ, who rescued Peter when he tried and failed to walk on the Sea of Galilee (Matthew 14.25-31).

6. See Revelation 22.1-2, on the "pure river of water of life," and the "tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits."

7. Inexpressible hymn of joy sung at "the marriage supper of the Lamb" (Revelation 19).

And wipe the tears forever from his eyes.
 Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
 Henceforth thou art the Genius⁸ of the shore,
 In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
 185 To all that wander in that perilous flood.
 Thus sang the uncouth swain⁹ to th' oaks and rills,
 While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
 He touched the tender stops of various quills,¹
 With eager thought warbling his Doric² lay:
 190 And now the sun had stretched out all the hills,
 And now was dropped into the western bay;
 At last he rose, and twitched his mantle blue:³
 Tomorrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

November 1637

1638

*From The Reason of Church Government Urged
 Against Prelaty¹*

[PLANS AND PROJECTS]

* * * Concerning therefore this wayward subject against prelaty,² the touching whereof is so distasteful and disquietous³ to a number of men, as by what hath been said I may deserve of charitable readers to be credited that neither envy nor gall hath entered me upon this controversy, but the enforcement of conscience only and a preventive fear lest the omitting of this duty should be against me when I would store up to myself the good provision of peaceful hours; so lest it should be still imputed to me, as I have found it hath been, that some self-pleasing humor of vainglory hath incited me to contest with men of high estimation, now while green years are upon my head;⁴ from this needless surmial I shall hope to dissuade the intelligent and equal auditor, if I can but say successfully that which in this exigent⁵ behooves me; although I would be heard only, if it might be, by the elegant and learned reader, to whom principally for a while I shall beg leave I may address myself. To him it will be no new thing though I tell him that if I hunted after praise by the ostentation of wit and learning, I should not write thus out of mine own season

8. Local guardian spirit.

9. Another voice now seems to take over from the previously heard voice of the "uncouth swain" (unknown, unskilled shepherd).

1. The oaten stalks of panpipes.

2. Rustic, the dialect of Theocritus and other famous Greek pastoral poets.

3. The color of hope. "Twitched": pulled up around his shoulders.

1. This was the fourth of five tracts Milton published attacking the bishops, liturgy, and church government of the Church of England, in support of Presbyterian reform, though these tracts also show signs of the more radical positions he will soon adopt. This 1642 treatise is the first one to carry his name, so the autobiographical passage is in part to introduce himself to the reader and explain why, though a layman and a young man,

he feels himself called, and well prepared, to write on theology and ecclesiastical order. Beyond that rhetorical purpose, this is also the fullest account Milton ever set forth of his poetics: his sense of the poet's calling, of the nature and multiple uses of poetry, and of the several genres he already has employed or hopes to attempt. It also registers his inner conflict between duty (to serve God and his church with his learning) and desire (to write poetry).

2. Government by prelates (bishops). "Wayward": untoward, unpromising.

3. Distressing.

4. Milton's opponents, Bishops Joseph Hall, James Ussher, and Lancelot Andrewes, were famous, and he was still almost unknown, at age thirty-four.

5. Urgent occasion. "Equal": impartial.

when I have neither yet completed to my mind the full circle of my private studies,⁶ although I complain not of any insufficiency to the matter in hand; or, were I ready to my wishes, it were a folly to commit anything elaborately composed to the careless and interrupted listening of these tumultuous times. Next, if I were wise only to mine own ends, I would certainly take such a subject as of itself might catch applause, whereas this hath all the disadvantages on the contrary, and such a subject as the publishing whereof might be delayed at pleasure, and time enough to pencil it over with all the curious touches of art, even to the perfection of a faultless picture; whenas in this argument the not deferring is of great moment to the good speeding,⁷ that if solidity have leisure to do her office, art cannot have much. Lastly, I should not choose this manner of writing, wherein knowing myself inferior to myself, led by the genial power of nature⁸ to another task, I have the use, as I may account it, but of my left hand. And though I shall be foolish in saying more to this purpose, yet, since it will be such a folly as wisest men going about to commit have only confessed and so committed, I may trust with more reason, because with more folly, to have courteous pardon. For although a poet, soaring in the high region of his fancies with his garland and singing robes about him, might without apology speak more of himself than I mean to do, yet for me sitting here below in the cool element of prose, a mortal thing among many readers of no empyreal conceit,⁹ to venture and divulge unusual things of myself, I shall petition to the gentler sort, it may not be envy¹ to me.

I must say, therefore, that after I had from my first years by the ceaseless diligence and care of my father (whom God recompense) been exercised to the tongues and some sciences, as my age would suffer,² by sundry masters and teachers both at home and at the schools, it was found that whether aught was imposed me by them that had the overlooking, or betaken to of mine own choice in English or other tongue, prosing or versing (but chiefly this latter), the style, by certain vital signs it had, was likely to live. But much latelier in the private academies of Italy,³ whither I was favored to resort—perceiving that some trifles which I had in memory, composed at under twenty or thereabout (for the manner is that everyone must give some proof of his wit⁴ and reading there) met with acceptance above what was looked for, and other things which I had shifted in scarcity of books and conveniences to patch up amongst them, were received with written encomiums,⁵ which the Italian is not forward to bestow on men of this side the Alps—I began thus far to assent both to them and divers of my friends here at home, and not less to an inward prompting which now grew daily upon me, that by labor and intent study (which I take to be my portion in this life) joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something so written to aftertimes, as they should not willingly let it die. These thoughts at once possessed me, and these

6. After taking his B.A. and M.A. degrees from Cambridge, Milton spent nearly six more years in private study at home; he was still continuing that program of reading.

7. Prompt publication is essential in polemic, so substance rather than art must be the priority. "Office": duty.

8. Intellectual gifts or natural disposition.

9. Without sublime and elevated conceits.

1. Cause for odium or disrespect.

2. Admit. "Tongues": foreign languages. In *Ad*

Patrem Milton says that as a boy he learned Latin, Greek, French, Italian, and Hebrew.

3. When on the grand tour of the Continent (1638–39) Milton enjoyed attending academies in Rome and especially Florence, which were centers for literary, scientific, and social exchange.

4. Ingenuity, creative powers; Milton read some of his Latin poems to the academies.

5. Praises. Milton published five of these encomiums, four in Latin, one in Italian, as prefatory material to the Latin part of his 1645 *Poenis*.

other: that if I were certain to write as men buy leases, for three lives and downward,⁶ there ought no regard be sooner had than to God's glory by the honor and instruction of my country. For which cause, and not only for that I knew it would be hard to arrive at the second rank among the Latins, I applied myself to that resolution which Ariosto followed against the persuasions of Bembo,⁷ to fix all the industry and art I could unite to the adorning of my native tongue; not to make verbal curiosities the end—that were a toilsome vanity—but to be an interpreter and relater of the best and sagest things among mine own citizens throughout this island in the mother dialect. That what the greatest and choicest wits of Athens, Rome, or modern Italy, and those Hebrews of old did for their country, I, in my proportion, with this over and above of being a Christian,⁸ might do for mine; not caring to be once named abroad, though perhaps I could attain to that, but content with these British islands as my world; whose fortune hath hitherto been that if the Athenians, as some say, made their small deeds great and renowned by their eloquent writers, England hath had her noble achievements made small by the unskillful handling of monks and mechanics.

Time serves not now, and perhaps I might seem too profuse to give any certain account of what the mind at home in the spacious circuits of her musing hath liberty to propose to herself, though of highest hope and hardest attempting: whether that epic form whereof the two poems of Homer and those other two of Virgil and Tasso are a diffuse, and the book of Job a brief, model;⁹ or whether the rules of Aristotle herein are strictly to be kept, or nature to be followed,¹ which in them that know art and use judgment is no transgression but an enriching of art; and lastly, what king or knight before the conquest² might be chosen in whom to lay the pattern of a Christian hero. And as Tasso gave to a prince of Italy his choice whether he would command him to write of Godfrey's expedition against the infidels, or Belisarius against the Goths, or Charlemagne against the Lombards;³ if to the instinct of nature and the emboldening of art aught may be trusted, and that there be nothing adverse in our climate⁴ or the fate of this age, it haply would be no rashness from an equal diligence and inclination to present the like offer in our own ancient stories; or whether those dramatic constitutions⁵ wherein Sophocles and Euripides reign shall be found more doctrinal and exemplary to a nation. The Scripture also affords us a divine pastoral drama in the Song of Solomon, consisting of two persons and a double chorus, as Origen rightly judges. And the Apocalypse of St. John is the majestic image of a high and stately tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn scenes and acts with a sevenfold

6. Leases were often drawn for a tenancy to run through the longest-lived of three named persons.

7. Rejecting Cardinal Bembo's advice, Ariosto said he would rather be first among the Italian poets than second among those ^Writing Latin.

8. The advantage would be in having "true" subjects to write about.

9. The great models for the "diffuse" or long, epic were Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Virgil's *Aeneid*, and Torquato Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*; there was also a long tradition of reading the Book of Job as a "brief" epic, a moral conflict between Job and Satan. Milton's brief epic, *Paradise Regained* (1671), makes some use of that model. For all the genres he discusses, Milton cites both classical and biblical models.

1. One contemporary debate concerned whether the Aristotelian rule of beginning in *medias res* was to be followed, or Ariosto's "natural" method of beginning at the beginning of the story.

2. At first Milton considered as potential epic subjects King Arthur, who fought against invading Saxons, and King Alfred, who warred with invading Danes; he excluded those after the Norman Conquest.

3. Tasso offered this choice to his patron, Alfonso II d'Este, Duke of Ferrara.

4. Milton often speculated that the cold climate of England might not be conducive to poetry, as the warmer climate of Italy and Greece had been.

5. Plays.

chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies; and this my opinion the grave authority of Paraeus, commenting that book, is sufficient to confirm.⁶ Or if occasion shall lead to imitate those magnificent odes and hymns wherein Pindarus and Callimachus⁷ are in most things worthy, some others in their frame judicious, in their matter most an end⁸ faulty. But those frequent songs throughout the law and prophets beyond all these, not in their divine argument alone, but in the very critical art of composition, may be easily made appear over all the kinds of lyric poesy to be incomparable.⁹ These abilities, wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God rarely bestowed, but yet to some (though most abuse) in every nation; and are of power beside the office of a pulpit to inbreed and cherish in a great people the seeds of virtue and public civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind and set the affections in right tune, to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what he works and what he suffers to be wrought with high providence in his church, to sing the victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ, to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship. Lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in virtue amiable or grave, whatsoever hath passion or admiration in all the changes of that which is called fortune from without or the wily subtleties and refluxes of man's thoughts from within, all these things with a solid and treatable smoothness to paint out and describe.¹ Teaching over the whole book of sanctity and virtue through all the instances of example, with such delight to those especially of soft and delicious temper,² who will not so much as look upon truth herself unless they see her elegantly dressed, that whereas the paths of honesty and good life appear now rugged and difficult, though they be indeed easy and pleasant, they would then appear to all men both easy and pleasant, though they were rugged and difficult indeed. And what a benefit this would be to our youth and gentry may be soon guessed by what we know of the corruption and bane which they suck in daily from the writings and interludes of libidinous and ignorant poetasters,³ who, having scarce ever heard of that which is the main consistence of a true poem, the choice of such persons as they ought to introduce, and what is moral and decent to each one, do for the most part lap up⁴ vicious principles in sweet pills to be swallowed down, and make the taste of virtuous documents harsh and sour.

But because the spirit of man cannot demean⁵ itself lively in this body without some recreating intermission of labor and serious things, it were happy for the commonwealth if our magistrates, as in those famous governments of old, would take into their care, not only the deciding of our contentious law cases and brawls, but the managing of our public sports and festival pastimes, that

6. Sophocles and Euripides are supreme examples of Greek tragedy; the Scripture models for drama are the Song of Solomon as a "divine pastoral drama" (Milton cites Origen, an Alexandrine Father of the 3rd century), and the Book of Revelation as a "high and stately tragedy" (he cites David Paraeus, a German theologian of the 16th and 17th centuries).

7. Pindar, a 5th century B.C.E. Greek poet, wrote numerous odes especially on winners of the Olympic games; Callimachus, a 3rd century B.C.E. Alexandrine Greek, wrote elegant elegiac verse on the origin of various myths and rituals.

8. Almost entirely.

9. He thinks especially of the Psalms, often compared to classical lyric.

1. See the wide range of kinds and subjects and functions suggested for the serious national poet.

2. Temperament. Milton here paraphrases Horace's formula echoed by Sidney and Jonson, that poetry both teaches and delights, and that it encourages virtuous endeavor.

3. Some of the pseudo-poets of the Cavalier court who wrote on lascivious topics.

4. Roll up.

5. Comport.

they might be, not such as were authorized a while since,⁶ the provocations of drunkenness and lust, but such as may inure and harden our bodies by martial exercises to all warlike skill and performance, and may civilize, adorn, and make discreet our minds by the learned and affable meeting of frequent academies, and the procurement of wise and artful recitations sweetened with eloquent and graceful enticements to the love and practice of justice, temperance, and fortitude, instructing and bettering the nation at all opportunities, that the call of wisdom and virtue may be heard everywhere, as Solomon saith: "She crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets, in the top of high places, in the chief concourse, and in the openings of the gates."⁷ Whether this may not be, not only in pulpits, but after another persuasive method,⁸ at set and solemn panegyries, in theaters, porches,⁹ or what other place or way may win most upon the people to receive at once both recreation and instruction, let them in authority consult.

The thing which I had to say, and those intentions which have lived within me ever since I could conceive myself anything worth to my country, I return to crave excuse that urgent reason hath plucked from me by an abortive and foredated discovery.¹ And the accomplishment of them lies not but in a power above man's to promise; but that none hath by more studious ways endeavored, and with more unwearied spirit that none shall, that I dare almost aver of myself as far as life and free leisure will extend; and that the land had once enfranchised herself from this impertinent² yoke of prelaty, under whose inquisitorious and tyrannical duncery no free and splendid wit can flourish. Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader that for some few years yet I may go on trust with him toward the payment of what I am now indebted, as being a work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapors of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amonist or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite, nor to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her siren daughters,³ but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases.⁴ To this must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs; till which in some measure be compassed, at mine own peril and cost I refuse not to sustain this expectation.* * * But were it the meanest under-service, if God by his secretary conscience enjoin it, it were sad for me if I should draw back; for me especially, now when all men offer their aid to help ease and lighten the difficult labors of the church, to whose service by the intentions of my parents and friends I was destined of a child, and in mine own resolutions: till coming to some maturity of years and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the church, that he who would take orders must subscribe

6. Charles I's republication (1633) of James I's *Booth of Sports*, encouraging sports, dancing, and rural festivals on Sundays—anathema to Puritans.

7. The phrases are from Proverbs 1.20—21 and 8.2—3. Milton would not ban recreation or festival pastimes but reform them: his models are the lofty encomiastic poems and recitations Plato would admit into his *Republic*, the literary and social exchanges of the Italian academies, and martial exercises (to prepare the citizenry for war, now imminent).

8. I.e., poetry.

9. Porticos. "Panegyries": solemn public meetings.

1. I.e., I have been forced to write for my country's sake and to reveal my poetic plans before I was ready to do either.

2. Unsuitable, absurd.

3. True poetry comes, not from youth, wine, a full plate, or even Memory (and her daughters the Muses): tradition alone does not make a poet.

4. The coal from the altar that purifies the prophet's Hps (Isaiah 6.6-7): the passage makes poetry first and foremost the product of inspiration, but Milton also insists on his need to attain well-nigh universal knowledge and experience.

slave and take an oath withal,⁵ which, unless he took with a conscience that would retch, he must either straight perjure or split his faith; I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing. Howsoever, thus church-outed by the prelates, hence may appear the right I have to meddle in these matters, as before the necessity and constraint appeared.

1642

Areopagitica This passionate, trenchant defense of intellectual liberty has had a powerful influence on the evolving liberal conception of freedom of speech, press, and thought. Milton's specific target is the Press Ordinance of June 14, 1643, Parliament's attempt to crack down on the flood of pamphlets (including Milton's own controversial treatises on divorce) that poured forth both from legal and from underground presses as the Civil War raged. Like Tudor and Stuart censorship laws, Parliament's ordinance demanded that works be registered with the stationers and licensed by the censors before publication, and that both author and publisher be identified, on pain of fines and imprisonment for both. Milton vigorously protests the prepublication licensing of books, arguing that such measures have only been used by, and are only fit for, degenerate cultures. In the regenerate English nation, now "rousing herself like a strong man after sleep," men and women must be allowed to develop in virtue by participating in the clash and conflict of ideas. Truth will always overcome falsehood in reasoned debate. Thus, in opposition to the Presbyterians then in power, Milton defends widespread religious toleration, though with restrictions on Roman Catholicism, which, like most of his Protestant contemporaries, he viewed as a political threat and a tyranny binding individual conscience to the pope.

The title associates the tract with the speech of the Greek orator Isocrates to the Areopagus, the Council of the Wise in Athens. Learned readers would have recognized the irony of this. While Isocrates instructed the council to reform Athens by careful supervision of the private lives of citizens, Milton argues that only liberty and removal of censorship can advance reformation. This association explains the oratorical tone of the tract, which was, in fact, subtitled "A Speech." In this most literary of his tracts, Milton's style is elevated, eloquent, dense with poetic figures, and ranges in tone from satire and ridicule to urgent pleading and florid praise. His arguments and principles are often couched in striking images and phrases. One example is his passionate testimony to the potency and inestimable value of books: "As good almost kill a man as kill a good book . . ." Most memorable is his ringing credo that echoes down the centuries to protest every new tyranny: "Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties."

Frovt Areopagitica

I deny not, but that it is of greatest concernment in the church and commonwealth, to have a vigilant eye how books demean¹ themselves as well as men; and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors:² For books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a

5. Milton was not willing to subscribe the oath affirming that the Book of Common Prayer and the present government of the church by bishops were according to the word of God; still less was he willing to subscribe the notorious "etcetera" oath required in 1640, that the minister would never seek to alter the government of the church "by

archbishops, bishops, deacons, and archdeacons, etc."

1. Behave.

2. Milton allows that books may be called to account after publication, if they are proved to contain libels or other manifest crimes (he leaves this quite vague).

potency of life in them to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively, and as vigorously productive, as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men.³ And yet on the other hand unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book; who kills a man kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book, kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious lifeblood of a master spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life. 'Tis true, no age can restore a life, whereof perhaps there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse. We should be wary therefore what persecution we raise against the living labors of public men, how we spill that seasoned life of man preserved and stored up in books; since we see a kind of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elemental life, but strikes at that ethereal and fifth essence,⁴ the breath of reason itself, slays an immortality rather than a life. But lest I should be condemned of introducing licence, while I oppose licensing, I refuse not the pains to be so much historical, as will serve to show what hath been done by ancient and famous commonwealths, against this disorder, till the very time that this project of licensing crept out of the Inquisition,⁵ was caught up by our prelates, and hath caught some of our presbyters.⁶ * * *

* * * Good and evil we know in the field of this world grow up together almost inseparably; and the knowledge of good is so involved and interwoven with the knowledge of evil, and in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discerned, that those confused seeds which were imposed on Psyche as an incessant labor to cull out and sort asunder were not more intermixed.⁷ It was from out the rind of one apple tasted, that the knowledge of good and evil, as two twins cleaving together, leaped forth into the world. And perhaps this is that doom which Adam fell into of knowing good and evil, that is to say of knowing good by evil.

As therefore the state of man now is, what wisdom can there be to choose, what continence to forbear, without the knowledge of evil? He that can apprehend and consider vice with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true wayfaring⁸ Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed,⁹ that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into the world, we bring

3. After Cadmus killed a dragon on his way to founding Thebes, on a god's advice he sowed the dragon's teeth, which sprang up as an army, the belligerent forefathers of Sparta.

4. Quintessence, a pure, mystical substance above the four elements (fire, air, water, earth).

5. The Roman Catholic institution for suppressing heresy, especially strong in Spain.

6. The Presbyterians, powerful in the Parliament, were striving to establish theirs as the national church and suppress others. Milton, who began by supporting them in *The Reason of Church Government* and his other antiprelatical tracts (1641—42), now rejects them, in large part because they seek to supplant one repressive church with another.

7. Angry at her son Cupid's love for Psyche, Venus set the girl many trials, among them to sort out a vast mound of mixed seeds, but the ants took pity on her and did the work.

8. The printed text reads "wayfaring," calling up the image of the Christian pilgrim; several presentation copies correct it (by hand) to "warfaring," calling up the image of the Christian warrior. Both suit the passage.

9. Not forced by exertion to breathe hard. "Immortal garland" (next line): the prize for the winner of a race, as figure for the "crown of life" promised to those who endure temptation (James 1.12).

impurity much rather; that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary. That virtue therefore which is but a youngling in the contemplation of evil, and knows not the utmost that vice promises to her followers, and rejects it, is but a blank virtue, not a pure; her whiteness is but an excremental¹ whiteness; which was the reason why our sage and serious poet Spenser (whom I dare be known to think a better teacher than Scotus or Aquinas), describing true temperance under the person of Guyon, brings him in with his Palmer through the Cave of Mammon and the Bower of Earthly Bliss,² that he might see and know, and yet abstain.

Since therefore the knowledge and survey of vice is in this world so necessary to the constituting of human virtue, and the scanning of error to the confirmation of truth, how can we more safely, and with less danger, scout into the regions of sin and falsity than by reading all manner of tractates and hearing all manner of reason:¹ And this is the benefit which may be had of books promiscuously read.

But of the harm that may result hence, three kinds are usually reckoned. First is feared the infection that may spread; but then all human learning and controversy in religious points must remove out of the world, yea, the Bible itself; for that oftentimes relates blasphemy not nicely,³ it describes the carnal sense of wicked men not unelegantly, it brings in holiest men passionately murmuring against providence through all the arguments of Epicurus;⁴ in other great disputes it answers dubiously and darkly to the common reader.⁵

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To sequester out of the world into Atlantic and Utopian politics,⁶ which never can be drawn into use, will not mend our condition, but to ordain wisely as in this world of evil, in the midst whereof God hath placed us unavoidably. . . . Impunity and remissness, for certain, are the bane of a commonwealth; but here the great art lies, to discern in what the law is to bid restraint and punishment, and in what things persuasion only is to work. If every action which is good or evil in man at ripe years were to be under pittance⁷ and prescription and compulsion, what were virtue but a name, what praise could be then due to well-doing, what gramercy⁸ to be sober, just, or continent?

Many there be that complain of divine providence for suffering Adam to transgress; foolish tongues! When God gave him reason, he gave him freedom to choose, for reason is but choosing; he had been else a mere artificial Adam, such an Adam as he is in the motions.⁹ We ourselves esteem not of that obedience, or love, or gift, which is of force: God therefore left him free, set before him a provoking object, ever almost in his eyes; herein consisted his merit, herein the right of his reward, the praise of his abstinence.¹ Wherefore did he create passions within us, pleasures round about us, but that these rightly

1. Exterior only.

2. John Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas, major Scholastic theologians. Guyon (following), the hero of Book 2 of the *Faerie Queene*, passes through the Cave of Mammon (symbolic of all worldly goods and honors) without his Palmer-guide, but that figure does accompany him through the Bower of Bliss.

3. Daintily.

4. Greek philosopher (342-270 B.C.E.) who taught that happiness is the greatest good, and that virtue should be practiced because it brings happiness; some of his followers equated happiness with sensual enjoyment. Milton may be thinking

of the biblical book of Ecclesiastes.

5. Milton goes on to argue that a fool can find material for folly in the best books, and a wise person material for wisdom in the worst. Also, one cannot remove evil by censoring books without also censoring ballads, fiddlers, clothing, conversation, and all social life.

6. Milton alludes to Mores *Utopia* and Bacon's *Neil' Atlantis*.

7. Rationing.

8. Reward, thanks.

9. Puppet shows.

I. Compare Milton's representation of Adam and Eve in Eden in *Paradise Lost*.

tempered are the very ingredients of virtue? They are not skillful considerers of human things, who imagine to remove sin by removing the matter of sin; for, besides that it is a huge heap increasing under the very act of diminishing, though some part of it may for a time be withdrawn from some persons, it cannot from all, in such a universal thing as books are; and when this is done, yet the sin remains entire. Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure, he has yet one jewel left: ye cannot bereave him of his covetousness. Banish all objects of lust, shut up all youth into the severest discipline that can be exercised in any hermitage, ye cannot make them chaste that came not thither so; such great care and wisdom is required to the right managing of this point.

Suppose we could expel sin by this means; look how much we thus expel of sin, so much we expel of virtue: for the matter of them both is the same; remove that, and ye remove them both alike. This justifies the high providence of God, who, though he commands us temperance, justice, continence, yet pours out before us, even to a profuseness, all desirable things, and gives us minds that can wander beyond all limit and satiety. Why should we then affect a rigor contrary to the manner of God and of nature, by abridging or scanting those means, which books freely permitted are, both to the trial of virtue and the exercise of truth? It would be better done to learn that the law must needs be frivolous which goes to restrain things uncertainly and yet equally working to good and to evil. And were I the chooser, a dram of well-doing should be preferred before many times as much the forcible hindrance of evil-doing. For God sure esteems the growth and completing of one virtuous person more than the restraint of ten vicious.

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What advantage is it to be a man over it is to be a boy at school, if we have only scaped the ferula to come under the fescue of an *imprimatur*;² if serious and elaborate writings, as if they were no more than the theme of a grammar-lad under his pedagogue, must not be uttered without the cursory eyes of a temporizing and extemporizing licenser?¹ He who is not trusted with his own actions, his drift not being known to be evil, and standing to the hazard of law and penalty, has no great argument to think himself reputed, in the commonwealth wherein he was born, for other than a fool or a foreigner.

When a man writes to the world, he summons up all his reason and deliberation to assist him; he searches, meditates, is industrious, and likely consults and confers with his judicious friends, after all which done he takes himself to be informed in what he writes, as well as any that writ before him. If in this the most consummate act of his fidelity and ripeness, no years, no industry, no former proof of his abilities can bring him to that state of maturity as not to be still mistrusted and suspected (unless he carry all his considerate diligence, all his midnight watchings, and expense of Palladian⁴ oil, to the hasty view of an unleisured licenser, perhaps much his younger, perhaps far his inferior in judgment, perhaps one who never knew the labor of book-writing), and if he be not repulsed, or slighted, must appear in print like a puny⁵ with his guardian, and his censor's hand on the back of his title to be his bail and

2. "Ferula": a schoolmaster's rod: "fescue": a pointer, "imprimatur": "it may be printed" (Latin), appears on the title page of books approved by the Roman Catholic censors. Milton's keen sense of the affront to scholars and scholarship, and to himself, is evident in this passage.

3. He temporizes in following the times, and acts by whim (extemporizes).

4. Pertaining to Pallas Athena, goddess of wisdom.

5. A minor, hence, young, unseasoned.

surety that he is no idiot, or seducer; it cannot be but a dishonor and derogation to the author, to the book, to the privilege and dignity of learning. * * *

And how can a man teach with authority, which is the life of teaching, how can he be a doctor⁶ in his book as he ought to be, or else had better be silent, whenas all he teaches, all he delivers, is but under the tuition, under the correction of his patriarchal⁷ licenser to blot or alter what precisely accords not with the hide-bound humor which he calls his judgment? When every acute reader upon the first sight of a pedantic license, will be ready with these like words to ding the book a quoit's⁸ distance from him: "I hate a pupil teacher, I endure not an instructor that comes to me under the wardship of an overseeing fist. I know nothing of the licenser, but that I have his own hand here for his arrogance; who shall warrant me his judgment?"

"The state, sir," replies the stationer,⁹ but has a quick return: "The state shall be my governors, but not my critics; they may be mistaken in the choice of a licenser, as easily as this licenser may be mistaken in an author."

~ * ~

Well knows he who uses to consider, that our faith and knowledge thrives by exercise, as well as our limbs and complexion.¹ Truth is compared in Scripture to a streaming fountain;² if her waters flow not in a perpetual progression, they sicken into a muddy pool of conformity and tradition. A man may be a heretic in the truth; and if he believe things only because his pastor says so, or the Assembly³ so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy.

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Truth indeed came once into the world with her Divine Master, and was a perfect shape most glorious to look on: but when he ascended, and his apostles after him were laid asleep, then straight arose a wicked race of deceivers, who, as that story goes of the Egyptian Typhon with his conspirators, how they dealt with the good Osiris,⁴ took the virgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds. From that time ever since, the sad friends of Truth, such as durst appear, imitating the careful search that Isis made for the mangled body of Osiris, went up and down gathering up limb by limb, still as they could find them. We have not yet found them all, Lords and Commons, nor ever shall do, till her Master's second coming; he shall bring together every joint and member, and shall mold them into an immortal feature of loveliness and perfection. Suffer not these licensing prohibitions to stand at every place of opportunity, forbidding and disturbing them that continue seeking, that continue to do our obsequies' to the torn body of our martyred saint.

We boast our light; but if we look not wisely on the sun itself, it smites us into darkness. Who can discern those planets that are oft combust,⁵ and those stars of brightest magnitude that rise and set with the sun, until the opposite

6. Teacher.

7. Taking on the role of a father; also, standing in for ecclesiastical patriarchs or prelates (like Archbishop Laud).

8. A flat disc of stone or metal, thrown as an exercise of strength or skill.

9. Printer, who was responsible for submitting books before publication to the "licenser" (censor).

1. Constitution, the proper mingling of qualities in the body.

2. In Psalm 85.11.

3. The Westminster Assembly, convened by Parliament in 1643 to reorganize the English church along Presbyterian lines.

4. Plutarch tells, in "Isis and Osiris," of Typhon's scattering the fragments of his brother Osiris and of Isis's efforts to recover them.

5. Funeral or commemorative rites.

6. Burned up; in astrology, so close to the sun as not to be visible.

motion of their orbs bring them to such a place in the firmament where they may be seen evening or morning? The light which we have gained was given us, not to be ever staring on, but by it to discover onward things more remote from our knowledge. It is not the unfrocking of a priest, the unmitering of a bishop, and the removing him from off the Presbyterian shoulders, that will make us a happy nation. No, if other things as great in the church, and in the rule of life both economical and political, be not looked into and reformed, we have looked so long upon the blaze that Zwinglius and Calvin⁷ hath beacons up to us, that we are stark blind.

There be who perpetually complain of schisms and sects, and make it such a calamity that any man dissents from their maxims. 'Tis their own pride and ignorance which causes the disturbing, who neither will hear with meekness, nor can convince; yet all must be suppressed which is not found in their syntagma.⁸ They are the troublers, they are the dividers of unity, who neglect and permit not others to unite those dissevered pieces which are yet wanting to the body of Truth. To be still searching what we know not by what we know, still closing up truth to truth as we find it (for all her body is homogeneous and proportional), this is the golden rule in theology as well as in arithmetic, and makes up the best harmony in a church; not the forced and outward union of cold and neutral and inwardly divided minds.

Lords and Commons of England, consider what nation it is whereof ye are, and whereof ye are the governors: a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit, acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to. Therefore the studies of learning in her deepest sciences have been so ancient and so eminent among us, that writers of good antiquity and ablest judgment have been persuaded that even the school of Pythagoras and the Persian wisdom took beginning from the old philosophy of this island.⁹ And that wise and civil Roman, Julius Agricola,¹ who governed once here for Caesar, preferred the natural wits of Britain before the labored studies of the French. Nor is it for nothing that the grave and frugal Transylvanian sends out yearly from as far as the mountainous borders of Russia, and beyond the Hercynian wilderness, not their youth, but their staid men, to learn our language and our theologic arts.

Yet that which is above all this, the favor and the love of heaven we have great argument to think in a peculiar manner propitious and propending² towards us. Why else was this nation chosen before any other, that out of her, as out of Zion,³ should be proclaimed and sounded forth the first tidings and trumpet of Reformation to all Europe? And had it not been the obstinate perverseness of our prelates against the divine and admirable spirit of Wycliffe to suppress him as a schismatic and innovator, perhaps neither the Bohemian Huss and Jerome,⁴ no, nor the name of Luther or of Calvin, had been ever known: the glory of reforming all our neighbors had been completely

7. Zwingli and Calvin, famous Protestant reformers, were mainstays of the Presbyterian cause. "Economical": domestic.

8. Compilations of beliefs, creeds.

9. Some speculation existed as to whether the Pythagorean notion of the transmigration of souls might trace back to the Druids, but the notion was mostly denied.

1. The "civil" (cultured, civilized) Agricola's opinion of the British intellect is found in Tacitus's *Life of Agricola*. Transylvania (following; now Romania)

was an independent Protestant country whose citizens sometimes came to England to study. "Hercynian wilderness": Roman name for a forested and mountainous region of Germany.

2. Inclining, favorable. "Argument": reason.

3. Mount Zion, in Jerusalem, the site of the Temple.

4. John Wycliffe was a 14th-century English reformer and translator of the Bible, whose books were forbidden by Pope Alexander V in 1409. John Huss spread Wycliffe's doctrines on the Continent;

ours. But now, as our obdurate clergy have with violence demeaned the matter, we are become hitherto the latest and the backwardest scholars of whom' God offered to have made us the teachers.

Now once again by all concurrence of signs, and by the general instinct of holy and devout men, as they daily and solemnly express their thoughts, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in his church, even to the reforming of Reformation itself; what does he then but reveal himself to his servants, and as his manner is, first to his Englishmen? I say, as his manner is, first to us, though we mark not the method of his counsels, and are unworthy. Behold now this vast city: a city of refuge,⁶ the mansion house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his protection; the shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers waking, to fashion out the plates⁷ and instruments of armed justice in defense of beleaguered truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching Reformation: others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and conviction.

What could a man require more from a nation so pliant and so prone to seek after knowledge? What wants there to such a towardly and pregnant⁸ soil, but wise and faithful laborers, to make a knowing people, a nation of prophets,⁹ of sages, and of worthies? We reckon more than five months yet to harvest; there need not be five weeks; had we but eyes to lift up, the fields are white already.¹ Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions; for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making. Under these fantastic terrors of sect and schism we wrong the earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge and understanding which God hath stirred up in this city.

What some lament of, we rather should rejoice at, should rather praise this pious forwardness among men, to reassume the ill-deputed care of their religion into their own hands again. A little generous prudence, a little forbearance of one another, and some grain of charity might win all these diligences to join, and unite into one general and brotherly search after truth; could we but forgo this prelatical tradition of crowding free consciences and Christian liberties into canons and precepts of men. I doubt not, if some great and worthy stranger should come among us, wise to discern the mold and temper of a people, and how to govern it, observing the high hopes and aims, the diligent alacrity of our extended thoughts and reasonings in the pursuance of truth and freedom, but that he would cry out as Pyrrhus did, admiring the Roman docility and courage: "If such were my Epirots, I would not despair the greatest design that could be attempted, to make a church or kingdom happy."² Yet these are the men cried out against for schismatics and sectaries;³ as if, while the temple of the Lord was building, some cutting, some squaring

he was burned at the stake in 1415, as was (the next year) his follower Jerome of Prague.

5. Of those whom. "Demeaned": conducted, degraded.

6. Numbers 35 instructs the Jews to establish "cities of refuge" where those accused of crimes will be protected from "revengers of blood."

7. Plate mail, for armor.

8. Favorable and fertile.

9. In Numbers 11.29 Moses reproaches Joshua, who complained of the presence of other prophets:

"Enviest thou for my sake? Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets."

1. Milton is paraphrasing Christ's words to his disciples (John 4.35): "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields: for they are white already to harvest."

2. Though King Pyrrhus of Epirus beat the Roman armies at Heraclea in 280 B.C.E., he was much impressed by their discipline.

3. "Schismatics": those who cut up or divide the church; "sectaries": members of Protestant communions outside the national church.

the marble, others hewing the cedars, there should be a sort of irrational men, who could not consider there must be many schisms and many dissections⁴ made in the quarry and in the timber, ere the house of God can be built. And when every stone is laid artfully together, it cannot be united into a continuity, it can but be contiguous in this world; neither can every piece of the building be of one form; nay rather the perfection consists in this, that out of many moderate varieties and brotherly dissimilitudes that are not vastly disproportional, arises the goodly and the graceful symmetry that commends the whole pile and structure. Let us therefore be more considerate builders, more wise in spiritual architecture, when great reformation is expected. For now the time seems come, wherein Moses the great prophet may sit in heaven rejoicing to see that memorable and glorious wish of his fulfilled, when not only our seventy elders, but all the Lord's people, are become prophets.⁵

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks;⁶ methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam;⁷ purging and unsealing her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance; while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate⁸ a year of sects and schisms.

What should ye do then, should ye suppress all this flowery crop of knowledge and new light sprung up and yet springing daily in this city? Should ye set an oligarchy of twenty engrossers⁹ over it, to bring a famine upon our minds again, when we shall know nothing but what is measured to us by their bushel? Believe it, Lords and Commons, they who counsel ye to such a suppressing do as good as bid ye suppress yourselves; and I will soon show how.¹

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And now the time in special is by privilege to write and speak what may help to the further discussing of matters in agitation. The temple of Janus with his two controversial faces might now not insignificantly be set open.² And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously by licensing and prohibiting to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter? Her³ confuting is the best and surest suppressing. He who hears what praying there is for light and clearer knowledge to be sent down among us would think of other matters to be constituted beyond

4. Milton is playing on the literal meaning of "schism," cutting up or dividing.

5. Again alluding to Numbers 11.29, Milton equates the English assembly of clergy to set doctrine and church order (the Westminster Assembly) with the Jewish Sanhedrin of seventy elders.

6. The allusion is to Samson, whose uncut hair made him invincible, when he frustrated the first three attempts of Delilah and the Philistines to subdue him in sleep (Judges 16.6—14).

7. Eagles were thought to be able to look directly at the sun. "Mewing": molting, when the eagle sheds its feathers and thereby renews its coat.

8. Predict.

9. Engrossers, much hated in the English countryside, bought up great quantities of grain and held it for times of famine, selling it at high prices; Milton equates them with the twenty authorized printers, the stationers.

1. Milton goes on to argue that Parliament, by its own liberalizing reforms to date, has created the vigorous and inquiring minds it now seeks to suppress.

2. Janus, as god of beginnings and endings, had two faces looking in opposite directions; a door dedicated to him in Rome was kept open in time of war, closed in time of peace.

3. I.e., Falsehood's.

the discipline of Geneva framed and fabricated already to our hands.⁴

Yet when the new light which we beg for shines in upon us, there be who envy and oppose if it come not first in at their casements. What a collusion is this, whenas we are exhorted by the wise man to use diligence, to seek for wisdom as for hidden treasures early and late,⁵ that another order shall enjoin us to know nothing but by statute. When a man hath been laboring the hardest labor in the deep mines of knowledge, hath furnished out his findings in all their equipage, drawn forth his reasons as it were a battle⁶ ranged, scattered and defeated all objections in his way, calls out his adversary into the plain, offers him the advantage of wind and sun if he please, only that he may try the matter by dint of argument; for his opponents then to skulk, to lay ambushments, to keep a narrow bridge of licensing where the challenger should pass, though it be valor enough in soldiership, is but weakness and cowardice in the wars of Truth.

For who knows not that Truth is strong, next to the Almighty? She needs no policies nor stratagems nor licensings to make her victorious—those are the shifts and the defenses that error uses against her power. Give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps, for then she speaks not true, as the old Proteus⁷ did, who spake oracles only when he was caught and bound, but then rather she turns herself into all shapes except her own, and perhaps tunes her voice according to the time, as Micaiah did before Ahab,⁸ until she be adjured into her own likeness.

Yet it is not impossible that she may have more shapes than one. What else is all that rank of things indifferent, wherein Truth may be on this side or on the other without being unlike herself? What but a vain shadow else is the abolition of those ordinances, that handwriting nailed to the cross?⁹ What great purchase is this Christian liberty which Paul so often boasts of? His doctrine is that he who eats or eats not, regards a day or regards it not, may do either to the Lord.¹ How many other things might be tolerated in peace and left to conscience, had we but charity, and were it not the chief stronghold of our hypocrisy to be ever judging one another? I fear yet this iron yoke of outward conformity hath left a slavish print upon our necks; the ghost of a linen decency² yet haunts us. We stumble and are impatient at the least dividing of one visible congregation from another, though it be not in fundamentals; and through our forwardness to suppress and our backwardness to recover any enthralled piece of truth out of the grip of custom, we care not³ to keep truth separated from truth, which is the fiercest rent and disunion of all. We do not see that while we still affect by all means a rigid and external formality, we may as soon fall again into a gross conforming stupidity, a stark and dead congealment of "wood and hay and stubble,"⁴ forced and frozen together, which is more to the sudden degenerating of a church than many sub-dichotomies of petty schisms.

4. Milton was already disenchanted with Geneva's "Discipline" (Presbyterian church government) and within a year or so would be writing "Newpresbyter is but old priest, writ large." "Fabriced": fabricated.

5. Solomon's advice in Proverbs 8.11.

6. Line of battle. Wind and sun (below) were significant advantages in a fight with swords.

7. The sea god who could change shape at will, to avoid capture (*Odyssey* 4).

8. Micaiah, a prophet of God, tried for a time to disguise an unpleasant prophecy from King Ahab but then spoke truth when adjured to do so (1

Kings 22.10-28).

9. The locution, from Colossians 2.14, implies that the Crucifixion canceled all the rules and penalties of the Mosaic law. Paul's doctrine of Christian liberty (below) is expressed in Galatians 5 and elsewhere.

1. In the Lord's service.

2. White bands around the necks of clergymen are made emblems of formal piety.

3. Scruple not.

4. The contrast between "wood and hay and stubble" and "gold and silver and precious stones" (next paragraph) is from 1 Corinthians 3.12.

Not that I can think well of every light separation, or that all in a church is to be expected "gold and silver and precious stones." It is not possible for man to sever the wheat from the tares, the good fish from the other fry; that must be the angels' ministry at the end of mortal things.⁵ Yet if all cannot be of one mind—as who looks they should be?—this doubtless is more wholesome, more prudent, and more Christian, that many be tolerated rather than all compelled. I mean not tolerated popery and open superstition, which, as it extirpates all religions and civil supremacies, so itself should be extirpated, provided first that all charitable and compassionate means be used to win and regain the weak and the misled; that also which is impious or evil absolutely, either against faith or manners,⁶ no law can possibly permit that intends not to un-law itself; but those neighboring differences or rather indifferences are what I speak of, whether in some point of doctrine or of discipline, which though they may be many yet need not interrupt "the unity of spirit," if we could but find among us the "bond of peace."⁷

In the meanwhile, if anyone would write and bring his helpful hand to the slow-moving reformation which we labor under, if truth have spoken to him before others, or but seemed at least to speak, who hath so bejesuited⁸ us that we should trouble that man with asking license to do so worthy a deed? And not consider this, that if it come to prohibiting, there is not aught more likely to be prohibited than truth itself; whose first appearance to our eyes bleared and dimmed with prejudice and custom is more unsightly and un-plausible than many errors, even as the person is of many a great man slight and contemptible to see to. And what do they tell us vainly of new opinions, when this very opinion of theirs, that none must be heard but whom they like, is the worst and newest opinion of all others, and is the chief cause why sects and schisms do so much abound, and true knowledge is kept at distance from us; besides yet a greater danger which is in it. For when God shakes a kingdom⁹ with strong and healthful commotions to a general reforming, it is not untrue that many sectaries and false teachers are then busiest in seducing; but yet more true it is that God then raises to his own work men of rare abilities and more than common industry, not only to look back and revise what hath been taught heretofore, but to gain further and go on some new enlightened steps in the discovery of truth.

1644

Sonnets Milton wrote twenty-four sonnets between 1630 and 1658. Five in Italian constitute a mini-Petrarchan sequence on a perhaps imaginary Italian lady. The rest, in English, are individual poems on a wide variety of topics and occasions, though not on the usual sonnet topics (love, as in the sequences of Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare, or religious devotion, as in that of Donne). Milton writes sometimes about personal crises (his blindness, the death of his wife), sometimes about political issues or personages (Cromwell, the persecuting Parliament), sometimes about friends and friendship (Cyriack Skinner, Lady Margaret Ley), sometimes about historical events (a threatened royalist attack on London, the massacre of Protestants

5. In Matthew 13.24-30, 36-43, Christ in a parable tells his disciples to let the wheat and tares (weeds) grow up together till harvest time.

6. Morals.

7. The quoted phrases are from Ephesians 4.3.

8. Imposed on us Jesuit ideas (of censorship).

9. Milton alludes to Haggai 2.7: "I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts."

in Piedmont). His tone ranges from Jonsonian urbanity to prophetic denunciation. The form of the sonnets is Petrarchan (see "Poetic Forms and Literary Terminology," in the appendices to this volume), but in the later sonnets especially (e.g., the Blindness and Piedmont sonnets) the sense runs on from line to line, overriding the expected end-stopped lines and the octave/sestet shift. There is some precedent for this in the Italian sonneteer Giovanni della Casa, but not for the powerful tension Milton creates as meaning and emotion strive within and against the formal metrics of the Petrarchan sonnet. Milton's new ways with the sonnet had a profound and acknowledged influence on the Romantic poets, especially Wordsworth and Shelley.

SONNETS

How Soon Hath Time

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
 Stol'n on his wing my three and twentieth year!
 My hasting days fly on with full career,
 But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
 5 Perhaps my semblance might deceive¹ the truth,
 That I to manhood am arrived so near,
 And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
 That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.⁰ *endows*
 Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
 10 It shall be still in strictest measure even²
 To that same lot, however mean or high,
 Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven;
 All is, if I have grace to use it so,
 As ever in my great Taskmaster's eye.¹

1632?

1645

On the New Forcers of Conscience under the
Long Parliament¹

Because you have thrown off your prelate lord,²
 And with stiff vows renounced his liturgy,
 To seize the widowed whore Plurality³
 From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorred,

1. Misrepresent. "Semblance": appearance.

2. Equal, adequate. "It": Milton's inner growth. "Even / To that same lot": conformed to my appointed destiny.

3. The final lines allow for various readings. "Taskmaster" identifies God with the parable (Matthew 20.1–16) in which a vineyard keeper takes on workers throughout the day, paying the same wages to those hired at the first and at the eleventh hour.

1. The sonnet targets the Presbyterians, whom Milton in *The Reason of Church Government* (p. 1811) and other antiprelatical tracts of 1641—

42 had supported against the bishops. Now that they have overthrown the bishops and dominate the Long Parliament, they seek to become the national church, repressing all others. This *sonetto cauduto*, or "tailed sonnet" (an Italian form) has the usual fourteen lines followed by (two "tails" of three lines each.

2. Bishops and the ecclesiastical church structure.

3. The practice of holding several benefices at once; she is a "widowed whore" because her earlier lovers, the Anglican clergy, can no longer possess her.

5 Dare ye for this adjure⁰ the civil sword⁴ *invoke*
 To force our consciences that Christ set free,
 And ride us with a classic hierarchy⁵
 Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rutherford?⁶
 Men whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent
 10 Would have been held in high esteem with Paul
 Must now be named and printed heretics
 By shallow Edwards and Scotch what-d'ye-call:⁷
 But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
 Your plots and packing⁰ worse than those of Trent,⁸ *fraudulent dealings*
 is That so the Parliament⁹
 May with their wholesome and preventive shears
 Clip your phylacteries,¹ though balk your ears,²
 And succor our just fears
 When they shall read this clearly in your charge:
 20 New *presbyter* is but old *priest* writ large.³
 ca. 1646 1673

To the Lord General Cromwell, May 1652¹

Cromwell, our chief of men, who through a cloud
 Not of war only, but detractions² rude,
 Guided by faith and matchless fortitude
 To peace and truth³ thy glorious way hast ploughed,
 5 And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud
 Hast reared God's trophies,⁴ and his work pursued,
 While Darwen stream with blood of Scots imbrued⁵
 And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
 And Worcester's laureate wreath;⁶ yet much remains

4. State authority.

5. The Presbyterian church order comprised of synods and classes as governing boards and disciplinary courts.

6. Adam Stuart and Samuel Rutherford, Scottish Presbyterian pamphleteers who urged the establishment of an English national Presbyterian church on the Scottish model.

7. Thomas Edwards analyzed hundreds of so-called heresies in a book picturesquely titled *Gangraena* (1645, 1646). It even identifies Milton as the founder of a sect of Divorcers, promoting "divorce at pleasure." "Scotch what-d'ye-call" may refer to another Scots cleric, Robert Baillie, or may simply be a sneer at the unpronounceability of Scottish names.

8. The Council of Trent, held by the Roman Church to deal with the Protestant Reformation, was notorious as a scene of political jockeying.

9. In the previous few months Independents and more secular-minded republicans had gained some strength in the Parliament, so Milton could hope they might weigh in against Presbyterian repression.

1. Little scrolls containing texts from the Pentateuch, worn on the forehead and arm by observant Jews; Milton takes them as a symbol of self-righteous ostentation.

2. "Balk": spare. Mutilation by cutting off the ears was a punishment formerly suffered by several Presbyterian leaders, as Milton hereby reminds

them. Milton changed the rather cruel manuscript version of this line—"Crop ye as close as marginal P's ears"—alluding to the ultraprolific pamphleteer William Prynne, who stuffed his margins with citations, and who had his ears cropped twice.
 3. "Priest" is, etymologically, a contracted form of "Presbyter."

1. The sonnet appeals to Cromwell, a longtime supporter of religious toleration but also of some kind of loosely defined national church, to oppose recent proposals by Independents to set up a national church with a paid clergy and some limits to toleration. This is the only Milton sonnet to end with an epigrammatic couplet. It could not be published in the 1673 *Poems* of Milton because the subject would have offended the restored Stuart monarchy.

2. Cromwell was a target of slander and vituperation from royalists and from extreme radicals.

3. The words "Truth and Peace" were on a coin issued by Parliament to honor Cromwell's victories over the Scots at Preston (1648), Dunbar (1650), and Worcester (1651).

4. Alluding to the ancient Greek custom of erecting trophies of victory on the battlefield.

5. Stained with blood. The river Darwen runs through Preston, site of a major victory by Cromwell over the Scots.

6. Cromwell described his victory at Worcester as his "crowning mercy."

10 To conquer still; peace hath her victories
 No less renowned than war; new foes arise,
 Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains:⁷
 Help us to save free conscience from the paw
 Of hireling wolves⁸ whose gospel is their maw.⁹ *belly*

1652

1694

When I Consider How My Light Is Spent¹

When I consider how my light is spent,⁰ *extinguished*
 Ere half my days,² in this dark world and wide,
 And that one talent which is death to hide³
 Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent
 5 To serve therewith my Maker, and present
 My true account, lest he returning chide;
 "Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"⁴
 I fondly⁰ ask; but Patience to prevent⁰ *foolishly/forestall*
 That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
 io Either man's work or his own gifts; who best
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best. His state⁰ *splendor*
 Is kingly.⁵ Thousands at his bidding speed
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest:
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

1652?

1673

On the Late Massacre in Piedmont¹

Avenge,² O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
 Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;

7. Alluding to the new proposals that Parliament, the secular power, repress heresies and blasphemy.
 8. Milton fiercely opposed a paid clergy, believing they should support themselves or be supported by their congregations.

1. Apparently written soon after Milton lost his sight entirely in 1652.

2. Milton was forty-three in 1652; he is obviously not thinking of the biblical lifespan of seventy, but perhaps of that of his father, who died at eighty-four.

3. In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25.14—30), a crucial text for Puritans, the servants who put their master's money ("talents") to earn interest for him were praised, while the servant who buried the single talent he was given was deprived of it and cast into outer darkness. Milton puns on "literary talent." "Useless" (line 4) carries a pun on "usury," the return expected by the Master.

4. Milton alludes here to the parable of the vineyard keeper (see "How Soon Hath Time," note 3), and also to John 9.4, spoken by Jesus before curing a blind man: "I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."

5. The changed metaphor for God—from master

who needs to profit from his workers to king—allows the inference that those who "stand and wait" may be placed nearest the throne.

1. The Waldensians (or Vaudois) were a proto-Protestant sect dating to the 12th century who lived in the valleys of northern Italy (the Piedmont) and southern France; Protestants considered them a remnant retaining apostolic purity, free of Catholic superstitions and graven images ("stocks and stones," line 4). The treaty that had allowed them freedom of worship was bypassed in 1655 when the armies of the Catholic duke of Savoy conducted a massacre, razing villages, committing unspeakable atrocities, and hurling women and children from the mountaintops. Protestant Europe was outraged, and in his capacity as Cromwell's Latin secretary Milton translated and wrote several letters about the episode. The sonnet incorporates details from such letters and the contemporary newsbooks. Here Milton transforms the sonnet into a prophetic denunciation.

2. Cf. Revelation 6.9-10: "the souls of them that were slain for the word of God . . . cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood . . . ?'"

Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old
 When all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones,³
 5 Forget not: in thy book⁴ record their groans
 Who were thy sheep and in their ancient fold
 Slain by the bloody Piemontese that rolled
 Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
 The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
 io To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
 O'er all th' Italian fields, where still doth sway
 The triple tyrant:⁵ that from these may grow
 A hundredfold, who having learnt thy way
 Early may fly the Babylonian woe.⁶

1655

1673

Methought I Saw My Late Espoused Saint¹

Methought I saw my late espoused saint
 Brought to me like Alcestis² from the grave,
 Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
 Rescued from death by force though pale and faint.
 5 Mine, as whom³ washed from spot of childbed taint,
 Purification in the old law did save,⁴
 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,
 io Fler face was veiled, yet to my fancied sight⁵
 Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined
 So clear, as in no face with more delight.
 But O, as to embrace me she inclined,
 I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

1658

1673

3. Pagan gods of wood and stone, but with allusion to Roman Catholic "idols."

4. Cf. Revelation 20.12: "the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." "Sheep" (next line) echoes Romans 8.36: "we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

5. The pope, wearing his tiara with three crowns. The passage alludes to Tertullian's maxim that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church"; also to the parable of the sower (Matthew 13.3), some of whose seed brought forth fruit "an hundredfold" (see next line); and also to Cadmus, who sowed dragon's teeth that sprang forth armed men.

6. Protestants often identified the Roman Church with the whore of Babylon (Revelation 17–18).

1. There is some debate as to whether this poem refers to Milton's first wife, Mary Powell, who died in May 1652, three days after giving birth to her

third daughter, or his second wife, Katherine Woodcock, who died in February 1658, after giving birth (in October 1657) to a daughter. The text can support either, but the latter seems more likely. The sonnet is couched as a dream vision.

2. In Euripides' *Alcestis*, Alcestis, wife of Admetus, is rescued from the underworld by Hercules ("Jove's great son," next line) and restored, veiled, to Admetus; he is overjoyed when he lifts the veil, but she must remain silent until she is ritually cleansed.

3. As one whom.

4. The Mosaic Law (Leviticus 12.2–8) prescribed periods for the purification of women after childbirth (eighty days for a daughter).

5. She is veiled like Alcestis, and Milton's sight of her is only "fancied"; he never saw the face of his second wife, Katherine, because of his blindness.

Paradise Lost The setting of Milton's great epic encompasses Heaven, Hell, primordial Chaos, and the planet earth. It features battles among immortal spirits, voyages through space, and lakes of fire. Yet its protagonists are a married couple living in a garden, and its climax consists in the eating of a piece of fruit. *Paradise Lost* is ultimately about the human condition, the Fall that caused "all our woe," and the promise and means of restoration. It is also about knowing and choosing, about free will. In the opening passages of Books 1, 3, 7, and 9, Milton highlights the choices and difficulties he faced in creating his poem. His central characters—Satan, Beelzebub, Abdiel, Adam, and Eve—are confronted with hard choices under the pressure of powerful desires and sometimes devious temptations. Milton's readers, too, are continually challenged to choose and to reconsider their most basic assumptions about freedom, heroism, work, pleasure, language, nature, and love. The great themes of *Paradise Lost* are intimately linked to the political questions at stake in the English Revolution and the Restoration, but the connection is by no means simple or straightforward. This is a poem in which Satan leads a revolution against an absolute monarch and in which questions of tyranny, servitude, and liberty are debated in a parliament in Hell. Milton's readers are hereby challenged to rethink these topics and, like Abdiel debating with Satan in Books 5 and 6, to make crucial distinctions between God as monarch and earthly kings.

In Milton's time, the conventions of epic poetry followed a familiar recipe. The action was to begin in medias res (in the middle of things), following the poet's statement of his theme and invocation of his Muse. The reader could expect grand battles and love affairs, supernatural intervention, a descent into the underworld, catalogues of warriors, and epic similes. Milton had absorbed the epic tradition in its entirety, and his poem abounds with echoes of Homer and Virgil, the fifteenth-century Italians Tasso and Ariosto, and the English Spenser. But in *Paradise Lost* he at once heightens epic conventions and values and utterly transforms them. This is the epic to end all epics. Milton gives us the first and greatest of all wars (between God and Satan) and the first and greatest of love affairs (between Adam and Eve). His theme is the destiny of the entire human race, caught up in the temptation and Fall of our first "grand parents."

Milton challenges his readers in *Paradise Lost*, at once fulfilling and defying all of our expectations. Nothing in the epic tradition or in biblical interpretation can prepare us for the Satan who hurtles into view in Book 1, with his awesome energy and defiance, incredible fortitude, and, above all, magnificent rhetoric. For some readers, including Blake and Shelley, Satan is the true hero of the poem. But Milton is engaged in a radical reevaluation of epic values, and Satan's version of heroism must be contrasted with those of the loyal Abdiel and the Son of God. Moreover, the poem's truly epic action takes place not on the battlefield but in the moral and domestic arena. Milton's Adam and Eve are not conventional epic heroes, but neither are they the conventional Adam and Eve. Their state of innocence is not childlike, tranquil, and free of sexual desire. Instead, the first couple enjoy sex, experience tension and passion, make mistakes of judgment, and grow in knowledge. Their task is to prune what is unruly in their own natures as they prune the vegetation in their garden, for both have the capacity to grow wild. Their relationship exhibits gender hierarchy, but Milton's early readers may have been surprised by the fullness and complexity of Eve's character and the centrality of her role, not only in the Fall but in the promised restoration.

We expect in epics a grand style, and Milton's style engulfs us from the outset with its energy and power, as those rushing, enjambed, blank-verse lines propel us along with only a few pauses for line endings or grammar (there is only one full stop in the first twenty-six lines). The elevated diction and complex syntax, the sonorities and patternings make a magnificent music. But that music is an entire orchestra of tones, including the high political rhetoric of Satan in Books 1 and 2, the evocative sensuousness of the descriptions of Eden, the delicacy of Eve's love lyric to Adam in Book 4, the relatively plain speech of God in Book 3, and the speech rhythms of Adam

and Eve's marital quarrel in Book 9. This majestic achievement depends on the poet's rejection of heroic couplets, the norm for epic and tragedy in the Restoration, vigorously defended by Dryden but denounced by Milton in his note on "The Verse." The choice of verse form was, like so many other things in Milton's life, in part a question of politics. Milton's terms associate the "troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming" with Restoration monarchy and the repression of dissidents and present his use of unrhymed blank verse as a recovery of "ancient liberty."

The first edition (1667) presented *Paradise Lost* in ten books; the second (1674) recast it into twelve books, after the Virgilian model, splitting the original Books 7 and 10. We present the twelve-book epic in its entirety, to allow readers to experience the impact of the whole.

PARADISE LOST

SECOND EDITION (1674)

The Verse

The measure is English heroic verse without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek and of Virgil in Latin; rhyme being no necessary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verse, in longer works especially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to set off wretched matter¹ and lame meter; graced indeed since by the use of some famous modern poets,² carried away by custom, but much to their own vexation, hindrance, and constraint to express many things otherwise, and for the most part worse than else they would have expressed them. Not without cause therefore some both Italian³ and Spanish poets of prime note have rejected rhyme both in longer and shorter works, as have also long since our best English tragedies, as a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial and of no true musical delight; which consists only in apt numbers,⁴ fit quantity of syllables, and the sense variously drawn out from one verse into another, not in the jingling sound of like endings, a fault avoided by the learned ancients both in poetry and all good oratory. This neglect then of rhyme so little is to be taken for a defect, though it may seem so perhaps to vulgar readers, that it rather is to be esteemed an example set, the first in English, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem from the troublesome and modern bondage of rhyming.

Book 1

*The Argument*¹

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

1. Perhaps the bawdy content of the Latin songs composed by goliardic poets of the Middle Ages; they learned rhyme from medieval hymns.

2. Notably, Dryden. See his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*, p. 2125.

3. Trissino and Tasso.

4. Appropriate rhythm.

1. *Paradise Lost* appeared originally without any sort of prose aid to the reader, but the printer asked Milton for some "Arguments," or summary explanations of the action in the various books, and these were prefixed to later issues of the poem. We reprint the "Argument" for the first book.

the prime cause of his fall, the Serpent, or rather Satan in the Serpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of angels, was by the command of God driven out of Heaven with all his crew into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastes into the midst of things,² presenting Satan with his angels now fallen into Hell, described here, not in the center³ (for Heaven and Earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed) but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos: here Satan with his angels lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded; they rise, their numbers, array of 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 or report in Heaven; for that angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient Fathers.⁴ To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine⁵ 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 fruit¹
 Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal⁹ taste *deadly*
 Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
 With loss of Eden, till one greater Man²
 5 Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
 Sing Heav'nly Muse,³ 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 heav'ns and earth
 10 Rose out of Chaos: or if Sion hill⁴
 Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
 Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
 Invoke thy aid to my advent'rous song,
 That with no middle flight intends to soar
 is Above th' Aonian mount,⁵ while it pursues
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.⁶
 And chiefly thou O Spirit,⁷ that dost prefer
 Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,

2. According to Horace, the epic poet should begin, "in medias res."

3. I.e., of the earth.

4. Church Fathers, the Christian writers of the first centuries.

5. I.e., what action to take.

1. Eve's apple, and all the consequences of eating it. This first proem (lines 1—26) combines the epic statement of theme and invocation.

2. Christ, the second Adam.

3. In Greek mythology, Urania, Muse of astronomy; here, however, by the references to Oreb (Horeb) and Sinai (following), identified with the Muse who inspired Moses ("that shepherd") to

write Genesis and the other four books of the Pentateuch for the instruction of the Jews ("the chosen seed").

4. Mount Zion: the site of Solomon's Temple. "Siloa's brook" (next line): a spring near the Temple where Christ cured a blind man.

5. Helicon, home of the classical Muses. Milton will attempt to surpass Homer and Virgil.

6. Paradoxically, Milton vaunts his originality in a translated line from Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* 1.2. The allusion also challenges the romantic epic in Ariosto's tradition.

7. Here identified with God's creating power.

Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread
Dove-like sat'st brooding⁸ 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" *subject, theme*
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify⁹ the ways of God to men. *show the justice of*

Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view
Nor the deep tract of Hell, say first what cause⁹
Moved our grand parents in that happy state, .
Favored of Heav'n so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For^o one restraint, lords of the world besides?" *because of/ otherwise*
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^o his pride *when*
Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host
Of rebel angels, by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,^o *equals*
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 Heav'n 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 adamant¹ chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space² 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^o eyes *malignant*
That witnessed huge affliction and dismay
Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate:
At once as far as angels' ken^o he views *range of sight*
The dismal situation waste and wild,
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round
As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe,

8. A composite of phrases and ideas from Genesis 1.2 ("And the earth was without form, and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"). Only a small number of Milton's many allusions to the Bible (in many versions) can be indicated in the notes. Milton's brooding dove

image comes from the Latin (Tremellius) Bible version, *incubabat*, "incubated."

9. An opening question like this is an epic convention.

1. A mythical substance of great hardness.
2. Extent of time.

- 65 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
 And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
 That comes to all;³ but torture without end
 Still urges,⁰ and a fiery deluge, fed *always provokes*
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed:
- 70 Such place Eternal Justice had prepared
 For those rebellious, here their prison ordained
 In utter darkness, and their portion set
 As far removed from God and light of Heav'n
 As from the center thrice to th' utmost pole.⁴
- 75 O how unlike the place from whence they fell!
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
 He soon discerns, and welt'ring⁰ by his side *rolling in the waves*
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,
- 50 Long after known in Palestine, and named
 Beelzebub.⁵ To whom th' Arch-Enemy,
 And thence in Heav'n called Satan,⁶ with bold words
 Breaking the horrid silence thus began.
 "If thou beest he; but O how fall'n!⁷ how changed
- 85 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,
- 90 Joined with me once, now misery hath joined
 In equal ruin: into what pit thou seest
 From what height fall'n, so much the stronger proved
 He with his thunder:⁰ and till then who knew *thunderbolt*
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
- 95 Nor what the potent victor in his rage
 Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
 Though changed in outward luster, that fixed mind
 And high disdain, from sense of injured merit,
 That with the mightiest raised me to contend,
- 100 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 dubious⁰ battle on the plains of Heav'n, *of uncertain outcome*
- 105 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
 All is not lost; the unconquerable will,
 And study⁰ of revenge, immortal hate, *intense consideration*

3. The phrase alludes to Dante ("All hope abandon, ye who enter here").

4. Milton makes use of various images of the cosmos in *Paradise Lost*: (1) the earth is the center of the (Ptolemaic) cosmos of ten concentric spheres; (2) the earth and the whole cosmos are an appendage hanging from Heaven by a golden chain; (3) the cosmos seems Copernican from the angels' perspective (see Book 8). Here, the fall from Heaven to Hell is described as thrice as far as the distance from the center (earth) to the outermost sphere.

5. A Phoenician deity, or Baal (the name means "Lord of Flies"). He is called the prince of devils in Matthew 12.24. As with the other fallen angels, his angelic name has been obliterated, and he is now called by the name he will bear as a pagan deity. That literary strategy evokes all the evil associations attaching to those names in human history.

6. In Hebrew the name means "adversary."

7. Alludes to Isaiah 14.12: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, Son of the morning."

And courage never to submit or yield:
 And what is else not to be overcome?⁸
 1 io That glory never shall his wrath or might
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power
 Who from the terror of this arm so late
 Doubted⁰ his empire, that were low indeed, *feared for*
 ii5 That were an ignominy and shame beneath
 This downfall; since by fate the strength of gods⁹
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail,⁰ *cease to exist*
 Since through experience of this great event
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
 120 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 of Heav'n."
 125 So spake th' apostate angel, though in pain,
 Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair:
 And him thus answered soon his bold compeer.⁰ *comrade*
 "O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers,
 That led th' embattled Seraphim¹ to war
 130 Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds
 Fearless, endangered Heav'n's perpetual King;
 And put to proof his high supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
 Too well I see and rue the dire event,⁰ *outcome*
 135 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat
 Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as gods and heav'nly essences
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
 140 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 force⁰ believe almighty, since no less *necessarily*
 145 Than such could have o'erpow'ered such force as ours)
 Have left us this our spirit and strength entire
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
 That we may so suffice⁰ his vengeful ire, *satisfy'*
 Or do him mightier service as his thralls
 150 By right of war, whate'er his business be
 Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
 Or do his errands in the gloomy deep;
 What can it then avail though yet we feel
 Strength undiminished, or eternal being

8. I.e., what else does it mean not to be overcome?
 9. A term commonly used in the poem for angels.
 But to Satan and his followers it means more, as
 Satan claims the position of a god, subject to fate
 but nothing else. Their substance is "empyrean"
 (next line), of the empyrean.

1. According to tradition, there were nine orders
 of angels, arranged hierarchically—seraphim,
 cherubim, thrones, dominions, virtues, powers,
 principalities, archangels, and angels. The poem
 makes use of some of these titles but does not keep
 this hierarchy.

- 155 To undergo eternal punishment?"
 Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-Fiend replied.
 "Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable
 Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
 To do aught⁰ good never will be our task, *anything*
- 160 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,
- 165 And out of good still to find means of evil;
 Which ofttimes may succeed, so as perhaps
 Shall grieve him, if I fail" not, and disturb *err*
 His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
 But see the angry victor hath recalled
- no His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
 Back to the gates of Heav'n: the sulphurous hail
 Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid^o *calmed*
 The fiery surge, that from the precipice
 Of Heav'n received us falling, and the thunder,
- 175 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^o th' occasion, whether scorn, *let slip*
 Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
- 180 Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
 The seat of desolation, void of light,
 Save what the glimmering of these livid^o flames *bluish*
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves,
- 185 There rest, if any rest can harbor there,
 And reassembling our afflicted powers," *armies*
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend^o *harm, vex*
 Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
 How overcome this dire calamity,
- 190 What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
 If not what resolution from despair."²
- Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blazed, his other parts besides
- 195 Prone on the flood, extended long and large
 Lay floating many a rood,³ in bulk as huge
 As whom^o the fables name of monstrous size, *as those whom.*
 Titanian, or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
 Briareos or Typhon,⁴ whom the den
- 200 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
 Leviathan,⁵ which God of all his works

2. Five of the last nine lines of Satan's speech rhyme.

3. An old unit of measure, between six and eight yards.

4. Both the Titans, led by Briareos (said to have had a hundred hands), and the earth-born Giants, represented by Typhon (who lived in Cilicea near

Tarsus and was said to have had a hundred heads), fought with Jove. They were punished by being thrown into the underworld. Christian mythographers found in these stories an analogy to Satan's revolt and punishment.

5. The whale, often identified with the great sea monster and enemy of the Lord in Isaiah 17.1 and

- Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream:
Him haply^o slumb'ring on the Norway foam
The pilot of some small night-founded^o skiff,
205 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,⁶
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee,^o while night
Invests^o the sea, and wished morn delays:
So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay
210 Chained on the burning lake, nor ever thence
Had ris'n 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
215 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
220 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured.
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
Driv'n backward slope their pointing spires,^o and rolled
In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid^o vale.
225 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on^o the dusky air
That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
He lights,^o if it were land that ever burned
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
230 And such appeared in hue; as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
Of thund'ring Etna,⁷ whose combustible
And fueled entrails thence conceiving fire,
235 Sublimed^o with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involved^o
With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate,
Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian^o flood
240 As gods, and by their own recovered strength,
Not by the sufferance^o of supernal power.
"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
Said then the lost Archangel, "this the seat^o
That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful gloom
245 For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is sov'reign can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best
Whom reason hath equaled, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell happy fields
250 Where joy forever dwells: Hail horrors, hail

the crocodile-like dragon of Job 41. Both were also identified with Satan.

6. The story of the deceived sailor and the illusory island was a commonplace, but the reference to

Norway suggests a 16th-century version by Olaus Magnus, a Swedish historian.

7. Pelorus and Etna are volcanic mountains in Sicily.

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
 255 Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.⁸
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less than⁰ he *barely less than*
 Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
 We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
 260 Here for his envy,⁹ will not drive us hence:
 Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
 To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:
 Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heav'n.¹
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
 265 Th' associates and copartners of our loss
 Lie thus astonished⁰ on th' oblivious pool,² *stunned*
 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
 270 Regained in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell?"
 So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub
 Thus answered. "Leader of those armies bright,
 Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foiled,
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
 275 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge⁰ *front lines*
 Of battle when it raged, in all assaults
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume
 New courage and revive, though now they lie
 280 Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
 As we erewhile, astounded and amazed,
 No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth."
 He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend
 Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield
 285 Ethereal temper,³ 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 views⁴
 At evening from the top of Fesole,
 290 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 ammiral,⁰ were but a wand *admiral's ship*
 295 He walked with to support uneasy steps
 Over the burning marl,⁰ not like those steps *soil*

8. Compare Satan's soliloquy, 4.32-113.

9. I.e., because he desires this place.

1. An ironic echo of *Odyssey* 11.489-91, where the shade of Achilles tells Odysseus that it is better to be a farmhand on earth than king among the dead.

2. The epithet "oblivious" is transferred from the fallen angels to the pool into which they have

fallen.

3. I.e., tempered in celestial fire.

4. Galileo, who looked through a telescope ("optic glass") from the hill town of Fiesole, outside Florence, in the valley of the Arno River ("Valdarno," val d'Arno, line 290). In 1610 he published a book describing the mountains on the moon.

On heaven's azure; and the torrid clime
 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire;
 Nathless⁰ he so endured, till on the beach *nevertheless*
 Of that inflamed⁰ sea, he stood and called *flaming*
 His legions, angel forms, who lay entranced
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
 In Vallombrosa,⁵ where th' Etrurian shades
 High overarched embow'r;⁰ or scattered sedge⁰ *form bowers I seaweed*
 Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
 Hath vexed the Red Sea coast,⁶ whose waves o'erthrew
 Busiris⁷ and his Memphian chivalry,
 While with perfidious hatred they pursued
 The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
 From the safe shore their floating carcasses
 And broken chariot wheels; so thick bestrown
 Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
 Under amazement of their hideous change.
 He called so loud, that all the hollow deep
 Of Hell resounded. "Princes, Potentates,
 Warriors, the flow'r of Heav'n, once yours, now lost,
 If such astonishment as this can seize
 Eternal Spirits: or have ye chos'n this place
 After the toil of battle to repose
 Your wearied virtue,⁰ for the ease you *find* *strength, valor*
 To slumber here, as in the vales of Heav'n?
 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,⁰ till anon *battle flags*
 His swift pursuers from Heav'n 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 fall'n."
 They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung
 Upon the wing, as when men wont⁰ to watch *accustomed*
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
 Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;⁸
 Yet to their general's voice they soon obeyed
 Innumerable. As when the potent rod
 Of Amram's son⁹ in Egypt's evil day
 Waved round the coast, up called a pitchy cloud
 Of locusts, warping⁰ on the eastern wind, *swarming*

5. The name means "shady valley" and refers to a region high in the Apennines, about twenty miles from Florence, in Tuscany ("Etruria"). Similes comparing the numberless dead to falling leaves are frequent in epic (e.g., *Aeneid* 6.309—10).

6. Orion is a constellation whose rising near sunset in late summer and autumn was associated with storms in the Red Sea.

7. Mythical Egyptian pharaoh, whom Milton asso-

ciates with the pharaoh of Exodus 14, who pursued the Israelites ("sojourners of Goshen," line 309) into the Red Sea, which God parted for them. His "chivalry" (following) are horsemen from Memphis.

8. The double negatives make a positive: they did perceive both plight and pain.

9. Moses, who drew down a plague of locusts on Egypt (Exodus 10.12-15).

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
 345 Hovering on wing under the cope^o of Hell *roof*
 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
 Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted spear
 Of their great Sultan¹ waving to direct
 Their course, in even balance down they light
 350 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;
 A multitude, like which the populous north
 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
 355 Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.²
 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,
 360 And powers that erst^o in Heaven sat on thrones; *formerly*
 Though of their names in heav'nly records now
 Be no memorial, blotted out and razed^o *erased*
 By their rebellion, from the Books of Life.
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
 365 Got them new names, till wand'ring 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
 370 Glory of him that made them, to transform
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
 With gay religions^o full of pomp and gold, *showy rites*
 And devils to adore for deities:
 Then were they known to men by various names,
 375 And various idols through the heathen world.
 Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,³
 Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,
 At their great emperor's call, as next in worth
 Came singly^o where he stood on the bare strand, *one at a time*
 380 While the promiscuous^o crowd stood yet aloof. *mixed*
 The chief were those who from the pit of Hell
 Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
 Their seats long after next the seat of God,⁴
 Their altars by his altar, gods adored
 385 Among the nations round, and durst abide
 Jehovah thund'ring out of Zion, throned
 Between the Cherubim;⁵ yea, often placed
 Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,

1. A first use of this description of Satan as an Oriental despot.

2. The barbarian invasions of Rome began with crossings of the Rhine ("Rhene") and Danube ("Danaw") rivers and spread across Spain, via Gibraltar, to North Africa.

3. The catalogue of gods here is an epic conven-

tion; Homer catalogues ships; Virgil, warriors.

4. The first group of devils come from the Middle East, close neighbors of Jehovah "throned" in his sanctuary in Jerusalem.

5. Golden cherubim adorned opposite ends of the gold cover on the Ark of the Covenant.

Abomination; and with cursed things
 390 His holy rites, and solemn feasts profaned,
 And with their darkness durst affront his light.
 First Moloch,⁶ horrid king besmeared with blood
 Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears,
 Though for the noise of drums and timbrels⁰ loud
 395 Their children's cries unheard, that passed through fire
 To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite⁷
 Worshipped in Rabba and her wat'ry plain,
 In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
 Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
 400 Audacious neighborhood, the wisest heart
 Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
 His temple right against the temple of God
 On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
 The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
 405 And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.⁸
 Next Chemos,⁹ th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,
 From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild
 Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
 And Horanaim, Seon's realm, beyond
 410 The flow'ry dale of Sibma clad with vines,
 And Eleale to th' Asphaltic Pool.¹
 Peor² his other name, when he enticed
 Israel in Sittim on their march from Nile
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
 415 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged
 Even to that hill of scandal,³ by the grove
 Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by^o hate;
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
 With these came they, who from the bord'ring flood
 420 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts
 Egypt from Syrian ground,⁴ had general names
 Of Baalim and Ashtaroth, those male,
 These feminine.⁵ For Spirits when they please
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
 425 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

*tambourines**close by*

6. Moloch was a sun god, sometimes represented as a roaring bull or with a calf's head, within whose brazen image living children were supposedly burned as sacrifices.

7. The Ammonites lived east of the Jordan River. "Rabba" (next line) is modern Amman, in Jordan; "Argob," "Basan," "utmost Arnon" (lines 398-99) are lands east of the Dead Sea.

8. The rites of Moloch on "that opprobrious hill" (the Mount of Olives), just opposite the Jewish temple, and in the valley of Hinnom so polluted those places that they were turned into the refuse dump of Jerusalem. Under the name "Tophet" and "Gehenna," Hinnom became a type of Hell.

9. Chemos, or Chemosh, associated with Moloch in 1 Kings 11.7, was the god of the Moabites, whose lands (many drawn from Isaiah 15-16) are

mentioned in the following lines.

1. The Dead Sea.

2. The story of Peor seducing the Israelites in Sittim is told in Numbers 25.

3. The Mount of Olives, where Solomon built temples for Chemos and Moloch (1 Kings 11.7); epithets were commonly attached to the names of gods, as in the next line, Moloch "homicide." Josiah (following line) destroyed pagan idols in Jerusalem and other cities (2 Chronicles 34).

4. Palestine lies between the Euphrates and "the brook Besor" (1 Samuel 30.10).

5. Plural forms, masculine and feminine, respectively, denoting aspects of the sun god Baal and the moon goddess Astarte (called "Astareth" in line 438, below).

Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
 430 Can execute their airy purposes,
 And works of love or enmity fulfill.
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook
 Their Living Strength, and unfrequented left
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
 435 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 Heav'n, with crescent horns;
 440 To whose bright image nightly by the moon
 Sidonian virgins⁶ paid their vows and songs,
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood
 Her temple on th' offensive mountain,⁷ built
 By that uxorious king, whose heart though large,
 445 Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
 To idols foul. Thammuz⁸ came next behind,
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
 450 While smooth Adonis⁹ from his native work
 Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
 455 Ezekiel¹ saw, when by the vision led
 His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one
 Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark
 Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopped off
 460 In his own temple, on the grunsel edge,²
 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
 465 Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon
 And Accaron and Gaza's³ frontier bounds.
 Him followed Rimmon,⁴ whose delightful seat
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
 Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
 470 He also against the house of God was bold:
 A leper once he lost and gained a king,
 Ahaz his sottish conqueror, whom he drew

6. Sidon and Tyre were the chief cities of Phoenicia.

7. The Mount of Olives again. "That uxorious king" (next line) is Solomon, who "loved many strange women" (2 Kings 11.1-8).

8. A Syrian god, supposedly killed by a boar in Lebanon; his Greek form was Adonis, beloved of Aphrodite and god of the solar year. Annual festivals mourned his death and celebrated his revival as signifying the death and rebirth of vegetation.

9. Here, the Lebanese river named for the deity because every spring it turned bloodred from sedi-

imentary mud.

1. The prophet complained that Jewish women were worshipping Thammuz (Ezekiel 8.14).

2. When the Philistines stole the ark of God, they placed 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") (1 Samuel 5.1-5).

3. The five chief cities of the Philistines, sites of Dagon's worship.

4. A Phoenician god whose temple was in Damascus.

God's altar to disparage and displace
 For one of Syrian mode,⁵ whereon to burn
 His odious off'rings, and adore the gods
 Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared
 A crew who under names of old renown,
 Osiris, Isis, Orus⁶ and their train
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
 Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek
 Their wand'ring gods disguised in brutish forms
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape
 Th' infection when their borrowed gold composed
 The calf in Oreb:⁷ and the rebel king
 Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
 Lik'ning his Maker to the grazed ox,⁸
 Jehovah, who in one night when he passed
 From Egypt marching, equaled⁹ with one stroke
 Both her firstborn and all her bleating gods.⁹
 Belial came last,¹ than whom a spirit more lewd
 Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
 Vice for itself: to him no temple stood
 Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he
 In temples and at altars, when the priest
 Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons,² 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 tow'rs,
 And injury and outrage: and when night
 Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
 Of Belial, flown⁰ with insolence and wine.³
 Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
 Exposed a matron to avoid worse rape.⁴

*leveled.**flushed*

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 Heav'n and Earth
 Their boasted parents;⁵ Titan Heav'n's firstborn
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seized

5. A Syrian general, Naaman, was cured of leprosy and converted from worship of Rimmon by the waters of the Jordan (2 Kings 5), while King Ahaz, an Israelite monarch who conquered Damascus, was converted there to Rimmon's worship.

6. The second group of devils includes the Egyptian gods driven from Heaven by the revolt of the giants (Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 5) and forced to wander in "monstrous" (next line) animal disguises.

7. In the wilderness of Egypt, while Moses was receiving the Law, Aaron made a golden calf, thought to be an idol of the Egyptian god Apis and made of ornaments brought out of Egypt (Exodus 32).

8. Jeroboam, "the rebel king" who led the ten tribes of Israel in revolt against Solomon's son, Rehoboam; he doubled Aaron's sin by making two golden calves (1 Kings 12.25—30).

9. Jehovah smote the firstborn of all Egyptian families as well as their gods (Exodus 12.12).

1. Belial was never worshipped as a god; his name means "wickedness," but its use in phrases like "sons of Belial" encouraged personification.

2. Priests who were termed "sons of Belial" because they seized for themselves offerings made to God and lay with women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle (1 Samuel 2.12—22).

3. This passage, with its present-tense verbs, invites application to current examples—at court and in Restoration London.

4. Lot begged the Sodomites to rape his daughters rather than his (male) angel guests (Genesis 19); in Gibeah a Levite avoided "worse" (homosexual) rape by surrendering his concubine to riotous "sons of Belial" (Judges 19.21-30).

5. The Ionian Greeks ("Javan's issue," i.e., of the line of Javan, grandson of Noah) regarded the Titans as gods; their supposed parents were Heaven (Uranus) and Earth (Gaea).

By younger Saturn, he from mightier Jove,
 His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;
 So Jove usurping reigned:⁶ these first in Crete
 515 And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
 Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air
 Their highest heav'n; or on the Delphian cliff,
 Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
 Of Doric land;⁷ or who with Saturn old
 520 Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields,
 And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost isles.⁸
 All these and more came flocking; but with looks
 Downcast and damp,⁹ yet such wherein appeared *depressed, dazed*
 Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief
 525 Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
 In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast
 Like doubtful hue:⁹ but he his wonted⁰ pride *accustomed*
 Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
 Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised
 530 Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears.
 Then straight⁰ commands that at the warlike sound *immediately*
 Of trumpets loud and clarions be upreared
 His mighty standard; that proud honor claimed
 Azazel¹ as his right, a Cherub tall:
 535 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:² all the while
 540 Sonorous metal⁰ blowing martial sounds: *trumpets*
 At which the universal host upsent
 A shout that tore Hell's concave,⁰ and beyond *vault*
 Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.³
 All in a moment through the gloom were seen
 545 Ten thousand banners rise into the air
 With orient⁰ colors waving: with them rose *lustrous*
 A forest huge of spears: and thronging helms
 Appeared, and serried⁴ shields in thick array *pushed close together*
 Of depth immeasurable: anon they move
 550 In perfect phalanx to the Dorian⁴ mood
 Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised
 To highth of noblest temper heroes old
 Arming to battle, and instead of rage
 Deliberate valor breathed, firm and unmoved

6. The Titan Cronos, or Saturn, deposed his elder brother, married his sister Rhea, and ruled until he was deposed by his father, Zeus (Jove), who had been reared in secret on Mount Ida in Crete.

7. Zeus and the other Olympian gods had their seat on Mount Olympus, in "middle air"; they were worshipped in Delphi, Dodona, and throughout Greece ("Doric lands").

8. Saturn, after his downfall, fled over "Adria" (the Adriatic Sea) to the "Hesperian fields" (Italy), crossed the "Celtic" fields of France, and thence to Britain, the "utmost isles."

9. Satan's face reflected the same mixed emotions.

1. Traditionally, one of the four standard-bearers in Satan's army. "Clarions" (line 532): small, shrill trumpets.

2. Their flags bear the heraldic arms of the various orders of angels and memorials of their battles.

3. In *Paradise Lost* 2.894-909, 959-70 Chaos and Night rule the region of unformed matter between Heaven and earth.

4. Severe, martial music used by the Spartans marching to battle. "Phalanx": battle formation.

With dread of death to flight or foul retreat,
 Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage⁰ *assuage*
 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 horrid⁰ front *bristling with spears*
 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
 Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse⁰
 The whole battalion views, their order due,
 Their visages and stature as of gods,
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart
 Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
 Glories: for never since created man⁵
 Met such embodied force, as named⁰ with these *composed*
 Could merit more than that small infantry
 Warred on by cranes:⁶ though all the giant brood
 Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were joined
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium,⁷ on each side
 Mixed with auxiliar⁰ gods; and what resounds *allied*
 In fable or romance of Uther's son
 Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
 And all who since, baptized or infidel
 Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
 Damasco, or Morocco, or Trebisond,
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore
 When Charlemagne with all his peerage fell
 By Fontarabia.⁸ Thus far these beyond
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed⁰ *obeyed*
 Their dread commander: he above the rest
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent
 Stood like a tow'r; his form had yet not lost
 All her⁹ original brightness, nor appeared
 Less than Archangel ruined, and th' excess
 Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-ris'n
 Looks through the horizontal⁰ misty air *on the horizon*
 Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon
 In dim eclipse disastrous⁰ twilight sheds *ill-starred*
 On half the nations, and with fear of change

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

6. Pygmies (little people, with a pun, in "infantry" on "infants") had periodic fights with the cranes, in Pliny's account. Compared with Satan's forces, all other armies are puny.

7. In Greek mythology, the Giants fought the gods at Phlegra in Macedonia; in Roman myth, it was at Phlegra in Italy. Satan's forces surpass them, even if joined with the Seven who fought against Thebes and the whole Greek host that besieged

Troy ("Ilium").

8. Satan's forces also surpass the "British and Armoric" (from Brittany) knights who fought with King Arthur ("Uther's son") and all the romance knights who fought at the famous named sites in the following lines. Roncesvalles, near Fontarabia, was the place where Charlemagne's "peerage," including his best knight, Roland, were defeated in battle (though not Charlemagne himself).

9. *Forma* in Latin is feminine.

Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
 Above them all th' Archangel: but his face
 Deep scars of thunder had intrenched,⁰ and care *furrowed*
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate" pride *conscious, deliberate*
 Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
 Signs of remorse and passion⁰ to behold *compassion, pain*
 The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
 (Far other once beheld in bliss) condemned
 Forever now to have their lot in pain,
 Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced⁰ *deprived*
 Of Heav'n, and from eternal splendors flung
 For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
 Their glory withered: as when Heaven's fire
 Hath scathed⁰ the forest oaks, or mountain pines, *damaged*
 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,⁰ and thrice, in spite of scorn, *attempted*
 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" was dire, *outcome*
 As this place testifies, and this dire change
 Hateful to utter: but what power of mind
 Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
 Of knowledge past or present, could have 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" legions, whose exile *potent, powerful*
 Hath emptied Heav'n, shall fail to reascend
 Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?
 For me, be witness all the host of Heav'n,
 If counsels different," or danger shunned *contradictory*
 By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
 Monarch in Heav'n, 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, *always*
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own
 So as not either to provoke, or dread
 New war, provoked; our better part remains
 To work in close design, by fraud or guile
 What force effected not: that he no less
 At length from us may find, who overcomes
 By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
 Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife" *common*
 There went a fame" in Heav'n that he ere long *rumor*

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,⁰ thither or elsewhere: *breaking out*
 For this infernal pit shall never hold
 Celestial Spirits in bondage, not 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 understood⁰ must be resolved." *covert*

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,¹
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heav'n.

There stood a hill not far whose grisly top
 Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
 Shone with a glossy scurf,⁰ undoubted sign *crust*
 That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
 The work of sulphur.² Thither winged with speed
 A numerous brigade hastened. As when bands
 Of pioneers⁰ with spade and pickax armed *military engineers*
 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
 Or cast a rampart. Mammon³ led them on,
 Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
 From Heav'n, for ev'n in Heav'n his looks and thoughts
 Were always downward bent, admiring more
 The riches of Heav'n'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 of gold. Let none admire⁰ *wonder*
 That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best
 Deserve the precious bane.⁰ And here let those *poison*
 Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
 Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,⁴
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
 And strength and art are easily outdone
 By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour
 What in an age they with incessant toil
 And hands innumerable scarce perform.

1. Like Roman legionnaires, the fallen angels applaud by beating swords on shields.

2. Sulfur and mercury were considered the basic substances of all metals.

3. "Mammon," an abstract word for riches, came

to be personified and associated with the god of wealth, Plutus, and so with Pluto, god of the underworld. Cf. Matthew 6.24: "Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

4. The Tower of Babel and the pyramids of Egypt.

700 Nigh on the plain in many cells prepared,
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire
 Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
 With wondrous art founded⁰ the massy ore, *melted*
 Severing⁰ each kind, and scummed the bullion dross:⁰ *separating / boiling dregs*
 705 A third as soon had formed within the ground
 A various mold, and from the boiling cells
 By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook,
 As in an organ from one blast of wind
 To many a row of pipes the soundboard breathes.
 710 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,⁵ where pilasters⁰ round *columns set in a wall*
 Were set, and Doric pillars⁶ overlaid
 715 With golden architrave; nor did there want
 Cornice or frieze, with bossy⁰ sculptures grav'n;
 The roof was fretted⁰ gold. Not Babylon, *embossed*
 Nor great Alcairo such magnificence *richly ornamented*
 Equaled in all their glories, to enshrine
 720 Belus or Serapis⁷ their gods, or seat
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
 In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
 Stood fixed⁰ her stately height, and straight⁰ the doors *complete / at once*
 Opening their brazen folds discover⁰ wide *reveal*
 725 Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
 And level pavement: from the arched roof
 Pendent by subtle magic many a row
 Of starry lamps and blazing cressets⁸ fed
 With naphtha and asphaltus yielded light
 730 As from a sky. The hasty multitude
 Admiring entered, and the work some praise
 And some the architect: his hand was known
 In Heav'n by many a towered structure high,
 Where scepter'd angels held their residence,
 735 And sat as princes, whom the Supreme King
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
 Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
 Nor was his name unheard or unadored
 In ancient Greece and in Ausonian land
 740 Men called him Mulciber⁹ and how he fell
 From Heav'n, 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

5. After melting the gold with fire from the lake and pouring it into molds, the devils cause their building to rise as by magic, to the sounds of marvelous music.

6. Doric pillars are severe and plain. The devils' palace combines classical architectural features with elaborate ornamentation, suggesting, perhaps, St. Peter's in Rome.

7. At Babylon, in Assyria, there were temples to

"Belus" or Baal; at Alcairo (modern Cairo, ancient Memphis), in Egypt, they were to Osiris ("Serapis").

8. Basketlike lamps, hung from the ceiling.

9. Hephaestus, or Vulcan, was sometimes known in "Ausonian land" (Italy) as "Mulciber." The story of Jove's tossing him out of Heaven (see following lines) is told in Book 1 of the *Iliad*.

- 745 Dropped from the zenith like a falling star,
 On Lemnos th' Aegean isle: thus they relate,
 Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
 Fell long before; nor aught availed him now
 To have built in Heav'n high tow'rs; nor did he scape
 750 By all his engines, but was headlong sent
 With his industrious crew to build in Hell.
 Meanwhile the winged heralds by command
 Of sov'reign power, with awful ceremony
 And trumpet's sound throughout the host proclaim
 755 A solemn council forthwith to be held
 At Pandemonium,¹ the high capitol
 Of Satan and his peers:⁰ their summons called *nobles*
 From every band and squared regiment
 By place⁰ or choice⁰ the worthiest; they anon *rank / election*
 760 With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
 Attended: all access was thronged, the gates
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
 (Though like a covered field, where champions bold
 Wont ride in armed, and at the soldan's⁰ chair *sultan's*
 765 Defied the best of paynim⁰ chivalry *pagan*
 To mortal combat or career with lance)
 Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air,
 Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
 In springtime, when the sun with Taurus rides,²
 770 Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
 In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
 New rubbed with balm, expatiate and confer³
 775 Their state affairs. So thick the aery crowd
 Swarmed and were straitened; till the signal giv'n,
 Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed
 In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
 780 Throng numberless, like that Pygmean race
 Beyond the Indian mount,⁴ or fairy elves,
 Whose midnight revels, by a forest side
 Or fountain some belated peasant sees,
 Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon
 785 Sits arbitress,⁰ and nearer to the earth *witness*
 Wheels her pale course: they on their mirth and dance
 Intent, with jocund⁰ music charm his ear;¹ *merry*
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
 Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
 790 Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large,
 Though without number still amidst the hall

1. "Pandemonium" (a Miltonic coinage) means literally "all demons," an inversion of "pantheon," "all gods."

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

3. Spread out and discuss. Bee similes were common in epic from Homer on; also, the bees' (roy-

alist) society was often cited in political argument. The simile prepares for the sudden contraction of the devils, who can shrink or dilate at will.

4. The pygmies were supposed to live beyond the Himalayas.

5. The belated peasant's.

Of that infernal court. But far within
 And in their own dimensions like themselves
 The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
 75 In close recess and secret conclave sat,
 A thousand demigods on golden seats,
 Frequent and full.⁶ After short silence then
 And summons read, the great consult⁷ began.

Book 2

High on a throne of royal state, which far
 Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,¹
 Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
 Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
 5 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 Heav'n, and by success" untaught
 10 His proud imaginations" thus displayed.
 "Powers and Dominions,² deities of Heaven,
 For since no deep within her gulf can hold
 Immortal vigor, though oppressed and fall'n,
 I give not Heav'n for lost. From this descent
 15 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 Heav'n
 Did first create your leader, next, free choice,
 20 With what besides, in counsel 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. The happier state
 25 In Heav'n, 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
 30 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
 35 Will covet more. With this advantage then
 To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
 More than can be in Heav'n, we now return
 To claim our just inheritance of old,

*the outcome
 schemes*

6. Crowded together, and in full complement.

7. Consultation, often secret and seditious.

1. India. "Ormus": an island in the Persian Gulf,

modern Hormuz, famous for pearls.

2. Angelic orders.

Surer to prosper than prosperity
 Could have assured us;³ and by what best way,
 Whether of open war or covert guile,⁴
 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 Heav'n; now fiercer by despair:
 His trust was with th' Eternal to be deemed
 Equal in strength, and rather than be less
 Cared not to be at all; with that care lost
 Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse
 He recked⁰ not, and these words thereafter spake.
 "My sentence⁰ is for open war: of wiles,
 More unexpert,⁰ I boast not: them let those
 Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.
 For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
 Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
 The signal to ascend, sit lingering here
 Heav'n's fugitives, and for their dwelling place
 Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
 The prison of his tyranny who reigns
 By our delay? No, let us rather choose
 Armed with Hell flames and fury all at once
 O'er Heav'n's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
 Turning our torturers into horrid⁰ arms
 Against the Torturer; when to meet the noise
 Of his almighty engine⁰ he shall hear
 Infernal thunder, and for lightning see
 Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
 Among his angels; and his throne itself
 Mixed with Tartarean⁵ sulfur, and strange fire,
 Flis own invented torments. But perhaps
 The way seems difficult and steep to scale
 With upright wing against a higher foe.
 Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench⁰
 Of that forgetful⁰ lake benumb not still,
 That in our proper⁰ motion we ascend
 Up to our native seat: descent and fall
 To us is adverse. Who but felt of late
 When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
 Insulting,⁶ and pursued us through the deep,
 With what compulsion and laborious flight
 We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then;
 Th' event⁰ is feared; should we again provoke
 Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
 To our destruction: if there be in Hell
 Fear to be worse destroyed: what can be worse
 Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemned

cared
judgment
less experienced

bristling, horridifying

the thunderbolt

large draught
causing oblivion
natural to us

outcome

3. Note the play on "surer," "prosper," "prosperity," "assured," a favorite device of Milton's.

4. A typical epic convention (in Homer, Virgil, Tasso, and elsewhere) involved councils debating war or peace, with spokesmen on each side. Satan

offers only the option of war, open or covert.

5. Tartarus is a classical name for hell.

6. With the Latin sense of stamping on; also, triumphantly scorning.

In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
 Where pain of unextinguishable fire
 Must exercise⁰ us without hope of end *vex, afflict*

90 The vassals' of his anger, when the scourge
 Inexorably, and the torturing hour
 Calls us to penance? More destroyed than thus
 We should be quite abolished and expire.
 What fear we then? What⁰ doubt we to incense *why*

95 His utmost ire? which to the height enraged,
 Will either quite consume us, and reduce
 To nothing this essential,⁰ happier far *essence*
 Than miserable to have eternal being;
 Or if our substance be indeed divine,

100 And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
 On this side nothing;⁸ and by proof we feel
 Our power sufficient to disturb his Heav'n,
 And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
 Though inaccessible, his fatal⁹ throne:

105 Which if not victory is yet revenge."
 He ended frowning, and his look, denounced⁰ *portended.*
 Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
 To less than gods. On th' other side up rose
 Belial, in act more graceful and humane;⁰ *civil, polite*

no A fairer person lost not Heav'n; he seemed
 For dignity composed and high exploit:
 But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
 Dropped manna, and could make the worse appear
 The better reason,¹ to perplex and dash⁰ *confuse*

115 Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low;
 To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
 Timorous and slothful: yet he pleased the ear,
 And with persuasive accent thus began.
 "I should be much for open war, O Peers,

120 As not behind in hate; if what was urged
 Main reason to persuade immediate war,
 Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
 Ominous conjecture on the whole success:
 When he who most excels in fact⁰ of arms, *feat*

125 In what he counsels and in what excels
 Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
 And utter dissolution, as the scope
 Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
 First, what revenge? The tow'rs of Heav'n are filled

130 With armed watch, that render all access
 Impregnable; oft on the bordering deep
 Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing
 Scout far and wide into the realm of Night,

7. Servants, but perhaps also vessels. See Romans 9.22: "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction."

8. I.e., we cannot be worse off than we are now, and still live.

9. Established by Fate; also, deadly.

1. The Sophists, mercenary teachers of rhetoric in

ancient Greece, were denounced by Plato for making "the worse appear / The better reason." "His tongue / Dropped manna": his honeyed words seemed like the manna supplied to the Israelites in the desert.

- Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
 135 By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise
 With blackest insurrection, to confound
 Heav'n's purest light, yet our great enemy
 All incorruptible would on his throne
 Sit unpolluted, and th' ethereal mold²
 140 Incapable of stain would soon expel
 Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire
 Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope
 Is flat despair: we must exasperate
 Th' almighty victor to spend all his rage,
 145 And that must end us, that must be our cure,
 To be no more; sad cure; for who would lose,
 Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
 Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
 To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
 150 In the wide womb of uncreated night,
 Devoid of sense and motion? And who knows,
 Let this be good, whether our angry foe
 Can give it, or will ever? How he can
 Is doubtful; that he never will is sure.
 155 Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
 Belike⁰ through impotence, or unaware, *perha-ps*
 To give his enemies their wish, and end
 Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
 To punish endless? 'Wherefore cease we then?'
 160 Say they who counsel war, 'We are decreed,
 Reserved and destined to eternal woe;
 Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
 What can we suffer worse?' Is this then worst,
 Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
 165 What when we fled amain,⁰ pursued and strook⁰ *headlong / struck*
 With Heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought
 The deep to shelter us? This Hell then seemed
 A refuge from those wounds. Or when we lay
 Chained on the burning lake? That sure was worse.
 170 What if the breath that kindled those grim fires
 Awaked should blow them into sevenfold rage
 And plunge us in the flames? Or from above
 Should intermitted⁰ vengeance arm again *suspended*
 His red right hand to plague us? What if all
 175 Her⁰ stores were opened, and this firmament⁰ *Hell's/sky*
 Of Hell should spout her cataracts⁰ of fire, *cascades*
 Impendent³ horrors, threat'ning hideous fall
 One day upon our heads; while we perhaps
 Designing or exhorting glorious war,
 180 Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurled
 Each on his rock transfixed, the sport and prey
 Of racking whirlwinds, or forever sunk
 Under yon boiling ocean, **wrapped** in chains;

2. Heavenly substance, derived from "ether," the fifth and purest element, thought to be incorrupt-

ible.

3. In the Latin sense, hanging down, threatening.

There to converse with everlasting groans,
 185 Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,
 Ages of hopeless end; this would be worse.
 War therefore, open or concealed, alike
 My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile⁴
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
 190 Views all things at one view? He from Heav'n's high
 All these our motions⁰ vain, sees and derides;
 Not more almighty to resist our might
 Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
 Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heav'n
 195 Thus trampled, thus expelled to suffer here
 Chains and these torments? Better these than worse
 By my advice; since fate inevitable
 Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
 The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
 200 Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust
 That so ordains: this was at first resolved,
 If we were wise, against so great a foe
 Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
 I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
 205 And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear
 What yet they know must follow, to endure
 Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
 The sentence of their conqueror: This is now
 Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
 210 Our Supreme Foe in time may much remit
 His anger, and perhaps thus far removed
 Not mind us not offending, satisfied
 With what is punished; whence these raging fires
 Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
 215 Our purer essence then will overcome
 Their noxious vapor, or inured⁰ not feel,
 Or changed at length, and to the place conformed
 In temper and in nature, will receive
 Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
 220 This horror will grow mild, this darkness light,
 Besides what hope the never-ending flight
 Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
 Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
 For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,⁵
 225 If we procure not to ourselves more woe."
 Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's garb,
 Counseled ignoble ease and peaceful sloth,
 Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.
 "Either to disenthroned the King of Heav'n
 230 We war, if war be best, or to regain
 Our own right lost: him to unthroned we then
 May hope when everlasting Fate shall yield
 To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:

*proposals**accustomed*

4. The verb "accomplish" or "achieve" is understood.

5. I.e., from the point of view of happiness, the devils are in an ill state, but it could be worse.

The former vain to hope argues⁰ as vain *proves*
 235 The latter: for what place can be for us
 Within Heav'n's bound, unless Heav'n's Lord supreme
 We overpower? Suppose he should relent
 And publish grace to all, on promise made
 Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
 240 Stand in his presence humble, and receive
 Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne
 With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
 Forced hallelujahs; while he lordly sits
 Our envied Sov'reign, and his altar breathes
 245 Ambrosial⁰ odors and ambrosial flowers, *fragrant, immortal*
 Our servile offerings. This must be our task
 In Heav'n, this our delight; how wearisome
 Eternity so spent in worship paid
 To whom we hate. Let us not then pursue
 250 By force impossible, by leave obtained
 Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our state
 Of splendid vassalage,⁰ but rather seek *servitude*
 Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
 Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
 255 Free, and to none accountable, preferring
 Hard liberty before the easy yoke
 Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
 Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
 Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse
 260 We can create, and in what place soe'er
 Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain
 Through labor and endurance. This deep world
 Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
 Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'n's all-ruling Sire
 265 Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,
 And with the majesty of darkness round
 Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar
 Must'ring their rage, and Heav'n resembles Hell?
 As he our darkness, cannot we his light
 270 Imitate when we please? This desert soil
 Wants⁰ not her hidden luster, gems and gold; *lacks*
 Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
 Magnificence; and what can Heav'n show more?
 Our torments also may in length of time
 275 Become our elements, these piercing fires *constitution*
 As soft as now severe, our temper⁰ changed
 Into their temper; which must needs remove
 The sensible of pain.⁶ All things invite
 To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
 280 Of order, how in safety best we may
 Compose⁰ our present evils, with regard *come to terms with*
 Of what we are and where, dismissing quite
 All thoughts of war: ye have what I advise."
 He scarce had finished, when such murmur filled

6. Pain felt by the senses.

285 Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
 The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long
 Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
 Seafaring men o'erwatched," whose bark by chance *worn out from watching*
 Or pinnacle" anchors in a craggy bay *boat*
 290 After the tempest: such applause was heard
 As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased.
 Advising peace: for such another *field"* *battlefield*
 They dreaded worse than Hell: so much the fear
 Of thunder and the sword of Michael⁷
 295 Wrought still within them; and no less desire
 To found this nether empire, which might rise
 By policy," and long process of time, *statecraft*
 In emulation opposite to Heav'n.
 Which then Beelzebub perceived, than whom,
 300 Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
 Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed
 A pillar of state; deep on his front" engraven *brow*
 Deliberation sat and public care;
 And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
 305 Majestic though in ruin: sage he stood
 With Atlantean⁸ shoulders fit to bear
 The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
 Drew audience and attention still as night
 Or summer's noontide air, while thus he spake.
 310 "Thrones and imperial Powers, offspring of Heav'n
 Ethereal Virtues; or these titles⁹ now
 Must we renounce, and changing style" be called *title*
 Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
 Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
 315 A growing empire. Doubtless! while we dream,
 And know not that the King of Heav'n hath doomed
 This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
 From Heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league
 320 Banded against his throne, but to remain
 In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,
 Under th' inevitable curb, reserved
 His captive multitude: for he, be sure,
 In height or depth, still first and last will reign
 325 Sole King, and of his kingdom lose no part
 By our revolt, but over Hell extend
 His empire, and with iron scepter rule
 Us here, as with his golden those in Heav'n.
 What" sit we then projecting peace and war? *why*
 330 War hath determined us,¹ and foiled with loss
 Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
 Vouchsafed" or sought; for what peace will be giv'n *granted*
 To us enslaved, but custody severe,
 And stripes, and arbitrary punishment

7. The warrior angel, chief of the angelic armies.

8. Worthy of Atlas, the Titan who as a punishment for rebellion was condemned to hold up the heavens on his shoulders.

9. The official titles of angelic orders.

1. i.e., war has decided the question for us, but also limited us.

Inflicted? And what peace can we return,
 But, to our power,² hostility and hate,
 Untamed reluctance,⁰ and revenge though slow, *resistance*
 Yet ever plotting how the conqueror least
 May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
 In doing what we most in suffering feel?
 Nor will occasion want,⁰ nor shall we need *be lacking*
 With dangerous expedition to invade
 Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
 Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
 Some easier enterprise? There is a place
 (If ancient and prophetic fame⁰ in Heav'n *rumor*
 Err not) another world, the happy seat
 Of some new race called Man, about this time
 To be created like to us, though less
 In power and excellence, but favored more
 Of him who rules above; so was his will
 Pronounced among the gods, and by an oath,
 That shook Heav'n's whole circumference, confirmed.
 Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
 What creatures there inhabit, of what mold,
 Or substance, how endued,⁰ and what their power, *endowed*
 And where their weakness, how attempted⁰ best, *attacked, tempted*
 By force or subtlety. Though Heav'n be shut,
 And Heav'n's high arbitrator sit secure
 In his own strength, this place may lie exposed,
 The utmost border of his kingdom, left
 To their defense who hold it:³ here perhaps
 Some advantageous act may be achieved
 By sudden onset, either with hellfire
 To waste⁰ his whole creation, or possess *lay waste*
 All as our own, and drive as we were driven,
 The puny habitants, or if not drive,
 Seduce them to our party, that their God
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
 Abolish his own works.⁴ This would surpass
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
 In our confusion, and our joy upraise
 In his disturbance; when his darling sons
 Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
 Their frail original,⁰ and faded bliss, *originator, parent*
 Faded so soon. Advise⁰ if this be worth *consider*
 Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
 Hatching vain empires." Thus Beelzebub
 Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devised
 By Satan, and in part proposed: for whence,
 But from the author of all ill could spring
 So deep a malice, to confound⁰ the race *ruin*
 Of mankind in one root,⁵ and earth with Hell
 To mingle and involve, done all to spite

2. I.e., to the best of our power.

3. To be defended by the occupants.

4. Cf. Genesis 6.7: "And the Lord said, i will destroy man [and all other creatures]; for it repen-

teth me that I have made them."

5. Adam, the first man, is the "root" of the human race.

- 385 The great Creator? But their spite still serves
 His glory to augment. The bold design
 Pleas'd highly those infernal States," and joy *nobles*
 Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
 They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.
- 390 "Well have ye judged, well ended long debate,
 Synod of gods, and like to what ye are,
 Great things resolved, which from the lowest deep
 Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
 Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
- 395 Of those bright confines, whence with neighboring arms
 And opportune excursion we may chance
 Reenter Heav'n; or else in some mild zone
 Dwell not unvisited of Heav'n's fair light
 Secure, and at the bright ning orient⁰ beam *lustrous*
- ^∞ Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious air,
 To heal the scar of these corrosive fires
 Shall breathe her balm. But first whom shall we send
 In search of this new world, whom shall we find
 Sufficient? Who shall tempt⁰ with wand'ring feet *attempt, venture*
- 405 The dark unbottomed infinite abyss
 And through the palpable obscure⁶ find out
 His uncouth⁰ way, or spread his aery flight *unknown*
 Upborne with indefatigable wings
 Over the vast abrupt,⁷ ere he arrive
- 410 The happy isle? What strength, what art can then
 Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
 Through the strict senteries⁰ and stations thick *sentries*
 Of angels watching round? Here he had need
 All circumspection, and we now no less
- 415 Choice⁰ in our suffrage; for on whom we send, *discrimination*
 The weight of all and our last hope relies."
 This said, he sat; and expectation held
 His look suspense,⁸ awaiting who appeared
 To second, or oppose, or undertake
- 420 The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,
 Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
 In other's count'nance read his own dismay
 Astonished. None among the choice and prime
 Of those Heav'n-warring champions could be found
- 425 So hardy as to proffer or accept
 Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised
 Above his fellows, with monarchical pride
 Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake.
- 430 "O progeny of Heav'n, empyreal Thrones,
 With reason hath deep silence and demur⁰ *hesitation*
 Seized us, though undismayed: long is the way
 And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light;
 Our prison strong, this huge convex of fire,

6. Darkness so thick it can be felt (cf. Exodus 10.21).

7. Chaos, a striking example of sound imitating

sense.

8. I.e., he sat waiting in suspense.

- 435 Outrageous to devour, immures us round
 Ninefold,⁹ and gates of burning adamant
 Barred over us prohibit all egress.
 These passed, if any pass, the void profound
 Of unessential Night receives him next
- 440 Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being
 Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.¹
 If thence he scape into whatever world,
 Or unknown region, what remains him less^o *awaits him except*
 Than unknown dangers and as hard escape?
- 445 But I should ill become this throne, O Peers, ·
 And this imperial sov'reignty, adorned
 With splendor, armed with power, if aught proposed
 And judged of public moment,^o in the shape *importance*
 Of difficulty or danger could deter
- 450 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
 These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
 Refusing^o to accept as great a share *if I refuse*
 Of hazard as of honor, due alike
 To him who reigns, and so much to him due
- 455 Of hazard more, as he above the rest
 High honored sits? Go therefore mighty Powers,
 Terror of Heav'n, though fall'n; intend^o at home, *consider*
 While here shall be our home, what best may ease
 The present misery, and render Hell
- 460 More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
 To respite or deceive, or slack the pain
 Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
 Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
 Through all the coasts^o of dark destruction seek *districts*
- 465 Deliverance for us all: this enterprise
 None shall partake with me." Thus saying rose
 The monarch, and prevented^o all reply, *forestalled*
 Prudent, lest from his resolution raised^o *roused*
 Others among the chief might offer now
- 470 (Certain to be refused) what erst^o they feared; *formerly*
 And so refused might in opinion stand
 His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
 Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
 Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice
- 475 Forbidding; and at once with him they rose;
 Their rising all at once was as the sound
 Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
 With awful^o reverence prone; and as a god *full of awe*
 Extol him equal to the Highest in Heav'n:
- 480 Nor failed they to express how much they praised,
 That for the general safety he despised
 His own: for neither do the Spirits damned
 Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast

9. Hell's fiery walls and gates have nine thicknesses (see lines 645ff.). "Adamant" (following): a fabulously hard metal.

1. Chaos is a womb in which all potential forms fragment (see lines 895ff.) "Unessential" (line 439): i.e., having no real essence.

Their specious" deeds on earth, which glory excites,
 Or close" ambition varnished o'er with zeal. *pretending to worth*
 Thus they their doubtful consultations dark *secret*
 Ended rejoicing in their matchless chief:
 As when from mountaintops the dusky clouds
 Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread
 Heav'n's cheerful face, the louring element" *threatening sky*
 Scowls o'er the darkened landscape snow, or show'r;
 If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
 Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
 The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
 O shame to men! Devil with devil damned
 Firm concord holds, men only disagree
 Of creatures rational, though under hope
 Of heavenly grace: and God proclaiming peace,
 Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
 Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
 Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
 As if (which might induce us to accord)
 Man had not hellish foes enow" besides, *enough*
 That day and night for his destruction wait.
 The Stygian" council thus dissolved; and forth *Styx-like, hellish*
 In order came the grand infernal peers:
 Midst came their mighty paramount," and seemed *supreme ruler*
 Alone th' antagonist of Heav'n, nor less
 Than Hell's dread emperor with pomp supreme,
 And godlike imitated state; him round
 A globe" of fiery Seraphim enclosed *hand, circle*
 With bright emblazonry and horrent² arms.
 Then of their session ended they bid cry
 With trumpet's regal sound the great result:
 Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim
 Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy³
 By herald's voice explained; the hollow abyss
 Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell
 With deaf'ning shout, returned them loud acclaim.
 Thence more at ease their minds and somewhat raised
 By false presumptuous hope, the ranged" powers *arrayed in ranks*
 Disband, and wand'ring, each his several way
 Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
 Leads him perplexed, where he may likeliest find
 Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
 The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
 Part on the plain, or in the air sublime" *aloft*
 Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
 As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields;⁴
 Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal⁵
 With rapid wheels, or fronted" brigades form. *confronting*

2. **Bristling.** "Emblazonry": decorated shields.

3. **Trumpets** (made of the goldlike alloy brass).

4. **The Olympic games** were held at Olympia, the Pythian games at Delphi. Games celebrating a

(usually dead) hero are an epic convention.

5. **To drive a chariot** as close as possible around a column without hitting it.

As when to warn proud cities war appears
 Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush
 To battle in the clouds,⁶ before each van^o *vanguard*
 Prick^o forth the aery knights, and couch their spears *spur*
 Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
 From either end of Heav'n the welkin^o burns. *sky*
 Others with vast Typhoean⁷ rage more fell^o *fierce*
 Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
 In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
 As when Alcides from Oechalia crowned
 With conquest, felt th' envenomed robe, and tore
 Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
 And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw
 Into th' Euboic sea.⁸ Others more mild,
 Retreated in a silent valley, sing
 With notes angelical to many a harp
 Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall
 By doom of battle; and complain that fate
 Free virtue should enthrall to force or chance.
 Their song was partial,⁹ but the harmony *prejudiced*
 (What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)
 Suspended^o Hell, and took with ravishment *held in suspense*
 The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
 (For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense)
 Others apart sat on a hill retired,
 In thoughts more elevatèd, and reasoned high
 Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
 Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
 And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.
 Of good and evil much they argued then,
 Of happiness and final misery,
 Passion and apathy,⁹ and glory and shame,
 Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy:
 Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm
 Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
 Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured^o breast *hardened*
 With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
 Another part in squadrons and gross^o bands, *solid, dense*
 On bold adventure to discover wide
 That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
 Might yield them easier habitation, bend
 Four ways their flying march, along the banks
 Of four infernal rivers that disgorge
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams:¹
 Abhorred Styx the flood of deadly hate,

6. The appearance of warfare in the skies, reported before several notable battles, portends trouble on earth.

7. Like that of Typhon, the hundred-headed Titan (see 1.199).

8. Wearing a poisoned robe given him in a deception, Hercules ("Alcides") in his dying agonies threw his beloved companion Lichas, along with a good part of Mount Oeta, into the Euboean Sea,

near Thermopylae.

9. The Stoic goal of freedom from passion.

1. These four rivers are traditional in hellish geography. Milton distinguishes them by the original meanings of their Greek names: Styx means "hateful," Acheron "woeful," etc. Lethe is "far off" and quite different from the others, oblivion being a desired state in Hell.

Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
 Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
 580 Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon
 Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
 Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
 Lethe the river of oblivion rolls
 Her wat'ry labyrinth, whereof who drinks,
 585 Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
 Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
 Beyond this flood a frozen continent
 Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
 Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
 590 Thaws not, but gathers heap,² and ruin seems
 Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,
 A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog³
 Betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,
 Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
 595 Burns froze,^o and cold performs th' effect of fire. frozen
 Thither by harpy-footed⁴ Furies haled,^o driven
 At certain revolutions^o all the damned recurring times
 Are brought: and feel by turns the bitter change
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
 600 From beds of raging fire to starve^o in ice make numb
 Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
 Immovable, infixed, and frozen round,
 Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire.
 They ferry over this Lethean sound
 605 Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
 And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
 The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
 In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
 All in one moment, and so near the brink;
 610 But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt
 Medusa⁵ with Gorgonian terror guards
 The ford, and of itself the water flies
 All taste of living wight,^o as once it fled creature
 The lip of Tantalus.⁶ Thus roving on
 615 In confused march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands
 With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast
 Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found
 No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
 They passed, and many a region dolorous,
 620 O'er many a frozen, many a fiery alp,^o volcano
 Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
 A universe of death, which God by curse
 Created evil, for evil only good,
 Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,

2. In a heap, resembling the ruin of an old building ("ancient pile." next line).

3. Lake Serbonis, once famous for its quicksands, lies near the city of Damiatta ("Damiata," next line), just east of the Nile.

4. Taloned. In Greek mythology the Harpies (monsters with women's faces) carried off individ-

uals to the Furies, who avenged crimes.

5. One of the three Gorgons, women with snaky hair, scaly bodies, and boar's tusks, the sight of whose faces changed men to stone.

6. Tantalus, afflicted with a raging thirst, stood in the middle of a lake, the water of which always receded when he tried to drink (hence, "tantalyze").

Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
 Abominable, inutterable, and worse
 Than fables yet have feigned, or fear conceived,
 Gorgons and Hydras, and Chimeras⁷ dire.
 Meanwhile the Adversary⁸ of God and man,
 Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,
 Puts on swift wings,⁰ and towards the gates of Hell *flies* *swiftly*
 Explores his solitary flight; sometimes
 He scours the right-hand coast, sometimes the left,
 Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
 Up to the fiery concave⁰ tow'ring high. *vault*
 As when far off at sea a fleet descried
 Hangs on the clouds, by equinoctial⁰ winds *from the equator*
 Close sailing from Bengala,⁰ or the isles *Bengal*
 Of Ternate and Tidore,⁹ whence merchants bring
 Their spicy drugs: they on the trading flood
 Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
 Ply stemming nightly toward the pole:¹ so seemed
 Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear
 Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid roof,
 And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass,
 Three iron, three of adamantine rock,
 Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,
 Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat
 On either side a formidable shape;²
 The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair,
 But ended foul in many a scaly fold
 Voluminous and vast, a serpent armed
 With mortal sting: about her middle round
 A cry⁰ of hellhounds never ceasing barked *pack*
 With wide Cerberean³ mouths full loud, and rung
 A hideous peal: yet, when they list,⁰ would creep, *wish*
 If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,
 And kennel there, yet there still barked and howled,
 Within unseen. Far less abhorred than these
 Vexed Scylla⁴ bathing in the sea that parts
 Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
 Nor uglier follow the night-hag,⁵ when called
 In secret, riding through the air she comes
 Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
 With Lapland witches, while the laboring⁰ moon *troubled*
 Eclipses at their charms.⁰ The other shape, *magic*

7. The Hydra was a serpent whose multiple heads grew back when severed; the Chimera was a fire-breathing creature, part lion, part dragon, part goat.

8. *Satan* in Hebrew means "adversary."

9. Two of the Moluccas, or Spice Islands, modern Indonesia.

1. The South Pole. "Ethiopian": the Indian Ocean. "The Cape" is the Cape of Good Hope.

2. The allegorical figures of Sin and Death are founded on James 1.15: "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." But the incestuous relations of Sin and Death are Milton's own inven-

tion. Physically, Sin is modeled on Virgil's or Ovid's Scylla, with some touches adopted from Spenser's Error. Death is a traditional figure, vague and vast.

3. Like Cerberus, the multiheaded hound of Hell.
 4. Circe, out of jealousy, threw poison into the water where Scylla bathed, in the straits between Calabria and Sicily ("Trinacria," next line); the poison caused Scylla to develop a ring of barking, snapping dogs around her waist.

5. Hecate (three syllables), goddess of sorcery. She attends orgies of witches in Lapland (line 665, famous for witchcraft), drawn by the blood of babies sacrificed for the occasion.

If shape it might be called that shape had none
 Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb,
 Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
 670 For each seemed either; black it stood as night,
 Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as hell,
 And shook a dreadful dart; what seemed his head
 The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
 Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
 675 The monster moving onward came as fast
 With horrid strides. Hell trembled as he strode.
 Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admired,⁶ *wondered*
 Admired, not feared; God and his Son except,
 Created thing naught valued he nor shunned;
 680 And with disdainful look thus first began.
 "Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,
 That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
 Thy miscreated front⁰ athwart my way *misshapen face*
 To yonder gates? Through them I mean to pass,
 685 That be assured, without leave asked of thee:
 Retire, or taste⁰ thy folly, and learn by proof, *experience*
 Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heav'n."
 To whom the goblin full of wrath replied:
 "Art thou that traitor angel, art thou he,
 690 Who first broke peace in Heav'n and faith, till then
 Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
 Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's sons
 Conjured⁰ against the Highest, for which both thou *sivorn together*
 And they outcast from God, are here condemned
 695 To waste eternal days in woe and pain?
 And reckon'st thou thyself with Spirits of Heav'n,
 Hell-doomed, and breath'st defiance here and scorn,
 Where I reign king, and to enrage thee more,
 Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
 700 False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings,
 Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
 Thy ling'ring, or with one stroke of this dart
 Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before."
 So spake the grisly terror, and in shape,
 705 So speaking and so threat'ning, grew tenfold
 More dreadful and deform: on th' other side
 Incensed with indignation Satan stood
 Unterrified, and like a comet burned
 That fires the length of Ophiuchus⁶ huge
 710 In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid⁰ hair *bristling*
 Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
 Leveled his deadly aim; their fatal hands
 No second stroke intend, and such a frown
 Each cast at th' other, as when, two black clouds
 715 With Heav'n's artillery fraught,⁷ come rattling on
 Over the Caspian,⁸ then stand front to front

6. A vast northern constellation, "the Serpent Bearer."

7. Loaded with thunderbolts.

8. The Caspian is a particularly stormy area.

Hov'ring a space, till winds the signal blow
 To join their dark encounter in mid-air:
 So frowned the mighty combatants, that Hell
 720 Grew darker at their frown, so matched they stood;
 For never but once more was either like
 To meet so great a foe.⁹ And now great deeds
 Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,
 Had not the snaky sorceress that sat
 725 Fast by Hell gate, and kept the fatal key,
 Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rushed between.
 "O father, what intends thy hand," she cried,
 "Against thy only son?¹ What fury O son,
 Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
 730 Against thy father's head? And know'st for whom;
 For him who sits above and laughs the while
 At thee ordained his drudge, to execute
 Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids,
 His wrath which one day will destroy ye both."
 735 She spake, and at her words the hellish pest
 Forbore, then these to her Satan returned.
 "So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
 Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
 Prevented⁰ spares to tell thee yet by deeds
 740 What it intends; till first I know of thee,
 What thing thou art, thus double-formed, and why
 In this infernal vale first met thou call'st
 Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son?
 I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
 745 Sight more detestable than him and thee."
 'T' whom thus the portress of Hell gate replied:
 "Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
 Now in thine eye so foul, once deemed so fair
 In Heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
 750 Of all the Seraphim with thee combined
 In bold conspiracy against Heav'n's King,
 All on a sudden miserable pain
 Surprised thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
 In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
 755 Threw forth, till on the left side op'ning wide,
 Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
 Then shining heav'nly fair, a goddess armed
 Out of thy head I sprung:² amazement seized
 All th' host of Heav'n; back they recoiled afraid
 760 At first, and called me Sin, and for a sign
 Portentous held me; but familiar grown,
 I pleased, and with attractive graces won
 The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
 Thysself in me thy perfect image viewing
 765 Becam'st enamored, and such joy thou took'st

forestalled

9. I.e., the Son of God.

1. Sin, Death, and Satan, in their various inter-relations, parody obscenely the relations between

God and the Son, Adam and Eve.

2. As Athena sprang full grown from the head of Zeus.

With me in secret, that my womb conceived
 A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,
 And fields were fought in Heav'n; wherein remained
 (For what could else) to our almighty foe
 770 Clear victory, to our part loss and rout
 Through all the empyrean: down they fell
 Driv'n headlong from the pitch^o of Heaven, down *summit*
 Into this deep, and in the general fall
 I also; at which time this powerful key
 775 Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep
 These gates forever shut, which none can pass
 Without my op'ning. Pensive here I sat
 Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb
 Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown
 780 Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.
 At last this odious offspring whom thou seest
 Thine own begotten, breaking violent way
 Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
 Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
 785 Transformed: but he my inbred enemy
 Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart
 Made to destroy: I fled, and cried out 'Death';
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sighed
 From all her caves, and back resounded 'Death.'
 790 I fled, but he pursued (though more, it seems,
 Inflamed with lust than rage) and swifter far,
 Me overtook his mother all dismayed,
 And in embraces forcible and foul
 Engend'ring with me, of that rape begot
 795 These yelling monsters that with ceaseless cry
 Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceived
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
 To me, for when they list,^o into the womb *wish*
 That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw
 800 My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth
 Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
 That rest or intermission none I find.
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits
 Grim Death my son and foe, who sets them on,
 805 And me his parent would full soon devour
 For want of other prey, but that he knows
 His end with mine involved; and knows that I
 Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,^o *poison*
 Whenever that shall be; so fate pronounced.
 810 But thou O father, I forewarn thee, shun
 His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
 To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
 Though tempered heav'nly, for that mortal dint,^o *blow*
 Save he who reigns above, none can resist."
 815 She finished, and the subtle Fiend his lore^o *lesson*
 Soon learned, now milder, and thus answered smooth.
 "Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
 And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge

Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys
 820 Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
 Befall'n us unforeseen, unthought of, know
 I come no enemy, but to set free
 From out this dark and dismal house of pain,
 Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly host
 825 Of Spirits that in our just pretenses⁰ armed *claims*
 Fell with us from on high: from them I go
 This uncouth errand³ sole, and one for all
 Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
 Th' unfounded⁰ deep, and through the void immense *bottomless*
 830 To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold
 Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
 Created vast and round, a place of bliss
 In the purlieu⁰ of Heav'n, and therein placed *outskirts*
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply
 835 Perhaps our vacant room, though more removed,
 Lest Heav'n surcharged⁰ with potent multitude *overcrowded*
 Might hap to move new broils:⁰ be this or aught *controversies*
 Than this more secret now designed, I haste
 To know, and this once known, shall soon return,
 840 And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
 Wing silently the buxom⁰ air, embalmed⁰ *yielding / made fragrant*
 With odors; there ye shall be fed and filled
 Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey."
 845 He ceased, for both seemed highly pleased, and Death
 Grinned horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
 His famine⁰ should be filled, and blessed his maw⁰ *ravenous hunger / belly*
 Destined to that good hour: no less rejoiced
 His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire.
 850 "The key of this infernal pit by due,
 And by command of Heav'n's all-powerful King
 I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
 These adamantine gates; against all force
 Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
 855 Fearless to be o'ermatched by living might.
 But what owe I to his commands above
 Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
 Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
 To sit in hateful office here confined,
 860 Inhabitant of Heav'n, and heav'nly-born,
 Here in perpetual agony and pain,
 With terrors and with clamors compassed round
 Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
 Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
 865 My being gav'st me; whom should I obey
 But thee, whom follow? Thou wilt bring me soon
 To that new world of light and bliss, among
 The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign

At thy right hand voluptuous,⁴ as beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end."

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And towards the gate rolling her bestial train,⁵
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew,
Which but herself not all the Stygian powers⁰
Could once have moved; then in the keyhole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens: on a sudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus.⁰ She opened, but to shut
Excelled⁰ her power; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a bannered host
Under spread ensigns⁰ marching might pass through
With horse and chariots ranked in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth
Cast forth redounding⁰ smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes in sudden view appear
The secrets of the hoary⁰ deep, a dark
Illimitable⁰ ocean without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,
And time and place are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry, four champions fierce
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms;⁶ they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light-armed or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumbered as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,⁷
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise⁸
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment; Chaos⁹ umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss,
The womb of Nature and perhaps her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes⁰ mixed

armies of Hell

*Hell
exceeded*

flags, standards

billowing

*ancient
without limit*

seeds

4. As the Son sits at God's right hand. Sin will at Satan's, a blasphemous parody of the Apostles' Creed and of *Paradise Lost* 3.250—80.

5. I.e. propelling her yelping offspring.

6. These subatomic qualities combine together in nature to form the four elements, fire, earth, water, and air, but they struggle endlessly in Chaos, where the atoms of these elements remain unde-

veloped (in "embryo").

7. Cities built on the shifting sands of North Africa.

8. Give weight to. "Levied": both enlisted and raised up.

9. Chaos is both the place where confusion reigns and personified confusion itself.

Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain
 His dark materials to create more worlds,
 Into this wild abyss the wary Fiend
 Stood on the brink of Hell and looked a while,
 Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith⁰ *channel, firth*
 He had to cross. Nor was his ear less pealed⁰ *dinned*
 With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
 Great things with small) than when Bellona¹ storms,
 With all her battering engines bent to raze
 Some capital city; or less than if this frame⁰ *structure*
 Of Heav'n were falling, and these elements
 In mutiny had from her axle torn
 The steadfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans⁰ *wings*
 He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
 Uplifted spurns the ground, thence many a league
 As in a cloudy chair ascending rides
 Audacious, but that seat soon failing, meets
 A vast vacuity: all unawares
 Flutt'ring his pennons² vain plumb down he drops
 Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour
 Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
 The strong rebuff³ of some tumultuous cloud
 Instinct⁰ with fire and niter⁰ hurried him *counterblast*
 As many miles aloft: that fury stayed, *filled / salt-peter*
 Quenched in a boggy Syrtis,³ neither sea,
 Nor good dry land: nigh foundered⁰ on he fares, *drowned*
 Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
 Half flying; behoves⁰ him now both oar and sail. *befits*
 As when a griffin through the wilderness
 With winged course o'er hill or moory⁰ dale, *marshy*
 Pursues the Arimasian, who by stealth
 Had from his wakeful custody purloined
 The guarded gold:⁴ so eagerly the Fiend
 O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
 With head, hands, wings, or feet pursues his way,
 And swims or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies:
 At length a universal hubbub wild
 Of stunning sounds and voices all confused
 Borne through the hollow dark assaults his ear
 With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,
 Undaunted to meet there whatever Power
 Or Spirit of the nethermost abyss
 Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
 Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
 Bordering on light; when straight behold the throne
 Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread
 Wide on the wasteful deep; with him enthroned

1. Goddess of war.

2. Useless wings ("pinions").

3. Quicksand in North African gulfs, famous for their shifting sandbars.

4. Griffins, mythical creatures, half-eagle, half-lion, hoarded gold that was stolen from them by the one-eyed Arimaspians.

Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
 The consort of his reign; and by them stood
 Orcus and Ades,⁵ and the dreaded name
 Of Demogorgon,⁶ Rumor next and Chance,
 And Tumult and Confusion all embroiled.
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus. "Ye Powers
 And Spirits of this nethermost abyss,
 Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy,
 With purpose to explore or to disturb
 The secrets of your realm, but by constraint
 Wand'ring this darksome desert, as my way
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
 Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek
 What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds

Confine with⁰ Heav'n; or if some other place *border on*
 From your dominion won, th' Ethereal King
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive
 I travel this profound;⁰ direct my course; *deep pit*
 Directed, no mean recompense it brings
 To your behoof,⁰ if I that region lost, *on your behalf*
 All usurpation thence expelled, reduce
 To her original darkness and your sway
 (Which is my present journey)⁷ and once more
 Erect the standard there of ancient Night;
 Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge."

Thus Satan; and him thus the anarch⁸ old *disordered*
 With falt'ring speech and visage incomposed⁰
 Answered. "I know thee, stranger, who thou art,
 That mighty leading angel, who of late
 Made head against Heav'n's King, though overthrown.
 I saw and heard, for such a numerous host
 Fled not in silence through the frightened deep
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
 Confusion worse confounded; and Heav'n gates
 Poured out by millions her victorious bands
 Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
 Keep residence; if all I can will serve,
 That little which is left so to defend,
 Encroached on still⁰ through our intestine broils⁰ *constantly / civil wars*
 Weak'ning the scepter of old Night: first Hell
 Your dungeon stretching far and wide beneath;
 Now lately heaven and earth,⁹ another world
 Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain
 To that side Heav'n from whence your legions fell:
 If that way be your walk, you have not far;
 So much the nearer danger; go and speed;
 Havoc and spoil and ruin are my gain."

He ceased; and Satan stayed not to reply,

5. Latin and Greek names of Pluto, god of Hell.

6. A mysterious deity associated with Fate; Milton elsewhere identifies him with Chaos.

7. The purpose of my present journey.

8. Chaos is not monarch of his realm but, appropriately, "anarch," nonruler.

9. The cosmos, with its own "heaven" (not the empyrean, the Heaven of God and the angels).

But glad that now his sea should find a shore,
 With fresh alacrity and force renewed
 Springs upward like a pyramid of fire
 Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
 1015 Of fighting elements, on all sides round
 Environed wins his way; harder beset
 And more endangered, than when Argo passed
 Through Bosphorus betwixt the justling rocks:¹
 Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunned
 1020 Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steered.²
 So he with difficulty and labor hard
 Moved on, with difficulty and labor he;
 But he once passed, soon after when man fell,
 Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain⁰ *at full speed*
 1025 Following his track, such was the will of Heav'n,
 Paved after him a broad and beaten way
 Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
 Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length
 From Hell continued reaching th' utmost orb³
 1030 Of this frail world; by which the Spirits perverse
 With easy intercourse pass to and fro
 To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
 God and good angels guard by special grace.
 But now at last the sacred influence
 1035 Of light appears, and from the walls of Heav'n
 Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night
 A glimmering dawn; here Nature first begins
 Her farthest verge,⁰ and Chaos to retire *threshold*
 As from her outmost works a broken foe
 1040 With tumult less and with less hostile din,
 That⁰ Satan with less toil, and now with ease *so that*
 Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light
 And like a weather-beaten vessel holds⁰ *makes for*
 Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
 1045 Or in the emptier waste, resembling air
 Weighs⁰ his spread wings, at leisure to behold *balances*
 Far off th' empyreal Heav'n, extended wide
 In circuit, undetermined square or round,
 With opal tow'rs and battlements adorned
 1050 Of living sapphire, once his native seat;
 And fast by hanging in a golden chain
 This pendent world,⁰ in bigness as a star *universe*
 Of smallest magnitude close by the moon.
 Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,
 1055 Accursed, and in a cursed hour, he hies.

1. Jason and his fifty Argonauts, sailing through the Bosphorus to the Black Sea in pursuit of the Golden Fleece, had to pass through the Symplegades, or clashing rocks.

2. Homer's Ulysses, sailing where Italy almost

touches Sicily, had to pass between Charybdis, a whirlpool, and Scylla, a monster who devoured six of his men (not another whirlpool, as used here).

3. The bridge ends on the outermost sphere of the ten concentric spheres making up the universe.

Book 3

Hail holy Light, offspring of Heav'n firstborn,
 Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam
 May I express thee unblamed?¹ Since God is light,
 And never but in unapproached light
 Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate. *uncreated, eternal*
 Or hear'st thou rather² pure ethereal stream,
 Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,
 Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
 Of God, as with a mantle didst invest⁰ *cover*
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless infinite.
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
 Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detained
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight
 Through utter and through middle darkness³ borne
 With other notes than to th' Orphean lyre⁴
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,
 Taught by the Heav'nly Muse⁵ to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to reascend,
 Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sov'reign vital lamp; but thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
 So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orbs,
 Or dim suffusion⁶ veiled. Yet not the more
 Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
 Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
 Thee Sion⁷ and the flow'ry brooks beneath
 That wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow,
 Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget⁰ *always remember*
 Those other two equaled with me in fate,⁸
 So were I equaled with them in renown,
 Blind Thamyris and blind Maeonides,
 And Tiresias and Phineus prophets old,⁹
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
 Harmonious numbers;⁰ as the wakeful bird⁰ *verses/nightingale*
 Sings darkling,⁰ and in shadiest covert hid
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year *in the dark*

1. This second proem or invocation (3.1—55) is a hymn to Light, addressed either as the first creature of God or as coeternal with God, with allusion to 1 John 1.5, "God is Light, and in him is no darkness at all."

2. I.e., would you rather be called (a Latinism).

3. Hell is "utter" (i.e., outer) darkness; Chaos is middle darkness.

4. One of the so-called Orphic hymns is "To Night," and Orpheus himself visited the underworld. But Milton's song, Christian and epic, is of a different kind.

5. Urania (though not named until 7.1).

6. Cataract—*suffusio nigra*. "Drop serene": *gutta serena*, the medical term for Milton's kind of blindness.

7. The mountain of scriptural inspiration, with its brooks Siloa and Kidron.

8. I.e., blind like me.

9. Thamyris was a blind Thracian poet who lived before Homer; "Maeonides" is an epithet of Homer; Tiresias was the blind prophet of Thebes; Phineus was a blind king and seer (*Aeneid* 3).

Seasons return, but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
 But cloud instead, and ever-during^o dark *everlasting*
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
 Cut off, and for the book of knowledge^o fair *Book of Nature*
 Presented with a universal blank
 Of nature's works to me expunged and razed,^o *erased*
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
 So much the rather thou celestial Light
 Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
 Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
 Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
 Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Now had the Almighty Father from above,
 From the pure empyrean^o where he sits *Heaven*
 High throned above all height, bent down his eye,
 His own works and their works at once to view:
 Above him all the sanctities^o of Heaven *angels*
 Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received
 Beatitude past utterance; on his right
 The radiant image of his glory sat,
 His only Son; on earth he first beheld
 Our two first parents, yet the only two
 Of mankind, in the happy garden placed,
 Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
 Uninterrupted joy, unrivaled love
 In blissful solitude; he then surveyed
 Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
 Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side Night
 In the dun^o air sublime,^o and ready now *dusky / aloft*
 To stoop^o with wearied wings, and willing feet *swoop down*
 On the bare outside of this world,^o that seemed *universe*
 Firm land embosomed without firmament,^o *atmosphere*
 Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
 Him God beholding from his prospect high,
 Wherein past, present, future he beholds,
 Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake.

"Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage
 Transports our Adversary, whom no bounds
 Prescribed, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
 Heaped on him there, nor yet the main^o abyss *vast*
 Wide interrupt¹ can hold; so bent he seems *flow back*
 On desperate revenge, that shall redound^o
 Upon his own rebellious head. And now
 Through all restraint broke loose he wings his way
 Not far off Heav'n, in the precincts of light,
 Directly towards the new-created world,
 And man there placed, with purpose to essay^o *try*
 If him by force he can destroy, or worse,

1. Forming a wide breach between Heaven and Hell.

By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert;
 For man will hearken to his glozing⁰ lies, *flattering*
 And easily transgress the sole command,
 95 Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall
 He and his faithless progeny: whose fault?
 Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
 All he could have; I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 100 Such I created all th' ethereal Powers
 And Spirits, both them who stood and them who failed;
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have giv'n sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
 105 Where only what they needs must do, appeared,
 Not what they would? What praise could they receive?
 What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
 When will and reason (reason also is choice)
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoiled,
 no Made passive both, had served necessity,
 Not me. They therefore as to right belonged,
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
 As if predestination overruled
 us Their will, disposed by absolute decree
 Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
 Their own revolt, not I: if I foreknew,
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
 Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.²
 120 So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
 Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
 They trespass, authors to themselves in all
 Both what they judge and what they choose; for so
 I formed them free, and free they must remain,
 125 Till they enthrall themselves: I else must change
 Their nature, and revoke the high decree
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordained
 Their freedom, they themselves ordained their fall.
 The first sort³ by their own suggestion fell,
 130 Self-tempted, self-depraved: man falls deceived
 By the other first: man therefore shall find grace,
 The other none: in mercy and justice both,
 Through Heav'n and earth, so shall my glory excel,
 But mercy first and last shall brightest shine."
 135 Thus while God spake, ambrosial⁰ fragrance filled *fragrant, immortal*
 All Heav'n, and in the blessed Spirits elect⁰ *unfallen*
 Sense of new joy ineffable⁰ diffused: *inexpressible*
 Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
 Most glorious, in him all his Father shone
 140 Substantially expressed, and in his face
 Divine compassion visibly appeared,
 Love without end, and without measure grace,

2. I.e., if I had not foreknown it.

3. Satan and his crew.

- Which uttering thus he to his Father spake.
 "O Father, gracious was that word which closed
 145 Thy sov'reign sentence, that man should find grace;
 For which both Heav'n and earth shall high extol
 Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound
 Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
 Encompassed shall resound thee ever blessed.
 150 For should man finally be lost, should man
 Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son
 Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though joined
 With his own folly? That be from thee far,
 That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
 155 Of all things made, and judgest only right.⁴
 Or shall the Adversary thus obtain
 His end, and frustrate thine, shall he fulfill
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught,
 Or proud return though to his heavier doom,
 160 Yet with revenge accomplished, and to Hell
 Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
 By him corrupted? Or wilt thou thyself
 Abolish thy creation, and unmake,
 For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
 165 So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
 Be questioned and blasphemed⁰ without defense." *profaned.*
 To whom the great Creator thus replied.
 "O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
 Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
 170 My Word, my wisdom, and effectual might,⁵
 All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
 As my eternal purpose hath decreed:
 Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will,
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
 175 Freely vouchsafed;⁰ once more I will renew *bestowed*
 His lapsed powers, though forfeit and enthralled
 By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
 Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
 On even ground against his mortal foe,
 180 By me upheld, that he may know how frail
 His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
 All his deliv'rance, and to none but me.
 Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
 Elect above the rest;⁶ so is my will:
 185 The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warned⁰ *warned about*
 Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
 Th' incensed Deity, while offered grace
 Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,

4. The Son echoes (or rather foreshadows) Abraham pleading with the Lord to spare Sodom: "That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked . . . that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Genesis 18.25).

5. God's speech is rhythmic and sometimes rhymed.

6. In this speech, Milton's God rejects the Calvinist doctrine that he had from the beginning predestined the damnation or salvation of each individual soul; he claims rather that grace sufficient for salvation is offered to all, enabling everyone, if they choose to do so, to believe and persevere. He does, however, assert his right to give special grace to some.

What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
 190 To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
 To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
 Though but endeavored with sincere intent,
 Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
 And I will place within them as a guide
 195 My umpire conscience, whom if they will hear,
 Light after light well used they shall attain,⁷
 And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
 This my long sufferance and my day of grace
 They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
 200 But hard be hardened, blind be blinded more,
 That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
 And none but such from mercy I exclude.
 But yet all is not done; man disobeying,
 Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
 205 Against the high supremacy of Heav'n,
 Affecting⁰ Godhead, and so losing all, *aspiring to*
 To expiate his treason hath naught left,
 But to destruction sacred and devote,⁰ *consecrated*
 He with his whole posterity must die,
 210 Die he or justice must; unless for him
 Some other able, and as willing, pay
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
 Say heav'nly Powers, where shall we find such love,
 Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
 215 Man's mortal crime,⁸ and just th' unjust to save,
 Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?"
 He asked, but all the heav'nly choir stood mute,⁹
 And silence was in Heav'n; on man's behalf
 Patron or intercessor none appeared,
 220 Much less that durst upon his own head draw
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
 And now without redemption all mankind
 Must have been lost, adjudged to death and Hell
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
 225 In whom the fullness dwells of love divine,
 His dearest mediation⁰ thus renewed. *intercession*
 "Father, thy word is passed, man shall find grace;
 And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
 The speediest of thy winged messengers,
 230 To visit all thy creatures, and to all
 Comes unprevented,⁰ unimplored, unsought, *unanticipated*
 Happy for man, so coming; he her aid
 Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
 Atonement for himself or offering meet,⁰ *fitting*
 235 Indebted and undone, hath none to bring:
 Behold me then, me for him, life for life
 I offer, on me let thine anger fall;

7. By using the light of conscience well they will gain more light.

8. "Mortal" means "human" in line 214, but

"deadly" in line 215.

9. Compare the devils in the Great Consult, 2.420-26.

Account me man; I for his sake will leave
 Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
 240 Freely put off, and for him lastly die
 Well pleased, on me let Death wreak all his rage;
 Under his gloomy power I shall not long
 Lie vanquished; thou hast giv'n me to possess
 Life in myself forever, by thee I live,
 245 Though now to Death I yield, and am his due
 All that of me can die, yet that debt paid,
 Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
 His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
 Forever with corruption there to dwell;
 250 But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
 My vanquisher, spoiled of his vaunted spoil;
 Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
 Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarmed.
 I through the ample air in triumph high
 255 Shall lead Hell captive maugre⁰ Hell, and show *in spite of*
 The powers of darkness bound. Thou at the sight
 Pleased, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,
 While by thee raised I ruin¹ all my foes,
 Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave:
 260 Then with the multitude of my redeemed
 Shall enter Heaven long absent, and return,
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assured,
 And reconciliation; wrath shall be no more
 265 Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire."
 His words here ended, but his meek aspect
 Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
 To mortal men, above which only shone
 Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
 270 Glad to be offered, he attends the will
 Of his great Father. Admiration⁰ seized *wonder*
 All Heav'n, what this might mean, and whither tend
 Wond'ring; but soon th' Almighty thus replied:
 "O thou in Heav'n and earth the only peace
 275 Found out for mankind under wrath, O thou
 My sole complacence!⁰ well thou know'st how dear *pleasure, delight*
 To me are all my works, nor man the least
 Though last created, that for him I spare
 Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
 280 By losing thee a while, the whole race lost.
 Thou therefore whom² thou only canst redeem,
 Their nature also to thy nature join;
 And be thyself man among men on earth,
 Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
 285 By wondrous birth: be thou in Adam's room
 The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.³

1. In the Latin sense, throw down.

2. The antecedent of "whom" is, loosely construed, the "their nature" that follows it.

3. The Son of God, who long antedates the crea-

tion of Adam and who is actually the first created being (3.383), is later incarnated in Jesus Christ; he is called Second Adam and Son of Man by reason of his descent from the first man, Adam. Cf. 1

As in him perish all men, so in thee
 As from a second root shall be restored,
 As many as are restored, without thee none.
 290 His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit
 Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
 Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
 And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
 Receive new life.⁴ So man, as is most just,
 295 Shall satisfy for man, be judged and die,
 And dying rise, and rising with him raise
 His brethren, ransomed with his own dear life.
 So heav'nly love shall outdo hellish hate,
 Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
 300 So dearly to redeem what hellish hate
 So easily destroyed, and still destroys
 In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
 Nor shalt thou by descending to assume
 Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
 305 Because thou hast, though throned in highest bliss
 Equal to God, and equally enjoying
 Godlike fruition,⁰ quitted all to save *pleasurable possession*
 A world from utter loss, and hast been found
 By merit more than birthright Son of God,⁵
 310 Found worthiest to be so by being good,
 Far more than great or high; because in thee
 Love hath abounded more than glory abounds.
 Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
 With thee thy manhood also to this throne;
 315 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
 Both God and man, Son both of God and man,
 Anointed⁶ universal King; all power
 I give thee, reign forever, and assume
 Thy merits; under thee as Head Supreme
 320 Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions⁷ I reduce:
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
 In Heaven, or earth, or under earth in Hell;
 When thou attended gloriously from Heav'n
 Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
 325 The summoning Archangels to proclaim
 Thy dread tribunal: forthwith from all winds⁰ *directions*
 The living, and forthwith the cited⁰ dead *summoned*
 Of all past ages to the general doom⁰ *judgment*
 Shall hasten, such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
 330 Then all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge
 Bad men and angels, they arraigned⁰ shall sink *accused*
 Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,
 Thenceforth shall be forever shut. Meanwhile

Corinthians 15.22: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive."

4. The merit of Christ attributed vicariously ("imputed") to human beings frees from original sin those who renounce their own deeds, good and bad, and hope to be saved by faith.

5. A heterodox doctrine, that Christ was Son of God by merit. Compare with Satan (2.5).

6. In Hebrew "Messiah" means "the anointed one."

7. Orders of angels.

The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
 335 New heav'n" and earth, wherein the just shall dwell,⁸ *sky, cosmos*
 And after all their tribulations long
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
 With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
 Then thou thy regal scepter shalt lay by,
 340 For regal scepter then no more shall need,⁰ *be needed*
 God shall be all in all. But all ye gods,⁰ *angels*
 Adore him, who to compass all this dies,
 Adore the Son, and honor him as me."
 No sooner had th' Almighty ceased, but all
 345 The multitude of angels with a shout
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
 As from blest voices, uttering joy, Heav'n rung⁹
 With jubilee, and loud hosannas filled
 Th' eternal regions: lowly reverent
 350 Towards either throne¹ they bow, and to the ground
 With solemn adoration down they cast
 Their crowns inwove with amarant² and gold,
 Immortal amarant, a flow'r which once
 In Paradise, fast by the Tree of Life
 355 Began to bloom, but soon for man's offense
 To Heav'n removed where first it grew, there grows,
 And flow'rs aloft shading the Fount of Life,
 And where the river of bliss through midst of Heav'n
 Rolls o'er Elysian³ flow'rs her amber stream;
 360 With these that never fade the Spirits elect
 Bind their resplendent locks inwreathed with beams,
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
 Pavement that like a sea of jasper shone
 Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.
 365 Then crowned again their golden harps they took,
 Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side
 Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
 Of charming symphony they introduce
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;
 370 No voice exempt,⁰ no voice but well could join *excluded*
 Melodious part, such concord is in Heav'n.
 Thee Father first they sung omnipotent,
 Immutable, immortal, infinite,
 Eternal King; thee Author of all being,
 375 Fountain of light, thyself invisible
 Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitt'st
 Throned inaccessible, but⁰ when thou shad'st *except*
 The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
 Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,⁴

8. Milton's description of the Last Judgment draws on several biblical texts, including Matthew 24.30–31 and 25.31–32; the account of the burning and re-creation of the heavens and earth is from 2 Peter 3.12–13.

9. "Multitude" (line 345) is the subject of the sentence, "rung" the verb, and "Heav'n" the object.

I. Thrones of God and the Son.

2. In Greek, "unfading," a legendary immortal flower.

3. Milton draws freely, for his Christian Heaven, on descriptions of the classical paradisaical place, the Elysian Fields.

4. The turn from theological debate to images that evoke a more mystical aspect of God.

380 Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear,
 Yet dazzle Heav'n, that brightest Seraphim
 Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
 Thee next they sang of all creation first,⁵
 Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,

385 In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud
 Made visible, th' Almighty Father shines,
 Whom else no creature can behold;⁶ on thee
 Impressed th' effulgence of his glory abides,
 Transfused on thee his ample spirit rests.

390 He Heav'n of heavens and all the Powers therein
 By thee created, and by thee threw down
 Th' aspiring Dominations.⁷ Thou that day
 Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
 Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels, that shook

395 Heav'n's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
 Thou drov'st of warring angels disarrayed.
 Back from pursuit thy Powers⁹ with loud acclaim
 Thee only extolled, Son of thy Father's might,
 To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,

angels

400 Not so on man; him through their malice fall'n,
 Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
 So strictly, but much more to pity incline:
 No sooner did thy dear and only Son
 Perceive thee purposed not to doom⁰ frail man

judge

405 So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,
 He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
 Of mercy and justice in thy face discerned,
 Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
 Second to thee, offered himself to die

410 For man's offense. O unexampled love,
 Love nowhere to be found less than divine!
 Hail Son of God, Savior of men, thy name
 Shall be the copious matter of my⁸ song
 Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise

415 Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.
 Thus they in Heav'n, above the starry sphere,
 Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
 Meanwhile upon the firm opacous⁰ globe

opaque

420 Of this round world, whose first convex divides
 The luminous inferior orbs, enclosed
 From Chaos and th' inroad of Darkness old,
 Satan alighted walks:⁹ a globe far off
 It seemed, now seems a boundless continent
 Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night

425 Starless exposed, and ever-threatening storms
 Of Chaos blust'ring round, inclement sky;
 Save on that side which from the wall of Heav'n

5. The Son is not eternal, as in Trinitarian doctrine, but rather, God's first creation.

6. If it were not for the Son who is God's image, no creature could see God.

7. The rebel angels.

8. Either Milton here quotes the angels singing as a single chorus, or he associates himself with their song, or both.

9. Satan is on the outermost of the ten concentric spheres that make up the cosmos.

Though distant far some small reflection gains
 Of glimmering air less vexed with tempest loud:
 430 Here walked the Fiend at large in spacious field.
 As when a vulture on Imaus bred,
 Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,¹
 Dislodging from a region scarce of prey
 To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling⁰ kids *newborn*
 435 On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs
 Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;²
 But in his way lights on the barren plains
 Of Sericana, where Chinesees drive
 With sails and wind their cany wagons light:
 440 So on this windy sea of land, the Fiend
 Walked up and down alone bent on his prey,
 Alone, for other creature in this place
 Living or lifeless to be found was none,
 None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
 445 Up hither like aerial vapors flew
 Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
 With vanity had filled the works of men:
 Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
 Built their fond^o hopes of glory or lasting fame, *foolish*
 450 Or happiness in this or th' other life;
 All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
 Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
 Naught seeking but the praise of men, here find
 Fit retribution, empty as their deeds;
 455 All th' unaccomplished⁰ works of nature's hand, *imperfect*
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly⁰ mixed, *unnaturally*
 Dissolved on earth, fleet⁰ hither, and in vain, *float*
 Till final dissolution, wander here,
 Not in the neighboring moon, as some³ have dreamed;
 460 Those argent⁰ fields more likely habitants, *silver*
 Translated saints,⁴ or middle Spirits hold
 Betwixt th' angelical and human kind:
 Hither of ill-joined sons and daughters born
 First from the ancient world those giants came
 465 With many a vain exploit, though then renowned:⁵
 The builders next of Babel on the plain
 Of Sennaar,⁶ and still with vain design
 New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
 Others came single; he who to be deemed
 470 A god, leaped fondly⁰ into Etna *flames,* *foolishly*
 Empedocles, and he who to enjoy

1. Imaus, a ridge of mountains beyond the modern Himalayas, runs north through Asia from modern Afghanistan to the Arctic Circle.

2. Both the Ganges and the Hydaspes (a tributary of the Indus) rise from the mountains of northern India. Sericana (line 438) is a region in northwest China.

3. Milton's Paradise of Fools (named in line 496) was inspired by Ariosto's Limbo of Vanity in *Orlando Furioso* (Book 34, lines 73ff.); Milton's region is reserved for deluded victims of misplaced

devotion, chiefly Roman Catholics.

4. Holy men like Enoch and Elijah, transported to Heaven while yet alive. (Genesis 5.24; 2 Kings 2.11-12).

5. Giants, born of unnatural marriages between the "sons of God" and the daughters of men (Genesis 6.4), are creatures unkindly mixed.

6. Shinar, the plain of Babel (Genesis 11.2-9); the Tower of Babel is an emblem of human pride and folly.

Plato's Elysium, leaped into the sea,
 Cleombrotus, and many more too long,⁷
 Embryos and idiots, eremites⁹ and friars *hermits*
 White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery.⁸
 Here pilgrims roam, that strayed so far to seek
 In Golgotha⁹ him dead, who lives in Heav'n;
 And they who to be sure of paradise
 Dying put on the weeds⁰ of Dominic,
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised;¹
 They pass the planets seven, and pass the fixed,
 And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
 The trepidation talked, and that first moved;²
 And now Saint Peter at Heav'n's wicket seems
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
 Of Heav'n's ascent they lift their feet, when lo
 A violent crosswind from either coast
 Blows them transverse ten thousand leagues awry
 Into the devious⁰ air. Then might ye see
 Cowls, hoods, and habits³ with their wearers tossed
 And fluttered into rags; then relics, beads,
 Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
 The sport of winds: all these upwhirled aloft
 Fly o'er the backside⁰ of the world far off *rump*
 Into a limbo large and broad, since called
 The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
 Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod;
 All this dark globe the Fiend found as he passed,
 And long he wandered, till at last a gleam
 Of dawning light turned thitherward in haste
 His traveled⁰ steps; far distant he descries *travel-weary*
 Ascending by degrees⁰ magnificent *steps*
 Up to the wall of Fleaven a structure high,
 At top whereof, but far more rich appeared
 The work as of a kingly palace gate
 With frontispiece⁰ of diamond and gold *pediment*
 Embellished; thick with sparkling orient⁰ gems *lustrous*
 The portal shone, inimitable on earth,
 By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
 The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
 Angels ascending and descending, bands
 Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
 To Padan-Aram in the field of Luz,
 Dreaming by night under the open sky,

7. I.e., it would take too long to name them. Both Empedocles and Cleombrotus foolishly carried piety to the point of suicide.

8. Religious paraphernalia. The white friars are Carmelites; the black, Dominicans; and the gray, Franciscans.

9. Place where Christ was crucified.

1. Some try to trick God into granting them salvation by wearing on their deathbeds the garb of various religious orders.

2. Milton follows their souls through the spheres

of the moon and sun, the five then-known planets, the fixed stars, and the sphere responsible for the "trepidation" (a periodic corrective shudder of the cosmos), up to the primum mobile, or prime mover. The next step seems to be the empyreal Heaven.

3. The dress of religious orders, together with (next lines) saints' relics, rosary beads, various kinds of pardon for sins, and papal decrees ("bulls").

515 And waking cried, "This is the gate of Heav'n."⁴
 Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
 There always, but drawn up to Heav'n sometimes
 Viewless," and underneath a bright sea flowed *invisible*
 Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon

520 Who after came from earth, sailing arrived,
 Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
 Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.⁵
 The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
 The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate

525 His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss.
 Direct against which opened from beneath,
 Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
 A passage down to th' earth, a passage wide,⁶
 Wider by far than that of aftertimes

530 Over Mount Zion, and, though that were large,
 Over the Promised Land to God so dear,
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
 On high behests his angels to and fro
 Passed frequent, and his eye with choice⁰ regard *discriminating*

535 From Paneas the fount of Jordan's flood
 To Beersaba, where the Holy Land
 Borders on Egypt and the Arabian shore;⁷
 So wide the op'ning seemed, where bounds were set
 To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.

540 Satan from hence now on the lower stair
 That scaled by steps of gold to Heaven gate
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
 Of all this world at once. As when a scout
 Through dark and desert ways with peril gone

545 All night; at last by break of cheerful dawn
 Obtains⁰ the brow of some high-climbing hill, *gains*
 Which to his eye discovers unaware
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land
 First seen, or some renowned metropolis

550 With glistering spires and pinnacles adorned,
 Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams.
 Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,
 The Spirit malign, but much more envy seized
 At sight of all this world beheld so fair.

555 Round he surveys, and well might, where he stood
 So high above the circling canopy
 Of night's extended shade; from eastern point
 Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
 Andromeda far off Atlantic seas⁸

560 Beyond th' horizon; then from pole to pole

4. The story of Jacob's vision is summarized from Genesis 28.1—19; the stairs of the ladder (next line) allegorically ("mysteriously") represent stages of spiritual growth.

5. Elijah was wafted to heaven in a chariot.

6. A passage through the crystalline spheres, otherwise impenetrable.

7. From Paneas (or Dan) in northern Palestine to Beersaba, or Beersheba, near the Egyptian border—the entire land of Israel.

8. In the zodiac, Libra is diametrically opposite Aries, or the Ram ("the fleecy star"), which seems to carry the constellation Andromeda on its back,

He views in breadth, and without longer pause
 Down right into the world's first region throws
 His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
 Through the pure marble⁰ air his oblique way *sparkling*
 565 Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
 Stars distant, but nigh hand seemed other worlds,
 Or other worlds they seemed, or happy isles,
 Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,
 Fortunate fields, and groves and flow'ry vales,⁹
 570 Thrice happy isles, but who dwelt happy there
 He stayed not to inquire: above them all
 The golden sun in splendor likest Heaven
 Allured his eye: thither his course he bends
 Through the calm firmament;⁰ but up or down *sky*
 575 By center, or eccentric, hard to tell,
 Or longitude,¹ where the great luminary
 Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
 That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
 Dispenses light from far; they as they move
 580 Their starry dance in numbers that compute
 Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp
 Turn swift their various motions, or are turned
 By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
 The universe, and to each inward part
 585 With gentle penetration, though unseen,
 Shoots invisible virtue⁰ even to the deep: *influence, strength*
 So wondrously was set his station bright.
 There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps
 Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
 590 Through his glazed optic tube yet never saw.²
 The place he found beyond expression bright,
 Compared with aught on earth, metal or stone;
 Not all parts like, but all alike informed
 With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;
 595 If metal, part seemed gold, part silver clear;
 If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,³
 Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
 In Aaron's breastplate,⁴ and a stone besides
 Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen,⁵
 600 That stone, or like to that which here below
 Philosophers in vain so long have sought,⁶
 In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
 Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
 In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,

9. The gardens of the Hesperides and the "fortunate isles" of Greek mythology, classical versions of paradise, lay far out in the Atlantic.

1. The passage leaves open whether the sun or the earth is at the center of the cosmos.

2. Galileo first observed sunspots through his telescope in 1609.

3. Any green stone. "Carbuncle": any red stone.

4. In Exodus 28.15–20, Aaron's "breastplate" is

described as decorated with twelve different gems, of which Milton lists the first four.

5. I.e., elsewhere imagined more often than seen.

6. Alchemists had identified the "philosophers" stone with the *itrim* on Aaron's breastplate (Exodus 28.30); that stone reputedly could heal all diseases, restore paradise, and transmute base metals to gold.

Drained through a limbec to his native form.⁷
 What wonder then if fields and regions here
 Breathe forth elixir pure,⁸ and rivers run
 Potable⁰ gold, when with one virtuous⁰ touch *drinhtahle / powerful*
 Th' arch-chemic^o sun so far from us remote *chief alchemist*
 Produces with terrestrial humor⁰ mixed *earth's moisture*
 Here in the dark so many precious things
 Of color glorious and effect so rare?
 Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
 Undazzled, far and wide his eye commands,
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
 But all sunshine, as when his beams at noon
 Culminate from th' equator, as they now
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
 Shadow from body opaque can fall,⁹ and the air,
 Nowhere so clear, sharpened his visual ray
 To objects distant far,¹ whereby he soon
 Saw within ken^o a glorious angel stand, *range of vision*
 The same whom John saw also in the sun:²
 His back was turned, but not his brightness hid;
 Of beaming sunny rays, a golden tiar^o *tiara, crown*
 Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
 Illustrious⁰ on his shoulders fledge⁰ with wings *lustrous / feathered*
 Lay waving round; on some great charge employed
 He seemed, or fixed in cogitation deep.
 Glad was the Spirit impure; as now in hope
 To find who might direct his wand'ring flight
 To Paradise the happy seat of man,
 His journey's end and our beginning woe.
 But first he casts⁰ to change his proper shape, *contrives*
 Which else might work him danger or delay:
 And now a stripling Cherub he appears,
 Not of the prime,³ yet such as in his face
 Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb
 Suitable grace diffused, so well he feigned;
 Under a coronet his flowing hair
 In curls on either cheek played, wings he wore
 Of many a colored plume sprinkled with gold,
 His habit fit for speed succinct,⁰ and held *close-fitting*
 Before his decent⁰ steps a silver wand. *comely*
 He drew not nigh unheard; the angel bright,
 Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turned,
 Admonished by his ear, and straight⁰ was known *immediately*
 Th' Archangel Uriel, one of the sev'n

7. "Hermes": the winged god and the element mercury, which evaporated readily ("volatile"). "Proteus": the shape-shifting sea god, a symbol of matter. Alchemists would "bind" (solidify) mercury and dissolve or refine matter to its "native form" in a vessel (alembic, "limbec").

8. The liquid form of the philosopher's stone. "Here": in the sun.

9. Before the Fall (and the consequent tipping of

the earth's axis) the sun at noon, on the equator, never cast a shadow. "Culminate": reach their zenith.

1. The eye was thought to emit a beam into the object perceived.

2. "I saw an angel standing in the sun" (Revelation 19.17).

3. Not yet in the prime of life.

Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne⁴
 650 Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
 That run through all the heav'ns, or down to th' earth
 Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
 O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts:
 "Uriel, for thou of those sev'n Spirits that stand
 655 In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
 The first art wont^o his great authentic^o will *used / authoritative*
 Interpreter through highest Heav'n to bring,
 Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
 And here art likeliest by supreme decree
 660 Like honor to obtain, and as his eye
 To visit oft this new creation round;
 Unspeakable desire to see, and know
 All these his wondrous works, but chiefly man,
 His chief delight and favor,^o him for whom *favorite*
 665 All these his works so wondrous he ordained,
 Hath brought me from the choirs of Cherubim
 Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest Seraph tell
 In which of all these shining orbs hath man
 His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
 670 But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;
 That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
 Or open admiration him behold
 On whom the great Creator hath bestowed
 Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces poured;
 675 That both in him and all things, as is meet,^o *fitting*
 The Universal Maker we may praise;
 Who justly hath driv'n out his rebel foes
 To deepest Hell, and to repair that loss
 Created this new happy race of men
 680 To serve him better: wise are all his ways."
 So spake the false dissembler unperceived;
 For neither man nor angel can discern
 Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
 Invisible, except to God alone,
 685 By his permissive will, through Heav'n and earth:
 And oft though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
 At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
 Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
 Where no ill seems: which now for once beguiled
 690 Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held
 The sharpest-sighted Spirit of all in Heav'n;
 Who to the fraudulent impostor foul
 In his uprightness answer thus returned:
 "Fair angel, thy desire which tends^o to know *inclines*
 695 The works of God, thereby to glorify
 The great Work-Master, leads to no excess
 That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
 The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
 From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,

4. Uriel—in Hebrew, "light" (or "fire") of God—is the angel named first (in 2 Esdras 4.1—5. *apocrypha*) among the seven angels who stood before God's throne.

700 To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps
 Contented with report hear only in Heav'n:
 For wonderful indeed are all his works,
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
 Had in remembrance always with delight;
 705 But what created mind can comprehend
 Their number, or the wisdom infinite
 That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep.
 I saw when at his word the formless mass,
 This world's material mold,⁵ came to a heap: *substance*
 710 Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
 Stood ruled, stood vast infinitude confined;
 Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
 Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
 Swift to their several quarters hasted then
 715 The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire,
 And this ethereal quintessence⁵ of Heav'n
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
 That rolled orbicular/⁶ and turned to stars
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
 720 Each had his place appointed, each his course,
 The rest in circuit walls this universe.
 Look downward on that globe whose hither side
 With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
 That place is earth the seat of man, that light
 725 His day, which else as th' other hemisphere
 Night would invade, but there the neighboring moon
 (So call that opposite fair star) her aid
 Timely interposes, and her monthly round
 Still ending, still renewing through mid-Heav'n,
 730 With borrowed light her countenance triform⁷
 Hence⁸ fills and empties to enlighten th' earth,
 And in her pale dominion checks the night.
 That spot to which I point is Paradise,
 Adam's abode, those lofty shades his bow'r.
 735 Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires."
 Thus said, he turned, and Satan bowing low,
 As to superior Spirits is wont in Heav'n,
 Where honor due and reverence none neglects,
 Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath,
 740 Down from th' ecliptic,⁹ sped with hoped success, *the sun's orbit*
 Throws his steep flight in many an airy wheel,
 Nor stayed, till on Niphates' top⁹ he lights.

Book 4

O for that warning voice, which he who saw
 Th' Apocalypse, heard cry in Heaven aloud,

5. The fifth element, of which the incorruptible heavenly bodies were made.

6. The spherical shape of the stars and their orbits. "Spirited with various forms": presided over or inhabited by various angelic spirits or intelli-

gences (Plato, *Timaeus* 41E).

7. The moon was said to have a triple nature: Luna in Heaven. Diana on earth, and Hecate in Hell.

8. From here (the sun).

9. A mountain in Assyria.

Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
 Came furious down to be revenged on men,
 5 "Woe to the inhabitants on earth!"¹ that now,
 While time was, our first parents had been warned
 The coming of their secret foe, and scaped
 Haply⁰ so scaped his mortal⁰ snare; for now *perha-ps/deadly*
 Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,
 10 The tempter ere^o th' accuser of mankind, *before being*
 To wreak⁰ on innocent frail man his loss *avenge*
 Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell:
 Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold,
 Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
 15 Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth
 Now rolling, boils in his tumultuous breast,
 And like a devilish engine back recoils
 Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
 20 The Hell within him, for within him Hell
 He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
 One step no more than from himself can fly
 By change of place: now conscience wakes despair
 That slumbered, wakes the bitter memory
 25 Of what he was, what is, and what must be
 Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
 Sometimes towards Eden which now in his view
 Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad,
 Sometimes towards Heav'n and the full-blazing sun,
 30 Which now sat high in his meridian tow'r:²
 Then much revolving,⁰ thus in sighs began. *pondering*
 "O thou that with surpassing glory crowned,³
 Look'st from thy sole dominion like the god
 Of this new world: at whose sight all the stars
 35 Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,
 But with no friendly voice, and add thy name
 O sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams
 That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
 40 Till pride and worse ambition threw me down
 Warring in Heav'n against Heav'n's matchless King:
 Ah wherefore! he deserved no such return
 From me, whom he created what I was
 In that bright eminence, and with his good
 45 Upbraided⁴ none, nor was his service hard.
 What could be less than to afford him praise,
 The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
 How due! yet all his good proved ill in me,
 And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
 50 I 'sdained⁰ subjection, and thought one step higher *disdained*

1. John of Patmos, in Revelation 12.3–12, hears such a cry during a second war in Heaven, between the Dragon and the angels.

2. At midday, the height of noon.

3. Milton's nephew, Edward Phillips, said that this

soliloquy was written "several years before the poem was begun," and was intended to begin a drama on the topic, *Adam Unparadised*.

4. Reproached (James 1.5).

Would set me highest, and in a moment quit *pay*
 The debt immense of endless gratitude,
 So burthensome still⁰ paying, still to owe; *always*
 Forgetful what from him I still received,
 And understood not that a grateful mind
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
 Indebted and discharged; what burden then?
 O had his powerful destiny ordained
 Me some inferior angel, I had stood *angel*
 Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised
 Ambition. Yet why not? some other Power⁰
 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 thou⁵ the same free will and power to stand?
 Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
 But Heav'n'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!⁶ which way shall I fly
 Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
 Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;⁷
 And in the lowest deep a lower deep
 Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
 To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heav'n.
 O then at last relent! is there no place
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left?
 None left but by submission; and that word
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
 Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduced
 With other promises and other vaunts
 Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
 Th' Omnipotent. Ay me, they little know
 How dearly I abide⁰ that boast so vain, *pay the penalty for*
 Under what torments inwardly I groan:
 While they adore me on the throne of Hell,
 With diadem and scepter high advanced
 The lower still I fall, only supreme
 In misery; such joy ambition finds.
 But say I could repent and could obtain
 By act of grace⁸ my former state; how soon
 Would heighth recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
 What feigned submission swore: ease would recant
 Vows made in pain, as violent⁰ and void. *forced*
 For never can true reconcilement grow
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep:

5. Compare Satan's address to himself here with Adam's soliloquy in parallel circumstances (10.758ff.).

6. A Latinism, *me miserum!*

7. Compare Satan's earlier claim that "the mind is its own place" (1.254).

8. The technical term for a formal pardon.

100 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse,
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
 Short intermission bought with double smart.
 This knows my punisher; therefore as far
 From granting he, as I from begging peace:
 105 All hope excluded thus, behold instead
 Of us outcast, exiled, his new delight,
 Mankind created, and for him this world.
 So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,
 Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;
 110 Evil be thou my good; by thee at least
 Divided empire with Heav'n's King I hold
 By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
 As man ere long, and this new world shall know."
 Thus while he spake, each passion dimmed his face
 115 us Thrice changed with pale,⁹ ire, envy, and despair, *pallor*
 Which marred his borrowed visage, and betrayed
 Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.
 For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul
 Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
 120 Each perturbation smoothed with outward calm,
 Artificer of fraud; and was the first
 That practiced falsehood under saintly show,
 Deep malice to conceal, couched⁰ with revenge: *hidden*
 Yet not enough had practiced to deceive
 125 Uriel once warned; whose eye pursued him down
 The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount⁰ *Niphates*
 Saw him disfigured, more than could befall
 Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
 He marked and mad demeanor, then alone,
 130 As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.
 So on he fares, and to the border comes
 Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,⁹
 Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
 As with a rural mound the champaign head⁰ *open summit*
 135 Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
 With thicket overgrown, grotesque¹ and wild,
 Access denied; and overhead up grew
 Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
 Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
 140 A sylvan scene, and as the ranks ascend
 Shade above shade, a woody theater²
 Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
 The verdurous wall of Paradise up sprung:
 Which to our general sire gave prospect large
 145 Into his nether empire neighboring round.
 And higher than that wall a circling row
 Of goodliest trees loaden with fairest fruit.
 Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue
 Appeared, with gay enameled⁰ colors mixed: *bright*

9. Paradise is a delightful ("delicious") garden on top of a steep hill situated in the east of the land of Eden.

1. Characterized by interwoven, tangled vines and

branches.

2. As if in a Greek amphitheater, the trees are set row on row.

On which the sun more glad impressed his beams
 Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,^o *rainbow*
 When God hath show'ed the earth; so lovely seemed
 That landscape: and of pure now purer air³
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires^o *infuses*
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive^o *drive out*
 All sadness but despair: now gentle gales
 Fanning their odoriferous^o wings dispense *fragrance-bearing*
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
 Beyond the Cape of Hope,^o and now are past
 Mozambic, off at sea northeast winds blow *Cape of Good Hope*
 Sabean odors from the spicy shore
 Of Araby the Blest,⁴ with such delay
 Well pleased they slack their course, and many a league
 Cheered with the grateful^o smell old Ocean smiles. *pleasing*
 So entertained those odorous sweets the Fiend
 Who came their bane,^o though with them better pleased *poison*
 Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume,
 That drove him, though enamored, from the spouse
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent
 From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.¹
 Now to th'ascent of that steep savage^o hill *wooded, wild*
 Satan had journeyed on, pensive and slow;
 But further way found none, so thick entwined,
 As one continued brake,^o the undergrowth *thicket*
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed
 All path of man or beast that passed that way:
 One gate there only was, and that looked east
 On th' other side: which when th' arch-felon saw
 Due entrance he disdained, and in contempt,
 At one slight bound high overleaped all bound
 Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
 Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
 In hurdled cotes^o amid the field secure, *pens of woven reeds*
 Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:
 Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash
 Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
 Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault,
 In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles;
 So clomb^o this first grand thief into God's fold: *climbed*
 So since into his church lewd hirelings⁶ climb.
 Thence up he flew, and on the Tree of Life,
 The middle tree and highest there that grew,
 Sat like a cormorant;⁷ yet not true life
 Thereby regained, but sat devising death

3. The air becomes still purer.

4. *Arabia Felix* (modern Yemen). "Sabean": the biblical Sheba.

5. The Apocryphal book of Tobit tells of Tobias, Tobit's son, who married Sara and avoided the fate of her previous seven husbands (killed on their wedding night by the demon Asmodeus) by follow-

ing the instructions of the angel Raphael and making a fishy smell to drive him off; Asmodeus then fled to Egypt, where Raphael bound him.

6. Base men interested only in money; Milton would have clergymen not paid by required tithes or by the state, to ensure their purity of motive.

7. A sea bird, noted for gluttony.

To them who lived; nor on the virtue⁰ thought *power*
 Of that life-giving plant, but only used
 200 For prospect,⁰ what well used had been the pledge *as a lookout*
 Of immortality. So little knows
 Any, but God alone, to value right
 The good before him, but perverts best things
 To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
 205 Beneath him with new wonder now he views
 To all delight of human sense exposed
 In narrow room nature's whole wealth, yea more,
 A heav'n on earth: for blissful Paradise
 Of God the garden was, by him in the east
 210 Of Eden planted; Eden stretched her line
 From Auran eastward to the royal tow'rs
 Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
 Or where the sons of Eden long before
 Dwelt in Telassar:⁸ in this pleasant soil
 215 His far more pleasant garden God ordained;
 Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow
 All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
 And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,
 High eminent, blooming ambrosial⁰ fruit *divinely fragrant*
 220 Of vegetable gold; and next to life
 Our death the Tree of Knowledge grew fast by,
 Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
 Southward through Eden went a river large,⁹
 Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
 225 Passed underneath engulfed, for God had thrown
 That mountain as his garden mold⁰ high raised *rich earth*
 Upon the rapid current, which through veins
 Of porous earth with kindly⁰ thirst up drawn, *natural*
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
 230 Watered the garden; thence united fell
 Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
 Which from his darksome passage now appears,
 And now divided into four main streams,
 Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
 235 And country whereof here needs no account,
 But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
 How from that sapphire fount the crisped⁰ brooks *wavy, rippling*
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
 With mazy error' under pendent shades
 240 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
 Flow'rs worthy of Paradise which not nice⁰ art *fastidious*
 In beds and curious knots, but nature boon⁰ *bounteous*
 Poured forth profuse on hill and dale and plain,
 Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
 245 The open field, and where the unpierced shade
 Embrowned⁰ the noontide bow'rs. Thus was this place, *darkened*

8. Auran is the province of Hauran on the eastern border of Israel. Selucia, a powerful city on the Tigris, near modern Baghdad, was founded by one of Alexander's generals ("built by Grecian kings").

Telassar is another Near Eastern kingdom.
9. The Tigris (identified at 9.71) flowed under the hill.

1. From Latin *errare*, wandering.

A happy rural seat of various view,²
 Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,
 Others whose fruit burnished with golden rind
 Hung amiable,⁰ Hesperian fables true,³ *lovely*
 If true, here only, and of delicious taste:
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs,⁰ and flocks *uplands*
 Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,
 Or palmy hillock, or the flow'ry lap
 Of some irriguous⁰ valley spread her store, *well-watered*
 Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose:
 Another side, umbrageous⁰ grots and caves *shady*
 Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling⁰ vine *enveloping*
 Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
 Luxuriant; meanwhile murmuring waters fall
 Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,
 That to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned,
 Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
 The birds their choir apply; airs,⁴ vernal airs,
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
 The trembling leaves, while universal Pan⁵
 Knit⁰ with the Graces and the Hours in dance *clasping hands*
 Led on th' eternal spring. Not that fair field
 Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flow'rs
 Herself a fairer flow'r by gloomy Dis
 Was gathered, which cost Ceres all that pain
 To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspired
 Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
 Of Eden strive;⁶ nor that Nyseian isle
 Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
 Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,
 Hid Amalthea and her florid⁰ son *wine-flnshed*
 Young Bacchus from his stepdame Rhea's eye;⁷
 Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard,
 Mount Amara,⁸ though this by some supposed
 True Paradise under the Ethiop line⁰ *equator*
 By Nilus'° head, enclosed with shining rock, *Nile's*
 A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
 From this Assyrian garden,⁰ where the Fiend *Eden*
 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 honor clad

2. Like a country estate, with a variety of prospects.

3. These were real golden apples, by contrast to those feigned golden apples of the Hesperides, fabled paradisaal islands in the Western Ocean.

4. Both breezes and melodies. "Their choir apply": practice their songs.

5. The god of all nature—*pain* in Greek means "all."

6. Milton compares Paradise with famous beauty spots of antiquity. Enna in Sicily was a lovely meadow from which Proserpine was kidnapped by

"gloomy Dis" (i.e., Pluto); her mother Ceres sought her throughout the world. The grove of Daphne, near Antioch and the Orontes River in the Near East, had a spring called "Castalia" after the Muses' fountain near Parnassus.

7. The isle of Nysa in the river Triton in Tunisia was where Ammon (an Egyptian god, identified with Cham, or Ham, the son of Noah) hid Bacchus, his child by Amalthea (who later became the god of wine), away from the eyes of his wife Rhea.

8. Atop Mount Amara, the "Abassin" (Abyssinian) king had a splendid palace in a paradisaal garden.

290 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;
 295 Whence true authority in men;⁹ though both
 Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;
 For contemplation he and valor formed,
 For softness she and sweet attractive grace,
 He for God only, she for God in him:¹
 300 His fair large front⁰ and eye sublime declared *forehead*
 Absolute rule; and hyacinthine² locks
 Hound from his parted forelock manly hung
 Clust'ring, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
 She as a veil down to the slender waist
 305 Her unadorned golden tresses wore
 Disheveled, but in wanton⁰ ringlets waved *unrestrained*
 As the vine curls her tendrils,³ which implied
 Subjection, but required⁰ with gentle sway,⁰ *requested/persuasion*
 And by her yielded, by him best received,
 310 Yielded with coy^o submission, modest pride,
 And sweet reluctant amorous delay. *shyly reserved*
 Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed,
 Then was not guilty shame, dishonest⁰ shame *unchaste*
 Of nature's works, honor dishonorable,
 315 Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
 With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
 And banished from man's life his happiest life,
 Simplicity and spotless innocence.
 So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight
 320 Of God or angel, for they thought no ill:
 So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair
 That ever since in love's embraces met,
 Adam the goodliest man of men since born
 His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
 325 Under a tuft of shade that on a green
 Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain side
 They sat them down, and after no more toil
 Of their sweet gard'ning labor than sufficed
 To recommend cool Zephyr,⁴ and made ease
 330 More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
 More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell,
 Nectarine⁰ fruits which the compliant boughs *sweet as nectar*
 Yielded them, sidelong as they sat recline
 On the soft downy bank damasked with flow'rs:
 335 The savory pulp they chew, and in the rind
 Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream;

9. This phrase underscores Milton's idea that true freedom involves obedience to natural superiors (i.e., God).

1. The phrase has as its context 1 Corinthians 1 1.3: "The head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man."

2. A classical metaphor for hair curled in the form of hyacinth petals, and perhaps also implying dark or flowing.

3. Eve's hair is curly, abundant, not subjected to rigid control, like the vegetation in Paradise.

4. I.e., to make a cool breeze welcome.

Nor gentle purpose,⁰ nor endearing smiles
 Wanted," nor youthful dalliance as beseems
 Fair couple, linked in happy nuptial league,
 Alone as they. About them frisking played
 All beasts of th' earth, since wild, and of all chase"
 In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
 Sporting the lion ramped,⁰ and in his paw
 Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces,⁰ pards^o ^
 Gamboled before them; th' unwieldy elephant
 To make them mirth used all his might, and wreathed
 His lithe proboscis;⁰ close the serpent sly
 Insinuating,⁰ wove with Gordian twine
 His braided train,⁵ and of his fatal guile
 Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass
 Couched, and now filled with pasture gazing sat,
 Or bedward ruminating:⁰ for the sun
 Declined was hastening now with prone⁰ career
 To th' Ocean Isles,⁰ and in th' ascending scale
 Of Heav'n the stars that usher evening rose:
 When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length failed speech recovered sad.
 "O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold,
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanced
 Creatures of other mold, earth-born perhaps,
 Not Spirits, yet to heav'nly Spirits bright
 Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace
 The hand that formed them on their shape hath poured.
 Ah gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
 Your change approaches, when all these delights
 Will vanish and deliver ye to woe,
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;
 Happy, but for so happy⁰ ill secured
 Long to continue, and this high seat your heav'n
 111 fenced for Heav'n to keep out such a foe
 As now is entered; yet no purposed foe
 To you whom I could pity thus forlorn
 Though I unpitied: league with you I seek,
 And mutual amity so strait,⁰ so close,
 That I with you must dwell, or you with me
 Henceforth; my dwelling haply⁰ may not please
 Like this fair Paradise, your sense, yet such
 Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me,
 Which I as freely give; Hell shall unfold,
 To entertain you two, her widest gates,
 And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
 Not like these narrow limits, to receive
 Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
 Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge

*conversation
lacked*

game animals

*stood on hind legs
lynxes / leopards*

*trnk
writhing, twisting*

*chewing the cud
sinking
the Azores*

such happiness

intimate

perhaps

5. Checkered body. "Gordian twine": cords as convoluted as the Gordian knot that Alexander the Great had to cut with his sword.

On you who wrong me not for^o him who wronged. *in place of*
 And should I at your harmless innocence
 Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
 390 Honor and empire with revenge enlarged
 By conquering this new world, compels me now
 To do what else though damned I should abhor."⁶
 So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,
 The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.
 395 Then from his lofty stand on that high tree
 Down he alights among the sportful herd
 Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
 Now other, as their shape served best his end
 Nearer to view his prey, and unespied
 400 To mark what of their state he more might learn
 By word or action marked: about them round
 A lion now he stalks with fiery glare,
 Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied
 In some purlieu^o two gentle fawns at play, *outskirts of a forest*
 405 Straight^o couches close, then rising changes oft *at once*
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
 Gripped in each paw: when Adam first of men
 To first of women Eve thus moving speech
 410 Turned him all ear to hear new utterance flow:
 "Sole partner and sole^o part of all these joys, *chief*
 Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Power
 That made us, and for us this ample world
 Be infinitely good, and of his good
 415 As liberal and free as infinite,
 That raised us from the dust and placed us here
 In all this happiness, who at his hand
 Have nothing merited, nor can perform
 Aught whereof he hath need, he who requires
 420 From us no other service than to keep
 This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
 In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
 So various, not to taste that only Tree
 Of Knowledge, planted by the Tree of Life,
 425 So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,
 Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou know'st
 God hath pronounced it death to taste that Tree,
 The only sign of our obedience left
 Among so many signs of power and rule
 430 Conferred upon us, and dominion giv'n
 Over all other creatures that possess
 Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
 One easy prohibition, who enjoy
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
 435 Unlimited of manifold delights:
 But let us ever praise him, and extol
 His bounty, following our delightful task

6. Satan's excuse—reason of state, public interest, empire, etc.—is called "the tyrant's plea" in line 394.

To prune these growing plants, and tend these flow'rs,
 Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet."
 440 To whom thus Eve replied. "O thou for whom
 And from whom I was formed flesh of thy flesh,
 And without whom am to no end, my guide
 And head, what thou hast said is just and right.
 For we to him indeed all praises owe,
 445 And daily thanks, I chiefly who enjoy
 So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
 Preeminent by so much odds,⁰ while thou *advantage*
 Like consort to thyself canst nowhere find.
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep
 450 I first awaked, and found myself reposed⁰ *resting*
 Under a shade on flowers, much wond'ring where
 And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
 Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
 Of waters issued from a cave and spread
 455 Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved
 Pure as th' expanse of Heav'n; I thither went
 With unexperienced thought, and laid me down
 On the green bank, to look into the clear
 Smooth lake, that to me seemed another sky.
 460 As I bent down to look, just opposite,
 A shape within the wat'ry gleam appeared
 Bending to look on me, I started back,
 It started back, but pleased I soon returned,
 Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks
 465 Of sympathy and love; there I had fixed
 Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain^o desire,⁷ *futile*
 Had not a voice thus warned me, 'What thou seest,
 What there thou seest fair creature is thyself,
 With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
 470 And I will bring thee where no shadow stays⁰ *hinders*
 Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
 Whose image thou art, him thou shall enjoy
 Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
 Multitudes like thyself, and thence be called
 475 Mother of human race': what could I do,
 But follow straight⁰ invisibly thus led? *at once*
 Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall,
 Under a platan,⁰ yet methought less fair, *plane tree*
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
 480 Than that smooth wat'ry image; back I turned,
 Thou following cried'st aloud, 'Return fair Eve,
 Whom fli'st thou? Whom thou fli'st, of him thou art,
 His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart
 485 Substantial life, to have thee by my side
 Henceforth an individual⁰ solace dear; *inseparable, distinct*
 Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim

7. Eve's experience reprises (but with significant differences) the story of Narcissus, who fell in love with his own reflection and was transformed into a flower.

My other half: with that thy gentle hand
 Seized mine, I yielded, and from that time see
 490 How beauty is excelled by manly grace
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair."
 So spake our general mother, and with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unreproved,
 And meek surrender, half embracing leaned
 495 On our first father, half her swelling breast
 Naked met his under the flowing gold
 Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
 Both of her beauty and submissive charms
 Smiled with superior love, as Jupiter
 500 On Juno smiles, when he impregns^o the clouds *impregrates*
 That shed May flowers; and pressed her matron lip
 With lasses pure: aside the Devil turned
 For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
 Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plained.^o *complained*
 505 "Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two
 Imparadised in one another's arms
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
 Of bliss on bliss, while I to Hell am thrust,
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
 510 Among our other torments not the least,
 Still^o unfulfilled with pain of longing pines; *always*
 Yet let me not forget what I have gained
 From their own mouths; all is not theirs it seems:
 One fatal tree there stands of Knowledge called,
 515 Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden?
 Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
 Envy^o them that? Can it be sin to know, *begrudge*
 Can it be death? And do they only stand
 By ignorance, is that their happy state,
 520 The proof of their obedience and their faith?
 O fair foundation laid whereon to build
 Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds
 With more desire to know, and to reject
 Envious commands, invented with design
 525 To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt
 Equal with gods; aspiring to be such.
 They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
 But first with narrow search I must walk round
 This garden, and no corner leave unspied;
 530 A chance, but chance⁸ may lead where I may meet
 Some wand'ring Spirit of Heav'n, by fountain side,
 Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw
 What further would be learnt. Live while ye may,
 Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
 535 Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed."
 So saying, his proud step he scornful turned,
 But with sly circumspection, and began
 Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale his roam." *act of wandering*

8. Ail opportunity, even if only by luck.

Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where heav'n⁰ *the sty*
 540 With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun
 Slowly descended, and with right aspect
 Against the eastern gate of Paradise
 Leveled his evening rays.⁹ It was a rock
 Of alabaster,¹ piled up to the clouds,
 545 Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
 Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
 The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
 Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
 Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel² sat
 550 Chief of th' angelic guards, awaiting night;
 About him exercised heroic games
 Th' unarmed youth of Heav'n, but nigh at hand
 Celestial armory, shields, helms, and spears
 Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.
 555 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
 On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star
 In autumn thwarts⁰ the night, when vapors fired *passes across*
 Impress the air, and shows the mariner
 From what point of his compass to beware
 560 Impetuous winds:³ he thus began in haste.
 "Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath giv'n
 Charge and strict watch that to this happy place
 No evil thing approach or enter in;
 This day at height of noon came to my sphere
 565 A Spirit, zealous, as he seemed, to know
 More of th' Almighty's works, and chiefly man
 God's latest image: I describ'd⁰ his way *descried, observed*
 Bent all on speed, and marked his airy gait;⁰ *path*
 But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
 570 Where he first lighted, soon discerned his looks
 Alien from Heav'n, with passions foul obscured:
 Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade⁰ *trees*
 Lost sight of him; one of the banished crew
 I fear, hath ventured from the deep, to raise
 575 New troubles; him thy care must be to find."
 To whom the winged warrior thus returned:
 "Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
 Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sitt'st,
 See far and wide. In at this gate none pass
 580 The vigilance here placed, but such as come
 Well known from Heav'n; and since meridian hour⁰ *noon*
 No creature thence: if Spirit of other sort,
 So minded, have o'erleaped these earthy bounds
 On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
 585 Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.
 But if within the circuit of these walks,
 In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom

9. Setting in the west, the sun struck the eastern gate from the inside, at a ninety-degree angle.

1. White, translucent marble veined with colors.

2. In Hebrew, "strength of God." A tradition (cf.

1 Enoch 20.7) gave Gabriel charge of Paradise.

3. Shooting stars were thought to indicate by the direction of their fall the source of oncoming storms. "Vapors fired": heat lightning.

Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know."
 So promised he, and Uriel to his charge
 580 Returned on that bright beam, whose point now raised
 Bore him slope downward to the sun now fall'n
 Beneath th' Azores; whether the prime orb,
 Incredible how swift, had thither rolled
 Diurnal,⁰ or this less voluble⁰ earth *daily / swift-turning*
 595 By shorter flight to th' east,⁴ had left him there
 Arraying with reflected purple and gold
 The clouds that on his western throne attend.
 Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
 Had in her sober livery all things clad;
 600 Silence accompanied, for beast and bird,
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
 Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;
 She all night long her amorous descant⁰ sung; *melody*
 Silence was pleased: now glowed the firmament
 605 With living sapphires: Hesperus⁵ that led
 The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length
 Apparent⁰ queen unveiled her peerless light,
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw. *clearly seen*
 610 When Adam thus to Eve: "Fair consort, th' hour
 Of night, and all things now retired to rest
 Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
 Labor and rest, as day and night to men
 Successive, and the timely dew of sleep
 615 Now falling with soft slumbrous weight inclines
 Our eyelids; other creatures all day long
 Rove idle unemployed, and less need rest;
 Man hath his daily work of body or mind
 Appointed, which declares his dignity,
 620 And the regard of Heav'n on all his ways;
 While other animals unactive range,
 And of their doings God takes no account.
 Tomorrow ere fresh morning streak the east
 With first approach of light, we must be ris'n,
 625 And at our pleasant labor, to reform
 Yon flow'ry arbors, yonder alleys green,
 Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
 That mock our scant manuring,⁰ and require *cultivating*
 More hands than ours to lop their wanton⁰ growth: *luxuriant*
 630 Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,
 That lie bestrown unsightly and unsmooth,
 Ask riddance,⁰ if we mean to tread with ease;
 Meanwhile, as nature wills, night bids us rest." *need to be cleared*
 To whom thus Eve with perfect beauty adorned.
 635 "My author and disposer, what thou bidd'st
 Unargued I obey; so God ordains,

4. Here and elsewhere Milton leaves open the question of whether the sun moves around the earth, or vice versa.

5. Called Venus when it appears in the evening sky.

God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
 Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.
 With thee conversing I forget all time.

640 All seasons⁰ and their change, all please alike. *times of day*
 Sweet⁶ is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
 With charm⁷ of earliest birds; pleasant the sun
 When first on this delightful land he spreads
 His orient⁰ beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flow'r, *lustrious, eastern*

645 Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
 After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
 Of grateful evening mild, then silent night
 With this her solemn bird⁰ and this fair moon, *the nightingale*
 And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train:

650 But neither breath of morn when she ascends
 With charm of earliest birds, nor rising sun
 On this delightful land, nor herb, fruit, flow'r,
 Glist'ring with dew, nor fragrance after showers,
 Nor grateful evening mild, nor silent night

655 With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
 Or glittering starlight without thee is sweet.
 But wherefore all night long shine these, for whom
 This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?"
 To whom our general ancestor replied.

660 "Daughter of God and man, accomplished⁸ Eve,
 Those have their course to finish, round the earth,
 By morrow evening, and from land to land
 In order, though to nations yet unborn,
 Minist'ring light prepared, they set and rise;

665 Lest total darkness should by night regain
 Her old possession, and extinguish life
 In nature and all things, which these soft⁰ *fires* *agreeable*
 Not only enlighten, but with kindly⁰ heat *natural, benevolent*
 Of various influence foment⁰ and warm, *foster*

670 Temper or nourish, or in part shed down
 Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
 On earth, made hereby apter to receive
 Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.⁹
 These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,

675 Shine not in vain, nor think, though men were none,
 That heav'n would want⁰ spectators, God want praise; *lack*
 Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
 Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold

680 Both day and night: how often from the steep
 Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
 Celestial voices to the midnight air,
 Sole, or responsive each to other's note
 Singing their great Creator: oft in bands

6. With this embedded lyric, beginning here, Eve displays her literary talents in an elegant love song, sonnetlike and replete with striking rhetorical figures of circularity and repetition.

7. Blended singing of many birds.

8. Having many talents and achievements; perfect, complete.

9. The stars were thought to have their own occult influence, and also to moderate that of the sun.

- 685 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
 With heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds
 In full harmonic number joined, their songs
 Divide' the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven."
 Thus talking hand in hand alone they passed
- 690 On to their blissful bower; it was a place
 Chos'n by the sov'reign Planter, when he framed⁰ *fashioned*
 All things to man's delightful use; the roof
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
 Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
- 695 Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
 Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub
 Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flow'r,
 Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine⁰ *jasmine*
 Reared high their flourished⁰ heads between, and wrought *flowering*
- 700 Mosaic; underfoot the violet,
 Crocus, and hyacinth with rich inlay
 Broidered the ground, more colored than with stone
 Of costliest emblem:⁰ other creature here *inlaid work*
 Beast, bird, insect, or worm durst enter none,
- 705 Such was their awe of man. In shadier bower
 More sacred and sequestered,⁰ though but feigned, *secluded*
 Pan or Silvanus never slept, nor nymph,
 Nor Faunus² haunted. Here in close recess
 With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs
- 710 Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed,
 And heav'nly choirs the hymenean⁰ sung, *wedding song*
 What day the genial³ angel to our sire
 Brought her in naked beauty more adorned,
 More lovely than Pandora, whom the gods
- 715 Endowed with all their gifts, and O too like
 In sad event,⁰ when to the unwiser son *outcome*
 Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared
 Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged
 On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.⁴
- 720 Thus at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,
 Both turned, and under open sky adored
 The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n
 Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe
 And starry pole:⁰ "Thou also mad'st the night, *sky*
- 725 Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day,
 Which we in our appointed work employed
 Have finished happy in our mutual help
 And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
 Ordained by thee, and this delicious place
- 730 For us too large, where thy abundance wants
 Partakers, and uncropped falls to the ground.
 But thou hast promised from us two a race

1. Mark the watches of the night; also, perform musical "divisions," elaborate melodic passages.
 2. Forest and field divinities of classical mythology-
 3. Presiding over marriage and generation.
 4. Pandora (the name means "all gifts") was an artificial woman, molded of clay, bestowed by the

gods on Epimetheus, brother of Prometheus (who angered Jove by stealing fire from heaven). She brought a box that foolish Epimetheus opened, releasing all the ills of the human race, leaving only hope inside. The brothers were sons of Iapetus, whom Milton identifies with Japhet, Noah's third son. The Eve-Pandora parallel was often noted.

To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
 735 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep."
 This said unanimous, and other rites
 Observing none, but adoration pure
 Which God likes best,' into their inmost bow'r
 Handed⁰ they went; and eased⁰ the putting off *hand in hand / spared*
 740 These troublesome disguises which we wear,
 Straight side by side were laid, nor turned I ween"
 Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites *surmise*
 Mysterious⁶ of connubial love refused:
 Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
 745 Of purity and place and innocence,
 Defaming as impure what God declares
 Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
 Our Maker bids increase,⁷ who bids abstain
 But our destroyer, foe to God and man?
 750 Hail wedded Love, mysterious law, true source
 Of human offspring, sole propriety⁰ *private property*
 In Paradise of all things common else.
 By thee adulterous lust was driv'n from men
 Among the bestial herds to range, by thee
 755 Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
 Relations dear, and all the charities⁰ *loves*
 Of father, son, and brother first were known.
 Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
 Or think thee unbecoming holiest place,
 760 Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
 Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,
 Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs used.⁸
 Here Love his golden shafts employs,⁹ here lights
 His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
 765 Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile
 Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,
 Casual fruition, nor in court amours,
 Mixed dance, or wanton masque, or midnight ball,
 Or serenade, which the starved⁰ lover sings *deprived*
 770 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.
 These lulled by nightingales embracing slept,
 And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof
 Show'red roses, which the morn repaired.⁰ Sleep on, *replaced*
 Blest pair; and O yet happiest if ye seek
 775 No happier state, and know to know no more.¹
 Now had night measured with her shadowy cone
 Halfway up hill this vast sublunar vault,²

5. Like many Puritans, Milton objected to set forms of prayer, so Adam and Eve pray spontaneously (therefore sincerely), but also, paradoxically, together. Their prayer develops variations on Psalm 104.20-24.

6. Ephesians 5.32 calls the union of man and woman a "mystery" paralleling that of Christ and the church.

7. Genesis 1.28: "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth."

8. Throughout history ("present or past"), Old and New Testament worthies have "used" matrimony as a noble estate.

9. The "golden shafts" (arrows) of Cupid produce true love, his lead-tipped arrows, hate.

1. Know enough to be content with what you know.

2. The conical shadow cast by the earth has moved halfway up to its zenith, so it is 9 p.m., the end of the first three-hour watch.

And from their ivory port the Cherubim
 Forth issuing at th' accustomed hour stood armed
 To their night watches in warlike parade,
 When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake:
 "Uzziel,³ half these draw off, and coast° the south *skirt*
 With strictest watch; these other wheel⁴ the north,
 Our circuit meets full west." As flame they part
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.
 From these, two strong and subtle Spirits he called
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge:
 "Ithuriel and Zephon,⁵ with winged speed
 Search through this garden, leave unsearched no nook,
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, *from*
 Now laid perhaps asleep secure of° harm.
 This evening from the sun's decline arrived
 Who° tells of some infernal Spirit seen *one who*
 Hitherward bent who could have thought? escaped
 The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt:
 Such where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring."
 So saying, on he led his radiant files,
 Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct
 In search of whom they sought: him there they found
 Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve;
 Assaying⁶ by his devilish art to reach *attempting*
 The organs of her fancy,⁶ and with them forge
 Illusions as he list,⁶ phantasms and dreams; *pleased*
 Or if, inspiring⁶ venom, he might taint *breathing*
 Th' animal spirits that from pure blood arise
 Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence arise
 At least distempered,⁶ discontented thoughts, *disordered*
 Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires
 Blown up with high conceits⁶ engend'ring pride. *notions*
 Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear
 Touched lightly; for no falsehood can endure
 Touch of celestial temper,⁷ but returns
 Of force to its own likeness: up he starts
 Discovered and surprised. As when a spark
 Lights on a heap of nitrous powder,⁸ laid
 Fit for the tun some magazine to store
 Against a rumored war, the smutty⁶ grain *black*
 With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air:
 So started up in his own shape the Fiend.
 Back stepped those two fair angels half amazed
 So sudden to behold the grisly king;
 Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon:
 "Which of those rebel Spirits adjudged to Hell
 Com'st thou, escaped thy prison; and transformed,

3. Hebrew, "my strength is God."

4. "Wheel": turn to (military term); "shield" (line 785) is left, "spear" is right.

5. Hebrew, "a looking out." "Ithuriel": Hebrew, "discovery of God."

6. The faculty of forming mental images.

7. Anything, like the spear, made ("tempered") in

Heaven.

8. Alights or kindles ("lights") gunpowder ("nitrous powder"), ready (next lines) to be stored in some barrel ("tun") laid up in some storehouse ("magazine"), in preparation for ("against") rumors of war.

Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?"

"Know ye not then," said Satan, filled with scorn,
"Know ye not me? Ye knew me once no mate
For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar;
Not to know me argues⁰ yourselves unknown,
The lowest of your throng; or if ye know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain?"

proves

To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn:
"Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminished brightness, to be known
As when thou stood'st in Heav'n upright and pure;
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee, and thou resembl'st now
Thy sin and place of doom obscure⁰ and foul.
But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm."

dark

So spake the Cherub, and his grave rebuke
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible: abashed the Devil stood,
And felt how awful⁰ goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely, saw, and pined⁰
His loss; but chiefly to find here observed
His luster visibly impaired; yet seemed
Undaunted. "If I must contend," said he,
"Best with the best, the sender not the sent,
Or all at once; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost." "Thy fear," said Zephon bold,
"Will save us trial what the least can do
Single⁰ against thee wicked, and thence weak."

*awe-inspiring
mourned*

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

in single combat

"O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade,⁰
And with them comes a third of regal port,⁰
But faded splendor wan;⁰ who by his gait
And fierce demeanor seems the Prince of Hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest;
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours."⁰

*trees
bearing
faint, dark*

He scarce had ended, when those two approached
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couched.

frowns

To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake:

"Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed
 To thy transgressions, and disturbed the charge" *responsibility*

880 Of others, who approve not to transgress
 By thy example, but have power and right
 To question thy bold entrance on this place;
 Employed it seems to violate sleep, and those
 Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?"

885 To whom thus Satan, with contemptuous brow:
 "Gabriel, thou hadst in Heav'n th' esteem" of wise, *reputation of being*
 And such I held thee; but this question asked
 Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
 Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,

890 Though thither doomed? Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt,
 And boldly venture to whatever place
 Farthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change" *exchange*
 Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
 Dole" with delight, which in this place I sought; *pain, grief*

895 To thee no reason, who know'st only good,
 But evil hast not tried: and wilt object⁹
 His will who bound us? Let him surer bar
 His iron gates, if he intends our stay
 In that dark durance:" thus much what was asked.¹ *confinement*

900 The rest is true, they found me where they say;
 But that implies not violence or harm."
 Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel moved,
 Disdainfully half smiling thus replied:
 "O loss of one in Heav'n to judge of wise,

905 Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,²
 And now returns him from his prison scaped,
 Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
 Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
 Unlicensed from his bounds in Hell prescribed;

910 So wise he judges it to fly from pain
 However," and to scape his punishment. *howsoever*
 So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
 Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
 Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,

915 Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
 Can equal anger infinite provoked.
 But wherefore thou alone? Wherefore with thee
 Came not all Hell broke loose? Is pain to them
 Less pain, less to be fled, or thou than they

920 Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief,
 The first in flight from pain, hadst thou alleged
 To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
 Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive."
 To which the Fiend thus answered frowning stern:

925 "Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,
 Insulting angel, well thou know'st I stood" *withstood*
 Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid

9. Put forward as an objection.

1. I.e., thus much (answers) what was asked.

2. Irony: "O what a loss to Heaven to lose such a

judge of wisdom as Satan, whose folly led to his fall."

The blasting volleyed thunder made all speed
 And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
 But still thy words at random, as before,
 Argue thy inexperience what behoves
 From⁰ hard assays⁰ and ill successes past *after / attempts*
 A faithful leader, not to hazard all
 Through ways of danger by himself untried.
 I therefore, I alone first undertook
 To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
 This new-created world, whereof in Hell
 Fame⁰ is not silent, here in hope to find *rumor*
 Better abode, and my afflicted powers⁰ *downcast armies*
 To settle here on earth, or in midair;³
 Though for possession put^o to try once more *forced*
 What thou and thy gay^o legions dare against; *showy*
 Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
 High up in Heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
 And practiced distances to cringe, not fight."⁴

To whom the warrior angel soon replied:
 "To say and straight unsay, pretending first
 Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
 Argues no leader, but a liar traced,⁰ *found out*
 Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name,
 O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!
 Faithful to whom? To thy rebellious crew?
 Army of fiends, fit body to fit head;
 Was this your discipline and faith engaged,
 Your military obedience, to dissolve
 Allegiance to th' acknowledged Power Supreme?
 And thou sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou
 Once fawned, and cringed, and servilely adored
 Heav'n's awful Monarch?⁵ Wherefore but in hope
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
 But mark what I areed^o thee now, avaunt;⁰ *advise / be gone*
 Fly thither whence thou fledd'st: if from this hour
 Within these hallowed limits thou appear,
 Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chained,
 And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
 The facile^o gates of Hell too slightly barred."
easily moved

So threatened he, but Satan to no threats
 Gave heed, but waxing^o more in rage replied: *growing*
 "Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,
 Proud limitary^o Cherub, but ere then
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
 From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
 Used to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels
 In progress through the road of heav'n star-paved."

3. Satan will become "prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2.2).

4. Satan contemptuously parallels the angels' courtly deference ("distances") before God's throne and keeping a safe distance from battle.

"Cringe": bow or kneel in fear or servility.

5. See 5.617 for Satan's "servile" adoration on the day of the Son's exaltation, when he "seemed well pleased" but was not.

6. Frontier guard, also, one of limited authority.

While thus he spake, th' angelic squadron bright
 Turned fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns⁷
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
 980 With ported⁸ spears, as thick as when a field
 Of Ceres⁹ ripe for harvest waving bends
 Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
 Sways them; the careful plowman doubting stands
 Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
 985 Prove chaff. On th' other side Satan alarmed⁰ *called to arms*
 Collecting all his might dilated stood,
 Like Tenerife or Atlas¹ unremoved:⁰ *unremovable*
 His stature reached the sky, and on his crest
 Sat Horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp
 990 What seemed both spear and shield: now dreadful deeds
 Might have ensued, nor only Paradise
 In this commotion, but the starry cope^o *vault*
 Of Heav'n perhaps, or all the elements
 At least had gone to wrack, disturbed and torn
 995 With violence of this conflict, had not soon
 Th' Eternal to prevent such horrid fray
 Hung forth in Heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
 Betwixt Astraea and the Scorpion sign,²
 Wherein all things created first he weighed,
 1000 The pendulous round earth with balanced air
 In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
 Battles and realms: in these he put two weights
 The sequel each of parting and of fight;³
 The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam;
 1005 Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the Fiend:
 "Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,
 Neither our own but giv'n; what folly then
 To boast what arms can do, since thine no more
 Than Heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubled now
 1010 To trample thee as mire: for proof look up,
 And read thy lot in yon celestial sign
 Where thou art weighed, and shown how light, how weak,⁴
 If thou resist." The Fiend looked up and knew
 His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
 1015 Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

Book 5

Now Morn her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
 Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl,⁰ *sparkling dew*

7. A crescent-shaped military formation.

8. Held slantwise in front.

9. Roman goddess of grain; here, the grain itself. A Homeric simile compares an excited army to windswept corn (*Iliad* 2.147—50).

1. A mountain in Morocco. "Tenerife": a mountain in the Canary Islands.

2. The zodiac sign Libra, represented by a pair of scales, is between Virgo (identified with Astraea, goddess of Justice, who fled the earth at the end

of the Golden Age) and Scorpio.

3. In several classical epic similes the fates of opposing heroes are weighed in scales by the gods, but here God "ponders" (weighs the consequences of) all events, including parting or fighting. Battle, desired by Satan, proves lighter ("kicked the beam," line 1004).

4. Cf. Daniel 5.27: "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting."

When Adam waked, so custom'd, for his sleep
 Was aery light, from pure digestion bred,
 And temperate vapors bland,⁰ which th' only sound *gentle, balmy*
 Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,¹
 Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin⁰ song *morning*
 Of birds on every bough; so much the more
 His wonder was to find unawaken'd Eve
 With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek,
 As through unquiet rest: he on his side
 Leaning half-raised, with looks of cordial⁰ love *heartfelt*
 Hung over her enamored, and beheld
 Beauty, which whether waking or asleep,
 Shot forth peculiar⁰ graces; then with voice *its own*
 Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora² breathes,
 Her hand soft touching, whispered thus: "Awake
 My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
 Heav'n's last best gift, my ever new delight,
 Awake, the morning shines, and the fresh field
 Calls us, we lose the prime, to mark how spring
 Our tended plants, how blows⁰ the citron grove, *blooms*
 What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,⁰ *balsam*
 How nature paints her colors, how the bee
 Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet."³

Such whispering waked her, but with startled eye
 On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake:

"O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
 My glory, my perfection, glad I see
 Thy face, and morn returned, for I this night,
 Such night till this I never pass'd, have dream'd,
 If dream'd, not as I oft am wont,⁰ of thee, *accustomed*
 Works of day past, or morrow's next design,
 But of offense and trouble, which my mind
 Knew never till this irksome night. Methought
 Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
 With gentle voice, I thought it thine; it said,
 'Why sleep'st thou Eve? Now is the pleasant time,
 The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
 To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
 Tunes sweetest his love-labored song; now reigns
 Full-orbed the moon, and with more pleasing light
 Shadowy sets off the face of things, in vain,
 If none regard; heav'n wakes with all his eyes,⁰ *stars*
 Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire,
 In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
 Attracted by thy beauty still⁰ to gaze.'
continually
 I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
 To find thee I directed then my walk;
 And on, me thought, alone I pass'd through ways

1. Rustling leaves and streams ("rills") stirred by Aurora, goddess of the dawn.

2. Zephyrus is god of the gentle west wind, Flora goddess of flowers.

3. Adam sings a morning love song (*aubade*) to Eve, which works variations on Song of Solomon

2.10—12: "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. . . . The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come." Compare Satan's serenade (5.38¹⁷), a parody of Adam's *aubade* and the Song of Solomon. "Prime" (line 21): first hour of the day.

- That brought me on a sudden to the tree
 Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seemed,
 Much fairer to my fancy than by day;
 And as I wond'ring looked, beside it stood
 55 One shaped and winged like one of those from Heav'n
 By us oft seen; his dewy locks distilled
 Ambrosia;^o on that tree he also gazed; *heavenly fragrance*
 And 'O fair plant,' said he, 'with fruit surcharged,^o *overburdened*
 Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet,
 60 Nor god,^o nor man? Is knowledge so despised? *angel*
 Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?⁴
 Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
 Longer thy offered good, why else set here?'
 This said he paused not, but with vent'rous arm
 65 He plucked, he tasted; me damp horror chilled
 At such bold words vouched with^o a deed so bold: *backed by*
 But he thus overjoyed, 'O fruit divine,
 Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropped,
 Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
 70 For gods, yet able to make gods of men:
 And why not gods of men, since good, the more
 Communicated, more abundant grows,
 The author not impaired,^o but honored more? *injured, diminished*
 Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve,
 75 Partake thou also; happy though thou art,
 Happier thou may'st be, worthier canst not be:
 Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
 Thyself a goddess, not to earth confined,
 But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
 80 Ascend to Heav'n, by merit thine, and see
 What life the gods live there, and such live thou.'
 So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
 Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part
 Which he had plucked; the pleasant savory smell
 85 So quickened appetite, that I, methought,
 Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
 With him I flew, and underneath beheld
 The earth outstretched immense, a prospect wide
 And various: wond'ring at my flight and change
 90 To this high exaltation: suddenly
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
 And fell asleep; but O how glad I waked
 To find this but a dream!" Thus Eve her night
 Related, and thus Adam answered sad.^o *gravely, soberly*
 95 "Best image of myself and dearer half,
 The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
 Affects me equally; nor can I like
 This uncouth^o dream, of evil sprung I fear; *strange, unpleasant*
 Yet evil whence? In thee can harbor none,
 100 Created pure. But know that in the soul
 Are many lesser faculties⁵ that serve

4. I.e., does envy or some other barrier ("reserve") forbid your being tasted?

5. Adam's explanation of the dream (lines 100—116) summarizes the orthodox faculty psychology

Reason as chief; among these fancy next
 Her office holds; of all external things,
 Which the five watchful senses represent,
 105 She forms imaginations," aery shapes, *images*
 Which reason joining or disjoining, frames
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
 Into her private cell when nature rests.
 110 Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes
 To imitate her; but misjoining shapes,
 Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
 111 matching words and deeds long past or late.
 Some such resemblances methinks I find
 us Of our last evening's talk in this thy dream,⁶
 But with addition strange; yet be not sad.
 Evil into the mind of god⁷ or man
 May come and go, so unapproved,⁸ and leave
 No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope
 120 That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,
 Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
 Be not disheartened then, nor cloud those looks
 That wont to be⁹ more cheerful and serene *usually are*
 Than when fair morning first smiles on the world,
 125 And let us to our fresh employments rise
 Among the groves, the fountains, and the flow'rs
 That open now their choicest bosomed smells
 Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store."
 So cheered he his fair spouse, and she was cheered,
 130 But silently a gentle tear let fall
 From either eye, and wiped them with her hair;
 Two other precious drops that ready stood,
 Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
 Kissed as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
 135 And pious awe, that feared to have offended.
 So all was cleared, and to the field they haste.
 But first from under shady arborous⁰ roof, *consisting of trees*
 Soon as they forth were come to open sight
 Of day-spring,⁹ and the sun, who scarce up risen *daybreak*
 140 With wheels yet hov'ring o'er the ocean brim,
 Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
 Discovering in wide landscape all the east
 Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
 Lowly they bowed adoring, and began
 145 Their orisons,⁹ each morning duly paid *prayers*
 In various style, for neither various style
 Nor holy rapture⁰ wanted they to praise *ecstasy*
 Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced or sung
 Unmeditated,⁹ such prompt eloquence

and dream theory of Milton's time—one among many kinds of knowledge with which unfallen man was endowed.

6. Adam recalls his own words in 4.411–39.

7. Probably "angel" as elsewhere, but perhaps God, whose omniscience must encompass knowl-

edge of evil as well as good.

8. If not willed (approved of) or not acted on (put to the proof).

9. In a variety of styles or forms of speech and song, which harmonize together but are at the same time impromptu, spontaneous, and ecstatic.

Flowed from their lips, in prose or numerous⁰ verse,
 More tuneable⁰ than needed lute or harp
 To add more sweetness, and they thus began:
 "These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,¹
 Almighty, thine this universal frame,
 Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then!
 Unspeakable, who sitt'st above these heavens,
 To us invisible or dimly seen
 In these thy lowest works, yet these declare
 Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine:
 Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
 Angels, for ye behold him, and with songs
 And choral symphonies,⁰ day without night,
 Circle his throne rejoicing, ye in Heav'n,
 On earth join all ye creatures to extol
 Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.
 Fairest of stars, - last in the train⁰ of night,
 If better thou belong not to the dawn,
 Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
 With thy bright cirlet, praise him in thy sphere
 While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.
 Thou sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
 Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
 In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
 And when high noon hast gained, and when thou fall'st.
 Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fli'st
 With the fixed stars, fixed in their orb that flies,
 And ye five other wand'ring fires that move
 In mystic dance not without song,³ resound
 His praise, who out of darkness called up light.
 Air, and ye elements the eldest birth
 Of nature's womb, that in quaternion⁴ run
 Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix
 And nourish all things, let your ceaseless change
 Vary to our great Maker still⁰ new praise.
 Ye mists and exhalations that now rise
 From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
 Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
 In honor to the world's great Author rise,
 Whether to deck with clouds the uncolored sky,
 Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,
 Rising or falling still advance his praise.
 His praise ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
 Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye pines,
 With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
 Fountains and ye, that warble, as ye flow,
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
 Join voices all ye living souls: ye birds,

*rhythmic
melodious*

music in parts

procession

continually

1. Their morning hymn works variations on Psalms 148, 104, and 19, as well as the canticle "Benedicite."

2. Venus, the morning star and (as Hesperus) the evening star.

3. The planets, unlike the fixed stars, change their relative positions; their motion produces the music of the spheres, audible to unfallen humans.

4. The fourfold changing relationship of the four elements.

- That singing up to heaven gate ascend,
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
- 200 Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk
 The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep;
 Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
 To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade
 Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
- 205 Hail universal Lord, be bounteous still⁰ *always*
 To give us only good; and if the night
 Have gathered aught of evil or concealed,
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark."
 So prayed they innocent, and to their thoughts
- 210 Firm peace recovered soon and wonted calm.
 On to their morning's rural work they haste
 Among sweet dews and flow'rs; where any row
 Of fruit trees over-woody⁰ reached too far *too bushy*
 Their pampered boughs, and needed hands to check
- 215 Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine
 To wed her elm;⁵ she spoused about him twines
 Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
 Her dow'r th' adopted clusters, to adorn
 His barren leaves. Them thus employed beheld
- 220 With pity Heav'n's high King, and to him called
 Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that deigned
 To travel with Tobias, and secured
 His marriage with the seven-times-wedded maid.⁶
 "Raphael," said he, "thou hear'st what stir on earth
- 225 Satan from Hell scaped through the darksome gulf
 Hath raised in Paradise, and how disturbed
 This night the human pair, how he designs
 In them at once to ruin all mankind.
 Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend
- 230 Converse with Adam, in what bow'r or shade
 Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retired,
 To respite his day labor with repast,
 Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
 As may advise him of his happy state,
- 235 Happiness in his power left free to will,
 Left to his own free will, his will though free,
 Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware
 He swerve not too secure:⁰ tell him withal *overconfident*
 His danger, and from whom, what enemy
- 240 Late fall'n himself from Heav'n, is plotting now
 The fall of others from like state of bliss;
 By violence, no, for that shall be withstood,
 But by deceit and lies; this let him know,
 Lest wilfully transgressing he pretend⁰ *plead*
- 245 Surprisal, unadmonished, unforewarned."
 So spake th' Eternal Father, and fulfilled

5. A familiar emblem of matrimony, the elm symbolizing masculine strength, and the vine, feminine fruitfulness, softness, and sweetness; note, however, the matriarchal implications of "adopted

clusters" (line 218).

6. Raphael (in Hebrew, "health of God") was the adviser of Tobias in winning his wife (see 4.168—71 and note).

All justice: nor delayed the winged saint *angel*
 After his charge received; but from among
 Thousand celestial ardors,⁷ where he stood
 Veiled with his gorgeous wings, up springing light
 Flew through the midst of Heav'n; th' angelic choirs
 On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
 Through all th' empyreal road; till at the gate
 Of Heav'n arrived, the gate self-opened wide
 On golden hinges turning, as by work^o *mechanism*
 Divine the sov'reign Architect had framed.
 From hence, no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
 Star interposed, however small he sees,
 Not unconform to other shining globes,
 Earth and the gard'n of God, with cedars crowned
 Above all hills. As when by night the glass^o *telescope*
 Of Galileo, less assured, observes
 Imagined lands and regions in the moon:
 Or pilot from amidst the Cyclades
 Delos or Samos first appearing kens^o *discerns*
 A cloudy spot.⁸ Down thither prone^o in flight *bent forward*
 He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
 Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing
 Now on the polar wings, then with quick fan
 Winnows the buxom air; till within soar
 Of tow'ring eagles,⁹ to all the fowls he seems
 A phoenix, gazed by all, as that sole bird
 When to enshrine his relics in the sun's
 Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.¹
 At once on th' eastern cliff of Paradise
 He lights, and to his proper shape returns
 A Seraph winged; six wings he wore, to shade
 His lineaments^o divine; the pair that clad *parts of the body*
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling^o o'er his breast *draping*
 With regal ornament; the middle pair
 Girt like a starry zone^o his waist, and round *belt*
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
 And colors dipped in Heav'n; the third his feet
 Shadowed from either heel with feathered mail²
 Sky-tinctured grain.^o Like Maia's son³ he stood, *dye*
 And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance filled
 The circuit wide. Straight^o knew him all the bands *at once*
 Of angels under watch; and to his state,^o *rank*
 And to his message^o high in honor rise; *mission*
 For on some message high they guessed him bound.
 Their glittering tents he passed, and now is come

7. Bright spirits burning in love; the Hebrew *seraph* means "to burn."

8. The Cyclades are a circular group of islands in the south Aegean Sea; the two islands seen as "spots" from within the archipelago are Delos (the traditional center but famous for having floated adrift) and Samos (outside the group).

9. Raphael sails with steady wing, turns at the pole, beats ("fans") with his wings the yielding

("buxom") air, and then comes within range of the eagle's soaring flight.

1. The phoenix was a mythical, unique ("sole") bird that lived five hundred years, was consumed by fire, and was reborn from the ashes, which it then carried to the temple of the sun at Heliopolis in Egypt.

2. Plumage suggesting scale armor.

3. Mercury, messenger of the gods.

Into the blissful field; through groves of myrrh,
 And flow'ring odors, cassia, nard, and balm;⁴
 A wilderness of sweets; for nature here
 295 Wantoned⁰ as in her prime, and played⁰ at will *reveled / acted out*
 Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
 Wild above rule or art; enormous⁰ bliss. *immense, beyond rule*
 Him through the spicy forest onward come
 Adam discerned, as in the door he sat⁵
 300 Of his cool bow'r, while now the mounted sun
 Shot down direct his fervid rays, to warm
 Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs;
 And Eve within, due⁰ at her hour prepared *fittingly*
 For dinner savory fruits, of taste to please
 305 True appetite and not disrelish thirst,
 Of nectarous drafts between, from milky stream,
 Berry or grape: to whom thus Adam called:
 "Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold
 Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
 310 Comes this way moving; seems another morn
 Ris'n on mid-noon; some great behest from Heav'n
 To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
 This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
 And what thy stores contain, bring forth and pour
 315 Abundance, fit to honor and receive
 Our heav'nly stranger; well we may afford
 Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
 From large bestowed, where nature multiplies
 Her fertile growth, and by disburd'ning grows
 320 More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare."
 To whom thus Eve. "Adam, earth's hallowed mold,⁶
 Of God inspired, small store will serve, where store,⁷
 All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
 Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
 325 To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes:
 But I will haste and from each bough and brake
 Each plant and juiciest gourd will pluck such choice
 To entertain our angel guest, as he
 Beholding shall confess that here on earth
 330 God hath dispensed his bounties as in Heav'n."
 So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
 What choice to choose for delicacy best,
 What order, so contrived as not to mix
 335 Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring
 Taste after taste upheld⁰ with kindest⁰ change, *maintained / most natural*
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
 Whatever earth all-bearing mother yields
 In India east or west, or middle shore

4. "Odors": aromatic substances; "cassia": cinnamon; "nard": spikenard; "balm": balsam—all were used to make perfumed ointments.

5. Raphael's visit to Adam is modeled on Abraham's entertainment of three angels (Genesis

18.1-16).

6. Revered shape of earth's substance. The name "Adam" signifies red earth.

7. A great quantity. "Small store": few stored foods.

In Pontus or the Punic coast,⁸ or where
 Alcinous reigned, fruit of all kinds, in coat,
 Rough, or smooth-rined, or bearded husk, or shell
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
 Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the grape
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths⁹
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels pressed
 She tempers⁰ dulcet creams, nor these to hold
 Wants⁰ her fit vessels pure, then strews the ground
 With rose and odors from the shrub unfumed.¹
 Meanwhile our primitive⁰ great sire, to meet
 His godlike guest, walks forth, without more train⁰
 Accompanied than with his own complete
 Perfections, in himself was all his state,⁰
 More solemn⁰ than the tedious pomp that waits
 On princes, when their rich retinue long
 Of horses led, and grooms besmeared with gold
 Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
 Nearer his presence Adam though not awed,
 Yet with submissive approach and reverence meek,
 As to a superior nature, bowing low,

*blends**laczsz**original**attendants**dignity, authority**awe-inspiring*

Thus said: "Native of Heav'n, for other place:
 None can than Heav'n such glorious shape contain;
 Since by descending from the thrones above,
 Those happy places thou hast deigned⁰ a while
 To want,⁰ and honor these, vouchsafe with us
 Two only, who yet by sov'reign gift possess
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bow'r
 To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
 To sit and taste, till this meridian⁰ heat
 Be over, and the sun more cool decline."

*condescended**be parted from*

Whom thus the angelic Virtue² answered mild:
 "Adam, I therefore came, nor art thou such
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
 As may not oft invite, though Spirits of Heav'n
 To visit thee; lead on then where thy bow'r
 O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise
 I have at will." So to the sylvan lodge
 They came, that like Pomona's³ arbor smiled
 With flow'rets decked⁰ and fragrant smells; but Eve
 Undecked, save with herself more lovely fair
 Than wood nymph, or the fairest goddess feigned
 Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove,⁴
 Stood to entertain her guest from Heav'n; no veil
 She needed, virtue-proof,⁰ no thought infirm

*covered**armored in virtue*

8. The "middle shore" includes Pontus, the south coast of the Black Sea, famous for nuts and fruits, and the "Punic" (Carthaginian) coast of North Africa on the Mediterranean, famous for figs; the gardens of Alcinous (next line) are described in the *Odyssey* 7.113–21 as perpetually fruitful.

9. Meads, drinks sweetened with honey. "Must": unfermented fruit juice.

1. Naturally scented, not burned for incense.

2. Milton uses these angelic titles freely, in the

Protestant manner, not as designations of the nine traditional orders (Raphael was called "Seraph" at line 277).

3. The Roman goddess of fruit trees.

4. On Mount Ida, Venus, Juno, and Minerva "strove" naked for the title of the most beautiful; Paris awarded the prize (the apple of discord) to Venus, which led to the rape of Helen and the Trojan War.

Altered her cheek. On whom the Angel "Hail"
Bestowed, the holy salutation used
Long after to blest Mary, second Eve.⁵

"Hail mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb
Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons
Than with these various fruits the trees of God
Have heaped this table." Raised of grassy turf
Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
And on her ample square from side to side
All autumn piled, though spring and autumn here
Danced hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;
No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began
Our author:⁰ "Heav'nly stranger, please to taste
These bounties which our Nourisher, from whom
All perfect good unmeasured out, descends,
To us for food and for delight hath caused
The earth to yield; unsavory food perhaps
To spiritual natures; only this I know,
That one Celestial Father gives to all."

forefather

To whom the angel: "Therefore what he gives
(Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part
Spiritual, may oP purest Spirits be found
No ingrateful food: and food alike those pure
Intelligential substances require⁶
As doth your rational; and both contain
Within them every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,⁷
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
For know, whatever was created, needs
To be sustained and fed; of elements
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon;
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged
Vapors not yet into her substance turned.⁸
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs.⁹
The sun that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimentaP recompense
In humid exhalations, and at even
Sups with the ocean;¹ though in Heav'n the trees
Of life ambrosial⁰ fruitage bear, and vines
Yield nectar,² though from off the boughs each morn

by

nourishing.

divinely fragrant

5. Cf. the angel's words to Mary announcing that she would bear a son, Jesus (Luke 1.28): "Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women."

6. Milton's angels ("intelligential substances") require real food, even as "rational" men do (see below, lines 430-38). As a monist (believer that all creation is of one matter), Milton denied the more common (dualistic) idea that angels are pure spirit, holding instead that they are of a very highly refined material substance.

7. Three stages in digestion.

8. Here Raphael describes lunar spots as still-

undigested vapors (in keeping with his exposition of the universal need of nourishment); in 1.287-91 he referred to moon spots in Galileo's terms, as landscape features.

9. A double negative: the moon does exhale such nourishment to other planets.

1. Milton explains evaporation as the sun dining off moisture exhaled from the oceans.

2. Ambrosia is the food and nectar the drink of the classical gods; Milton adds "pearly grain" (line 430), like the manna showered on the Israelites in the desert (Exodus 16.14-15).

We brush mellifluous⁰ dews, and find the ground
 Covered with pearly grain; yet God hath here
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,
 As may compare with Heaven; and to taste
 Think not I shall be nice.⁰ So down they sat,
 And to their viands fell, nor seemingly⁰
 The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss⁰
 Of theologians, but with keen dispatch
 Of real hunger, and concoctive⁰ heat
 To transubstantiate;³ what redounds, transpires
 Through Spirits with ease; nor wonder, if by fire
 Of sooty coal the empiric⁰ alchemist
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold
 As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve
 Ministered naked, and their flowing cups
 With pleasant liquors crowned.⁰ O innocence
 Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
 Then had the Sons of God excuse t' have been
 Enamored at that sight,⁴ but in those hearts
 Love unlibidinous⁰ reigned, nor jealousy
 Was understood, the injured lover's hell.

Thus when with meats and drinks they had sufficed,
 Not burdened nature, sudden mind arose
 In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass
 Given him by this great conference to know
 Of things above his world, and of their being
 Who dwell in Heav'n, whose excellence he saw
 Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms
 Divine effulgence,⁰ whose high power so far
 Exceeded human, and his wary speech
 Thus to th' empyreal minister he framed:
 "Inhabitant with God, now know I well
 Thy favor, in this honor done to man,
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed
 To enter and these earthly fruits to taste,
 Food not of angels, yet accepted so,
 As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
 At Heav'n's high feasts t' have fed: yet what compare?"

To whom the winged hierarch⁰ replied:
 "O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
 All things proceed, and up to him return,
 If not depraved from good, created all
 Such to perfection, one first matter all,⁵

*honey-flowing**fastidious, finicky**inshmv**explanation**digestive**experimental**filled**to the brim**without lust**shining forth**authority*

3. In common theological use, transubstantiation is the Roman Catholic doctrine that the bread and wine of the Eucharist become the body and blood of Christ. Milton vigorously denied that doctrine, but he describes the angels' transforming of earthly food into their more highly refined spiritual substance as a true transubstantiation. The excess ("what redounds") is exhaled ("transpires") through angelic pores.

4. Genesis 6.2 tells of the marriage of "the daughters of men" with "the sons of God," usually iden-

tified as sons of Seth, but a patristic tradition (alluded to here) identifies them as angels.

5. Milton held that the universe was created out of Chaos, not out of nothing: the primal matter of Chaos had its origin in God, who subsequently created all things from that matter (see 7.168—73, 210—42). This materialist "monism" denies sharp distinctions between angels and men, spirit and matter: all beings are of one substance, of varying degrees of refinement and life.

Endued with various forms, various degrees
 Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
 475 But more refined, more spiritous, and pure,
 As nearer to him placed or nearer tending
 Each in their several active spheres assigned,
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
 Proportioned to each kind.⁶ So from the root
 480 Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
 More airy, last the bright consummate flow'r
 Spirits odorous breathes:⁷ flow'rs and their fruit
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed⁰ *purified*
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
 485 To intellectual, give both life and sense,
 Fancy⁰ and understanding, whence the soul *imagination*
 Reason receives, and reason is her being,
 Discursive, or intuitive;⁸ discourse
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
 490 Differing but in degree, of kind the same.
 Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
 If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
 To proper⁰ substance; time may come when men *our own*
 With angels may participate, and find
 495 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare:
 And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
 Improved by tract⁰ of time, and winged ascend *passage*
 Ethereal as we, or may at choice
 500 Here or in heav'nly paradises dwell;
 If ye be found obedient, and retain
 Unalterably firm his love entire
 Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy
 Your fill what happiness this happy state
 505 Can comprehend, incapable⁰ of more." *unable to contain*
 To whom the patriarch of mankind replied:
 "O favorable Spirit, propitious guest,
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
 Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
 510 From center to circumference, whereon
 In contemplation of created things
 By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
 What meant that caution joined, 'If ye be found
 Obedient'? Can we want⁰ obedience then *lack*

6. Milton's version of the chain of being qualifies natural hierarchy by allowing for movement up or down; beings may become increasingly spiritual ("more spiritous") or increasingly gross (as the rebel angels do), depending on their moral choices—"nearer tending."

7. The plant figure—root, stalk, leaves, flowers, and fruit—provides an illustration of the dynamism of being in the universe and further explains why Raphael can eat the fruit. Such food is then transformed (next lines) into various orders of "spirits"—"vital," "animal," and "intellectual" (flu-

ids in the blood that sustain life, sensation, motion, and finally intellect and its functions, "fancy," "understanding," and "reason"), indicating that the soul is also material.

8. Traditionally, on the dualist assumption that angels are pure spirit and humans a combination of matter and spirit, angelic intuition (immediate apprehension of truth) was absolutely distinguished from human "discourse" of reason (arguing from premises to conclusions). Milton, denying that assumption, makes the distinction only relative, a matter of "degree" (line 490).

- 515 To him, or possibly his love desert
 Who formed us from the dust, and placed us here
 Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
 Human desires can seek or apprehend?"
 To whom the angel: "Son of Heav'n and earth,
- 520 Attend: that thou art happy, owe" to God; *attribute*
 That thou continu'st such, owe to thyself,
 That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
 This was that caution giv'n thee; be advised.
 God made thee perfect, not immutable;⁹ *unchangeable*
- 525 And good he made thee, but to persevere
 He left it in thy power, ordained thy will
 By nature free, not overruled by fate
 Inextricable, or strict necessity;
 Our voluntary service he requires,
- 530 Not our necessitated, such with him
 Finds no acceptance, nor can find, for how
 Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve
 Willing or no, who will but what they must
 By destiny, and can no other choose?
- 535 Myself and all th' angelic host that stand
 In sight of God enthroned, our happy state
 Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;
 On other surety⁰ none; freely we serve, *guarantee*
 Because we freely love, as in our will
- 540 To love or not; in this we stand or fall:
 And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,
 And so from Heav'n to deepest Hell; O fall
 From what high state of bliss into what woe!"
 To whom our great progenitor: "Thy words
- 545 Attentive, and with more delighted ear,
 Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
 Cherubic songs⁰ by night from neighboring hills *songs of Cherubim*
 Aerial music send: nor knew I not⁹
 To be both will and deed created free;
- 550 Yet that we never shall forget to love
 Our Maker, and obey him whose command
 Single, is yet^o so just, my constant thoughts *also*
 Assured me, and still assure: though what thou tell'st
 Hath passed in Heav'n, some doubt within me move,
- 555 But more desire to hear, if thou consent,
 The full relation, which must needs be strange,
 Worthy of sacred silence to be heard;
 And we have yet large^o day, for scarce the sun *ample*
 Hath finished half his journey, and scarce begins
- 560 His other half in the great zone of Heav'n."
 Thus Adam made request, and Raphael
 After short pause assenting, thus began:
 "High matter¹ thou enjoin'st me, O prime of men,

9. A double negative; i.e., "I did know."

1. Raphael's account of the war in Heaven is an epic device, a narrative of past action; it is also a mini-epic itself, with traditional battles, chal-

lenges, and single combats. As an "epic" poet treating sacred matter, Raphael confronts a narrative challenge similar to Milton's own.

Sad task and hard, for how shall I relate
565 To human sense th' invisible exploits
Of warring Spirits; how without remorse
The ruin of so many glorious once
And perfect while they stood; how last unfold
The secrets of another world, perhaps
570 Not lawful to reveal? Yet for thy good
This is dispensed, and what surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By lik'ning spiritual to corporal forms,
As may express them best, though what if earth
575 Be but the shadow of Heav'n, and things therein
Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?
"As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
Reigned where these heav'ns now roll, where earth now rests
Upon her center poised, when on a day
580 (For time, though in eternity, applied
To motion, measures all things durable
By present, past, and future)² on such day
As Heav'n's great year³ brings forth, th' empyreal host
Of angels by imperial summons called,
585 Innumerable before th' Almighty's throne
Forthwith from all the ends of Heav'n appeared
Under their hierarchs⁰ in orders bright. *leaders*
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,
Standards, and gonfalons⁰ twixt van and rear *banners*
590 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
Or in their glittering tissues⁰ bear emblazed *cloth*
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
595 Of circuit⁰ inexpressible they stood, *circumference*
Orb within orb, the Father Infinite,
By whom in bliss embosomed sat the Son,
Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top
Brightness had made invisible, thus spake:
600 "Hear all ye angels, progeny of Light,
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand.
This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
605 Him have anointed,"¹ whom ye now behold
At my right hand; your head I him appoint;
And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in Heav'n, and shall confess him Lord:
Under his great vicegerent⁵ reign abide

2. Countering a long philosophical tradition, Milton asserts the existence of time in Heaven, before the creation of the universe.

3. Plato and others defined the "great year" as the cycle completed when all the heavenly bodies simultaneously return to the positions they held at the cycle's beginning.

4. Cf. Psalm 2.7: "I will declare the decree: . . .

Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." The episode refers to the exaltation of the Son as King, not his actual begetting, since he is elsewhere described as "of all creation first" (3.383) and as God's agent in creating the angels and everything else.

5. Vice-regent, one appointed by the supreme ruler (here, God) to wield his authority.

United as one individual⁰ soul *indivisible*
 Forever happy: him who⁰ disobeys *whoever*
 Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day
 Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
 Into utter⁰ darkness, deep engulfed, his place *outer, total*
 Ordained without redemption, without end.'
 "So spake th' Omnipotent, and with his words
 All seemed well pleased, all seemed, but were not all.
 That day, as other solemn⁰ days, they spent *ceremonial*
 In song and dance about the sacred hill,
 Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
 Of planets and of fixed⁰ in all her wheels *fixed* *stars*
 Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
 Eccentric,⁰ intervolv'd,⁰ yet regular *off center / intertwined*
 Then most, when most irregular they seem:
 And in their motions harmony divine
 So smooths her charming tones,⁶ that God's own ear
 Listens delighted. Evening now approached
 (For we have also our evening and our morn,
 We ours for change delectable, not need)
 Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn
 Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
 Tables are set, and on a sudden piled
 With angels' food, and rubied nectar flows
 In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
 Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heav'n.
 On flow'rs reposed, and with fresh flow'rets crowned,
 They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
 Quaff immortality and joy, secure
 Of surfeit where full measure only bounds
 Excess, before th' all-bounteous King, who show'ed
 With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
 Now when ambrosial⁰ night with clouds exhaled *fragrant*
 From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
 Spring both, the face of brightest Heav'n had changed
 To grateful⁰ twilight (for night comes not there
 In darker veil) and roseate⁰ dews disposed *pleasing*
 All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest, *rose-scented*
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far
 Than all this globous earth in plain outspread,
 (Such are the courts of God) th' angelic throng
 Dispersed in bands and files their camp extend
 By living streams among the trees of life,
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden reared,
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
 Fanned with cool winds, save those who in their course
 Melodious hymns about the sov'reign throne
 Alternate all night long: but not so waked
 Satan, so call him now, his former name
 Is heard no more in Heav'n; he of the first,

6. The movements of the angels in their dance produce harmony, like those of the planets in the Pythagorean theory of the music of the spheres.

If not the first Archangel, great in power,
 In favor and preeminence, yet fraught
 With envy against the Son of God, that day
 Honored by his great Father, and proclaimed
 Messiah⁷ King anointed, could not bear
 Through pride that sight, and thought himself impaired.
 Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolved
 With all his legions to dislodge,⁸ and leave
 Unworshipped, unobeyed the throne supreme
 Contemptuous, and his next subordinate⁸
 Awak'ning, thus to him in secret spake:

leave camp

" 'Sleep'st thou companion dear, what sleep can close
 Thy eyelids? and remember'st what decree
 Of yesterday, so late hath passed the lips
 Of Heav'n's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts
 Wast wont," I mine to thee was wont to impart;
 Both waiting we were one; how then can now
 Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;
 New laws from him who reigns, new minds⁰ may raise
 In us who serve, new counsels, to debate
 What doubtful may ensue, more in this place
 To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
 Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
 Tell them that by command, ere yet dim night
 Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
 And all who under me their banners wave,
 Homeward with flying march where we possess
 The quarters of the north, there to prepare
 Fit entertainment to receive our King
 The great Messiah, and his new commands,
 Who speedily through all the hierarchies
 Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.'

in the habit of

purposes

"So spake the false Archangel, and infused
 Bad influence into th' unwary breast
 Of his associate; he together calls,
 Or several one by one, the regent powers,
 Under him regent, tells, as he was taught,
 That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
 Now ere dim night had disencumbered Heav'n,
 The great hierarchal standard was to move;
 Tells the suggested⁰ cause, and casts between
 Ambitious words and jealousies, to sound⁰
 Or taint integrity; but all obeyed
 The wonted signal, and superior voice
 Of their great potentate⁰ for great indeed
 His name, and high was his degree in Heav'n;
 His count'nance as the morning star that guides
 The starry flock, allured them, and with lies

*insinuated
 make trials of*

rider

7. Hebrew, "anointed."

8. His original name in Heaven is lost (1.356—63), but he will come to be known as Beelzebub.

Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's host:
 Meanwhile, th' Eternal Eye, whose sight discerns
 Abstrusest^o thoughts, from forth his holy mount
 And from within the golden lamps that burn
 Nightly before him, saw without their light
 Rebellion rising, saw in whom, how spread
 Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
 Were banded to oppose his high decree;
 And smiling to his only Son thus said:

most secret

"Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
 In full resplendence, heir of all my might,
 Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
 Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
 We mean to hold what anciently we claim
 Of deity or empire, such a foe
 Is rising, who intends to erect his throne
 Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;
 Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
 In battle, what our power is, or our right.
 Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
 With speed what force is left, and all employ
 In our defense, lest unawares we lose
 This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.'

"To whom the Son with calm aspect and clear
 Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
 Made answer: 'Mighty Father, thou thy foes
 Justly hast in derision, and secure
 Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,⁹
 Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
 Illustrates,^o when they see all regal power
 Giv'n me to quell their pride, and in event^o
 Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
 Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heav'n.'

*makes illustrious
 in the outcome*

"So spake the Son, but Satan with his powers^o
 Far was advanced on winged speed, an host
 Innumerable as the stars of night,
 Or stars of morning, dewdrops, which the sun
 Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
 Regions they passed, the mighty regencies^o
 Of Seraphim and Potentates and Thrones
 In their triple degrees, regions to^o which
 All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
 Than what this garden is to all the earth,
 And all the sea, from one entire globose^o
 Stretched into longitude^o which having passed
 At length into the limits^o of the north
 They came, and Satan to his royal seat
 High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
 Raised on a mount, with pyramids and tow'rs
 From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold,
 The palace of great Lucifer (so call

armies

dominions

compared to

*globe
 spread out flat
 regions*

9. Cf. Psalm 2.4: "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision."

That structure in the dialect of men
 Interpreted) which not long after, he
 Affecting⁰ all equality with God, *arrogating*
 In imitation of that mount whereon
 -65 Messiah was declared in sight of Heav'n,
 The Mountain of the Congregation called;
 For thither he assembled all his train,
 Pretending so commanded to consult
 About the great reception of their King,
 770 Thither to come, and with calumnious art
 Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears:
 " 'Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
 If these magnificent titles yet remain
 Not merely titular, since by decree
 775 Another now hath to himself engrossed⁰ *monopolized*
 All power, and us eclipsed under the name
 Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
 Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
 This only to consult how we may best
 780 With what may be devised of honors new
 Receive him coming to receive from us
 Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
 Too much to one, but double how endured,
 To one and to his image now proclaimed?
 785 But what if better counsels might erect
 Our minds and teach us to cast off this yoke?
 Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
 The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust
 To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves
 790 Natives and sons of Heav'n possessed before
 By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
 Equally free; for orders and degrees
 Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
 Who can in reason then or right assume
 795 Monarchy over such as live by right
 His equals,¹ if in power and splendor less,
 In freedom equal? or can introduce
 Law and edict on us, who without law
 Err not, much less for this to be our Lord,
 800 And look for adoration to th' abuse
 Of those imperial titles which assert
 Our being ordained to govern, not to serve?'
 "Thus far his bold discourse without control⁰ *hindrance*
 Had audience, when among the Seraphim
 805 Abdiel,² than whom none with more zeal adored
 The Deity, and divine commands obeyed,
 Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
 The current of his fury thus opposed:
 " 'O argument blasphemous, false and proud!

1. Satan here paraphrases the republican theory against earthly monarchy like that urged by Milton in his *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649); see p. 1748. Abdiel, however, insists (lines 809-41)

that the argument from equality cannot pertain to God and the angels.

2. Hebrew, "servant of God."

810 Words which no ear ever to hear in Heav'n
 Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate,
 In place thyself so high above thy peers.
 Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
 The just decree of God, pronounced and sworn,
 sis That to his only Son by right endued
 With regal scepter, every soul in Heav'n
 Shall bend the knee, and in that honor due
 Confess him rightful King? Unjust thou says't,
 Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
 820 And equal over equals to let reign,
 One over all with unsucceeded^o power. *without successor*
 Shalt thou give law to God, shalt thou dispute
 With him the points of liberty, who made
 Thee what thou art, and formed the pow'rs of Heav'n
 825 Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being?
 Yet by experience taught we know how good,
 And of our good, and of our dignity
 Flow provident he is, how far from thought
 To make us less, bent rather to exalt
 830 Our happy state under one head more near
 United. But to grant it thee unjust,
 That equal over equals monarch reign:
 Thyself though great and glorious dost thou count,
 Or all angelic nature joined in one,
 835 Equal to him begotten Son, by whom
 As by his Word the mighty Father made
 All things, ev'n thee, and all the Spirits of Heav'n
 By him created in their brightⁿ degrees, *illustrious*
 Crowned them with glory, and to their glory named
 840 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
 Essential Powers, nor by his reign obscured,
 But more illustrious made, since he the head
 One of our number thus reduced becomes,³
 His laws our laws, all honor to him done
 845 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
 And tempt not these; but hasten to appease
 Th' incensed Father and th' incensed Son,
 While pardon may be found in time besought.'
 "So spake the fervent angel, but his zeal
 850 None seconded, as out of season judged,
 Or singular and rash, whereat rejoiced
 Th' Apostate," and more haughty thus replied. *religious renegade*
 'That we were formed then say'st thou? and the work
 Of secondary hands, by task transferred
 855 From Father to his Son? Strange point and new!
 Doctrine which we would know whence learnt: who saw
 When this creation was? Remember'st thou
 Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?

3. Abdiel suggests that the Son's appointment as the angels' king is something like an "incarnation" for them.

We know no time when we were not as now;
 860 Know none before us, self-begot, self-raised,
 By our own quick'ning power, when fatal course^o *the course of fate*
 Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
 Of this our native Heav'n, ethereal sons.¹¹
 Our puissance^o is our own, our own right hand *power*
 865 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
 Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold
 Whether by supplication we intend
 Address, and to begirt th' Almighty throne
 Beseeching or besieging. This report,
 870 These tidings carry to th' anointed King;
 And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.'
 "He said, and as the sound of waters deep
 Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause
 Through the infinite host, nor less for that
 875 The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone
 Encompassed round with foes, thus answered bold:
 " 'O alienate from God, O Spirit accurst,
 Forsaken of all good; I see thy fall
 Determined, and thy hapless crew involved
 880 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread
 Both of thy crime and punishment: henceforth
 No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
 Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws
 Will not be now vouchsafed, other decrees
 885 Against thee are gone forth without recall;
 That golden scepter which thou didst reject
 Is now an iron rod to bruise and break
 Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise,
 Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
 890 These wicked tents devoted,^o lest the wrath *doomed*
 Impendent,^o raging into sudden flame *impending*
 Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel
 His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
 Then who created thee lamenting learn,
 895 When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.'
 "So spake the Seraph Abdiel faithful found,
 Among the faithless, faithful only he;
 Among innumerable false, unmoved,
 Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified
 900 His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
 Nor number, nor example with him wrought
 To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind
 Though single. From amidst them forth he passed,
 Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustained
 905 Superior, nor of violence feared aught;^o *anything*
 And with retorted scorn his back he turned
 On those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doomed."

4. Satan's (illogical) argument is that since the angels cannot remember their creation, they created themselves. Cf. Adam's comment on his recollection of origins (8.250—51, 270—79).

Book 6

All night the dreadless angel¹ unpursued
 Through Heav'n's wide champaign⁰ held his way, till Morn, *plain*
 Waked by the circling Hours,² with rosy hand
 Unbarred the gates of light. There is a cave
 5 Within the mount of God, fast⁰ by his throne, *close*
 Where light and darkness in perpetual round
 Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through Heav'n
 Grateful vicissitude,⁰ like day and night; *delightful change*
 Light issues forth, and at the other door
 io Obsequious⁰ darkness enters, till her hour *compliant*
 To veil the Heav'n, though darkness there might well
 Seem twilight here; and now went forth the Morn
 Such as in highest Heav'n, arrayed in gold
 Empyrean;⁰ from before her vanished night, *heavenly*
 15 Shot through with orient beams: when all the plain
 Covered with thick embattled⁰ squadrons bright, *in battle array*
 Chariots and flaming arms, and fiery steeds
 Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
 War he perceived, war in procinct,⁰ and found *preparation*
 20 Already known what he for news had thought
 To have reported: gladly then he mixed
 Among those friendly Powers who him received
 With joy and acclamations loud, that one
 That of so many myriads fall'n, yet one
 25 Returned not lost: on to the sacred hill
 They led him high applauded, and present
 Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice:
 From midst a golden cloud thus mild was heard.
 " 'Servant of God,³ well done, well hast thou fought
 30 The better fight, who single hast maintained
 Against revolted multitudes the cause
 Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;
 And for the testimony of truth hast borne
 Universal reproach, far worse to bear
 35 Than violence: for this was all thy care
 To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
 Judged thee perverse: the easier conquest now
 Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
 Back on thy foes more glorious to return
 40 Than scorned thou didst depart, and to subdue
 By force, who reason for their law refuse,
 Right reason⁰ for their law, and for their King *upright, true reason*
 Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.
 Go Michael of celestial armies prince,
 45 And thou in military prowess next
 Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons⁰ *angels*

1. I.e., Abdiel.

2. Daughters of Jove, who control the seasons and guard the gates of Heaven. "Morn": Aurora, god-

dess of dawn.

3. The literal meaning (Hebrew) of the name Abdiel.

Invincible, lead forth my armed saints
 By thousands and by millions ranged for fight;
 Equal in number to that godless crew
 Rebellious,⁴ them with fire and hostile arms
 Fearless assault, and to the brow of Heav'n
 Pursuing drive them out from God and bliss,
 Into their place of punishment, the gulf
 Of Tartarus,⁰ which ready opens wide *Hell*
 His fiery chaos to receive their fall.¹
 "So spake the Sov'reign Voice, and clouds began
 To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
 In dusky wreaths reluctant⁰ flames, the sign *writhing*
 Of wrath awaked: nor with less dread the loud *began to*
 Ethereal trumpet from on high gan^o blow:
 At which command the powers militant,
 That stood for Heav'n, in mighty quadrate⁵ joined
 Of union irresistible, moved on
 In silence their bright legions, to the sound
 Of instrumental harmony that breathed
 Heroic ardor to advent'rous deeds
 Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
 Of God and his Messiah. On they move
 Indissolubly firm; nor obvious⁰ hill, *standing in the way*
 Nor strait'ning vale,⁶ nor wood, nor stream divides
 Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground
 Their march was, and the passive air upbore
 Their nimble tread; as when the total kind
 Of birds in orderly array on wing
 Came summoned over Eden to receive
 Their names of thee; so over many a tract
 Of Heav'n they marched, and many a province wide
 Tenfold the length of this terrene:⁰ at last *earth, terrain*
 Far in th' horizon to the north appeared
 From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretched
 In battailous⁰ aspect, and nearer view *warlike*
 Bristled with upright beams⁰ innumerable *shafts*
 Of rigid spears, and helmets thronged, and shields
 Various, with boastful argument⁰ portrayed, *heraldic devices*
 The banded powers of Satan hasting on
 With furious expedition;⁰ for they weened⁰ *speed / thought*
 That selfsame day by fight, or by surprise
 To win the mount of God, and on his throne
 To set the envier of his state, the proud
 Aspirer, but their thoughts proved fond⁰ and vain *foolish*
 In the mid-way: though strange to us it seemed
 At first, that angel should with angel war,
 And in fierce hosting⁷ meet, who wont⁰ to meet *were accustomed*
 So oft in festivals of joy and love

4. God sends out only an equal force to match the one-third of the angelic host that rebelled, not the two-thirds that remained loyal.

5. A square military formation.

6. A narrow valley would force other armies to march in a file.

7. Hostile encounter.

Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire
 Hymning th' Eternal Father: but the shout
 Of battle now began, and rushing sound
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
 High in the midst exalted as a god
 Th' Apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat
 Idol of majesty divine, enclosed
 With flaming Cherubim, and golden shields;
 Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
 Twixt host⁰ and host but narrow space was left,
 A dreadful interval, and front to front⁰
 Presented stood in terrible array
 Of hideous length: before the cloudy van,"
 On the rough edge of battle⁰ ere it joined,
 Satan with vast and haughty strides advanced,
 Came tow'ring, armed in adamant and gold;
 Abdiel that sight endured not, where he stood
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores:
 " 'O Heav'n! that such resemblance of the Highest
 Should yet remain, where faith and realty⁰
 Remain not; wherefore should not strength and might
 There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
 Where boldest; though to sight⁰ unconquerable?
 His puissance,⁰ trusting in th' Almighty's aid,
 I mean to try, whose reason I have tried⁰
 Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just,
 That he who in debate of truth hath won,
 Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
 Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,
 When reason hath to deal with force, yet so
 Most reason is that reason overcome.'
 "So pondering, and from his armed peers
 Forth stepping opposite, halfway he met
 His daring foe, at this prevention⁰ more
 Incensed, and thus securely⁰ him defied:
 " 'Proud, art thou met? Thy hope was to have reached
 The height of thy aspiring unopposed,
 The throne of God unguarded, and his side
 Abandoned at the terror of thy power
 Or potent tongue; fool, not to think how vain
 Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms;
 Who out of smallest things could without end
 Have raised incessant armies to defeat
 Thy folly; or with solitary hand
 Reaching beyond all limit at one blow
 Unaided could have finished thee, and whelmed
 Thy legions under darkness; but thou seest
 All are not of thy train; there be^o who faith
 Prefer, and piety⁰ to God, though then
 To thee not visible, when I alone
 Seemed in thy world erroneous to dissent

*army
face to face*

*frowning vanguard
front line*

sincerity

*seemingly
power
proved b)> trial*

*obstruction
confidently*

*there are those
devotion*

From all: my sect⁸ thou seest, now learn too late
 How few sometimes may know, when thousand err.'
 "Whom the grand Foe with scornful eye askance
 150 Thus answered. 'Ill for thee, but in wished hour
 Of my revenge, first sought for thou return'st
 From flight, seditious angel, to receive
 Thy merited reward, the first assay
 Of this right hand provoked, since first that tongue
 155 Inspired with contradiction durst oppose
 A third part of the gods, in synod met
 Their deities to assert, who while they feel
 Vigor divine within them, can allow
 Omnipotence to none. But well thou com'st
 160 Before thy fellows, ambitious to win
 From me some plume, that thy success⁹ may show
 Destruction to the rest: this pause between
 (Unanswered lest thou boast)¹ to let thee know;
 At first I thought that liberty and Heav'n
 165 To heav'nly souls had been all one;^o but now *one and the same*
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
 Minist'ring Spirits, trained up in feast and song;
 Such hast thou armed, the minstrelsy² of Heav'n,
 Servility^o with freedom to contend, *bondage, obsequiousness*
 170 As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.'
 "To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied:
 Apostate, still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
 Unjustly thou deprav'st^o it with the name *vilify*
 175 Of servitude to serve whom God ordains,
 Or nature; God and nature bid the same,
 When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
 Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
 To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebelled
 180 Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
 Thyself not free, but to thyself enthralled;³
 Yet lewdly^o dar'st our minist'ring upbraid. *ignorantly, basely*
 Reign thou in Hell thy kingdom, let me serve
 In Heav'n God ever blest, and his divine
 185 Behests obey, worthiest to be obeyed;
 Yet chains in Hell, not realms expect: meanwhile
 From me returned, as erst^o thou saidst, from flight, *formerly*
 This greeting on thy impious crest receive.'

8. The term carries political resonance, since the national English church, Anglican or (during the revolution) Presbyterian, sought to suppress and persecute the sects who separated from it (Baptists, Quakers, Socinians, and others), often denouncing them as heretics. Satan claims that a "synod" (line 156, term for a Presbyterian assembly) has proclaimed the truth of the rebel angels' case; Abdiel insists that truth may rather reside (as here) with a single "dissenter" or a sect of a few.

9. The outcome of your action. "Plume": token of victory.

1. I.e., lest thou boast that I did not answer your argument.

2. Satan's contemptuous pun links together the loyal angels' service ("Minist'ring," line 167) with their song, likened to the street songs of minstrels.

3. Abdiel cites the "natural law" principle that rule rightly belongs to the best or worthiest, and that tyrants are enslaved to their own passions.

"So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
 190 Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell
 On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
 Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield
 Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
 He back recoiled; the tenth on bended knee
 195 His massy spear upstayed; as if on earth
 Winds under ground or waters forcing way
 Sidelong, had pushed a mountain from his seat
 Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seized
 The rebel Thrones,⁴ but greater rage to see
 200 Thus foiled their mightiest: ours joy filled, and shout,
 Presage of victory and fierce desire
 Of battle: whereat Michael bid sound
 Th' Archangel trumpet; through the vast of Heav'n
 It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
 205 Hosanna to the Highest: nor stood at gaze
 The adverse legions, nor less hideous joined
 The horrid shock: now storming fury rose,
 And clamor such as heard in Heav'n till now
 Was never, arms on armor clashing brayed⁵
 210 Horrible discord, and the madding⁰ wheels *whirling madly*
 Of brazen chariots raged; dire was the noise
 Of conflict; overhead the dismal⁰ hiss *dreadfid*
 Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
 And flying vaulted either host with fire.
 215 So under fiery cope^o together rushed *sky*
 Both battles main,⁶ with ruinous assault
 And inextinguishable rage; all Heav'n
 Resounded, and had earth been then, all earth
 Had to her center shook. What wonder? when
 220 Millions of fierce encount'ring angels fought
 On either side, the least of whom could wield
 These elements,⁷ and arm him with the force
 Of all their regions: how much more of power
 Army against army numberless to raise
 225 Dreadful combustion⁰ warring, and disturb, *tumult*
 Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
 Had not th' Eternal King Omnipotent
 From his stronghold of Heav'n high overruled
 And limited their might; though numbered such
 230 As each divided legion might have seemed
 A numerous host, in strength each armed hand
 A legion; led in fight, yet leader seemed
 Each warrior single as in chief,⁸ expert
 When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway⁰ *force*
 235 Of battle, open when, and when to close

4. Here as elsewhere Milton uses the name of one angelic order to stand for all. But the choice of "Thrones" here carries political resonance, linking monarchs with rebels against God's kingdom.

5. Made a harsh, jarring sound.

6. The principal body of an army, as opposed to

the van, rear, and wing.

7. The four elements—fire, air, water, earth—that constitute the several "regions" (next line) of planet earth.

8. I.e., the angelic legions had leaders, yet each single warrior seemed like such a leader.

The ridges⁰ of grim war; no thought of flight, *ranks*
 None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
 That argued fear; each on himself relied,
 As^o only in his arm the moment⁹ lay *as if*
 240 Of victory; deeds of eternal fame
 Were done, but infinite: for wide was spread
 That war and various; sometimes on firm ground
 A standing fight, then soaring on main^o wing *strong, powerful*
 Tormented" all the air; all air seemed then *agitated*
 245 Conflicting fire: long time in even scale
 The battle hung; till Satan, who that day
 Prodigious power had shown, and met in arms
 No equal, ranging through the dire attack
 Of fighting Seraphim confused, at length
 250 Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and felled
 Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway
 Brandished aloft the horrid edge came down
 Wide-wasting; such destruction to withstand
 He hasted, and opposed the rocky orb
 255 Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield¹
 A vast circumference: at his approach
 The great Archangel from his warlike toil
 Surceased, and glad as hoping here to end
 Intestine war^o in Heav'n, the Arch-Foe subdued *civil war*
 260 Or captive dragged in chains, with hostile frown
 And visage all inflamed first thus began:
 " Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
 Unnamed in Heav'n, now plenteous, as thou seest
 These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
 265 Though heaviest by just measure on thyself
 And thy adherents: how hast thou disturbed
 Heav'n's blessed peace, and into nature brought
 Misery, uncreated till the crime
 Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instilled
 270 Thy malice into thousands, once upright
 And faithful, now proved false! But think not here
 To trouble holy rest; Heav'n casts thee out
 From all her confines. Heav'n the seat of bliss
 Brooks^o not the works of violence and war. *endures*
 275 Hence then, and evil go with thee along
 Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell,
 Thou and thy wicked crew; there mingle^o broils, *concoct*
 Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
 Or some more sudden vengeance winged from God
 280 Precipitate thee with augmented pain.'
 "So spake the Prince of Angels; to whom thus
 The Adversary: 'Nor think thou with wind
 Of airy threats to awe whom yet with deeds
 Thou canst not. Hast thou turned the least of these
 285 To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise

9. Weight that will tip the scales.

I. Satan's shield is a rockdike ("rocky") circle,

made of impenetrable "adamant" (probably diamond), ten layers thick.

Unvanquished, easier to transact with me
 That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
 To chase me hence?² Err not that so shall end
 The strife which thou call'st evil, but we style
 290 The strife of glory: which we mean to win,
 Or turn this Heav'n itself into the Hell
 Thou fablest, here however to dwell free,
 If not to reign: meanwhile thy utmost force,
 And join him named Almighty to thy aid,
 295 I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.¹
 "They ended parle,^o and both addressed^o for fight *parley / prepared*
 Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
 Of angels, can relate, or to what things
 Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift
 300 Human imagination to such height
 Of godlike power: for likest gods they seemed,
 Stood they or moved, in stature, motion, arms
 Fit to decide the empire of great Heav'n.
 Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air
 305 Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields
 Blazed opposite, while Expectation stood³
 In horror; from each hand with speed retired
 Where erst^o was thickest fight, th' angelic throng, *ever*
 And left large field, unsafe within the wind
 310 Of such commotion, such as to set forth
 Great things by small, if nature's concord broke,
 Among the constellations war were sprung,
 Two planets rushing from aspect malign
 Of fiercest opposition in midsky,
 315 Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.⁴
 Together both with next to almighty arm,
 Uplifted imminent one stroke they aimed
 That might determine,^o and not need repeat,^o *end / repetition*
 As not of power,⁵ at once; nor odds^o appeared *inequality*
 320 In Michael or swift prevention;^o but the sword *anticipation*
 Of Michael from the armory of God
 Was giv'n him tempered so, that neither keen
 Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
 The sword of Satan with steep force to smite
 325 Descending, and in half cut sheer, nor stayed,
 But with swift wheel reverse, deep ent'ring shared^o *cut off*
 All his right side; then Satan first knew pain,
 And writhed him to and fro convolved;^o so sore *contorted*
 The griding^o sword with discontinuous^o wound *keenly cutting / gaping*
 330 Passed through him, but th' ethereal substance closed
 Not long divisible, and from the gash
 A stream of nectarous humor issuing flowed

2. I.e., Have you made even the least of my followers flee, or seen them fall and fail to rise, that you would hope "imperiously" to deal ("transact") otherwise with me, driving me off by mere threats? "Err not" (following): don't falsely suppose.

3. Personifying the angels' apprehension.

4. An epic simile comparing the clash of these

armies ("great things") with war among the planets, in which two planets clashing together from diametrically opposed positions ("aspect malign"), would cast the planetary system and its music ("jarring spheres") into confusion ("confound").

5. I.e., because they would not have power to repeat the blow.

Sanguine," such as celestial Spirits may bleed, *blood-red*
 And all his armor stained erewhile so bright.
 335 Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run
 By angels many and strong, who interposed
 Defense, while others bore him on their shields
 Back to his chariot, where it stood retired
 From off the files of war; there they him laid
 340 Gnashing for anguish and despite and shame
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride
 Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
 His confidence to equal God in power.
 Yet soon he healed; for Spirits that live throughout
 345 Vital in every part, not as frail man
 In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins," *kidneys*
 Cannot but by annihilating die;
 Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
 Receive, no more than can the fluid air:
 350 All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
 All intellect, all sense, and as they please,
 They limb themselves,⁶ and color, shape, or size
 Assume, as likes" them best, condense or rare. *pleases*
 "Meanwhile in other parts like deeds deserved
 355 Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,
 And with fierce ensigns pierced the deep array
 Of Moloch furious king,⁷ who him defied,
 And at his chariot wheels to drag him bound
 Threatened, nor from the Holy One of Heav'n
 360 Refrained his tongue blasphemous; but anon
 Down clov'n to the waist, with shattered arms
 And uncouth" pain fled bellowing. On each wing *unfamiliar*
 Uriel and Raphael his vaunting foe,
 Though huge, and in a rock of diamond armed,
 365 Vanquished Adramelech, and Asmadai,⁸
 Two potent Thrones, that to be less than gods
 Disdained, but meaner thoughts learned in their flight,
 Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy" *injure*
 370 The atheist" crew, but with redoubled blow *impious*
 Ariel and Arioch, and the violence
 Of Ramiel⁹ scorched and blasted overthrew.
 I might relate of thousands, and their names
 Eternize here on earth; but those elect
 375 Angels contented with their fame in Heav'n
 Seek not the praise of men: the other sort
 In might though wondrous and in acts of war,
 Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
 Canceled from Heav'n and sacred memory,
 380 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.

6. I.e., provide themselves with limbs. "Condense or rare" (line 353): dense or airy.

7. With his companies ("ensigns") he pierced Moloch's troops in their dense formation ("deep array").

8. Asmodeus, a Persian god (cf. 4.167—71). "Adramelech": "king of fire," a god worshipped at Samaria with human sacrifice.

9. "Ariel": "lion of God." "Arioch": "lionlike." "Ramiel": "thunder of God."

For strength from truth divided and from just,
 Illaudable,⁰ naught merits but dispraise *unworthy of praise*
 And ignominy, yet to glory aspires
 Vainglorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
 Therefore eternal silence be their doom.

"And now their mightiest quelled, the battle swerved,¹
 With many an inroad gored; deformed rout
 Entered, and foul disorder; all the ground
 With shivered armor strown, and on a heap
 Chariot and charioteer lay overturned
 And fiery foaming steeds; what⁰ stood, recoiled *those who*
 O'erwearied, through the faint Satanic host
 Defensive scarce,² or with pale fear surprised,⁰ *seized unexpectedly*
 Then first with fear surprised and sense of pain
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
 By sin of disobedience, till that hour
 Not liable to fear or flight or pain.
 Far otherwise th' inviolable saints
 In cubic phalanx⁰ firm advanced entire, *formation*
 Invulnerable, impenetrably armed:
 Such high advantages their innocence
 Gave them above their foes, not to have sinned,
 Not to have disobeyed; in fight they stood
 Unwearied, unobnoxious⁰ to be pained *not liable*
 By wound, though from their place by violence moved.

"Now night her course began, and over Heav'n
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce imposed,
 And silence on the odious din of war:
 Under her cloudy covert both retired,
 Victor and vanquished: on the foughten field
 Michael and his angels prevalent⁰ *victorious*
 Encamping, placed in guard their watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires: on th' other part
 Satan with his rebellious disappeared,
 Far in the dark dislodged,⁰ and void of rest, *shifted quarters*
 His potentates to council called by night;
 And in the midst thus undismayed began:

" 'O now in danger tried, now known in arms
 Not to be overpowered, companions dear,
 Found worthy not of liberty alone,
 Too mean pretense,⁰ but what we more affect,³ *low aim*
 Honor, dominion, glory, and renown,
 Who have sustained one day in doubtful⁰ fight, *indecisive*
 (And if one day, why not eternal days?)
 What Heaven's Lord had powerfullest to send
 Against us from about his throne, and judged
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
 But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
 Of future⁰ we may deem him, though till now *in the future*
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly armed,

1. I.e., the army gave way.
 2. Scarcely defending themselves.

3. Aspire to.

Some disadvantage we endured and pain,
 Till now not known, but known as soon contemned,⁴
 Since now we find this our empyreal form
 Incapable of mortal injury
 Imperishable, and though pierced with wound,
 Soon closing, and by native vigor healed.
 Of evil then so small as easy think
 The remedy; perhaps more valid⁰ arms,
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
 May serve to better us, and worse⁰ our foes,
 Or equal what between us made the odds,
 In nature none: if other hidden cause
 Left them superior, while we can preserve
 Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,
 Due search and consultation will disclose.'

*powerful**injure*

"He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood
 Nisroch,⁵ of Principalities the prime;
 As one he stood escaped from cruel fight,
 Sore toiled, his riven arms to havoc hewn,⁶
 And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake:
 'Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
 Enjoyment of our right as gods; yet hard
 For gods, and too unequal work we find
 Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
 Against unpained, impassive;⁶ from which evil
 Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails
 Valor or strength, though matchless, quelled with pain
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss⁰ the hands
 Of mightiest. Sense of pleasure we may well
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,
 But live content, which is the calmest life:
 But pain is perfect misery, the worst
 Of evils, and excessive, overturns
 All patience. He who therefore can invent
 With what more forcible we may offend⁰
 Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
 Ourselves with like defense, to me⁰ deserves
 No less than for deliverance what we owe.'⁷

*cut to pieces**slack, weak**attack**in my opinion*

"Whereto with look composed Satan replied.
 'Not uninvented that, which thou aright
 Believ'st so main⁰ to our success, I bring;
 Which of us who beholds the bright surface
 Of this ethereal mold⁰ whereon we stand,
 This continent of spacious Heav'n, adorned
 With plant, fruit, flow'r ambrosial, gems and gold,
 Whose eye so superficially surveys
 These things, as not to mind⁰ from whence they grow
 Deep underground, materials dark and crude,
 Of spiritous and fiery spume,⁰ till touched

*essential**ethereal matter**consider**frothy matter*

4. No sooner known than despised.

5. An Assyrian god; the Hebrew name was said to mean flight or luxurious temptation.

6. Not liable to suffering.

7. I.e., we would owe such a one our deliverance.

With Heav'n's ray, and tempered they shoot forth
 So beauteous, op'ning to the ambient⁰ light. *enveloping*
 These in their dark nativity the deep
 Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal⁰ flame, *from underground*
 Which into hollow engines⁰ long and round *cannon*
 Thick-rammed, at th' other bore⁸ with touch of fire
 Dilated and infuriate⁰ shall send forth *raging*
 From far with thund'ring noise among our foes
 Such implements of mischief as shall dash
 To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarmed
 The Thunderer of his only⁰ dreaded bolt. *unique*
 Nor long shall be our labor, yet ere dawn,
 Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive;
 Abandon fear; to strength and counsel joined
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despaired.'¹
 He ended, and his words their drooping cheer⁰ *spirits*
 Enlightened, and their languished hope revived. *marveled at*
 Th' invention all admired,⁰ and each, how he
 To be th' inventor missed, so easy it seemed
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought
 Impossible: yet haply⁰ of thy race *possibly*
 In future days, if malice should abound,
 Someone intent on mischief, or inspired
 With dev'lish machination might devise
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men
 For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
 Forthwith from council to the work they flew,
 None arguing stood, innumerable hands
 Were ready, in a moment up they turned
 Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath
 Th' originals⁰ of nature in their crude *original elements*
 Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam⁹
 They found, they mingled, and with subtle art,
 Concocted⁰ and adjusted⁰ they reduced *heated / dried*
 To blackest grain, and into store conveyed:
 Part hidden veins digged up (nor hath this earth
 Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,
 Whereof to found⁰ their engines and their balls *cast*
 Of missive⁰ ruin; part incentive⁰ reed *missile / kindling*
 Provide, pernicious⁰ with one touch to fire. *quick, destructive*
 So all ere day-spring,⁰ under conscious¹ night *dawn*
 Secret they finished, and in order set,
 With silent circumspection unespied.
 Now when fair morn orient in Heav'n appeared
 Up rose the victor angels, and to arms
 The matin⁰ trumpet sung: in arms they stood *morning*
 Of golden panoply, refulgent⁰ host, *shining*
 Soon banded; others from the dawning hills

8. The touchhole into which fine powder was poured to serve as fuse for the charge. "Thick": compactly.

9. Saltpeter ("nitrous foam") and sulphur are the ingredients of gunpowder,
 1. Aware, as an accessory to a crime.

Looked round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
 530 Each quarter, to descry the distant foe,
 Where lodged, or whither fled, or if for fight,
 In motion or in alt:^o him soon they met *halt*
 Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
 But firm battalion; back with speediest sail
 535 Zophiel,² of Cherubim the swiftest wing,
 Came flying, and in mid-air aloud thus cried:
 " 'Arm, warriors, arm for fight, the foe at hand,
 Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
 This day, fear not his flight; so thick a cloud
 540 He comes, and settled in his face I see
 Sad^o resolution and secure:^o let each *sober / confident*
 His adamantine" coat gird well, and each *of hardest metal*
 Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,
 Borne ev'n^o or high, for this day will pour down,
 545 If I conjecture^o aught, no drizzling shower,
 But rattling storm of arrows barbed with fire.'
 So warned he them aware themselves, and soon
 In order, quit of all impediment;^o *hindrance*
 Instant without disturb^o they took alarm, *disorder*
 550 And onward move embattled;^o when behold *in hattle order*
 Not distant far the heavy pace the foe
 Approaching gross^o and huge; in hollow cube
 Training^o his devilish enginry, impaled^o *compact*
 On every side with shadowing squadrons deep, *haiding/fenced in*
 555 To hide the fraud. At interview^o both stood *at mutual view*
 A while, but suddenly at head appeared
 Satan: and thus was heard commanding loud:
 " 'Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;
 That all may see who hate us, how we seek
 560 Peace and composure,^o and with open breast *agreement*
 Stand ready to receive them, if they like
 Our overture,³ and turn not back perverse;
 But that I doubt, however witness Heaven,
 Heav'n witness thou anon, while we discharge
 565 Freely our part: ye who appointed stand
 Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
 What we propound, and loud that all may hear.'
 "So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
 Had ended; when to right and left the front
 570 Divided, and to either flank retired.
 Which to our eyes discovered new and strange,
 A triple-mounted^o row of pillars laid *in three rows*
 On wheels (for like to pillars most they seemed
 Or hollowed bodies made of oak or fir
 575 With branches lopped, in wood or mountain felled)
 Brass, iron, stony mold,^o had not their mouths *matter*
 With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,

2. Hebrew, "spy of God."

3. A pun on "offer to negotiate" and "opening" (aperture), the hole or muzzle of the cannon. The passage is full of puns: e.g., "perverse" (line 562,

peevish, turned the wrong way), "discharge" (line 564), "charge," "touch," "propound," "loud" (lines 566—67), "hollow" (line 578).

Portending hollow truce; at each behind
 A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
 Stood waving tipped with fire; while we suspense,⁰ *m suspense*
 Collected stood within our thoughts amused,⁰ *puzzled*
 Not long, for sudden all at once their reeds
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
 With nicest⁰ touch. Immediate in a flame, *most exact*
 But soon obscured with smoke, all Heav'n appeared,
 From those deep-throated engines belched,⁴ whose roar
 Emboweled⁰ with outrageous noise the air, *disemboweled*
 And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
 Their devilish glut, chained⁵ thunderbolts and hail
 Of iron globes, which on the victor host
 Leveled, with such impetuous fury smote,
 That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
 Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
 By thousands, Angel on Archangel rolled,
 The sooner for their arms; unarmed they might
 Have easily as Spirits evaded swift
 By quick contraction or remove; but now
 Foul dissipation⁰ followed and forced rout; *dispersal*
 Nor served it to relax their serried files.⁶
 What should they do? If on they rushed, repulse
 Repeated, and indecent⁰ overthrow *shameful*
 Doubled, would render them yet more despised,
 And to their foes a laughter; for in view
 Stood ranked of Seraphim another row
 In posture to displode⁰ their second dire⁰ *explode / volley*
 Of thunder: back defeated to return
 They worse abhorred. Satan beheld their plight,
 And to his mates thus in derision called:
 " 'O friends, why come not on these victors proud?
 Erewhile they fierce were coming, and when we,
 To entertain them fair with open front⁰ *candid face*
 And breast,⁰ (what could we more?) propounded⁷ terms *heart*
 Of composition, straight they changed their minds,
 Flew off, and into strange vagaries⁰ fell, *eccentric motions*
 As they would dance, yet for a dance they seemed
 Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps
 For joy of offering peace: but I suppose
 If our proposals once again were heard
 We should compel them to a quick result.'
 "To whom thus Belial in like gamesome mood:
 'Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
 Of hard contents, and full of force urged home,
 Such as we might perceive amused them⁸ all,
 And stumbled many: who receives them right,

4. See the sustained debased imagery relating to bodily functions, e.g., "belched," "emboweled," "entrails."

5. Chainshot, which was linked cannonballs.

6. I.e., nor did it do any good ("served it") to loosen up ("relax") their rows pressed close together ("serried files").

7. More puns, on "propounded," "terms of composition," "flew off."

8. A pun on "held their attention" and "bewildered them." Belial also puns on (among other terms) "stumbled" ("nonplussed" and "tripped up") and "understand" ("comprehend" and "prop up").

Had need from head to foot well understand;
 Not understood, this gift they have besides,
 They show us when our foes walk not upright."
 "So they among themselves in pleasant⁰ vein *jesting*
 Stood scoffing, heightened in their thoughts beyond
 All doubt of victory, Eternal Might
 To match with their inventions they presumed
 So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
 And all his host derided, while they⁰ stood *the good angels*
 A while in trouble; but they stood not long,
 Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
 Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
 Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,
 Which God hath in his mighty angels placed)
 Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
 (For earth hath this variety from Heav'n
 Of pleasure situate in hill and dale)
 Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew,
 From their foundations loos'ning to and fro
 They plucked the seated hills with all their load,⁹
 Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops
 Uplifting bore them in their hands: amaze,⁰ *astonishment, panic*
 Be sure, and terror seized the rebel host,
 When coming towards them so dread they saw
 The bottom of the mountains upward turned,
 Till on those cursed engines' triple-row
 They saw themwhelmed, and all their confidence
 Under the weight of mountains buried deep,
 Themselves invaded⁰ next, and on their heads *attacked*
 Main⁰ promontories flung, which in the air *great, solid*
 Came shadowing, and oppressed⁰ whole legions armed. *pressed down*
 Their armor helped their harm, crushed in and bruised
 Into their substance pent,⁰ which wrought them pain *closely confined*
 Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,
 Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
 Out of such prison, though Spirits of purest light,
 Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
 The rest in imitation to like arms
 Betook them, and the neighboring hills uptore;
 So hills amid the air encountered hills
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation⁰ dire, *hurling*
 That underground they fought in dismal shade;
 Infernal noise; war seemed a civil⁰ game *humane, refined*
 To⁰ this uproar; horrid confusion heaped *compared to*
 Upon confusion rose: and now all Heav'n
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread,
 Had not th' Almighty Father where he sits
 Shrined in his sanctuary of Heav'n secure,
 Consulting⁰ on the sum of things, foreseen
 This tumult, and permitted all, advised:⁰ *considering*
deliberately

9. The hurling of hills as missiles is taken from the war between the Olympian gods and the Giants, in Hesiod's *Theogony*.

675 That his great purpose he might so fulfill,
 To honor his anointed Son avenged
 Upon his enemies, and to declare
 All power on him transferred: whence to his Son
 Th' assessor¹ of his throne he thus began:

680 " 'Effulgence⁰ of my glory, Son beloved, *radiance*
 Son in whose face invisible is beheld
 Visibly,² what by Deity I am,
 And in whose hand what by decree I do,
 Second Omnipotence,³ two days are passed,

685 Two days, as we compute the days of Heav'n,
 Since Michael and his powers went forth to tame
 These disobedient; sore hath been their fight,
 As likeliest was, when two such foes met armed;
 For to themselves I left them, and thou know'st,

690 Equal in their creation they were formed,
 Save what sin hath impaired, which yet hath wrought
 Insensibly,⁰ for I suspend their doom; *imperceptively*
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
 Endless, and no solution will be found:

695 War wearied hath performed what war can do,
 And to disordered rage let loose the reins,
 With mountains as with weapons armed, which makes
 Wild work in Heav'n, and dangerous to the main.⁰ *whole continent*
 Two days are therefore passed, the third is thine;

700 For thee I have ordained it, and thus far
 Have suffered,⁰ that the glory may be thine *permitted*
 Of ending this great war, since none but thou
 Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
 Immense I have transfused, that all may know

705 In Heav'n and Hell thy power above compare,
 And this perverse commotion governed thus,
 To manifest thee worthiest to be heir
 Of all things, to be heir and to be King
 By sacred unction,⁰ thy deserved right. *anointing*

710 Go then thou mightiest in thy Father's might,
 Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
 That shake Heav'n's basis, bring forth all my war,⁰ *instruments of war*
 My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
 Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;

715 Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out
 From all Heav'n's bounds into the utter⁰ deep: *outer*
 There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
 God and Messiah his anointed⁴ King.'

720 "He said, and on his Son with rays direct
 Shone full, he all his Father full expressed
 Ineffably⁰ into his face received, *inexpressibly*
 And thus the Filial Godhead answering spake:

1. One who sits beside, an associate.

2. Cf. Colossians 1.15: "Who is the image of the invisible God."

3. Two omnipotences are a logical impossibility; the phrase underscores Milton's view that the Son receives all power from the Father. Cf. John 5.19,

"The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do," which Milton cites in *Christian Doctrine* 1.5 to argue that the Son derives all power from the Father.

4. The literal meaning of "messiah."

" O Father, O Supreme of heav'nly Thrones,
 First, highest, holiest, best, thou always seek'st
 725 To glorify thy Son, I always thee,
 As is most just; this I my glory account,
 My exaltation, and my whole delight,
 That thou in me well pleased, declar'st thy will
 Fulfilled, which to fulfill is all my bliss.
 730 Scepter and power, thy giving, I assume,
 And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
 Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
 Forever, and in me all whom thou lov'st:
 But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on
 735 Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,
 Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,
 Armed with thy might, rid Heav'n of these rebelled,
 To their prepared ill mansion driven down
 To chains of darkness, and th' undying worm,
 740 That from thy just obedience could revolt,
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.
 Then shall thy saints unmixed, and from th' impure
 Far separate, circling thy holy mount
 Unfeigned hallelujahs to thee sing,
 745 Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief.'
 So said, he o'er his scepter bowing, rose
 From the right hand of Glory where he sat,
 And the third sacred morn began to shine
 Dawning through Heav'n: forth rushed with whirlwind sound
 750 The chariot of Paternal Deity,
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
 Itself instinct with^o spirit, but convoyed *animated by*
 By four Cherubic shapes, four faces each⁵
 Had wondrous, as with stars their bodies all
 755 And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels
 Of beryl, and careering fires between;⁶
 Over their heads a crystal firmament,
 Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
 Amber, and colors of the show'ry arch.^o *rainbow*
 760 He in celestial panoply all armed
 Of radiant urim,⁷ work divinely wrought,
 Ascended, at his right hand Victory
 Sat eagle-winged, beside him hung his bow
 And quiver with three-bolted thunder stored,⁸
 765 And from about him fierce effusion["] rolled *co-pious emission*
 Of smoke and bickering^o flame, and sparkles dire; *flickering*
 Attended with ten thousand thousand saints,
 He onward came, far off his coming shone,
 And twenty thousand⁹ (I their number heard)

5. The Son's living chariot, with its four-faced Cherubim—the faces being man, lion, ox, and eagle—is taken from Ezekiel 1 (especially 1.10) and 10.

6. Cf. Ezekiel 10.12: "And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about, even the wheels that they four had."

7. Gems worn by Aaron in his "breastplate of judgment" (Exodus 28.30).

8. Jove's bird was the eagle; his weapon was the thunderbolt.

9. Cf. Psalm 68.17: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them."

Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen:
 He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime⁰ *lifted up*
 On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned,
 Illustrious⁰ far and wide, but by his own *shining*
 First seen: them unexpected joy surprised,
 When the great ensign of Messiah blazed
 Aloft by angels borne, his sign in Heav'n:
 Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced⁰ *led back*
 His army, circumfused⁰ on either wing, *spread around*
 Under their Head embodied all in one.
 Before him Power Divine his way prepared;
 At his command the uprooted hills retired
 Each to his place, they heard his voice and went
 Obsequious,⁰ Heav'n his wonted face renewed, *dutiful*
 And with fresh flow'rets hill and valley smiled.
 This saw his hapless foes but stood obdured,⁰ *hardened*
 And to rebellious fight rallied their powers
 Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.
 In heav'nly Spirits could such perverseness dwell?
 But to convince the proud what signs avail,
 Or wonders move th' obdurate to relent?
 They hardened more by what might most reclaim,
 Grieving⁰ to see his glory, at the sight *aggrieved*
 Took envy, and aspiring to his height,
 Stood re-embattled¹ fierce, by force or fraud
 Weening⁰ to prosper, and at length prevail *thinking*
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall
 In universal ruin last, and now
 To final battle drew; disdainful flight,
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
 To all his host on either hand thus spake:
 " 'Stand still in bright array ye saints, here stand
 Ye angels armed, this day from battle rest;²
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause,
 And as ye have received, so have ye done
 Invincibly; but of this cursed crew
 The punishment to other hand belongs,
 Vengeance is his,³ or whose he sole appoints;
 Number to this day's work is not ordained
 Nor multitude, stand only and behold
 God's indignation on these godless poured
 By me, not you but me they have despised,
 Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
 Because the Father, t' whom in Heav'n supreme
 Kingdom and power and glory appertains,
 Hath honored me according to his will.
 Therefore to me their doom he hath assigned;
 That they may have their wish, to try with me
 In battle which the stronger proves, they all,

1. Drawn up again in battle formation.

2. Echoes Moses' words when God destroyed the Egyptians in the Red Sea (Exodus 14.13): "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord,

which he will shew to you to day."

3. Cf. Romans 12.19: "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

- 820 Or I alone against them, since by strength
 They measure all, of other excellence
 Not emulous," nor care who them excels;
 Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe."
 "So spake the Son, and into terror changed
 825 His count'nance too severe to be beheld
 And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
 At once the Four⁴ spread out their starry wings
 With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
 Of his fierce chariot rolled, as with the sound
 830 Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.
 He on his impious foes right onward drove,
 Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels
 The steadfast empyrean shook throughout,
 All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
 835 Among them he arrived; in his right hand
 Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
 Before him, such as in their souls infixed
 Plagues; they astonished⁰ all resistance lost,
 All courage; down their idle weapons dropped;
 840 O'er shields and helms, and helmed heads he rode
 Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,
 That wished the mountains now might be again
 Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.
 Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
 845 His arrows, from the fourfold-visaged Four,
 Distinct" with eyes, and from the living wheels,
 Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
 One spirit in them ruled, and every eye
 Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious⁰ fire
 850 Among th' accursed, that withered all their strength,
 And of their wonted" vigor left them drained,
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.
 Yet half his strength he put not forth, but checked
 His thunder in mid-volley, for he meant
 855 Not to destroy, but root them out of Heav'n:
 The overthrown he raised, and as a herd
 Of goats or timorous flock together thronged
 Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued
 With terrors and with furies to the bounds
 860 And crystal wall of Heav'n, which op'ning wide,
 Rolled inward, and a spacious gap disclosed
 Into the wasteful⁰ deep; the monstrous sight
 Strook them with horror backward, but far worse
 Urged them behind; headlong themselves they threw
 865 Down from the verge of Heav'n, eternal wrath
 Rurnt after them to the bottomless pit.
 "Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, Hell saw
 Heav'n ruining⁰ from Heav'n, and would have fled
 Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep
 870 Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.
 Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roared,

4. The four "Cherubic shapes" of line 753.

And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
 Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout^o *defeated army*
 Encumbered^o him with ruin: Hell at last *burdened*
 875 Yawning received them whole, and on them closed,
 Hell their fit habitation fraught with fire
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
 Disburdened Heav'n rejoiced, and soon repaired
 Her mural^o breach, returning whence it rolled. *in the wall*
 880 Sole "victor from th' expulsion of his foes
 Messiah his triumphal chariot turned:
 To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
 Eyewitnesses of his almighty acts,
 With jubilee^o advanced; and as they went, *joyful shouts*
 885 Shaded with branching palm, each order bright
 Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
 Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion giv'n,
 Worthiest to reign: he celebrated rode
 Triumphant through mid-Heav'n, into the courts
 890 And temple of his mighty Father throned
 On high: who into glory him received,
 Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.
 "Thus measuring things in Heav'n by things on earth
 At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
 895 By what is past, to thee I have revealed
 What might have else to human race been hid;
 The discord which befell, and war in Heav'n
 Among th' angelic powers,^o and the deep fall *armies*
 Of those too high aspiring, who rebelled
 900 With Satan, he who envies now thy state,
 Who now is plotting how he may seduce
 Thee also from obedience, that with him
 Bereaved of happiness thou may'st partake
 His punishment, eternal misery;
 905 Which would be all his solace and revenge,
 As a despite^o done against the Most High,
 Thee once to gain companion of his woe. *malicious act*
 But listen not to his temptations, warn
 Thy weaker;⁵ let it profit thee to have heard
 910 By terrible example the reward
 Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,
 Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress."

Book 7

Descend from Heav'n Urania,¹ by that name
 If rightly thou art called, whose voice divine
 Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
 Above the flight of Pegasean wing.²

5. Eve, who is, however, present for this story.
 1. Urania, the Greek Muse of astronomy, had
 been made into the Muse of Christian poetry by
 du Bartas and other religious poets. Milton, how-
 ever, constructs another derivation for her (line

5ff.). Milton begins Book 7 with a third proem
 (lines 1-39).

2. Pegasus, the flying horse of inspired poetry, sug-
 gests (in connection with Bellerophon, line 18) Mil-
 ton's sense of perilous audacity in writing this poem.

The meaning, not the name I call: for thou
 Nor of the muses nine, nor on the top
 Of old Olympus dwell'st, but heav'nly born
 Before the hills appeared, or fountain flowed,
 Thou with eternal Wisdom³ didst converse,⁰ *associate*
 Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
 In presence of th' Almighty Father, pleased
 With thy celestial song. Up led by thee
 Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns I have presumed,
 An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
 Thy temp'ring;⁰ with like safety guided down *made suitable by thee*
 Return me to my native element:
 Lest from this flying steed unreined (as once
 Bellerophon,⁴ though from a lower clime)⁰ *region*
 Dismounted, on th' Aleian field I fall
 Erroneous⁰ there to wander and forlorn. *straying*
 Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
 Within the visible diurnal sphere;⁵
 Standing on earth, not rapt⁰ above the pole, *transported, enraptured*
 More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged
 To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days,
 On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues;
 In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,⁶
 And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
 Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
 Purples the east: still govern thou my song,
 Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
 But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
 Of Bacchus and his revelers, the race
 Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
 In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
 To rapture, till the savage clamor drowned
 Both harp and voice;⁷ nor could the Muse defend
 Her son.⁸ So fail not thou, who thee implores:
 For thou art heav'nly, she an empty dream.
 Say goddess, what ensued when Raphael,
 The affable Archangel, had forewarned
 Adam by dire example to beware
 Apostasy, by what befell in Heaven
 To those apostates, lest the like befall

3. In Proverbs 8:24–31 Wisdom tells of her activities before the Creation: "Then I was by him [God], as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." Milton describes "eternal Wisdom" as a daughter of God (personification of his wisdom) and devises a myth in which the Muse of divine poetry ("celestial song," line 12) is Wisdom's "sister"—also, thereby, originating from God.

4. Bellerophon incurred the gods' anger when he tried to fly to heaven upon Pegasus; Zeus sent an insect to sting the horse, and Bellerophon fell down to the "Aleian field" (plain of error), where he wandered alone and blind until his death.

5. The universe, which appears to rotate daily.

6. After the Restoration of Charles II (May 1660) and until the passage of the Act of Oblivion

(August 1660), Milton was in danger of death and dismemberment (like Orpheus, lines 34–35); several of his republican colleagues were hanged, disembowelled, and quartered for their part in the revolution and regicide.

7. The music of the "Thracian bard" Orpheus, type of the poet, charmed even "woods and rocks," but his song was drowned out by the Bacchantes, a "wild rout" of screaming women who murdered and dismembered him and threw his body parts into the Hebrus River, which rises in the "Rhodope" mountains. Milton fears that a similar "barbarous dissonance" unleashed by the Restoration will drown out his voice and threaten his life.

8. Orpheus's mother is Calliope, Muse of epic poetry.

In Paradise to Adam or his race,
 Charged not to touch the interdicted tree,
 If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
 So easily obeyed amid the choice
 Of all tastes else⁰ to please their appetite, *besides*
 Though wand'ring. He with his consorted⁰ Eve *wedded*
 The story heard attentive, and was filled
 With admiration,⁰ and deep muse to hear *amazement*
 Of things so high and strange, things to their thought
 So unimaginable as hate in Heav'n,
 And war so near the peace of God in bliss
 With such confusion: but the evil soon
 Driv'n back redounded⁰ as a flood on those *flowed* *back*
 From whom it sprung, impossible to mix
 With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repealed⁰ *abandoned*
 The doubts that in his heart arose: and now
 Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
 What nearer might concern him, how this world
 Of Heav'n and earth conspicuous⁰ first began, *visible*
 When, and whereof created, for what cause,
 What within Eden or without was done
 Before his memory, as one whose drouth⁰ *thirst*
 Yet scarce allayed still eyes the current⁰ stream, *flowing*
 Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,
 Proceeded thus to ask his heav'nly guest:
 "Great things, and full of wonder in our ears,
 Far differing from this world, thou hast revealed
 Divine interpreter, by favor sent
 Down from the empyrean to forewarn
 Us timely of what might else⁰ have been our loss, *otherwise*
 Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach:
 For which to the Infinitely Good we owe
 Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
 Receive with solemn purpose to observe *purpose*
 Immutably his sov'reign will, the end⁰
 Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsafed
 Gently for our instruction to impart
 Things above earthly thought, which yet concerned
 Our knowing, as to Highest Wisdom seemed,
 Deign to descend now lower, and relate
 What may no less perhaps avail us known,
 How first began this Heav'n which we behold
 Distant so high, with moving fires adorned
 Innumerable, and this which yields or fills
 All space, the ambient⁰ air wide interfused *yielding*
 Embracing round this florid⁰ earth, what cause *flimvery*
 Moved the Creator in his holy rest
 Through all eternity so late to build
 In Chaos,⁹ and the work begun, how soon

9. Adam's question about God's actions before the Creation was often cited as an example of presumptuous and dangerous speculation, especially

when, as here, it implies mutability in God. But in Milton's Eden, error that is not deliberate is not sinful.

Absolved," if unforbid thou may'st unfold *finished*
 What we, not to explore the secrets ask
 Of his eternal empire, but the more
 To magnify⁰ his works, the more we know. *glorify*
 And the great light of day yet wants to run
 Much of his race though steep, suspense" in Heav'n *attentive, suspended*
 Held by thy voice, thy potent voice he hears,
 And longer will delay to hear thee tell
 His generation,⁰ and the rising birth *creation*
 Of nature from the unapparent¹ deep:
 Or if the star of evening and the moon
 Haste to thy audience, night with her will bring
 Silence, and sleep list'ning to thee will watch,⁰ *stay awake*
 Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
 End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine."
 Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought:
 And thus the godlike angel answered mild:
 "This also thy request with caution asked
 Obtain: though to recount almighty works
 What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,
 Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
 Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve
 To glorify the Maker, and infer⁰ *make, render*
 Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
 Thy hearing, such commission from above
 I have received, to answer thy desire
 Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain
 To ask, nor let thine own inventions⁰ hope *speculations*
 Things not revealed, which th' invisible King,
 Only omniscient, hath suppressed in night,
 To none communicable in earth or Heaven:
 Enough is left besides to search and know.
 But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
 Her temperance over appetite, to know
 In measure what the mind may well contain,
 Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
 Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.
 "Know then, that after Lucifer from Heav'n
 (So call him, brighter once amidst the host
 Of angels, than that star the stars among)²
 Fell with his flaming legions through the deep
 Into his place, and the great Son returned
 Victorious with his saints, th' Omnipotent
 Eternal Father from his throne beheld
 Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake:
 " 'At least our envious foe hath failed, who thought
 All like himself rebellious, by whose aid
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat
 Of Deity supreme, us dispossessed,³

1. Invisible, because dark and without form.

2. I.e., Lucifer (Satan) was once brighter among the angels than the star bearing his name is among

the stars.

3. I.e., once he had dispossessed us.

He trusted to have seized, and into fraud⁰ *deception, error*
 Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;
 145 Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,
 Their station, Heav'n yet populous retains
 Number sufficient to possess her realms
 Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
 With ministeries due and solemn rites:
 150 But lest his heart exalt him in the harm
 Already done, to have dispeopled Heav'n,
 My damage fondly⁰ deemed, I can repair *foolishly*
 That detriment, if such it be to lose
 Self-lost, and in a moment will create
 155 Another world, out of one man a race
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
 Not here, till by degrees of merit raised
 They open to themselves at length the way
 Up hither, under long obedience tried,
 160 And earth be changed to Heav'n and Heav'n to earth,
 One kingdom, joy and union without end.
 Meanwhile inhabit lax,^o ye Powers of Heav'n;
 And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee *spread out*
 This I perform, speak thou, and be it done:⁴
 165 My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee
 I send along, ride forth, and bid the deep
 Within appointed bounds be heav'n and earth,
 Boundless the deep, because I am who fill
 Infinitude, nor vacuous the space,
 no Though I uncircumscribed myself retire,
 And put not forth my goodness, which is free
 To act or not,⁵ necessity and chance
 Approach not me, and what I will is fate.'
 "So spake th' Almighty and to what he spake
 175 His Word, the Filial Godhead, gave effect.
 Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
 Than time or motion, but to human ears
 Cannot without process of speech be told,
 So told as earthly notion" can receive.⁶ *human understanding*
 180 Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heav'n
 When such was heard declared the Almighty's will;
 'Glory' they sung to the Most High, 'good will
 To future men, and in their dwellings peace:
 Glory to him whose just avenging ire
 185 Had driven out th' ungodly from his sight
 And th' habitations of the just; to him
 Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordained
 Good out of evil to create, instead
 Of Spirits malign a better race to bring

4. God identifies himself as Creator, the Son as his agent to speak his creating Word.

5. Milton's God creates out of Chaos, not out of nothing; the matter of Chaos emanated from God, and Chaos is therefore "infinite" because God fills it even while he withholds his "goodness" (creating power) from it. Neither necessity nor chance affect

in any way God's freely willed creative act.

6. Raphael explains the principle of accommodation, whereby God's acts are said to be translated into terms humans can understand: here, a six-day creation. This principle allows for an escape from biblical literalism.

Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse
 His good to worlds and ages infinite.
 So sang the hierarchies: meanwhile the Son
 On his great expedition now appeared,
 Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crowned
 Of majesty divine, sapience⁰ and love *wisdom*
 Immense, and all his Father in him shone.
 About his chariot numberless were poured
 Cherub and Seraph, Potentates and Thrones,
 And Virtues, winged Spirits, and chariots winged,
 From the armory of God, where stand of old
 Myriads between two brazen mountains lodged
 Against⁰ a solemn day, harnessed at hand, *in preparation for*
 Celestial equipage; and now came forth
 Spontaneous, for within them spirit lived,
 Attendant on their Lord: Heav'n opened wide
 Her ever-during⁰ gates, harmonious sound *lasting*
 On golden hinges moving, to let forth
 The King of Glory⁷ in his powerful Word
 And Spirit coming to create new worlds.
 On heav'nly ground they stood, and from the shore
 They viewed the vast immeasurable abyss
 Outrageous⁰ as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild, *enormous, violent*
 Up from the bottom turned by furious winds
 And surging waves, as mountains to assault
 Heav'n's height, and with the center mix the pole.
 " 'Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep, peace,'
 Said then th' Omnific⁰ Word, 'your discord end': *all-creating*
 "Nor stayed, but on the wings of Cherubim
 Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
 Far into Chaos, and the world unborn;
 For Chaos heard his voice: him all his train
 Followed in bright procession to behold
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.
 Then stayed the fervid⁰ wheels, and in his hand *burning*
 He took the golden compasses, prepared
 In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
 This universe, and all created things:
 One foot he centered, and the other turned
 Round through the vast profundity obscure,
 And said, 'Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
 This be thy just⁰ circumference O world.'
 Thus God the heav'n⁰ created, thus the earth, *exact*
 Matter unformed and void: darkness profound *the sky*
 Covered th' abyss: but on the wat'ry calm
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,
 And vital virtue⁰ infused, and vital warmth *power*
 Throughout the fluid mass, but downward purged
 The black tartareous cold infernal dregs⁸

7. Cf. Psalm 24.9: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory⁷ shall come in."

8. Crusty, gritty stuff left over from the elements

infused with life that make up the universe; it is associated with Hell ("infernal," "tartarous") and presumably used in its composition.

Adverse to life: then founded, then conglobed
 Like things to like, the rest to several place
 Disparted, and between spun out the air,
 And earth self-balanced on her center hung.

" 'Let there be light,' said God,⁹ and forthwith light
 Ethereal, first of things, quintessence¹ pure
 Sprung from the deep, and from her native east
 To journey through the airy gloom began,
 Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
 Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
 Sojourned the while. God saw the light was good;
 And light from darkness by the hemisphere
 Divided: light the day, and darkness night
 He named. Thus was the first day ev'n and morn:²
 Nor passed uncelebrated, nor unsung
 By the celestial choirs, when orient light
 Exhaling⁰ first from darkness they beheld;
 Birthday of heav'n⁰ and earth; with joy and shout
 The hollow universal orb they filled,
 And touched their golden harps, and hymning praised
 God and his works, Creator him they sung,
 Both when first evening was, and when first morn.

*rising as vapor
 the sky*

"Again, God said, 'Let there be firmament
 Amid the waters, and let it divide
 The waters from the waters': and God made
 The firmament, expanse of liquid,⁰ pure,
 Transparent, elemental air diffused
 In circuit to the uttermost convex⁰
 Of this great round:⁰ partition firm and sure,
 The waters underneath from those above
 Dividing: for as earth, so he the world
 Built on circumfluous⁰ waters calm, in wide
 Crystalline ocean, and the loud misrule
 Of Chaos far removed, lest fierce extremes
 Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:¹
 And heav'n⁰ he named the firmament: so ev'n
 And morning chorus sung the second day.

clear, bright

*vault
 universe*

flowing around

the sky

"The earth was formed, but in the womb as yet
 Of waters, embryon⁴ immature involved⁰
 Appeared not: over all the face of earth
 Main⁰ ocean flowed, not idle, but with warm
 Prolific humor⁰ soft'ning all her globe,
 Fermented the great mother to conceive,
 Sate with genial⁰ moisture, when God said,
 'Be gathered now ye waters under heav'n
 Into one place, and let dry land appear.'
 Immediately the mountains huge appear

enfolded

*of great expanse
 generative moisture*

generative

9. God's creating words, here and later, are quoted from Genesis 1—2, but Milton freely elaborates the creatures' responses to those words.

1. Ether was thought to be a fifth element or "quintessence," the substance of the celestial bodies above the moon.

2. One twenty-four-hour period measured in the

Hebrew manner from sundown to sundown.

3. Disturb the order and mixture of the elements and the created "frame" of the universe.

4. The earth is at first the "embryo" enveloped in a "womb of waters" and is then herself the "great mother" (line 281), made ready ("fermented") to conceive and bear every other being.

Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
 Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky:
 So high as heaved the tumid⁰ hills, SO low
 Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep, *swollen*
 Capacious bed of waters: thither they
 Hasted with glad precipitance,⁰ uprolled *headlongfall*
 As drops on dust conglobing from the dry;
 Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct⁰ *surge forward*
 For haste; such flight the great command impressed
 On the swift floods: as armies at the call
 Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
 Troop to their standard, so the wat'ry throng,
 Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
 If steep, with torrent rapture,⁰ if through plain, *force*
 Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill,
 But they, or⁰ underground, or circuit wide *whether*
 With serpent error⁰ wand'ring, found their way, *winding course*
 And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;
 Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
 All but within those banks, where rivers now
 Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.⁰ *following*
 The dry land, earth, and the great receptacle
 Of congregated waters he called seas:
 And saw that it was good, and said, 'Let th' earth
 Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,
 And fruit tree yielding fruit after her kind;
 Whose seed is in herself upon the earth.'
 He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
 Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorned,
 Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
 Her universal face with pleasant green,
 Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flow'ring
 Op'ning their various colors, and made gay *blossomed*
 Her bosom smelling sweet: and these scarce blown,⁰
 Forth flourished thick the clust'ring vine, forth crept *hard as horn*
 The swelling gourd, up stood the corny⁰ reed *low-growing*
 Embattled in her field: add the humble⁰ shrub, *tangled*
 And bush with frizzled hair implicit:⁰ last
 Rose as in dance the stately trees, and spread
 Their branches hung with copious fruit; or gemmed⁰ *put forth buds*
 Their blossoms: with high woods the hills were crowned,
 With tufts the valleys and each fountain side,
 With borders long the rivers. That earth now
 Seemed like to Heav'n, a seat where gods might dwell,
 Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
 Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rained
 Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
 None was, but from the earth a dewy mist
 Went up and watered all the ground, and each
 Plant of the field, which ere it was in the earth
 God made, and every herb, before it grew
 On the green stem; God saw that it was good:
 So ev'n and morn recorded the third day.

"Again th' Almighty spake: 'Let there be lights
 High in th' expanse of heaven" to divide *the sky*
 The day from night; and let them be for signs,
 For seasons, and for days, and circling years,
 And let them be for lights as I ordain
 Their office" in the firmament of heav'n *function*
 To give light on the earth'; and it was so.
 And God made two great lights, great for their use
 To man, the greater to have rule by day,
 The less by night altern" and made the stars, *in turns*
 And set them in the firmament of heav'n
 To illuminate the earth, and rule the day
 In their vicissitude," and rule the night, *regular alternation*
 And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
 Surveying his great work, that it was good;
 For of celestial bodies first the sun
 A mighty sphere he framed, unlightsome first,
 Though of ethereal mold:" then formed the moon *fashioned from ether*
 Globose, and every magnitude of stars,
 And sowed with stars the heav'n thick as a field:
 Of light by far the greater part he took,
 Transplanted from her cloudy shrine,⁵ and placed
 In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
 And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
 Her gathered beams, great palace now of light.
 Hither as to their fountain other stars
 Repairing," in their golden urns draw light, *resorting*
 And hence the morning planet gilds her horns;⁶
 By tincture" or reflection they augment *absorption*
 Their small peculiar," though from human sight *own small light*
 So far remote, with dimunition seen.
 First in his east the glorious lamp was seen,
 Regent of day, and all th' horizon round
 Invested with bright rays, jocund" to run *merry*
 His longitude" through heav'n's high road: the gray *distance*
 Dawn, and the Pleiades⁷ before him danced
 Shedding sweet influence: less bright the moon,
 But opposite in leveled west was set
 His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
 From him, for other light she needed none
 In that aspect," and still that distance keeps *when full*
 Till night, then in the east her turn she shines,
 Revolved on heav'n's great axle, and her reign
 With thousand lesser lights dividual" holds, *divided*
 With thousand thousand stars, that then appeared
 Spangling the hemisphere: then first adorned
 With their bright luminaries that set and rose,
 Glad" evening and glad morn crowned the fourth day. *bright, gay*
 And God said, 'Let the waters generate

5. The "cloudy tabernacle" of line 248.

6. Venus, which Galileo's telescope found to be crescent-shaped in her first quarter.

7. A cluster of seven stars in the constellation Taurus. They appear at dawn ahead of the sun. See Job 38.31.

Reptile⁰ with spawn abundant, living soul: *creeping animals*
 And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
 Displayed⁰ on the op'n firmament of heav'n.' *spread out*
 And God created the great whales, and each
 Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
 The waters generated by their kinds,
 And every bird of wing after his kind;
 And saw that it was good, and blessed them, saying,
 'Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas
 And lakes and running streams the waters fill;
 And let the fowl be multiplied on the earth.'
 Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay
 With fry⁰ innumerable swarm, and shoals *young fish*
 Of fish that with their fins and shining scales
 Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft
 Bank the mid-sea:⁸ part single or with mate
 Graze the seaweed their pasture, and through groves
 Of coral stray, or sporting with quick glance
 Show to the sun their waved⁰ coats dropped⁰ with gold, *striped / flecked*
 Or in their pearly shells at ease, attend⁰ *watch for*
 Moist nutriment, or under rocks their food
 In jointed armor watch: on smooth the seal,
 And bended⁹ dolphins play: part huge of bulk
 Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait
 Tempest⁰ the ocean: there leviathan¹ *stir up*
 Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
 Stretched like a promontory sleeps or swims,
 And seems a moving land, and at his gills
 Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out a sea.
 Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens and shores
 Their brood as numerous hatch, from th' egg that soon
 Bursting with kindly⁰ rupture forth disclosed *natural*
 Their callow⁰ young, but feathered soon and fledge *without feathers*
 They summed their pens,² and soaring th' air sublime
 With clang⁰ despised the ground, under a cloud *harsh cry*
 In prospect;³ there the eagle and the stork
 On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries build:
 Part loosely⁰ wing the region,⁰ part more wise *separately/sky*
 In common, ranged in figure wedge their way,⁴
 Intelligent" of seasons, and set forth *understanding*
 Their aery caravan high over seas
 Flying, and over lands with mutual wing
 Easing their flight;⁵ so steers the prudent crane
 Her annual voyage, borne on winds; the air
 Floats," as they pass, fanned with unnumbered plumes: *undulates*
 From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
 Solaced the woods, and spread their painted wings

8. The fishes' darting motions resemble boats oared now on one side, now on the other ("sculls"), as they turn they seem to form banks within the sea.

9. Curved in leaping. "Smooth": a stretch of calm water.

1. The great whale (see 1.200-208).

2. Brought their feathers to full growth.

3. The ground seems covered by a cloud of birds.

4. Fly in a wedge formation.

5. Birds were thought to support each other with their wings when they flew in formation.

Till ev'n, nor then the solemn nightingale
 Ceased warbling, but all night tuned her soft lays:⁰ *songs*
 Others on silver lakes and rivers bathed
 Their downy breast; the swan, with arched neck
 Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
 Her state with oary feet:⁶ yet oft they quit
 The dank,^o and rising on stiff pennons, tow'r⁰ *pool / soar into*
 The mid-aerial sky: others on ground
 Walked firm; the crested cock whose clarion sounds
 The silent hours, and th' other" whose gay train *the peacock*
 Adorns him, colored with the florid hue
 Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
 With fish replenished,^o and the air with fowl, *fully supplied*
 Evening and morn solemnized the fifth day.
 "The sixth, and of creation last arose
 With evening harps and matin,^o when God said, *morning*
 'Let th' earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
 Cattle and creeping things, and beast of the earth,
 Each in their kind.' The earth obeyed, and straight
 Op'ning her fertile womb teemed^o at a birth *brought forth*
 Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,
 Limbed and full grown: out of the ground up rose
 As from his lair the wild beast where he wons^o *dwells*
 In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den;
 Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walked:
 The cattle in the fields and meadows green:
 Those rare and solitary, these⁷ in flocks
 Pasturing at once,^o and in broad herds upsprung. *immediately*
 The grassy clods^o now calved, now half appeared *mounds of earth*
 The tawny lion, pawing to get free
 His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,
 And rampant shakes his brinded^o mane; the ounce,^o *streaked / lynx*
 The libbard,^o and the tiger, as the mole *leopard*
 Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
 In hillocks; the swift stag from underground
 Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mold
 Behemoth⁸ biggest born of earth upheaved
 His vastness: fleeced the flocks and bleating rose,
 As plants: ambiguous between sea and land
 The river-horse⁹ and scaly crocodile.
 At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,
 Insect or worm;¹ those waved their limber fans
 For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
 In all the liveries decked of summer's pride
 With spots of gold and purple, azure and green:
 These as a line their long dimension drew,
 Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all

6. The swan's outstretched ("mantling") wings form a mantle, and it seems like a monarch on a royal barge rowed by its own "oary" feet.

7. "These" are the domestic cattle who come forth in "flocks" and "herds" in pastures; "those" are the wild beasts who come forth "in pairs" (line 459),

and spread out ("rare") at wide intervals.

8. A huge biblical beast (Job 40.15), often identified with the elephant.

9. Translates the Greek name "hippopotamus."

1. Any creeping creature, including serpents.

Minims⁰ of nature; some of serpent kind *smallest animals*
 Wondrous in length and corpulence involved⁰ *coiled*
 Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
 The parsimonious emmet,⁰ provident *thrifty ant*
 Of future, in small room large heart⁰ enclosed, *great wisdom*
 Pattern of just equality perhaps
 Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes
 Of commonalty:² swarming next appeared
 The female bee that feeds her husband drone
 Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
 With honey stored: the rest are numberless,
 And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names,³
 Needless to thee repeated; nor unknown
 The serpent subtlest beast of all the field,
 Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
 And hairy mane⁴ terrific,⁰ though to thee *terrifying*
 Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.
 Now heav'n in all her glory shone, and rolled
 Her motions, as the great First Mover's hand
 First wheeled their course; earth in her rich attire
 Consummate⁰ lovely smiled; air, water, earth, *complete, perfect*
 By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walked
 Frequent;⁰ and of the sixth day yet remained; *in thrcmgs*
 There wanted yet the master work, the end⁰ *purpose*
 Of all yet done; a creature who not prone
 And brute as other creatures, but endued
 With sanctity of reason, might erect
 His stature,⁵ and upright with front⁰ serene *brow, face*
 Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence
 Magnanimous to correspond⁶ with Heav'n,
 But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
 Descends, thither with heart and voice and eyes
 Directed in devotion, to adore
 And worship God supreme, who made him chief
 Of all his works: therefore th' Omnipotent
 Eternal Father (for where is not he
 Present) thus to his Son audibly spake:
 " Let us make now man in our image, man
 In our similitude, and let them rule
 Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
 Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
 And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.'
 This said, he formed thee, Adam, thee O man
 Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed
 The breath of life; in his own image he
 Created thee, in the image of God

2. The ant will become the symbol of a frugal and self-governing republic ("pattern of just equality") with the "popular" (populous, plebian) tribes of common people ("commonalty") joined in rule (lines 486—89); Milton made it such a symbol in his prose tract *The Ready and Easy Way*. Bees here (lines 489—93) suggest delightful ease but are not yet (as in 1.768—75) a symbol of monarchy and

associated with Hell.

3. See 8.342-54, and Genesis 2.19-20.

4. Sea serpents were so described in *Aeneid* 2.203-7.

5. Both "stand erect" and "elevate his condition": his erect stance was understood to signify that he was created for Heaven.

6. Both "be in harmony" and "communicate."

- Express,⁰ and thou becam'st a living soul. *exact, manifest*
 Male he created thee, but thy consort
 530 Female for race; then blessed mankind, and said,
 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth,
 Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
 Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the air,
 And every living thing that moves on the earth.'
 535 Wherever thus created, for no place
 Is yet distinct by name, thence,⁰ as thou know'st *from there*
 He brought thee into this delicious⁰ grove, *delightful*
 This garden, planted with the trees of God,
 Delectable both to behold and taste;
 540 And freely all their pleasant fruit for food
 Gave thee, all sorts are here that all th' earth yields,
 Variety without end; but of the tree
 Which tasted works knowledge of good and evil,
 Thou may'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou di'st;
 545 Death is the penalty imposed, beware,
 And govern well thy appetite, lest Sin
 Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.
 Here finished he, and all that he had made
 Viewed, and behold all was entirely good;
 550 So ev'n and morn accomplished the sixth day:
 Yet not till the Creator from his work
 Desisting, though unwearied, up returned
 Up to the Heav'n of Heav'ns his high abode,
 Thence to behold his new-created world
 555 Th' addition of his empire, how it showed
 In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
 Answering his great Idea.⁷ Up he rode
 Followed with acclamation and the sound
 Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tuned⁰ *performed*
 560 Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air
 Resounded (thou remember'st, for thou heard'st),
 The heav'ns and all the constellations rung,
 The planets in their stations list'ning stood,
 While the bright pomp⁰ ascended jubilant. *triumphal procession*
 565 " 'Open, ye everlasting gates,' they sung,
 'Open, ye Heav'ns, your living doors; let in
 The great Creator from his work returned
 Magnificent,⁸ his six days' work, a world;
 Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
 570 To visit oft the dwellings of just men
 Delighted, and with frequent intercourse
 Thither will send his winged messengers
 On errands of supernal⁰ grace.' So sung *heavenly*
 The glorious train ascending: he through Heav'n,
 575 That opened wide her blazing⁰ portals, led *radiant*
 To God's eternal house direct the way,

7. Eternal archetype or pattern, as in Plato: concept in the mind of God.

8. Cf. Psalm 24.7: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates;

and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in."

A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold
 And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
 Seen in the galaxy, that Milky Way
 580 Which nightly as a circling zone⁰ thou seest *belt*
 Powdered with stars. And now on earth the seventh
 Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
 Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
 Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
 585 Of Heav'n's high-seated top, th' imperial throne
 Of Godhead, fixed forever firm and sure,
 The Filial Power arrived, and sat him down
 With his great Father, for he⁹ also went
 Invisible, yet stayed (such privilege
 590 Hath Omnipresence) and the work ordained,⁰ *ordered, enacted*
 Author and end of all things, and from work
 Now resting, blessed and hallowed the sev'nth day,
 As resting on that day from all his work,
 But not in silence holy kept; the harp
 595 Had work and rested not, the solemn pipe,
 And dulcimer, all organs⁰ of sweet stop, *wind instruments*
 All sounds on fret¹ by string or golden wire
 Tempered⁰ soft tunings, intermixed with voice *brought into harmony*
 Choral⁰ or unison: of incense clouds *in parts*
 600 Fuming from golden censers hid the mount.
 "Creation and the six days' acts they sung:
 'Great are thy works, Jehovah, infinite
 Thy power; what thought can measure thee or tongue
 Relate thee; greater now in thy return
 605 Than from the giant² angels; thee that day
 Thy thunders magnified; but to create
 Is greater than created to destroy.
 Who can impair thee, Mighty King, or bound
 Thy empire? Easily the proud attempt
 610 Of Spirits apostate and their counsels vain
 Thou hast repelled, while impiously they thought
 Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
 The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
 To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
 615 To manifest the more thy might: his evil
 Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
 Witness this new-made world, another heav'n
 From Heaven gate not far, founded in view
 On the clear hyaline,³ the glassy sea;
 620 Of amplitude almost immense,⁰ with stars *immeasurable*
 Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
 Of destined habitation; but thou know'st
 Their seasons: among these the seat of men,
 Earth with her nether ocean circumfused,⁰ *surrounded, bathed*

9. The Father.

1. Bar on the fingerboard of a stringed instrument.

"Dulcimer": the Hebrew bagpipe (Daniel 3.5).

2. The allusion implies that the myth of the Giants' revolt against Jove is a classical type or ver-

sion of the angels' rebellion.

3. From the Greek word for glass (Revelation 4.6), the waters above the firmament as contrasted with the "nether ocean" (line 624), the earth's seas.

625 Their pleasant dwellingplace. Thrice happy men,
 And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanced,
 Created in his image, there to dwell
 And worship him, and in reward to rule
 Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,
 630 And multiply a race of worshippers
 Holy and just: thrice happy if they know
 Their happiness, and persevere upright.'
 "So sung they, and the empyrean rung,
 With hallelujahs:⁴ thus was Sabbath kept.
 635 And thy request think now fulfilled, that asked
 How first this world and face of things began,
 And what before thy memory was done
 From the beginning, that posterity
 Informed by thee might know; if else thou seek'st
 640 Aught, not surpassing human measure, say."

Book 8

The angel ended, and in Adam's ear
 So charming⁰ left his voice, that he a while *spell-binding*
 Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear;
 Then as new-waked thus gratefully replied:¹
 5 "What thanks sufficient, or what recompense
 Equal have I to render thee, divine
 Historian, who thus largely hast allayed
 The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsafed
 This friendly condescension to relate
 10 Things else by me unsearchable, now heard
 With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
 With glory attributed to the high
 Creator; something yet of doubt remains,
 Which only thy solution⁰ can resolve. *explanation*
 15 When I behold this goodly frame,⁰ this world *the universe*
 Of heav'n and earth consisting, and compute
 Their magnitudes, this earth a spot, a grain,
 An atom, with the firmament compared
 And all her numbered⁰ stars, that seem to roll *numerous*
 20 Spaces incomprehensible (for such
 Their distance argues and their swift return
 Diurnal)⁰ merely to officiate⁰ light *daily / supply*
 Round this opacous⁰ earth, this punctual⁰ spot, *dark / pointlike*
 One day and night; in all their vast survey
 25 Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire,⁰ *wonder*
 How Nature wise and frugal could commit
 Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
 So many nobler bodies to create,
 Greater so manifold,⁰ to this one use, *so much greater*

4. Hebrew, "praise the Lord."

1. When Milton divided Book 7 of the ten-book version of 1667 into the present Books 7 and 8, he

replaced a line reading "To whom thus Adam gratefully replied" with these introductory lines,

For aught appears,⁰ and on their orbs impose as it *seems*
 Such restless revolution day by day
 Repeated, while the sedentary⁰ earth, *motionless*
 That better might with far less compass⁰ move, *circular course*
 Served by more noble than herself, attains
 Her end without least motion, and receives,
 As tribute such a sumless⁰ journey brought *incalculable*
 Of incorporeal⁰ speed, her warmth and light; *like that of spirits*
 Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails."

So spake our sire, and by his count'nance seemed
 Ent'ring on studious thoughts abstruse, which Eve
 Perceiving where she sat retired in sight,
 With lowliness majestic from her seat,
 And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
 Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flow'rs,
 To visit⁰ how they prospered, bud and bloom, *see*
 Her nursery;² they at her coming sprung
 And touched by her fair tendance gladlier grew.
 Yet went she not as not with such discourse
 Delighted, or not capable her ear
 Of what was high: such pleasure she reserved,
 Adam relating, she sole auditress;
 Her husband the relater she preferred
 Before the angel, and of him to ask
 Chose rather;³ he, she knew, would intermix
 Grateful⁰ digressions, and solve high dispute *gratifying*
 With conjugal caresses, from his lip
 Not words alone pleased her. O when meet now
 Such pairs, in love and mutual honor joined?
 With goddess-like demeanor forth she went;
 Not unattended, for on her as queen
 A pomp⁰ of winning Graces⁴ waited still, *procession*
 And from about her shot darts of desire
 Into all eyes to wish her still in sight.
 And Raphael now to Adam's doubt proposed
 Benevolent and facile⁰ thus replied. *easy, affable*

"To ask or search I blame thee not, for heav'n
 Is as the book of God before thee set,
 Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
 His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:
 This to attain, whether heav'n move or earth,
 Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest⁵
 From man or angel the great Architect
 Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
 His secrets to be scanned⁰ by them who ought *judged critically*
 Rather admire;⁰ or if they list to try *marvel*
 Conjecture, he his fabric⁰ of the heav'ns *design*

2. Her garden, where she "nurses" her flowers and plants.

3. The emphasis on choice suggests that Eve is not bound in Eden by the Pauline directive (1 Corinthians 14.34—35) that women refrain from speaking in church and instead learn at home from their

husbands, but she voluntarily and for her own pleasure observes this hierarchical decorum.

4. The Graces attended on Venus.

5. Presumably, God's ways with other worlds and other creatures inhabiting them (if any).

Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
 His laughter at their quaint opinions wide⁶ *wide of the mark*
 Hereafter, when they come to model heav'n
 And calculate the stars, how they will wield
 The mighty frame, how build, unbuild, contrive
 To save appearances,⁶ how gird the sphere
 With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,
 Cycle and epicycle,⁷ orb in orb:
 Already by thy reasoning this I guess,
 Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
 That bodies bright and greater should not serve
 The less not bright, nor heav'n such journeys run,
 Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
 The benefit: consider first, that great
 Or bright infers⁰ not excellence: the earth *implies*
 Though, in comparison of heav'n, so small,
 Nor glistering, may of solid good contain
 More plenty than the sun that barren shines,
 Whose virtue on itself works no effect,
 But in the fruitful earth; there first received
 His beams, unactive⁰ else, their vigor *find.* *ineffective*
 Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
 Officious,⁰ but to thee earth's habitant. *attentive, dutiful*
 And for the heav'n's wide circuit, let it speak
 The Maker's high magnificence, who built
 So spacious, and his line stretched out so far;
 That man may know he dwells not in his own;
 An edifice too large for him to fill,
 Lodged in a small partition, and the rest
 Ordained for uses to his Lord best known.
 The swiftness of those circles⁰ attribute, *orbits*
 Though numberless,⁰ to his omnipotence, *innumerable*
 That to corporeal substances could add
 Speed almost spiritual;⁰ me thou think'st not slow, *that of angels*
 Who since the morning hour set out from Heav'n
 Where God resides, and ere midday arrived
 In Eden, distance inexpressible
 By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
 Admitting motion in the heav'ns, to show
 Invalid that which thee to doubt it moved;
 Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
 To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.⁸
 God to remove his ways from human sense,
 Placed heav'n from earth so far, that earthly sight,

6. To find ways of explaining discrepancies between their hypotheses and observed facts.

7. In the Ptolemaic system, observed irregularities in the motion of heavenly bodies were first explained by hypothesizing eccentric orbits, then by adding epicycles, which were smaller orbits whose centers ride on the circumference of the main eccentric circles and carry the planets. The Copernican system also had some recourse to epicycles.

8. Raphael declines to "reveal" astronomical truth to Adam, leaving that matter open to human scientific speculation. He suggests here that Adam's Ptolemaic assumptions result from his earthbound perspective, and he implies that angels see the universe in different terms. In the following lines (122–58) he sets forth advanced scientific notions Adam had not imagined: not only Copernican astronomy but multiple universes and other inhabited planets.

If it presume, might err in things too high,
 And no advantage gain. What if the sun
 Be center to the world, and other stars
 By his attractive virtue⁰ and their own

125 Incited, dance about him various rounds?"
 Their wand'ring course now high, now low, then hid,
 Progressive, retrograde,⁰ or standing still,
 In six thou seest,⁹ and what if sev'nth to these
 The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,

130 Insensibly three different motions move?¹
 Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
 Moved contrary with thwart obliquities,²
 Or save the sun his labor, and that swift
 Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb³ supposed,

135 Invisible else above all stars, the wheel
 Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,
 If earth industrious of herself fetch day
 Traveling east, and with her part averse
 From the sun's beam meet night, her other part

140 Still luminous by his ray. What if that light
 Sent from her through the wide transpicuous⁰ air,
 To the terrestrial moon be as a star
 Enlight'ning her by day, as she by night
 This earth? Reciprocal, if land be there,

145 Fields and inhabitants: her spots thou seest
 As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
 Fruits in her softened soil, for some to eat
 Allotted there; and other suns perhaps
 With their attendant moons thou wilt descry

150 Communicating male⁰ and female⁰ light,
 Which two great sexes animate⁰ the world,
 Stored in each orb perhaps with some that live.
 For such vast room in nature unpossessed
 By living soul, desert and desolate,

155 Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute
 Each orb a glimpse of light, conveyed so far
 Down to this habitable,⁰ which returns
 Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.⁰
 But whether thus these things, or whether not,

160 Whether the sun predominant in heav'n
 Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun,
 He from the east his flaming road begin,
 Or she from west her silent course advance
 With inoffensive" pace that spinning sleeps

165 On her soft axle, while she paces ev'n,
 And bears thee soft with the smooth air along,
 Solicit" not thy thoughts with matters hid,

magnetism
circles

baclzivard

trans-parent

original / reflected
endow with life

inhabited place
open to dispute

unobstructed, harmless

disturb

9. Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, and the moon. In the Ptolemaic system the "seventh" is the sun; in the Copernican, earth.

1. Copernicus described the three motions as daily, annual, and "motion in declination" whereby the earth's axis swerved so as always to point in the same direction.

2. Oblique paths that cross each other.

3. Wheel, that is, the primum mobile, which (if we accept the Ptolemaic system and "save the sun his labor") revolves around the universe every twenty-four hours, carrying the planets and their spheres with it.

Leave them to God above, him serve and fear;
 Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
 170 Wherever placed, let him dispose: joy thou
 In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
 And thy fair Eve; heav'n is for thee too high
 To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
 Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
 175 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
 Live, in what state, condition, or degree,
 Contented that thus far hath been revealed
 Not of earth only but of highest Heav'n."
 To whom thus Adam cleared of doubt, replied:
 180 "How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure
 Intelligence^o of Heav'n, angel serene, *spirit*
 And freed from intricacies, taught to live
 The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts
 To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
 185 God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
 And not molest us, unless we ourselves
 Seek them with wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain.
 But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
 Unchecked, and of her roving is no end;
 190 Till warned, or by experience taught, she learn,
 That not to know at large of things remote
 From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
 That which before us lies in daily life,
 Is the prime wisdom; what is more, is fume," *vapor*
 195 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,^o *foolish irrelevance*
 And renders us in things that most concern
 Unpracticed, unprepared, and still to seek.^o *always searching*
 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
 200 Useful, whence haply^o mention may arise *perhaps*
 Of something not unseasonable to ask
 By sufferance,^o and thy wonted^o favor deigned. *permission / usual*
 Thee I have heard relating what was done
 Ere my remembrance: now hear me relate
 205 My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard;
 And day is yet not spent; till then thou seest
 How subtly to detain thee I devise,
 Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
 Fond,^o were it not in hope of thy reply: *foolish*
 210 For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heav'n,
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
 Than fruits of palm tree pleasantest to thirst
 And hunger both, from labor, at the hour
 Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,
 215 Though pleasant, but thy words with grace divine
 Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety."
 To whom thus Raphael answered heav'nly meek:
 "Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men,
 Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
 220 Abundantly his gifts hath also poured

Inward and outward both, his image fair:
 Speaking or mute all comeliness and grace
 Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms.
 Nor less think we in Heav'n of thee on earth
 Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire
 Gladly into the ways of God with man:
 For God we see hath honored thee, and set
 On man his equal love: say therefore on;
 For I that day was absent, as befell,
 Bound on a voyage uncouth⁰ and obscure, *strange*
 Far on excursion toward the gates of Hell;
 Squared in full legion (such command we had)
 To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
 Or enemy, while God was in his work,
 Lest he incensed at such eruption bold,
 Destruction with creation might have mixed.
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt,
 But us he sends upon his high behests
 For state,⁰ as sov'reign King, and to inure⁰ *ceremony/strengthen*
 Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut
 The dismal gates, and barricadoed strong;
 But long ere our approaching heard within
 Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
 Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
 Glad we returned up to the coasts of light
 Ere Sabbath evening: so we had in charge.
 But thy relation now; for I attend,
 Pleased with thy words no less than thou with mine."
 So spake the godlike Power, and thus our sire:
 "For man to tell how human life began
 Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?⁴
 Desire with thee still longer to converse
 Induced me. As new-waked from soundest sleep
 Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid
 In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun
 Soon dried, and on the reeking⁰ moisture fed. *steaming*
 Straight toward heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turned,
 And gazed a while the ample sky, till raised
 By quick instinctive motion up I sprung
 As thitherward endeavoring, and upright
 Stood on my feet; about me round I saw
 Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
 And liquid lapse⁰ of murmuring streams; by these, *flow*
 Creatures that lived, and moved, and walked, or flew,
 Birds on the branches warbling; all things smiled,
 With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed.
 Myself I then perused, and limb by limb
 Surveyed, and sometimes went,⁰ and sometimes ran *walked*
 With supple joints, as lively vigor led:
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause,

4. Compare Satan's inability to remember his origins (5.856—63), from which he infers self-creation, whereas Adam infers a Maker (line 278).

Knew not; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake,
 My tongue obeyed and readily could name
 Whate'er I saw.⁵ 'Thou sun,' said I, 'fair light,
 And thou enlightened earth, so fresh and gay,
 275 Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
 And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
 Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?
 Not of myself; by some great Maker then,
 In goodness and in power preeminent;
 280 Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,
 From whom I have that thus I move and live,
 And feel that I am happier than I know.'
 While thus I called, and strayed I knew not whither,
 From where I first drew air, and first beheld
 285 This happy light, when answer none returned,
 On a green shady bank profuse of flow'rs
 Pensive I sat me down; there gentle sleep
 First found me, and with soft oppression seized
 My drowsed sense, untroubled, though I thought
 290 I then was passing to my former state
 Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
 When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
 Whose inward apparition gently moved
 My fancy to believe I yet had being,
 295 And lived: one came, methought, of shape divine,
 And said, 'Thy mansion⁰ wants⁰ thee, Adam, rise,
 First man, of men innumerable ordained
 First father, called by thee I come thy guide
 To the garden of bliss, thy seat⁰ prepared.'
 300 So saying, by the hand he took me raised,
 And over fields and waters, as in air
 Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
 A woody mountain whose high top was plain,
 A circuit wide, enclosed, with goodliest trees
 305 Planted, with walks, and bowers, that what I saw
 Of earth before scarce pleasant seemed. Each tree
 Load'n with fairest fruit, that hung to the eye
 Tempting, stirred in me sudden appetite
 To pluck and eat; whereat I waked, and found
 310 Before mine eyes all real, as the dream
 Had lively⁰ shadowed: here had new begun
 My wand'ring, had not he who was my guide
 Up hither, from among the trees appeared,
 Presence Divine. Rejoicing, but with awe
 315 In adoration at his feet I fell
 Submiss:⁰ he reared me, and 'Whom thou sought'st I am,'
 Said mildly, 'Author of all this thou seest
 Above, or round about thee or beneath.
 This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
 320 To till and keep,⁰ and of the fruit to eat:
 Of every tree that in the garden grows

*habitation/lacks**residence**vividly**submissive**care for*

5. Adam's ability to name the creatures was said to signify his intuitive understanding of their natures.

Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:
 But of the tree whose operation⁰ brings *action*
 Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
 The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,
 Amid the garden by the Tree of Life,
 Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,
 And shun the bitter consequence: for know,
 The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
 Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt die;
 From that day mortal, and this happy state
 Shalt lose, expelled from hence into a world
 Of woe and sorrow.⁶ Sternly he pronounced
 The rigid interdiction,⁰ which resounds *prohibition*
 Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice
 Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect⁰ *untroubled expression*
 Returned and gracious purpose⁰ thus renewed: *speech*
 'Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth
 To thee and to thy race I give; as lords
 Possess it, and all things that therein live,
 Or live in sea, or air, beast, fish, and fowl.
 In sign whereof each bird and beast behold
 After their kinds; I bring them to receive
 From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
 With low subjection; understand the same
 Of fish within their wat'ry residence,
 Not hither summoned, since they cannot change
 Their element to draw the thinner air.'
 As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
 Approaching two and two, these⁰ cowering low
 With blandishment,⁰ each bird stooped on his wing. *the beasts
flattering gesture*
 I named them, as they passed, and understood
 Their nature, with such knowledge God endued
 My sudden apprehension:⁷ but in these
 I found not what methought I wanted still;
 And to the heav'nly Vision thus presumed:
 " 'O by what name, for thou above all these,
 Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,
 Surpassest far my naming,⁸ how may I
 Adore thee, Author of this universe,
 And all this good to man, for whose well-being
 So amply, and with hands so liberal
 Thou hast provided all things: but with me
 I see not who partakes. In solitude
 What happiness, who can enjoy alone,
 Or all enjoying, what contentment find?'
 Thus I presumptuous; and the Vision bright,
 As with a smile more brightened, thus replied:
 " 'What call'st thou solitude? Is not the earth

6. Compare God's commands to Adam (Genesis 1.28-30, 2.16-17) with Milton's elaboration here.
 7. Adam had already begun naming the sun and features of the earth (lines 272-74), but here he names (and thereby shows he understands) all liv-

ing creatures.

8. Adam reasons, as the Scholastics did, from the creatures to the fact of a Creator, but he cannot name (and so indicates that he cannot understand) God, except as God reveals himself.

- 370 With various living creatures, and the air
 Replenished,⁰ and all these at thy command *fully stocked*
 To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not
 Their language and their ways? They also know,⁰ *have understanding*
 And reason not contemptibly; with these
- 375 Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large.¹
 So spake the Universal Lord, and seemed
 So ordering. I with leave of speech implored,
 And humble deprecation thus replied:
- "Let not my words offend thee, Heav'nly Power,
 380 My Maker, be propitious while I speak.
 Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
 And these inferior far beneath me set?
 Among unequals what society
 Can sort,⁰ what harmony or true delight? *agree*
- 385 Which must be mutual, in proportion due
 Giv'n and received; but in disparity
 The one intense, the other still remiss
 Cannot well suit with either,⁹ but soon prove
 Tedious alike. Of fellowship I speak
- 390 Such as I seek, fit to partake⁰ *partake of*
 All rational delight, wherein the brute
 Cannot be human consort; they rejoice
 Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
 So fitly them in pairs thou hast combined;
- 395 Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl
 So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;
 Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.¹
 "Whereto th' Almighty answered, not displeas'd:
 'A nice⁰ and subtle happiness I see *fastidious*
- 400 Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice
 Of thy associates, Adam, and wilt taste
 No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
 What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
 Seem I to thee sufficiently possessed
- 405 Of happiness, or not? who am alone
 From all eternity, for none I know
 Second to me or like, equal much less.
 How have I then with whom to hold converse
 Save with the creatures which I made, and those
- 410 To me inferior, infinite descents
 Beneath what other creatures are to thee?'
 "He ceased, I lowly answered: 'To attain
 The height and depth of thy eternal ways
 All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things;
- 415 Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee
 Is no deficiency found; not so is man,
 But in degree, the cause of his desire
 By conversation with his like to help,
 Or solace his defects.¹ No need that thou

9. As with poorly matched musical instruments, Adam's string is too taut ("intense") and the animals' is too slack ("remiss") to be in harmony ("suit").

1. God is absolutely perfect, man only relatively so ("in degree"), and thereby needs companionship with a fit mate to assuage ("solace") the "defects" arising from solitude.

Shouldst propagate, already infinite;
 And through all numbers absolute, though One;
 But man by number is to manifest
 His single imperfection, and beget
 Like of his like, his image multiplied,
 In unity defective,² which requires
 Collateral⁰ love, and dearest amity. *mutual*
 Thou in thy secrecy⁰ although alone, *seclusion*
 Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
 Social communication, yet so pleased,
 Canst raise thy creature to what height thou wilt
 Of union or communion, deified;
 I by conversing cannot these erect
 From prone, nor in their ways complacence⁰ find.¹ *satisfaction*
 Thus I emboldened spake, and freedom used
 Permissive,⁰ and acceptance found, which gained *-permitted*
 This answer from the gracious Voice Divine:
 " Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleased,
 And find thee knowing not of beasts alone,
 Which thou hast rightly named, but of thyself,
 Expressing well the spirit within thee free,
 My image, not imparted to the brute,
 Whose fellowship therefore unmeet⁰ for thee *unsuitable*
 Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike,
 And be so minded still. I, ere thou spak'st,
 Knew it not good for man to be alone,
 And no such company as then thou saw'st
 Intended thee, for trial only brought,
 To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet:
 What next I bring shall please thee, be assured,
 Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,
 Thy wish, exactly to thy heart's desire.³
 "He ended, or I heard no more, for now
 My earthly by his heav'nly overpowered,
 Which it had long stood under,⁰ strained to the height *been exposed to*
 In that celestial colloquy sublime,
 As with an object that excels⁰ the sense, *exceeds*
 Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
 Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, called
 By nature as in aid, and closed mine eyes.
 Mine eyes he closed, but open left the cell
 Of fancy⁰ my internal sight, by which *imagination*
 Abstract⁰ as in a trance methought I saw, *withdrawn*
 Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
 Still glorious before whom awake I stood;
 Who stooping opened my left side, and took
 From thence a rib, with cordial⁰ spirits warm, *from the heart*
 And lifeblood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,
 But suddenly with flesh filled up and healed:
 The rib he formed and fashioned with his hands;

2. God, "though One," (line 421), contains all numbers, but man has to remedy the "imperfection" of being single (line 423) by procreating and thereby multiplying his single and thereby "defec-

tive" image (line 425).

3. Compare the account in Genesis 2.18 with Milton's elaboration,

- 470 Under his forming hands a creature grew,⁴
 Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair
 That what seemed fair in all the world seemed now
 Mean, or in her summed up, in her contained
 And in her looks, which from that time infused
- 475 Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
 And into all things from her air^o inspired *mien, look*
 The spirit of love and amorous delight.
 She disappeared, and left me dark, I waked
 To find her, or forever to deplore
- 480 Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:
 When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
 Such as I saw her in my dream, adorned
 With what all earth or heaven could bestow
 To make her amiable:^o on she came, *lovely*
- 485 Led by her heav'nly Maker, though unseen,⁵
 And guided by his voice, nor uninformed
 Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rites:
 Grace was in all her steps, Heav'n in her eye,
 In every gesture dignity and love.
- 490 I overjoyed could not forbear aloud:
 "This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfilled
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
 Giver of all things fair, but fairest this
 Of all thy gifts, nor enviest.^o I now see *given reluctantly*
- 495 Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, my self
 Before me; woman is her name, of man
 Extracted; for this cause he shall forgo
 Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
 And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.⁶
- 500 "She heard me thus, and though divinely brought,
 Yet innocence and virgin modesty,
 Her virtue and the conscience^o of her worth *consciousness*
 That would be wooed, and not unsought be won,
 Not obvious,^o not obtrusive,^o but retired, *bold /forward*
- 505 The more desirable, or to say all,
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
 Wrought in her so that, seeing me, she turned;
 I followed her, she what was honor knew,
 And with obsequious^o majesty approved *compliant*
- 510 My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bow'r
 I led her blushing like the morn: all heav'n,
 And happy constellations on that hour
 Shed their selectest influence; the earth
 Gave sign of gratulation,^o and each hill; *rejoicing, congratulation*
- 515 Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs⁷
 Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings
 Flung rose, flung odors from the spicy shrub,
 Disporting,^o till the amorous bird of night^o *frollicking / nightingale*

4. Go to Norton Literature Online, to see the *Creation of Eve* by the Italian painter Paolo Veronese (1528-1588).

5. Compare Eve's version of these events (4.440—

91).

6. Compare the account in Genesis 2.23—24.

7. Both breezes and melodies. "Gales": winds.

Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening star^o Venus
 On his hill top, to light the bridal lamp.
 Thus I have told thee all my state, and brought
 My story to the sum of earthly bliss
 Which I enjoy, and must confess to find
 In all things else delight indeed, but such
 As used or not, works in the mind no change,
 Nor vehement desire, these delicacies
 I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flow'rs,
 Walks, and the melody of birds; but here
 Far otherwise, transported^o I behold, *enraptured*
 Transported touch; here passion first I felt,
 Commotion^o strange, in all enjoyments else *mental agitation*
 Superior and unmoved, here only weak
 Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.
 Or^o nature failed in me, and left some part *either*
 Not proof enough such object to sustain,^o *withstand*
 Or from my side subducting,^o took perhaps *subtracting*
 More than enough; at least on her bestowed
 Too much of ornament, in outward show
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.
 For well I understand in the prime end
 Of nature her th' inferior, in the mind
 And inward faculties, which most excel,
 In outward also her resembling less
 His image who made both, and less expressing
 The character of that dominion giv'n
 O'er other creatures; yet when I approach
 Her loveliness, so absolute^o she seems *perfect, independent*
 And in herself complete, so well to know
 Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
 Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best;
 All higher knowledge in her presence falls
 Degraded, wisdom in discourse with her
 Loses discount'nanced,^o and like folly shows; *disconcerted, abashed*
 Authority and reason on her wait,
 As one intended first, not after made
 Occasionally;^o and to consummate all, *incidentally*
 Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat
 Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
 About her, as a guard angelic placed."
 To whom the angel with contracted brow:
 "Accuse not nature, she hath done her part;
 Do thou but thine, and be not diffident^o *mistrustful*
 Of wisdom, she deserts thee not, if thou
 Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh,
 By attributing overmuch to things
 Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
 For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so,
 An outside? Fair no doubt, and worthy well
 Thy cherishing, thy honoring, and thy love,
 Not thy subjection: weigh with her thyself;
 Then value: oftentimes nothing profits more

Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right
 Well managed; of that skill the more thou know'st,
 The more she will acknowledge thee her head,⁸
 575 And to realities yield all her shows:
 Made so adorn for thy delight the more,
 So awful,⁰ that with honor thou may'st love *awe-inspiring*
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
 But if the sense of touch whereby mankind
 580 Is propagated seem such dear delight
 Beyond all other, think the same vouchsafed
 To cattle and each beast; which would not be
 To them made common and divulged,⁰ if aught *imparted generally*
 Therein enjoyed were worthy to subdue
 585 The soul of man, or passion in him move.
 What higher in her society thou find'st
 Attractive, human, rational, love still;
 In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
 Wherein true love consists not; love refines
 590 The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat
 In reason, and is judicious, is the scale⁹
 By which to heav'nly love thou may'st ascend,
 Not sunk in carnal pleasure, for which cause
 Among the beasts no mate for thee was found."
 595 To whom thus half abashed Adam replied.
 "Neither her outside formed so fair, nor aught
 In procreation common to all kinds
 (Though higher of the genial¹ bed by far,
 And with mysterious reverence I deem)
 600 So much delights me, as those graceful acts,
 Those thousand decencies⁰ that daily flow *fitting* *acts*
 From all her words and actions, mixed with love
 And sweet compliance, which declare unfeigned
 Union of mind, or in us both one soul;
 605 Harmony to behold in wedded pair
 More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.
 Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose
 What inward thence I feel, not therefore foiled,⁰ *overcome*
 Who meet with various objects, from the sense
 610 Variously representing;² yet still free
 Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
 To love thou blam'st me not, for love thou say'st
 Leads up to Heav'n, is both the way and guide;
 Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask;
 615 Love not the heav'nly Spirits, and how their love
 Express they, by looks only, or do they mix
 Irradiance, virtual or immediate⁰ touch?" *actual*

8. See I Corinthians 11.3: "the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."

9. The ladder of love, a Neoplatonic concept for the movement from sensual love to higher forms, and ultimately to love of God (see Castiglione's *Courtier*, p. 646).

1. Both "nuptial" and "generative." Adam takes respectful issue with the apparent denigration of human sex in Raphael's account of the Neoplatonic ladder, which prompts his question about angelic sex (lines 61 5—17).

2. I.e., various objects, variously represented to me by my senses.

- To whom the angel with a smile that glowed
 Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue,³
 620 Answered. "Let it suffice thee that thou know'st
 Us happy, and without love no happiness.
 Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st
 (And pure thou wert created) we enjoy
 In eminence,⁰ and obstacle find none *higher degree*
- 625 Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars:
 Easier than air with air, if Spirits embrace,
 Total they mix, union of pure with pure
 Desiring; nor restrained conveyance need
 As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.
- 630 But I can now no more; the parting sun
 Beyond the earth's green cape and verdant isles
 Hesperian sets,⁴ my signal to depart.
 Be strong, live happy, and love, but first of all
 Him whom to love is to obey, and keep
- 635 His great command; take heed lest passion sway
 Thy judgment to do aught, which else free will
 Would not admit;⁰ thine and of all thy sons *permit*
 The weal or woe in thee is placed; beware.
 I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
- 640 And all the blest: stand fast; to stand or fall
 Free in thine own arbitrament⁰ it lies. *determination*
 Perfect within, no outward aid require;⁰ *depend on*
 And all temptation to transgress repel."
 So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus
- 645 Followed with benediction. "Since to part,
 Go heavenly guest, ethereal messenger,
 Sent from whose sov'reign goodness I adore.
 Gentle to me and affable hath been
 Thy condescension, and shall be honored ever
- 650 With grateful memory: thou to mankind
 Be good and friendly still,⁰ and oft return." *always*
 So parted they, the angel up to Heav'n
 From the thick shade, and Adam to his bow'r.

Book 9

- No more of talk where God or angel guest
 With man, as with his friend, familiar used
 To sit indulgent, and with him partake
 Rural repast, permitting him the while
- 5 Venial⁰ discourse unblamed: I now must change *permissible*
 Those notes to tragic; foul distrust, and breach
 Disloyal on the part of man, revolt,

3. This is not likely to be an embarrassed blush: red is the color traditionally associated with Seraphim, who burn with ardor. Raphael's smile also glows with friendship for Adam and appreciation

of his perceptive inference about angelic love.
 4. Cape Verde, near Dakar, and the islands off that coast are the westernmost ("Hesperian") points of Africa.

And disobedience: on the part of Heav'n
 Now alienated, distance and distaste,⁰ *aversion*
 Anger and just rebuke, and judgment giv'n,
 That brought into this world a world of woe,
 Sin and her shadow Death, and misery
 Death's harbinger:⁰ sad task, yet argument *forerunner / subject*
 Not less but more heroic than the wrath
 Of stern Achilles on his foe pursued
 Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage
 Of Turnus for Lavinia disespoused,
 Or Neptune's ire or Juno's, that so long
 Perplexed the Greek and Cytherea's son;¹
 If answerable⁰ style I can obtain *fitting*
 Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
 Her nightly visitation unimplored,²
 And dictates to me slumb'ring, or inspires
 Easy my unpremeditated verse:
 Since first this subject for heroic song
 Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late;
 Not sedulous⁰ by nature to indite *eager*
 Wars, hitherto the only argument⁰ *subject*
 Heroic deemed, chief mastery to dissect
 With long and tedious havoc fabled knights
 In battles feigned; the better fortitude
 Of patience and heroic martyrdom
 Unsung; or to describe races and games,
 Or tilting furniture, emblazoned shields,
 Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds;
 Bases³ and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
 At joust and tournament; then marshaled feast
 Served up in hall with sewers,⁰ and seneschals;⁰ *waiters / stewards*
 The skill of artifice⁰ or office mean, *mechanic art*
 Not that which justly gives heroic name
 To person or to poem. Me of these
 Nor skilled nor studious, higher argument
 Remains,⁴ sufficient of itself to raise
 That name, unless an age too late, or cold
 Climate, or years damp my intended wing
 Depressed, and much they may, if all be mine,
 Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear.
 The sun was sunk, and after him the star

1. In this fourth proem (lines 1–47), after signaling his change from pastoral to tragic mode (lines 1–6), Milton emphasizes tragic elements in several classical epics: Achilles pursuing Hector three times around the wall of Troy before killing him (*Iliad* 22); Turnus fighting Aeneas over the loss of his betrothed Lavinia, and then killed by Aeneas; Odysseus ("the Greek") and Aeneas ("Cytherea's son," i.e., Venus's son) tormented ("perplexed") by Neptune (Poseidon) and Juno, respectively.

2. Milton does not here invoke the Muse but testifies to her customary nightly visits. Milton's nephew reports that he often awoke in the morning with lines of poetry fully formed in his head, ready

to dictate them to a scribe.

3. Cloth coverings for horses; "tilting furniture": equipment for jousting; "impresses quaint": cunningly designed heraldic devices on shields; "caparisons": ornamental trappings or armor for horses. After rejecting the classical epic subjects, Milton here rejects the familiar topics of romance.

4. For a heroic poem. He proceeds to recap worries he has voiced before: that the times might not be receptive to such poems ("age too late"), that the "cold Climate" of England or his own advanced age might "damp" (benumb, dampen) his "intended wing / Depressed" (poetic flights held down, kept from soaring).

Of Hesperus,⁵ whose office is to bring
 Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter
 'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
 Night's hemisphere had veiled the horizon round:
 When Satan who late⁶ fled⁶ before the threats *recently*
 Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improved⁰ *increased*
 In meditated fraud and malice, bent
 On man's destruction, maugre what might hap
 Of heavier on himself,⁷ fearless returned.
 By night he fled, and at midnight returned
 From compassing the earth, cautious of day,
 Since Uriel regent of the sun descried
 His entrance, and forewarned the Cherubim
 That kept their watch; thence full of anguish driv'n,
 The space of seven continued nights he rode
 With darkness, thrice the equinoctial line⁰ *equator*
 He circled, four times crossed the car of Night
 From pole to pole, traversing each colure;⁸
 On the eighth returned, and on the coast averse⁰ *turned away*
 From entrance on Cherubic watch, by stealth
 Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
 Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change,
 Where Tigris at the foot of Paradise
 Into a gulf shot underground, till part
 Rose up a fountain by the Tree of Life;
 In with the river sunk, and with it rose
 Satan involved⁰ in rising mist, then sought *enveloped*
 Where to lie hid. Sea he had searched and land
 From Eden over Pontus,⁹ and the pool
 Maeotis, up beyond the river Ob;
 Downward as far Antarctic; and in length
 West from Orontes to the ocean barred
 At Darien, thence to the land where flows
 Ganges and Indus: thus the orb he roamed
 With narrow⁰ search; and with inspection deep *strict*
 Considered every creature, which of all
 Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found
 The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.¹
 Him after long debate, irresolute⁰ *undecided*
 Of⁰ thoughts revolved, his final sentence⁰ chose *among / decision*
 Fit vessel, fittest imp⁰ of fraud, in whom *offshoot*
 To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
 From sharpest sight: for in the wily snake,
 Whatever sleights⁰ none would suspicious mark, *artifices*

5. Venus, the evening star.

6. At the end of Book 4.

7. I.e., despite ("maugre") what might result in heavier punishments for himself.

8. The colures are two great circles that intersect at right angles at the poles. By circling the globe from east to west at the equator and then over the north and south poles, Satan can remain in darkness, keeping the earth between himself and the sun. "Car of Night" (line 65): the earth's shadow,

imagined as the chariot of the goddess Night.

9. The Black Sea. Satan's journey (lines 77–82) takes him from there to the Sea of Azov in Russia ("Maeotis"), beyond the river "Ob" in Siberia, which flows into the Arctic Ocean, then south to Antarctica; thence west from "Orontes" (a river in Syria) across the Atlantic to "Darien" (the Isthmus of Panama), then across the Pacific and Asia to India where the "Ganges" and "Indus" rivers [low. 1. The serpent is so described in Genesis 3.1.

As from his wit and native subtlety
 Proceeding, which in other beasts observed
 95 Doubt" might beget of diabolic pow'r *suspicion*
 Active within beyond the sense of brute.
 Thus he resolved, but first from inward grief
 His bursting passion into plaints thus poured:
 "O earth, how like to Heav'n, if not preferred
 100 More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built
 With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
 For what God after better worse would build?
 Terrestrial heav'n, danced round by other heav'ns
 That shine, yet bear their bright officious" lamps, *dutiful*
 105 Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,²
 In thee concent'ring all their precious beams
 Of sacred influence: as God in Heav'n
 Is center, yet extends to all, so thou
 Centring receiv'st from all those orbs; in thee,
 110 Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears
 Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
 Of creatures animate with gradual life
 Of growth, sense, reason,³ all summed up in man.
 With what delight could I have walked thee round,
 us If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange
 Of hill and valley, rivers, woods and plains,
 Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crowned,
 Rocks, dens, and caves; but I in none of these
 Find place or refuge; and the more I see
 120 Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
 Torment within me, as from the hateful siege"
 Of contraries; all good to me becomes *conflict*
 Bane," and in Heav'n much worse would be my state. *poison*
 But neither here seek I, no nor in Heav'n
 125 To dwell, unless by mastering Heav'n's Supreme;
 Nor hope to be myself less miserable
 By what I seek, but others to make such
 As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
 For only in destroying I find ease
 130 To my relentless thoughts; and him⁴ destroyed,
 Or won to what may work his utter loss,
 For whom all this was made, all this will soon
 Follow, as to him linked in weal or woe:
 In woe then; that destruction wide may range:
 135 To me shall be the glory sole among
 The infernal Powers, in one day to have marred
 What he Almighty styled," six nights and days *called*
 Continued making, and who knows how long
 Before had been contriving, though perhaps
 140 Not longer than since I in one night freed
 From servitude inglorious well-nigh half

2. Like Adam (8.15ff.) and Eve (4.657-58) but not Raphael (8.114-78), Satan assumes a Ptolemaic universe centered on the earth and human-kind.

3. Graduated in steps ("gradual," line 112) from vegetable to animal to rational forms (souls); cf. 5.469-90.

4. Adam. "This" (line 132): the universe.

Th' angelic name, and thinner left the throng
 Of his adorers. He to be avenged,
 And to repair his numbers thus impaired,
 Whether such virtue⁰ spent of old now failed **power**
 More angels to create, if they at least
 Are his created, or to spite us more,
 Determined to advance into our room
 A creature formed of earth, and him endow,
 Exalted from so base original,⁰ *origin*
 With Heav'nly spoils, our spoils: what he decreed
 He effected; man he made, and for him built
 Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
 Him lord pronounced, and, O indignity!
 Subjected to his service angel wings,
 And flaming ministers to watch and tend
 Their earthy charge: of these the vigilance
 I dread, and to elude, thus wrapped in mist
 Of midnight vapor glide obscure, and pry
 In every bush and brake, where hap^o may **find** *luck*
 The serpent sleeping, in whose mazy folds
 To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
 O foul descent! that I who erst contended
 With gods to sit the highest, am now constrained
 Into a beast, and mixed with bestial slime,
 This essence to incarnate and imbrute,⁵
 That to the height of deity aspired;
 But what will not ambition and revenge
 Descend to? Who aspires must down as low
 As high he soared, obnoxious⁰ first or last *exposed*
 To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
 Bitter ere long back on itself recoils;
 Let it; I reckon⁰ not, so it light well aimed,
 Since higher I fall short, on him who next *care*
 Provokes my envy, this new favorite
 Of Heav'n, this man of clay, son of despite,
 Whom us the more to spite his Maker raised
 From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid."
 So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,
 Like a black mist low creeping, he held on
 His midnight search, where soonest he might find
 The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
 In labyrinth of many a round self-rolled,
 Flis head the midst, well stored with subtle wiles:
 Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,
 Nor nocent⁰ yet, but on the grassy herb *harmful, guilty*
 Fearless unfeared he slept: in at his mouth
 The Devil entered, and his brutal⁰ sense, *animal*
 In heart or head, possessing soon inspired
 With act intelligential: but his sleep
 Disturbed not, waiting close⁰ th' approach of morn. *hidden*

5. Satan "imbruting" himself in a snake parodies, grotesquely, the Son's incarnation in human form, as Christ.

Now whenas sacred light began to dawn
 In Eden on the humid flow'rs, that breathed
 Their morning incense, when all things that breathe,
 From th' earth's great altar send up silent praise
 To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
 With grateful⁰ smell, forth came the human pair
 And joined their vocal worship to the choir
 Of creatures wanting⁰ voice; that done, partake
 The season, prime⁰ for sweetest scents and airs:
 Then commune how that day they best may ply
 Their growing work; for much their work outgrew
 The hands' dispatch of two gard'ning so wide.
 And Eve first to her husband thus began:

*pleasing**lacking**best*

"Adam, well may we labor still⁰ to dress
 This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flow'r,
 Our pleasant task enjoined, but till more hands
 Aid us, the work under our labor grows,
 Luxurious⁰ by restraint; what we by day
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
 One night or two with wanton⁰ growth derides,
 Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise
 Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present,
 Let us divide our labors, thou where choice
 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
 The woodbine round this arbor, or direct
 The clasping ivy where to climb, while I
 In yonder spring⁰ of roses intermixed
 With myrtle, find what to redress⁰ till noon:
 For while so near each other thus all day
 Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
 Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
 Casual discourse draw on, which intermits⁰
 Our day's work brought to little, though begun
 Early, and th' hour of supper comes unearned."

*continually**luxuriant**unrestrained**growth**set upright**interrupts*

To whom mild answer Adam thus returned:
 "Sole Eve, associate sole,⁶ to me beyond
 Compare above all living creatures dear,
 Well hast thou motioned,⁰ well thy thoughts employed
 How we might best fulfill the work which here
 God hath assigned us, nor of me shalt pass
 Unpraised: for nothing lovelier can be found
 In woman, than to study household good,
 And good works in her husband to promote.⁷
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed
 Labor, as to debar us when we need
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
 Of looks and smiles, for smiles from reason flow,
 To brute denied, and are of love the food,
 Love not the lowest end of human life.

proposed

6. Adam puns on "sole" as "unrivaled" and "only" (cf. 4.411).

7. Adam's compliments resemble the praises of a good wife in Proverbs 31.

For not to irksome toil, but to delight
 He made us, and delight to reason joined.
 These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
 245 Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide
 As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
 Assist us: but if much converse perhaps
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield.
 For solitude sometimes is best society,
 250 And short retirement urges sweet return.
 But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
 Befall thee severed from me; for thou know'st
 What hath been warned us, what malicious foe
 Envyng our happiness, and of his own
 255 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame
 By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
 Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
 His wish and best advantage, us asunder,
 Hopeless to circumvent us joined, where each
 260 To other speedy aid might lend at need;
 Whether his first design be to withdraw
 Our fealty^o from God, or to disturb *allegiance*
 Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
 Enjoyed by us excites his envy more;
 265 Or^o this, or worse, leave not the faithful side *whether*
 That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects.
 The wife, where danger or dishonor lurks,
 Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
 Who guards her, or with her the worst endures."
 270 To whom the virgin⁸ majesty of Eve,
 As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
 With sweet austere composure thus replied.
 "Offspring of Heav'n and earth, and all earth's lord,
 That such an enemy we have, who seeks
 275 Our ruin, both by thee informed I learn,
 And from the parting angel overheard
 As in a shady nook I stood behind,
 Just then returned at shut of evening flow'rs.⁹
 But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
 280 To God or thee, because we have a foe
 May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
 His violence thou fear'st not, being such,
 As we, not capable of death or pain,
 Can either not receive, or can repel.
 285 His fraud is then thy fear, which plain infers
 Thy equal fear that my firm faith and love
 Can by his fraud be shaken or seduced;
 Thoughts, which how found they harbor in thy breast,
 Adam, misthought oP her to thee so dear?" *misapplied to*

8. The term here means unspotted or peerless; Milton has insisted at the end of Books 4 and 8 that Adam and Eve have sex.

9. Somewhat confusing, since Eve heard the full story of the war in Heaven and Raphael's earlier

warnings; Raphael's parting words (8.630-43) overheard by Eve do not specifically mention Satan but warn Adam to resist his passion for Eve. He does, however, reiterate the charge to obey the "great command" and repel temptation.

To whom with healing words Adam replied.
 "Daughter of God and man, immortal Eve,
 For such thou art, from sin and blame entire:⁰
 Not diffident⁰ of thee do I dissuade
 Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
 Th' attempt itself, intended by our foe.
 For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses⁰
 The tempted with dishonor foul, supposed
 Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
 Against temptation: thou thyself with scorn
 And anger wouldst resent the offered wrong,
 Though ineffectual found; misdeem not then,
 If such affront I labor to avert
 From thee alone, which on us both at once
 The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare,
 Or daring, first on me th' assault shall light.
 Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;⁰
 Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce
 Angels, nor think superfluous others' aid.
 I from the influence of thy looks receive
 Access⁰ in every virtue, in thy sight
 More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
 Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
 Shame to be overcome or overreached⁰
 Would utmost vigor raise, and raised unite.
 Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
 When I am present, and thy trial choose
 With me, best witness of thy virtue tried."
 So spake domestic Adam in his care
 And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
 Less⁰ attributed to her faith sincere,
 Thus her reply with accent sweet renewed.
 "If this be our condition, thus to dwell
 In narrow circuit straitened⁰ by a foe,
 Subtle or violent, we not endued
 Single with like defense, wherever met,
 How are we happy, still⁰ in fear of harm?
 But harm precedes not sin: only our foe
 Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem
 Of our integrity: his foul esteem
 Sticks no dishonor on our front,⁰ but turns
 Foul on himself; then wherefore shunned or feared
 By us? who rather double honor gain
 From his surmise proved false, find peace within,
 Favor from Heav'n, our witness from th' event.⁰
 And what is faith, love, virtue unassayed
 Alone, without exterior help sustained?¹
 Let us not then suspect our happy state
 Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
 As not secure to single⁰ or combined.
 Frail is our happiness, if this be so,

*untouched
distrustful**bespatters**despise**increase**outwitted**too little**confined**always**forehead**outcome**one alone*

1. Compare and contrast *Areopagitica*, p. 1816.

And Eden were no Eden thus exposed."
 To whom thus Adam fervently replied.
 "O woman, best are all things as the will
 Of God ordained them, his creating hand
345 Nothing imperfect or deficient left
 Of all that he created, much less man,
 Or aught that might his happy state secure,
 Secure from outward force; within himself
 The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
350 Against his will he can receive no harm.
 But God left free the will, for what obeys
 Reason, is free, and reason he made right,²
 But bid her well beware, and still erect,⁰ *ever-alert*
 Lest by some fair appearing good surprised
355 She dictate false, and misinform the will
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.
 Not then mistrust, but tender love enjoins,
 That I should mind^o thee oft, and mind thou me. *remind, pay heed to*
 Firm we subsist,⁰ yet possible to swerve, *stand, exist*
360 Since reason not impossibly may meet
 Some specious^o object by the foe suborned, *deceptively attractive*
 And fall into deception unaware,
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warned.
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
365 Were better, and most likely if from me
 Thou sever not: trial will come unsought.
 Wouldst thou approve^o thy constancy, approve *prove*
 First thy obedience; th' other who can know,
 Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
370 But if thou think, trial unsought may find
 Us both securer^o than thus warned thou seem'st, *overconfident*
 Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
 Go in thy native innocence, rely
 On what thou hast of virtue, summon all,
375 For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine."
 So spake the patriarch of mankind, but Eve
 Persisted, yet submissive, though last, replied:
 "With thy permission then, and thus forewarned
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
380 Touched only, that our trial, when least sought,
 May find us both perhaps far less prepared,
 The willinger I go, nor much expect
 A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;
 So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse."
385 Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
 Soft she withdrew, and like a wood nymph light³
 Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
 Betook her to the groves, but Delia's self
 In gait surpassed and goddess-like deport,⁰ *bearing*

2. Right reason, a classical concept accommodated to Christian thought, is the God-given power to apprehend truth and moral law.

3. Light-footed, with overtones of "fickle" or "friv-

olous." "Oread" (next line): a mountain nymph. "Dryad": a wood nymph. "Delia": Diana, born on the isle of Delos, hunted with a "train" of nymphs.

- 390 Though not as she with bow and quiver armed,
 But with such gardening tools as art yet rude,
 Guiltless of fire⁴ had formed, or angels brought.
 To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorned,
 Likest she seemed Pomona when she fled
- 395 Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
 Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.⁵
 Her long with ardent look his eye pursued
 Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
 Oft he to her his charge of quick return
- 400 Repeated, she to him as oft engaged
 To be returned by noon amid the bow'r,
 And all things in best order to invite
 Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
 O much deceived, much failing,⁶ hapless⁰ Eve,
- 405 Of thy presumed return! event⁰ perverse! *erring / unlucky*
 Thou never from that hour in Paradise *outcome*
 Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose;
 Such ambush hid among sweet flow'rs and shades
 Waited with hellish rancor imminent
- 410 To intercept thy way, or send thee back
 Despoiled of innocence, of faith, of bliss.
 For now, and since first break of dawn the Fiend,
 Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,
 And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
- 415 The only two of mankind, but in them
 The whole included race, his purposed prey.
 In bow'r and field he sought, where any tuft
 Of grove or garden plot more pleasant lay,
 Their tendance or plantation for delight,⁶
- 420 Ry fountain or by shady rivulet
 He sought them both, but wished his hap⁰ might *find* *luck*
 Eve separate; he wished, but not with hope
 Of what so seldom chanced, when to his wish,
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
- 425 Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
 Half spied, so thick the roses bushing round
 About her glowed, oft stooping to support
 Each flow'r of slender stalk, whose head though gay
 Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,
- 430 Hung drooping unsustained, them she upstays
 Gently with myrtle band, mindless⁰ the while, *heedless*
 Herself, though fairest unsupported flow'r
 From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.⁷
 Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed
- 435 Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm,

4. Having no experience of fire, not needed in Paradise. Milton may be alluding to the guilt of Prometheus, who stole fire from heaven.

5. These goddesses, like Eve, are associated with agriculture (lines 393—96)—Pales, with flocks and pastures; Pomona, with fruit trees; Ceres, with harvests—and the latter two foreshadow Eve's situation. Pomona was chased by the wood god

"Vertumnus" in many guises before surrendering to him; Ceres was impregnated by Jove with Proserpina—later carried off to Hades by Pluto.

6. I.e., which they had cultivated or planted for their pleasure.

7. The conceit of the flower-gatherer who is herself gathered evokes the story of Proserpina, to whom it was applied in 4.269—71.

Then voluble⁰ and bold, now hid, now seen *undulating*
 Among thick-woven arborets⁰ and flow'rs *small trees*
 Embordered on each bank, the hand⁰ of Eve: *handiwork*
 Spot more delicious than those gardens feigned
 Or^o of revived Adonis, or renowned *either*
 Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son,
 Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
 Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.⁸
 Much he the place admired, the person more.
 As one who long in populous city pent,
 Where houses thick and sewers annoy⁰ the air, *make noisome, befoul*
 Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe
 Among the pleasant villages and farms
 Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight,
 The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,⁹
 Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
 If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass,
 What pleasing seemed, for^o her now pleases more, *because of*
 She most, and in her look sums all delight.
 Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold
 This flow'ry plat,⁰ the sweet recess⁰ of Eve *plot / retreat*
 Thus early, thus alone; her heav'nly form
 Angelic, but more soft, and feminine,
 Her graceful innocence, her every air^o
 Of gesture or least action overawed
 His malice, and with rapine sweet¹ bereaved
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
 That space the Evil One abstracted⁰ stood *withdrawn*
 From his own evil, and for the time remained
 Stupidly good,⁰ of enmity disarmed, *good because stupefied*
 Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge;
 But the hot hell that always in him burns,
 Though in mid-Heav'n, soon ended his delight,
 And tortures him now more, the more he sees
 Of pleasure not for him ordained: then soon
 Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
 Of mischief gratulating,⁰ thus excites: *greeting*
 "Thoughts, whither have ye led me, with what sweet
 Compulsion thus transported to forget
 What hither brought us, hate, not love, nor hope
 Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
 Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,
 Save what is in destroying, other joy
 To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
 Occasion which now smiles, behold alone
 The woman, opportune⁰ to all attempts, *open*
 Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,

8. The gardens of Adonis were beauty spots named for the lovely youth loved by Venus, killed by a boar, and subsequently revived; Odysseus ("Laertes' son") was entertained by Alcinous in his beautiful gardens; Solomon ("the sapient king") entertained his "fair Egyptian spouse," the Queen

of Sheba, in a real garden (not "mystic," or "feigned," as the others were).

9. Cattle. "Tedded": spread out to dry, like hay.

1. From Latin *rapere*, to seize, the root of both "rape" and "rapture," underscoring the paradox of the ravisher (temporarily) ravished.

Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
 And strength, of courage haughty," and of limb *exalted*
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial" mold, *earthly*
 Foe not formidable, exempt from wound,
 I not; so much hath Hell debased, and pain
 Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heav'n.
 She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods,
 Not terrible," though terror be in love *terrifying*
 And beauty, not" approached by stronger hate, *unless*
 Hate stronger, under show of love well feigned,
 The way which to her ruin now I tend."

So spake the Enemy of mankind, enclosed
 In serpent, inmate bad, and toward Eve
 Addressed his way, not with indented" wave, *zigzag*
 Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,
 Circular base of rising folds, that tow'rd
 Fold above fold a surging maze, his head
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle" his eyes; *deep red*
 With burnished neck of verdant" gold, erect *green*
 Amidst his circling spires," that on the grass *coils*
 Floated redundant:" pleasing was his shape, *in swelling waves*
 And lovely, never since of serpent kind
 Lovelier, not those that in Ilyria changed
 Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
 In Epidaurus;² nor to which transformed
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen,
 He with Olympias, this with her who bore
 Scipio, the height of Rome.³ With tract" oblique
 At first, as one who sought access, but feared
 To interrupt, sidelong he works his way.
 As when a ship by skillful steersman wrought
 Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
 Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail;
 So varied he, and of his tortuous train"
 Curled many a wanton" wreath in sight of Eve, *twisting length*
 To lure her eye; she busied heard the sound *luxuriant, sportive*
 Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as used
 To such disport before her through the field,
 From every beast, more duteous at her call,
 Than at Circean call the herd disguised.⁴
 He bolder now, uncalled before her stood;
 But as in gaze admiring: oft he bowed
 His turret crest, and sleek enameled" neck, *multicolored*
 Fawning, and licked the ground whereon she trod.
 His gentle dumb expression turned at length
 The eye of Eve to mark his play; he glad
 Of her attention gained, with serpent tongue

2. The legendary founder of Thebes, Cadmus, and his wife Harmonia (Milton's "Hermione") were changed to serpents when they went to Ilyria in old age; Aesculapius, god of healing, sometimes came forth as a serpent from his temple in Epidaurus.

3. Jupiter Ammon ("Ammonian Jove") made love

to Olympias in the form of a snake and sired Alexander the Great; the Jupiter worshipped in Rome ("Capitoline"), also in serpent form, sired Scipio Africanus, the savior and great leader ("height") of Rome.

4. Circe, in the *Odyssey*, transformed men to beasts and was attended by an obedient herd.

Organic, or impulse of vocal air,⁵
 His fraudulent temptation thus began.

"Wonder not, sov'reign mistress, if perhaps
 Thou canst, who art sole wonder, much less arm
 Thy looks, the heav'n of mildness, with disdain,
 Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze
 Insatiate, I thus single, nor have feared
 Thy awful⁰ brow, more awful thus retired.
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
 By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore
 With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
 Where universally admired; but here
 In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,
 Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
 Half what in thee is fair, one man except,
 Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be seen
 A goddess among gods, adored and served
 By angels numberless, thy daily train."⁶

awe-inspiring

So gloz'd⁰ the Tempter, and his proem⁰ tuned;
 Into the heart of Eve his words made way,
 Though at the voice much marveling; at length
 Not unamazed she thus in answer spake.
 "What may this mean? Language of man pronounced
 By tongue of brute, and human sense expressed?
 The first at least of these I thought denied
 To beasts, whom God on their creation day
 Created mute to all articulate sound;
 The latter I demur,⁰ for in their looks
 Much reason, and in their actions oft appears.
 Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all the field
 I knew, but not with human voice endued;⁰
 Redouble then this miracle, and say,
 How cam'st thou speakable⁰ of mute, and how
 To me so friendly grown above the rest
 Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight?
 Say, for such wonder claims attention due."

flattered / prelude

hesitate about

endowed

able to speak

To whom the guileful Tempter thus replied:
 "Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve,
 Easy to me it is to tell thee all
 What thou command'st, and right thou shouldst be obeyed:
 I was at first as other beasts that graze
 The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
 As was my food, nor aught but food discerned
 Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:
 Till on a day roving the field, I chanced
 A goodly tree far distant to behold
 Loaden with fruit of fairest colors mixed,
 Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
 When from the boughs a savory odor blown,

5. Satan either used the actual tongue of the serpent or impressed the air with his own voice.

6. Satan's entire speech is couched in the extravagant praises of the Petrarchan love convention.

- 580 Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense
 Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
 Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at ev'n,⁷
 Unsucked of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
 To satisfy the sharp desire I had
- 585 Of tasting those fair apples, I resolved
 Not to defer;⁰ hunger and thirst at once, *delay*
 Powerful persuaders, quickened at the scent
 Of that alluring fruit, urged me so keen.
 About the mossy trunk I wound me soon,
- 590 For high from ground the branches would require
 Thy utmost reach or Adam's: round the tree
 All other beasts that saw, with like desire
 Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
 Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
- 595 Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
 I spared⁰ not, for such pleasure till that hour *refrained*
 At feed or fountain never had I found.
 Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
 Strange alteration in me, to degree
- 600 Of reason in my inward powers, and speech
 Wanted⁰ not long, though to this shape retained.⁸ *lacked*
 Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
 I turned my thoughts, and with capacious mind
 Considered all things visible in Heav'n,
- 605 Or earth, or middle,⁰ all things fair and good; *regions between*
 But all that fair and good in thy divine
 Semblance, and in thy beauty's heav'nly ray
 United I beheld; no fair⁰ to thine *beauty*
 Equivalent or second, which compelled
- 610 Me thus, though importune⁰ perhaps, to come *inopportune*
 And gaze, and worship thee of right declared
 Sov'reign of creatures, universal dame."⁹
 So talked the spirited' sly snake; and Eve
 Yet more amazed unwary thus replied:
- 615 "Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
 The virtue⁰ of that fruit, in thee first proved: *power*
 But say, where grows the tree, from hence how far?
 For many are the trees of God that grow
 In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
- 620 To us, in such abundance lies our choice,
 As leaves a greater store of fruit untouched,
 Still hanging incorruptible, till men
 Grow up to their provision,² and more hands
 Help to disburden nature of her birth."
- 625 To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad:

7. According to Pliny, serpents ate fennel to aid in shedding their skins and to sharpen their eyesight; folklore had it that they drank the milk of sheep and goats.

8. There is no precedent in Genesis or the interpretative tradition for Satan's powerfully persuasive argument by analogy based on the snake's supposed experience of attaining to reason and

speech by eating the forbidden fruit.

9. Satan continues his Petrarchan language of courtship.

1. Both inspired by and possessed by an evil spirit, Satan.

2. I.e., until the numbers of the human race are such as to consume the food God has provided.

"Empress, the way is ready, and not long,
 Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
 Fast by° a fountain, one small thicket past *close by*
 Of blowing myrrh and balm;³ if thou accept
 630 My conduct,⁰ I can bring thee thither soon." *guidance*
 "Lead then," said Eve. He leading swiftly rolled
 In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
 To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
 Brightens his crest, as when a wand'ring fire,⁰ *will-o'-the-wisp*
 635 Compact⁰ of unctuous⁰ vapor, which the night *composed / oily*
 Condenses, and the cold environs round,
 Kindled through agitation to a flame,
 Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,
 Flowering and blazing with delusive light,
 640 Misleads th' amazed⁰ night-wanderer from his way *bewildered*
 To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,
 There swallowed up and lost, from succor far.
 So glistered the dire snake, and into fraud
 Led Eve our credulous mother, to the tree
 645 Of prohibition, root of all our woe;
 Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake:
 "Serpent, we might have spared our coming hither,
 Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
 The credit of whose virtue⁰ rest with thee, *power*
 650 Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects.
 But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;
 God so commanded, and left that command
 Sole daughter of his voice;⁴ the rest, we live
 Law to ourselves, our reason is our law."
 655 To whom the Tempter guilefully replied:
 "Indeed? hath God then said that of the fruit
 Of all these garden trees ye shall not eat,
 Yet lords declared of all in earth or air?"
 To whom thus Eve yet sinless: "Of the fruit
 660 Of each tree in the garden we may eat,
 But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
 The garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat
 Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'"⁵
 She scarce had said, though brief, when now more bold
 665 The Tempter, but with show of zeal and love
 To man, and indignation at his wrong,
 New part puts on, and as to passion moved,
 Fluctuates disturbed, yet comely, and in act
 Raised,⁶ as of some great matter to begin.
 670 As when of old some orator renowned
 In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
 Flourished, since mute, to some great cause addressed,

3. Blooming trees that exude the aromatic gums myrrh and balm (balsam).

4. God's only direct commandment (in Hebrew, *Bath Kul*, "daughter of a voice" from heaven). Otherwise (see following), they follow the moral law of nature, known to them perfectly by their unfallen reason, "our reason is our law."

5. Eve's formulation indicates her "sufficient" understanding of the prohibition and the conditions of life in Eden. See 3.98-101.

6. Drawn up to full dignity. Satan as the snake takes on the role of a Greek or Roman orator defending liberty (lines 670-72), a Demosthenes or a Cicero.

Stood in himself collected, while each part,
 Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue,
 675 Sometimes in height began, as no delay
 Of preface brooking⁷ through his zeal of right.
 So standing, moving, or to high upgrown
 The Tempter all impassioned thus began:
 "O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,
 680 Mother of science,⁰ now I feel thy power
 Within me clear, not only to discern
 Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
 Of highest agents, deemed however wise.
 Queen of this universe, do not believe
 685 Those rigid threats of death; ye shall not die:
 How should ye? By the fruit? It gives you life
 To knowledge.⁸ By the Threat'ner? Look on me,
 Me who have touched and tasted, yet both live,
 And life more perfect have attained than fate
 690 Meant me, by vent'ring higher than my lot.
 Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
 Is open? Or will God incense his ire
 For such a petty trespass, and not praise
 Rather your dauntless virtue,⁰ whom the pain
 695 Of death denounced,⁰ whatever thing death be,
 Deterred not from achieving what might lead
 To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;
 Of good, how just?⁹ Of evil, if what is evil
 Be real, why not known, since easier shunned?
 700 God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just;
 Not just, not God; not feared then,¹ nor obeyed:
 Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
 Why then was this forbid? Why but to awe,
 Why but to keep ye low and ignorant,
 705 His worshippers; he knows that in the day
 Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear,
 Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
 Opened and cleared, and ye shall be as gods,²
 Knowing both good and evil as they know.
 710 That ye should be as gods, since I as man,
 Internal man, is but proportion meet,
 I of brute human, ye of human gods.³
 So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
 Human, to put on gods, death to be wished,
 715 Though threatened, which no worse than this can bring.
 And what are gods that man may not become
 As they, participating⁰ godlike food?
 The gods are first, and that advantage use

*before speaking**knowledge**courage
threatened**partaking of*

7. Bursting into the middle of his speech without a preface, and "upgrown" to the impassioned high style ("high") at once (lines 675-78).

8. I.e., life as well as knowledge, and a better life enhanced by knowledge, which Satan in the snake presents as a magical property of the tree.

9. I.e., how can it be just to forbid the knowledge of good?

1. Satan's sophism invites atheism: if God forbids knowledge of good and evil he is not just, therefore not God, therefore his threat of death need not be feared.

2. Hereafter, Satan speaks of "gods," not God.

3. Satan invites the aspiration to divinity, based on analogy to the supposed experience of the snake.

On our belief, that all from them proceeds;
 720 I question it, for this fair earth I see,
 Warmed by the sun, producing every kind,
 Them nothing: if they all^o things, who enclosed *produce all*
 Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
 That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains
 725 Wisdom without their leave? And wherein lies
 Th' offense, that man should thus attain to know?
 What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
 Impart against his will if all be his?
 Or is it envy, and can envy dwell
 730 In heav'nly breasts? These, these and many more
 Causes import^o your need of this fair fruit. *prove*
 Goddess humane,⁴ reach then, and freely taste."
 He ended, and his words replete with guile
 Into her heart too easy entrance won:
 735 Fixed on the fruit she gazed, which to behold
 Might tempt alone, and in her ears the sound
 Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregnated^o *impregnated*
 With reason, to her seeming, and with truth;
 Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and waked
 740 An eager appetite, raised by the smell
 So savory of that fruit, which with desire,
 Inclinal now grown to touch or taste,
 Solicited her longing eye; yet first
 Pausing a while, thus to herself she mused:
 745 "Great are thy virtues,^o doubtless, best of fruits, *powers*
 Though kept from man, and worthy to be admired,
 Whose taste, too long forborne, at first assay^o *try*
 Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
 The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise:
 750 Thy praise he also who forbids thy use,
 Conceals not from us, naming thee the Tree
 Of Knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
 Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding
 Commends thee more, while it infers^o the good *implies*
 755 By thee communicated, and our want:^o *lack*
 For good unknown, sure is not had, or had
 And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
 In plain^o then, what forbids he but to know, *in plain words*
 Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
 760 Such prohibitions bind not. But if death
 Bind us with after-bands,^o what profits then *later bonds*
 Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
 Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die.
 How dies the serpent? He hath eat'n and lives,
 765 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

4. Both "human" and "gracious" or "kindly."

Hath tasted, envies⁰ not, but brings with joy
 The good befall'n him, author unsuspect,⁵
 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 virtue⁰ 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.⁶
 Earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat
 Sighing through all her works gave signs of woe,
 That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
 The guilty serpent, and well might, for Eve
 Intent now wholly on her taste, naught else
 Regarded, such delight till then, as seemed,
 In fruit she never tasted, whether true
 Or fancied so, through expectation high
 Of knowledge, nor was godhead from her thought.
 Greedily she engorged without restraint.
 And knew not eating death:⁷ satiate at length,
 And heightened as with wine, jocund⁰ and boon,⁰
 Thus to herself she pleasingly began:

"O sov'reign, virtuous, precious of all trees
 In Paradise, of operation blest
 To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed,⁸
 And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
 Created; but henceforth my early care,
 Not without song, each morning, and due praise
 Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
 Of thy full branches offered free to all;
 Till dieted by thee I grow mature
 In knowledge, as the gods who all things know;
 Though others envy what they cannot give;
 For had the gift been theirs,⁹ it had not here
 Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
 Best guide; not following thee, I had remained
 In ignorance, thou open'st wisdom's way,
 And giv'st access, though secret⁰ she retire.
 And I perhaps am secret;⁰ Heav'n is high,
 High and remote to see from thence distinct
 Each thing on earth; and other care perhaps
 May have diverted from continual watch
 Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies
 About him. But to Adam in what sort⁰
 Shall I appear? Shall I to him make known

*begrudges**power**merry/jolly**hidden
unseen**guise*

5. An authority or informant beyond suspicion.

6. Ate: an accepted past tense, pronounced *et*.

7. I.e., she is eating death and doesn't know it, or experience it yet, but also, punning, death is eating her too.

8. Slandered. "Sapience": both knowledge and tasting (Latin *sapere*).

9. Like Satan, Eve now conflates gods and God, ascribing envy but also lack of power to "them."

As yet my change, and give him to partake
 Full happiness with me, or rather not,
 But keep the odds⁰ of knowledge in my power *advantage*
 Without copartner? so to add what wants⁰ *lacks*
 In female sex, the more to draw his love,
 And render me more equal, and perhaps,
 A thing not undesirable, sometime
 Superior; for inferior who is free?¹
 This may be well: but what if God have seen,
 And death ensue? Then I shall be no more,
 And Adam wedded to another Eve,
 Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
 A death to think. Confirmed then I resolve,
 Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
 So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
 I could endure, without him live no life."
 So saying, from the tree her step she turned,
 But first low reverence done, as to the power
 That dwelt within,² whose presence had infused *knowledge-producing*
 Into the plant sciential⁰ sap, derived
 From nectar, drink of gods. Adam the while
 Waiting desirous her return, had wove
 Of choicest flow'rs a garland to adorn
 Her tresses, and her rural labors crown,
 As reapers oft are wont⁰ their harvest queen. *accustomed*
 Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new
 Solace in her return, so long delayed;
 Yet oft his heart, divine of³ something ill, *foreboding*
 Misgave him; he the falt'ring measure⁰ felt; *heartbeat*
 And forth to meet her went, the way she took
 That morn when first they parted; by the Tree
 Of Knowledge he must pass; there he her met,
 Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand
 A bough of fairest fruit that downy smiled,
 New gathered, and ambrosial⁰ smell diffused. *fragrant*
 To him she hasted, in her face excuse
 Came prologue,³ and apology to prompt,
 Which with bland⁰ words at will she thus addressed. *mild, coaxing*
 "Hast thou not wondered, Adam, at my stay?
 Thee I have missed, and thought it long, deprived
 Thy presence, agony of love till now
 Not felt, nor shall be twice, for never more
 Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought,
 The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
 Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear:
 This tree is not as we are told, a tree
 Of danger tasted,⁰ nor to evil unknown *if tasted*
 Op'ning the way, but of divine effect
 To open eyes, and make them gods who taste;

1. Cf. Satan, 1.248-63, 5.790-97.

2. Eve ends with idolatry, worship of the tree.

3. I.e., excuse came like the prologue in a play.

and apology (justification, self-defense) served as prompter.

And hath been tasted such: the serpent wise,
 Or^o not restrained as we, or not obeying, *either*
 Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
 Not dead, as we are threatened, but thenceforth
 Endued with human voice and human sense,
 Reasoning to admiration,^o and with me *wonderfully well*
 Persuasively^o hath so prevailed, that I *by-persuasion*
 Have also tasted, and have also found
 Th' effects to correspond, opener mine eyes,
 Dim erst,^o dilated spirits, ampler heart, *before*
 And growing up to godhead; which for thee
 Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
 For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss,
 Tedious, unshared with thee, and odious soon.
 Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
 May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
 Lest thou not tasting, different degree^o *rank*
 Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
 Deity for thee, when fate will not permit."⁴
 Thus Eve with count'nance blithe her story told;
 But in her cheek distemper⁵ flushing glowed.
 On th' other side, Adam, soon as he heard
 The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed,^o *stunned*
 Astonied^o stood and blank, while horror chill *petrified*
 Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed;
 From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve
 Down dropped, and all the faded roses shed:
 Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
 First to himself he inward silence broke:
 "O fairest of creation, last and best
 Of all God's works, creature in whom excelled
 Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,
 Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
 How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost,
 Defaced, deflow'ed, and now to death devote?^o *doomed*
 Rather how hast thou yielded to transgress
 The strict forbiddance, how to violate
 The sacred^o fruit forbidd'n! Some cursed fraud *consecrated*
 Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown,
 And me with thee hath ruined, for with thee
 Certain my resolution is to die;
 How can I live without thee, how forgo
 Thy sweet converse and love so dearly joined,
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn?
 Should God create another Eve, and I
 Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
 Would never from my heart; no no, I feel
 The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
 Bone of my bone thou art,⁶ and from thy state
 Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe."

4. Compare Eve in soliloquy, lines 817—33.

5. I.e., disorder arising from disturbance of the

balance of humors in the body, intoxication.

6. Adam echoes Genesis 2.23—24.

So having said, as one from sad dismay
 Recomforted, and after thoughts disturbed
 Submitting to what seemed remediless,
 920 Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turned:
 "Bold deed thou hast presumed, advent'rous Eve,
 And peril great provoked, who thus hast dared
 Had it been only coveting to eye
 That sacred fruit, sacred⁰ to abstinence, *set apart*
 925 Much more to taste it under ban to touch.
 But past who can recall, or done undo?
 Not God omnipotent, nor fate; yet so
 Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact⁰ *deed*
 Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
 930 Profaned first by the serpent, by him first
 Made common and unhallowed ere our taste;
 Nor yet on him found deadly, he yet lives,
 Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live as man
 Higher degree of life, inducement strong
 935 To us, as likely tasting to attain
 Proportional ascent, which cannot be
 But to be gods, or angels demigods.
 Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
 Though threat'ning, will in earnest so destroy
 940 Us his prime creatures, dignified so high,
 Set over all his works, which in our fall,
 For us created, needs with us must fail,
 Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
 Be frustrate, do, undo, and labor lose,
 945 Not well conceived of God, who though his power
 Creation could repeat, yet would be loath
 Us to abolish, lest the Adversary⁰ *Satan*
 Triumph and say; 'Fickle their state whom God
 Most favors, who can please him long? Me first
 950 He ruined, now mankind; whom will he next?'
 Matter of scorn, not to be given the Foe.
 However I with thee have fixed my lot,
 Certain⁰ to undergo like doom; if death
 Consort⁰ with thee, death is to me as life; *resolved*
 955 So forcible within my heart I feel
 The bond of nature draw me to my own,
 My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
 Our state cannot be severed, we are one,
 One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself."
 960 So Adam, and thus Eve to him replied:
 "O glorious trial of exceeding⁷ love,
 Illustrious evidence, example high!
 Engaging me to emulate, but short
 Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
 965 Adam, from whose dear side I boast me sprung,
 And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
 One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof

7. The word, which Eve intends as praise, carries the implication of "excessive."

This day affords, declaring thee resolved,
 Rather than death or aught⁰ than death more dread *anything other*
 Shall separate us, linked in love so dear,
 To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
 If any be, of tasting this fair fruit,
 Whose virtue,⁰ for of good still good proceeds, *power*
 Direct, or by occasion⁰ hath presented *indirectly*
 This happy trial of thy love, which else
 So eminently never had been known.
 Were it⁰ I thought death menaced would ensue⁰ *if/ residtfrom*
 This my attempt, I would sustain alone
 The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die
 Deserted, than oblige⁰ thee with a fact⁰ *hind/deed*
 Pernicious to thy peace, chiefly assured
 Remarkably so late of thy so true,
 So faithful love unequaled;⁸ but I feel
 Far otherwise th' event,⁰ not death, but life *result*
 Augmented, opened eyes, new hopes, new joys,
 Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
 Hath touched my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
 On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
 And fear of death deliver to the winds."
 So saying, she embraced him, and for joy
 Tenderly wept, much won that he his love
 Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
 Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
 In recompense (for such compliance bad
 Such recompense best merits) from the bough
 She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
 With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat
 Against his better knowledge, not deceived,⁹
 But fondly⁰ overcome with female charm. *foolishly*
 Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
 In pangs, and nature gave a second groan;
 Sky loured, and muttering thunder, some sad drops
 Wept at completing of the mortal sin
 Original;¹ while Adam took no thought,
 Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate⁰ *repeat*
 Her former trespass feared, the more to soothe
 Him with her loved society, that now
 As with new wine intoxicated both
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
 Divinity within them breeding wings
 Wherewith to scorn the earth: but that false fruit
 Far other operation first displayed,
 Carnal desire inflaming, he on Eve
 Began to cast lascivious eyes, she him
 As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn:

8. I.e., since I have so recently been assured of your unparalleled love.

9. Cf. 1 Timothy 2:14: "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."

1. The theological doctrine that all Adam's descendants are stained by Adam's sin and are thereby subject to physical death and (unless saved by grace) to damnation.

Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move:

"Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
 And elegant, of sapience² no small part,
 Since to each meaning savor we apply,
 And palate call judicious; I the praise
 Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purveyed.⁰
 Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstained
 From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
 True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
 In things to us forbidden, it might be wished,
 For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
 But come, so well refreshed, now let us play,
 As meet⁰ is, after such delicious fare;
 For never did thy beauty since the day
 I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorned
 With all perfections, so inflame my sense
 With ardor to enjoy thee, fairer now
 Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree."

provided

appropriate

So said he, and forbore not glance or toy^o
 Of amorous intent, well understood
 Of^o Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
 Her hand he seized, and to a shady bank,
 Thick overhead with verdant roof embow'ed
 He led her nothing loath; flow'rs were the couch,
 Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
 And hyacinth, earth's freshest softest lap.
 There they their fill of love and love's disport
 Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
 The solace of their sin, till dewy sleep
 Oppressed them, wearied with their amorous play.
 Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
 That with exhilarating vapor bland⁰
 About their spirits had played, and inmost powers
 Made err, was now exhaled, and grosser sleep
 Bred of unkindly fumes,⁰ with conscious dreams
 Encumbered,⁰ now had left them, up they rose
 As from unrest, and each the other viewing,
 Soon found their eyes how opened, and their minds
 How darkened; innocence, that as a veil
 Had shadowed them from knowing ill, was gone,
 Just confidence, and native righteousness,
 And honor from about them, naked left
 To guilty shame: he^o covered, but his robe
 Uncovered more. So rose the Danite strong
 Herculean Samson from the harlot-lap
 Of Philistean Dalilah, and waked
 Shorn of his strength,³ they destitute and bare
 Of all their virtue: silent, and in face
 Confounded long they sat, as stricken mute,

caress

by

pleasing

*unnatural vapors
 oppressed*

shame

2. Adam commends Eve for her fine ("exact") and discriminating ("elegant") taste, as a part of "sapience," which means both "taste" and "wisdom."

3. Samson, of the tribe of Dan, told the "harlot"

Philistine Delilah that the secret of his strength (like that of Hercules) lay in his hair; she sheared it off while he slept, and when he awoke he was easily captured and blinded by his enemies.

1065 Till Adam, though not less than Eve abashed,
 At length gave utterance to these words constrained:⁰ *forced*

"O Eve, in evil⁴ hour thou didst give ear
 To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
 To counterfeit man's voice, true in our fall,
 1070 False in our promised rising; since our eyes
 Opened we find indeed, and find we know
 Both good and evil, good lost and evil got,⁵
 Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,
 Which leaves us naked thus, of honor void,
 1075 Of innocence, of faith, of purity,
 Our wonted⁰ ornaments now soiled and stained, *accustomed*
 And in our faces evident the signs
 Of foul concupiscence;⁶ whence evil store;
 Even shame, the last of evils; of the first
 1080 Be sure then. How shall I behold the face
 Henceforth of God or angel, erst with joy
 And rapture so oft beheld? Those heav'nly shapes
 Will dazzle now this earthly, with their blaze
 Insufferably bright. O might I here
 loss In solitude live savage, in some glade
 Obscured, where highest woods impenetrable
 To star or sunlight, spread their umbrage⁰ broad, *shadow, foliage*
 And brown as evening: cover me ye pines,
 Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
 1090 Hide me, where I may never see them more.
 But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
 What best may for the present serve to hide
 The parts of each from other, that seem most
 To shame obnoxious,⁰ and unseemliest seen, *exposed*

1095 Some tree whose broad smooth leaves together sewed,
 And girded on our loins, may cover round
 Those middle parts, that this newcomer, shame,
 There sit not, and reproach us as unclean."
 So counseled he, and both together went
 1100 Into the thickest wood, there soon they chose
 The fig tree,⁷ not that kind for fruit renowned,
 But such as at this day to Indians known
 In Malabar or Deccan spreads her arms
 Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
 1105 The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
 About the mother tree, a pillared shade
 High overarched, and echoing walks between;
 There oft the Indian herdsman shunning heat
 Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
 1110 At loopholes cut through thickest shade: those leaves

4. Adam's bitter pun—Eve, evil—repudiates the actual etymology of Eve, "life," which Adam will later reaffirm (11.159-61).

5. Milton, like most commentators, derives the tree's name from the event (4.222, 11.84-89).

6. The theological term for the unruly human passions and desires seen as one effect of the Fall, a sign of abundance ("store") of evils. If "shame" (see

following lines) is the "last" evil, the "first" is probably the guiltiness that produces it, according to Milton's *Christian Doctrine* (1.12).

7. The banyan, or Indian fig, has small leaves, but the account Milton draws on from Gerard's *Herbal* (1597) contains the details of lines 1104-11; Malabar and Deccan (line 1103) are in southern India.

They gathered, broad as Amazonian targe,⁰ *shields*
 And with what skill they had, together sewed,
 To gird their waist, vain covering if to hide
 Their guilt and dreaded shame. O how unlike
 1115 To that first naked glory. Such of late
 Columbus found th' American so girt
 With feathered cincture,⁰ naked else and wild, *belt*
 Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
 Thus fenced, and as they thought, their shame in part
 1120 Covered, but not at rest or ease of mind,
 They sat them down to weep, nor only tears
 Rained at their eyes, but high winds worse within
 Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
 Mistrust, suspicion, discord, and shook sore
 ii25 Their inward state of mind, calm region once
 And full of peace, now tossed and turbulent:
 For understanding ruled not, and the will
 Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
 To sensual appetite, who from beneath
 1130 Usurping over sov'reign reason claimed
 Superior sway: from thus distempered breast,⁸
 Adam, estranged⁰ in look and altered style,
 Speech intermitted⁰ thus to Eve renewed: *unlike himself*
 "Would thou hadst hearkened to my words, and stayed *interrupted*
 1135 With me, as I besought thee, when that strange
 Desire of wand'ring this unhappy morn,
 I know not whence possessed thee; we had then
 Remained still happy, not as now, despoiled
 Of all our good, shamed, naked, miserable.
 1140 Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve⁰ *prove*
 The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
 Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail."
 To whom soon moved with touch of blame thus Eve:
 i 145 "What words have passed thy lips, Adam severe,
 Imput'st thou that to my default, or will
 Of wand'ring, as thou call'st it, which who knows
 But might as ill have happened thou being by,
 Or to thyself perhaps: hadst thou been there,
 Or here th' attempt, thou couldst not have discerned
 1150 Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake;
 No ground of enmity between us known,
 Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
 Was I to have never parted from thy side?
 As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
 1155 Being as I am, why didst not thou the head
 Command me absolutely not to go,
 Going into such danger as thou saidst?
 Too facile⁰ then thou didst not much gainsay,⁰ *easy, mild / oppose*
 Nay didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
 ii60 Hadst thou been firm and fixed in thy dissent,

8. The immediate psychological effects of the Fall are evident in the subjection of reason to the lower faculties of sensual appetite.

Neither had I transgressed, nor thou with me."
 To whom then first incensed Adam replied.
 "Is this the love, is this the recompense
 Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, expressed⁰ *demonstrated*
 ii65 Immutable when thou wert lost, not I,
 Who might have lived and joyed immortal bliss,
 Yet willingly chose rather death with thee:
 And am I now upbraided, as the cause
 Of thy transgressing? not enough severe,
 1170 It seems, in thy restraint: what could I more?
 I warned thee, I admonished thee, foretold
 The danger, and the lurking enemy
 That lay in wait; beyond this had been force,
 And force upon free will hath here no place.
 ii75 But confidence then bore thee on, secure⁰ *self-assured*
 Either to meet no danger, or to find
 Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
 I also erred in overmuch admiring
 What seemed in thee so perfect, that I thought
 ii80 No evil durst attempt thee, but I rue
 That error now, which is become my crime,
 And thou th' accuser. Thus it shall befall
 Him who to worth in women overtrusting
 Lets her will rule; restraint she will not brook,⁰ *accept*
 ii85 And left to herself, if evil thence ensue,
 She first his weak indulgence will accuse."
 Thus they in mutual accusation spent
 The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
 And of their vain contest appeared no end.

Book 10

Meanwhile the heinous and spiteful act
 Of Satan done in Paradise, and how
 He in the serpent had perverted Eve,
 Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
 5 Was known in Heav'n; for what can scape the eye
 Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
 Omniscient, who in all things wise and just,
 Hindered not Satan to attempt the mind
 Of man, with strength entire, and free will armed,
 10 Complete⁰ to have discovered and repulsed *fully equipped*
 Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
 For still they knew, and ought to have still⁰ remembered *always*
 The high injunction not to taste that fruit,
 Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,
 15 Incurred, what could they less, the penalty,
 And manifold in sin, deserved to fall.
 Up into Heav'n from Paradise in haste
 Th' angelic guards ascended, mute and sad
 For man, for of his state by this⁰ they knew, *this time*

Much wond'ring how the subtle Fiend had stol'n
 Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news
 From earth arrived at Heaven gate, displeas'd
 All were who heard, dim sadness did not spare
 That time celestial visages, yet mixed
 With pity, violated not their bliss.
 About the new-arrived, in multitudes
 Th' ethereal people ran, to hear and know
 How all befell: they towards the throne supreme
 Accountable made haste to make appear
 With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance,
 And easily approv'd;¹ when the Most High
 Eternal Father from his secret cloud,
 Amidst in thunder uttered thus his voice:

"Assembled Angels, and ye Powers returned
 From unsuccessful charge, be not dismay'd,
 Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,
 Which your sincerest care could not prevent,
 Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
 When first this tempter crossed the gulf from Hell.
 I told ye then he should prevail and speed⁰
 On his bad errand, man should be seduced
 And flattered out of all, believing lies
 Against his Maker; no decree of mine
 Concurring to necessitate his fall,
 Or touch with lightest moment² of impulse
 His free will, to her own inclining left
 In even scale. But fall'n he is, and now
 What rests,⁰ but that the mortal sentence pass
 On his transgression, death denounced⁰ that day,
 Which he presumes already vain and void,
 Because not yet inflicted, as he feared,
 By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find
 Forbearance no acquittance ere day end.³
 Justice shall not return as bounty scorn'd.
 But whom send I to judge them? Whom but thee
 Vicegerent Son, to thee I have transferred
 All judgment, whether in Heav'n, or earth, or Hell.⁴
 Easy it may be seen that I intend
 Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee
 Man's friend, his mediator, his designed
 Both ransom and redeemer voluntary,
 And destined man himself to judge man fall'n."

So spake the Father, and unfolding bright
 Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
 Blaz'd forth unclouded deity; he full
 Resplendent all his Father manifest
 Expressed, and thus divinely answer'd mild:

succeed

*remains
decreed*

1. The angels, "accountable" for guarding Eden, rush to God's throne to explain that they had exercised "utmost vigilance"; their plea is readily accepted ("easily approved").

2. The smallest weight that would tip the scales.

3. A proverb: "Abstinence from enforcing a debt is not release from it." Next line: My justice must not be scorn'd as my generosity has been.

4. Cf. John 5.22: "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."

"Father Eternal, thine is to decree,
 Mine both in Heav'n and earth to do thy will
 Supreme, that thou in me thy Son beloved
 May'st ever rest well pleased. I go to judge
 On earth these thy transgressors; but thou know'st,
 Whoever judged, the worst on me must light,
 When time shall be, for so I undertook
 Before thee; and not repenting, this obtain
 Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
 On me derived,⁰ yet I shall temper so
 Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most⁰ *diverted*
 Them fully satisfied, and thee appease. *best show*
 Attendance none shall need, nor train,⁰ where none *attendants*
 Are to behold the judgment, but the judged,
 Those two; the third best absent is condemned,
 Convict⁰ by flight, and rebel to all law: *proved guilty*
 Conviction to the serpent none belongs."
 Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose
 Of high collateral⁰ glory: him Thrones and Powers, *placed side by side*
 Princedoms, and Dominations ministrant
 Accompanied to Heaven gate, from whence
 Eden and all the coast⁰ in prospect lay. *region*
 Down he descended straight; the speed of gods
 Time counts not,⁵ though with swiftest minutes winged.
 Now was the sun in western cadence⁰ low *falling*
 From noon, and gentle airs due at their hour
 To fan the earth now waked, and usher in
 The evening cool, when he from wrath more cool
 Came the mild Judge and Intercessor both
 To sentence man: the voice of God they heard
 Now walking in the garden, by soft winds
 Brought to their ears, while day declined; they heard,
 And from his presence hid themselves among
 The thickest trees, both man and wife, till God
 Approaching, thus to Adam called aloud.
 "Where art thou Adam, wont⁰ with joy to meet *used before*
 My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
 Not pleased, thus entertained with solitude,
 Where obvious duty erewhile appeared unsought:
 Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
 Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth."
 He came, and with him Eve, more loath, though first
 To offend, discount'nanced both, and discomposed;
 Love was not in their looks, either to God
 Or to each other, but apparent⁰ guilt, *easily seen*
 And shame, and perturbation, and despair,
 Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.
 Whence Adam falt'ring long, thus answered brief:
 "I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice
 Afraid, being naked, hid myself." To whom

5. The Son's descent is immediate; Raphael had taken much of the morning to travel from Heaven to earth (8.110-14).

The gracious Judge without revile" replied: *abuse*
 "My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not feared,
 120 But still" rejoiced, how is it now become *always*
 So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who
 Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree
 Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?"
 To whom thus Adam sore beset replied.
 125 "O Heav'n! in evil strait this day I stand
 Before my Judge, either to undergo
 Myself the total crime, or to accuse
 My other self, the partner of my life;
 Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
 130 I should conceal, and not expose to blame
 By my complaint; but strict necessity
 Subdues me, and calamitous constraint,
 Lest on my head both sin and punishment,
 However insupportable, be all
 135 Devolved;" though should I hold my peace, yet thou *fallen on*
 Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.
 This woman whom thou mad'st to be my help,
 And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,
 So fit, so acceptable, so divine,
 140 That from her hand I could suspect no ill,
 And what she did, whatever in itself,
 Her doing seemed to justify the deed;
 She gave me of the tree, and I did eat."⁶
 To whom the Sov'reign Presence thus replied.
 145 "Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
 Before his voice, or was she made thy guide,
 Superior, or but equal, that to her
 Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
 Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
 150 And for thee,⁷ whose perfection far excelled
 Hers in all real dignity: adorned
 She was indeed, and lovely to attract
 Thy love, not thy subjection, and her gifts
 Were such as under government well seemed,
 155 Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part
 And person,⁸ hadst thou known thyself aright."
 So having said, he thus to Eve in few" *few words*
 "Say woman, what is this which thou hast done?"
 To whom sad Eve with shame nigh overwhelmed,
 160 Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge
 Bold or loquacious, thus abashed replied:
 "The serpent me beguiled and I did eat."
 Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
 To judgment he proceeded on th' accused
 165 Serpent though brute, unable to transfer

6. Compare Adam's speech in Genesis 3.12, and the elements Milton adds of complaint, veiled accusation of God, and self-exculpation; also compare Eve's answer in Genesis 3.13 and in lines 159-62 below.

7. Cf. 1 Corinthians 11.8-9: "For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man. / Neither was the man created for the woman; but the woman for the man."

8. Role and character (persona), as in a drama.

The guilt on him who made him instrument
 Of mischief, and polluted from the end⁰ *purpose*
 Of his creation; justly then accursed,
 As vitiated in nature:⁹ more to know
 170 Concerned not man (since he no further knew)
 Nor altered his offense; yet God at last
 To Satan first in sin his doom applied,
 Though in mysterious terms, judged as then best:
 And on the serpent thus his curse let fall.
 175 "Because thou hast done this, thou art accursed
 Above all cattle, each beast of the field;
 Upon thy belly groveling thou shalt go,
 And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.
 Between thee and the woman I will put
 180 Enmity, and between thine and her Seed;
 Her Seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel."¹
 So spake this oracle, then verified
 When Jesus son of Mary second Eve,
 Saw Satan fall like lightning down from Heav'n,²
 185 Prince of the air; then rising from his grave
 Spoiled Principalities and Powers, triumphed
 In open show, and with ascension bright
 Captivity led captive through the air,
 The realm itself of Satan long usurped,
 190 Whom he shall tread at last under our feet;
 Ev'n he who now foretold his fatal bruise,
 And to the woman thus his sentence turned.
 "Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
 By thy conception; children thou shalt bring
 195 In sorrow forth, and to thy husband's will
 Thine shall submit, he over thee shall rule."
 On Adam last thus judgment he pronounced.
 "Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife,
 And eaten of the tree concerning which
 200 I charged thee, saying: Thou shalt not eat thereof,
 Cursed is the ground for thy sake, thou in sorrow
 Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life;
 Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
 Unbid, and thou shalt eat th' herb of the field,
 205 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,
 Till thou return unto the ground, for thou
 Out of the ground wast taken: know thy birth,
 For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return."
 So judged he man, both judge and savior sent,
 210 And th' instant stroke of death denounced⁰ that day *announced*
 Removed far off; then pitying how they stood

9. The serpent was "unable to transfer" (line 165) his own guilt in being "polluted" from his proper end and nature onto Satan, who made him "instrument," so he was "justly . . . accursed," but the terms of that judgment have a "mysterious" (line 173) or hidden meaning that applies to Satan.

1. This is the so-called protoevangelion or judgment of the Serpent (Satan) that contains at the

same time the promise of the Redeemer ("her Seed"); Adam and Eve are led to understand it by degrees.

2. Cf. Christ's comment to his disciples (Luke 10:18: "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven"), and also Colossians 2.1 5 and Ephesians 4.8, to the following lines, 185-88.

Before him naked to the air, that now
 Must suffer change, disdained not to begin
 Thenceforth the form of servant to assume,
 As when he washed his servants' feet,³ so now
 As father of his family he clad
 Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or^o slain, *either*
 Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid;
 And thought not much" to clothe his enemies: *too much*
 Nor he their outward only with the skins
 Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
 Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness,
 Arraying covered from his Father's sight.
 To him with swift ascent he up returned,
 Into his blissful bosom reassumed
 In glory as of old, to him appeased
 All, though all-knowing, what had passed with man
 Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.
 Meanwhile ere thus was sinned and judged on earth,
 Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death,
 In counterview within the gates, that now
 Stood open wide, belching outrageous" flame *unrestrained*
 Far into Chaos, since the Fiend passed through,
 Sin opening, who thus now to Death began:
 "O son, why sit we here each other viewing
 Idly, while Satan our great author^o thrives *father*
 In other worlds, and happier seat provides
 For us his offspring dear? It cannot be,
 But that success attends him; if mishap,
 Ere this he had returned, with fury driv'n
 By his avengers, since no place like^o this *as well as*
 Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
 Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
 Wings growing, and dominion giv'n me large
 Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on,
 Or sympathy, or some connatural force
 Powerful at greatest distance to unite
 With secret amity things of like kind
 By secretest conveyance.⁴ Thou my shade
 Inseparable must with me along:
 For Death from Sin no power can separate.
 But lest the difficulty of passing back
 Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
 Impassable, impervious,^o let us try *impenetrable*
 Advent'rous work, yet to thy power and mine
 Not unagreeable, to found^o a path *establish*
 Over this main from Hell to that new world
 Where Satan now prevails, a monument
 Of merit high to all th' infernal host,
 Easing their passage hence, for intercourse,^o *passing back and forth*

3. Cf. Philippians 2.7: "[Christ] took upon him the form of a servant"; John 13.5: "he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet."

4. Sin feels an attraction ("sympathy") drawing two things together, or an innate ("connatural") force, linking her to Satan.

Or transmigration,⁰ as their lot shall lead. *emigration*
 Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
 By this new-felt attraction and instinct."
 Whom thus the meager⁰ shadow answered soon: *emaciated*
 "Go whither fate and inclination strong
 Leads thee, I shall not lag behind, nor err
 The way, thou leading, such a scent I draw
 Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
 The savor of death from all things there that live:
 Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest
 Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid."
 So saying, with delight he snuffed the smell
 Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
 Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
 Against⁰ the day of battle, to a field, *anticipating*
 Where armies lie encamped, come flying, lured
 With scent of living carcasses designed⁰ *marked out*
 For death, the following day, in bloody fight.
 So scented the grim feature,⁰ and upturned
 His nostril wide into the murky air,
 Sagacious⁰ of his quarry from so far. *keenly smelling, wise*
 Then both from out Hell gates into the waste
 Wide anarchy of Chaos damp and dark
 Flew diverse,⁰ and with power (their power was great) *in different directions*
 Hovering upon the water, what they met
 Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
 Tossed up and down, together crowded drive
 From each side shoaling⁰ towards the mouth of Hell. *assembling*
 As when two polar winds blowing adverse
 Upon the Cronian Sea,⁵ together drive
 Mountains of ice, that stop th' imagined way
 Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich
 Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil
 Death with his mace petrific,⁶ cold and dry,
 As with a trident smote, and fixed as firm
 As Delos floating once; the rest his look
 Bound with Gorgonian rigor not to move,⁷
 And with asphaltic slime;⁰ broad as the gate, *pitch*
 Deep to the roots of Hell the gathered beach
 They fastened, and the mole⁰ immense wrought on *pier*
 Over the foaming deep high-arched, a bridge
 Of length prodigious joining to the wall⁰ *outer shell*
 Immovable of this now fenceless world
 Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,
 Smooth, easy, inoffensive⁰ down to Hell. *free from obstacle*
 So, if great things to small may be compared,
 Xerxes,⁸ the liberty of Greece to yoke,

5. The Arctic Ocean; the "imagined way" (lines 291-93) is the Northeast Passage to North China ("Cathay") from Pechora ("Petsora"), a river in Siberia, which Henry Hudson could only imagine (in 1608) because it was blocked with ice.

6. Turning things to stone.

7. Anything the Gorgon Medusa looked upon

turned to stone. Death's materials are the "cold and dry" elements; his mace is associated with Neptune's "trident," which was said to have "fixed" the floating Greek island of Delos.

8. The Persian king Xerxes ordered the sea whipped when it destroyed the bridge of ships he built over the Hellespont (linking Europe and Asia)

From Susa his Memnonian palace high
 Came to the sea, and over Hellespont
 Bridging his way, Europe with Asia joined,
 And scourged with many a stroke th' indignant waves.
 Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
 Pontifical,⁹ a ridge of pendent rock
 Over the vexed⁰ abyss, following the track
 Of Satan, to the selfsame place where he
 First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
 From out of Chaos to the outside bare
 Of this round world: with pins of adamant
 And chains they made all fast, too fast they made
 And durable; and now in little space
 The confines⁰ met of empyrean Heav'n
 And of this world, and on the left hand Hell
 With long reach interposed; three sev'ral ways
 In sight, to each of these three places led.¹
 And now their way to earth they had descried,⁰
 To Paradise first tending, when behold
 Satan in likeness of an angel bright
 Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion² steering
 His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose:
 Disguised he came, but those his children dear
 Their parent soon discerned, though in disguise.
 He, after Eve seduced, unminded⁰ slunk
 Into the wood fast by, and changing shape
 To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
 By Eve, though all unweeting,⁰ seconded
 Upon her husband, saw their shame that sought
 Vain covertures;⁰ but when he saw descend
 The Son of God to judge them, terrified
 Fie fled, not hoping to escape, but shun
 The present, fearing guilty what his wrath
 Might suddenly inflict; that past, returned
 By night, and list'ning where the hapless pair
 Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,
 Thence gathered his own doom, which understood
 Not instant, but of future time.³ With joy
 And tidings fraught, to Hell he now returned,
 And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
 Of this new wondrous pontifice,⁰ unhop'd
 Met who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
 Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight
 Of that stupendous bridge his joy increased.
 Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
 Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broken:

stormy

boundaries

perceived

unnoticed

garments

so as to invade Greece. "Susa" (next line): Xerxes' winter residence, founded by the mythical prince Memnon.

9. Bridge-building, with a pun on "papal" (the pope had the title "pontifex maximus").

1. The golden staircase or chain linking the universe to Heaven, the new bridge linking it to Hell, and the passage through the spheres down to

earth.

2. Satan steered between Sagittarius ("the Centaur") and Scorpio, thereby passing through Anguis, the constellation of the Serpent.

3. This evidently refers to the complaints and discourse of Adam and Eve (lines 720-1104 below), which therefore precede Satan's return to Hell (lines 345-609).

"O parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
 Thy trophies,⁴ which thou view'st as not thine own,
 Thou art their author and prime architect:
 For I no sooner in my heart divined,
 My heart, which by a secret harmony
 Still moves with thine, joined in connection sweet,
 That thou on earth hadst prospered, which thy looks
 Now also evidence, but straight⁰ I felt *at once*
 Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt
 That I must after thee with this thy son;
 Such fatal consequence⁵ unites us three:
 Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds,
 Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
 Detain from following thy illustrious track.
 Thou hast achieved our liberty, confined
 Within Hell gates till now, thou us empow'red
 To fortify thus far, and overlay
 With this portentous⁰ bridge the dark abyss. *marvelous, ominous*
 Thine now is all this world, thy virtue⁰ hath won *power, courage*
 What thy hands builded not, thy wisdom gained
 With odds⁰ what war hath lost, and fully avenged *advantage*
 Our foil in Heav'n; here thou shalt monarch reign,
 There didst not; there let him still victor sway,
 As battle hath adjudged, from this new world
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated,
 And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
 Of all things parted by th' empyreal bounds,
 Flis quadrature, from thy orbicular world,⁶
 Or try⁰ thee now more dangerous to his throne." *discover by experience*

Whom thus the Prince of Darkness answered glad:
 "Fair daughter, and thou son and grandchild both,
 High proof ye now have giv'n to be the race
 Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
 Antagonist⁷ of Heav'n's Almighty King)
 Amply have merited of me, of all
 Th' infernal empire, that so near Heav'n's door
 Triumphal with triumphal act⁸ have met,
 Mine with this glorious work, and made one realm
 Hell and this world, one realm, one continent
 Of easy thoroughfare. Therefore while I
 Descend through darkness, on your road with ease
 To my associate powers, them to acquaint
 With these successes, and with them rejoice,
 You two this way, among those numerous orbs
 All yours, right down to Paradise descend;

4. Objects or persons captured in battle were displayed in the Triumphs accorded Roman generals and emperors who had won a great military victory; the term casts Satan's conquests in Eden in such terms.

5. Connection of cause and effect.

6. Revelation 21.16 describes the City of God as "foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth"; Satan's new conquest, earth, is an orb.

Sin may imply its superiority (being a sphere).

7. The name "Satan" means "adversary" or "antagonist."

8. The repeated word emphasizes that Satan is enacting a Triumph, passing over a triumphal bridge rather than through triumphal arches; the scene would likely evoke the "Roman" Triumph and triumphal arches celebrating the Restoration of Charles II.

There dwell and reign in bliss, thence on the earth
 Dominion exercise and in the air,
 Chiefly on man, sole lord of all declared,
 Him first make sure your thrall,^o and lastly kill. *slave*
 My substitutes I send ye, and create
 Plenipotent^o on earth, of matchless might *with full power*
 Issuing from me: on your joint vigor now
 My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
 Through Sin to Death exposed by my exploit.
 If your joint power prevail, th' affairs of Hell
 No detriment need fear, go and be strong."

So saying he dismissed them, they with speed
 Their course through thickest constellations held
 Spreading their bane;^o the blasted^o stars looked wan, *poison / ruined*
 And planets, planet-strook,⁹ real eclipse
 Then suffered. Th' other way Satan went down
 The causey^o to Hell gate; on either side *causeway*
 Disparted Chaos over-built exclaimed,
 And with rebounding surge the bars assailed,
 That scorned his indignation.¹ Through the gate,
 Wide open and unguarded, Satan passed,
 And all about found desolate; for those²
 Appointed to sit there, had left their charge,
 Flown to the upper world; the rest were all
 Far to the inland retired, about the walls
 Of Pandemonium, city and proud seat
 Of Lucifer, so by allusion^o called, *metaphor*
 Of that bright star to Satan paragoned.³
 There kept their watch the legions, while the grand⁴
 In council sat, solicitous^o what chance
 Might intercept their emperor sent, so he
 Departing gave command, and they observed.
 As when the Tartar from his Russian foe
 By Astracan over the snowy plains
 Retires, or Bactrian Sophi from the horns
 Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond
 The realm of Aladule, in his retreat
 To Tauris or Casbeen:⁵ so these the late
 Heav'n-banished host, left desert utmost Hell
 Many a dark league, reduced^o in careful watch *drawn together*
 Round their metropolis, and now expecting
 Each hour their great adventurer from the search
 Of foreign worlds: he through the midst unmarked,^o *unnoticed*
 In show plebeian angel militant

9. Suffering not merely a temporary eclipse but a real loss of light, as from the malign influence of an adverse planet.

1. Chaos is the instinctive enemy of all order, so hostile to the bridge built over it.

2. Sin and Death.

3. Satan before his fall was Lucifer, the Light-bringer, and the morning star is named Lucifer because it is compared ("paragoned") to him.

4. The "grand infernal peers" who govern (cf. 2.507).

5. The simile, begun in line 431, compares the fallen angels, withdrawn from other regions of Hell to guard their metropolis, to Tartars retiring before attacking Russians and Persians retreating before the attacking Turks. "Astracan": a region west of the Caspian Sea inhabited by Russia and defended against Turks and Tartars; "Aladule": the region of Armenia, from which the last Persian ruler, called Anadule, a "Bactrian Sophi" (Persian shah), was forced to retreat from the Turks, to Tabriz ("Tauris") and Kazvin ("Casbeen").

Of lowest order, passed; and from the door
 Of that Plutonian⁶ hall, invisible
 455 Ascended his high throne, which under state"
 Of richest texture spread, at th' upper end
 Was placed in regal luster. Down a while
 He sat, and round about him saw unseen:
 At last as from a cloud his fulgent head
 460 And shape star-bright appeared, or brighter, clad
 With what permissive⁹ glory since his fall
 Was left him, or false glitter: all amazed
 At that so sudden blaze the Stygian⁷ throng
 Bent their aspect, and whom they wished beheld,
 465 Their mighty chief returned: loud was th' acclaim:
 Forth rushed in haste the great consulting peers,
 Raised from their dark divan,⁸ and with like joy
 Congratulant approached him, who with hand
 Silence, and with these words attention won:
 470 "Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
 For in possession such, not only of right,
 I call ye⁹ and declare ye now, returned
 Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
 Triumphant out of this infernal pit
 475 Abominable, accurst, the house of woe,
 And dungeon of our tyrant: now possess,
 As lords, a spacious world, to our native Heaven
 Little inferior, by my adventure hard
 With peril great achieved. Long were to tell
 480 What I have done, what suffered, with what pain
 Voyaged th' unreal,⁹ vast, unbounded deep
 Of horrible confusion, over which
 By Sin and Death a broad way now is paved
 To expedite your glorious march; but I
 485 Toiled out my uncouth⁹ passage, forced to ride
 Th' untractable abyss, plunged in the womb
 Of unoriginal¹ Night and Chaos wild,
 That jealous of their secrets fiercely opposed
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
 490 Protesting Fate² supreme; thence how I found
 The new-created world, which fame in Heav'n
 Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful
 Of absolute perfection, therein man
 Placed in a paradise, by our exile
 495 Made happy: him by fraud I have seduced
 From his Creator, and the more to increase
 Your wonder, with an apple. He thereat
 Offended, worth your laughter, hath giv'n up
 Both his beloved man and all his world,
 500 To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,
 Without our hazard, labor, or alarm,
 To range in, and to dwell, and over man

6. Pertaining to Pluto, ruler of the classical underworld.

7. Of the river Styx in Hades, the river of hate.

8. The Turkish Council of State.

9. I.e., you now have these titles not only by right but by possession (from the conquest on earth).

1. Having no origin, uncreated.

2. Protesting both to and against Fate.

To rule, as over all he should have ruled.
 True is, me also he hath judged, or rather
 Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape
 Man I deceived; that which to me belongs,
 Is enmity, which he will put between
 Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;
 His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:
 A world who would not purchase with a bruise,
 Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account
 Of my performance: what remains, ye gods,
 But up and enter now into full bliss."³

So having said, a while he stood, expecting
 Their universal shout and high applause
 To fill his ear, when contrary he hears
 On all sides, from innumerable tongues
 A dismal universal hiss, the sound
 Of public scorn; he wondered, but not long
 Had leisure, wond'ring at himself now more;
 His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
 His arms clung to his ribs, his legs entwining
 Each other, till supplanted⁰ down he fell
 A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
 Reluctant,⁰ but in vain, a greater power
 Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinned,
 According to his doom: he would have spoke,
 But hiss for hiss returned with forked tongue
 To forked tongue, for now were all transformed
 Alike, to serpents⁴ all as accessories
 To his bold riot:⁵ dreadful was the din
 Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
 With complicated⁰ monsters, head and tail,
 Scorpion and asp, and amphisbaena dire,
 Cerastes horned, hydrus, and ellops drear,
 And dipsas⁵ (not so thick swarmed once the soil
 Bedropped with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
 Ophiusa)⁶ but still greatest he the midst,
 Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
 Engendered in the Pythian vale on slime,
 Huge Python,⁷ and his power no less he seemed
 Above the rest still to retain; they all
 Him followed issuing forth to th' open field,
 Where all yet left of that revolted rout
 Heav'n-fall'n, in station stood or just array,⁸
 Sublime⁰ with expectation when to see

tripped up

struggling

revolt

tangled

raised up

3. Ironically, the final word of Satan's proud, triumphal speech rhymes with and so prepares for the "hiss" (line 508) that will soon greet him, as his would-be triumph is turned by God to abject humiliation.

4. The scene recalls Dante's vivid description of the thieves metamorphosed to snakes in *Inferno* 24-25.

5. The "scorpion" has a venomous sting at the tip of the tail; "asp" is a small Egyptian viper; "amphisbaena" supposedly had a head at each end; "Cerastes" is an asp with horny projections over each eye;

"hydrus" and "ellops" were mythical water snakes; "dipsas" was a mythical snake whose bite caused raging thirst.

6. Drops of blood from the Gorgon Medusa's severed head turned into snakes; "Ophiusa" in Greek means "isle of snakes."

7. A gigantic serpent engendered from the slime left by Deucalion's flood; Apollo slew him and appropriated the "Pythian" vale and shrine at Delphi.

8. I.e., at their posts or on parade.

In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief;
 They saw, but other sight instead, a crowd
 Of ugly serpents; horror on them fell,
 540 And horrid sympathy; for what they saw,
 They felt themselves now changing; down their arms,
 Down fell both spear and shield, down they as fast,
 And the dire hiss renewed, and the dire form
 Caught by contagion, like in punishment,
 545 As in their crime. Thus was th' applause they meant,
 Turned to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
 Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood
 A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,
 His will who reigns above, to aggravate
 550 Their penance," laden with fair fruit, like that *punishment*
 Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
 Used by the Tempter: on that prospect strange
 Their earnest eyes they fixed, imagining
 For one forbidden tree a multitude
 555 Now ris'n, to work them further woe or shame;
 Yet parched with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
 Though to delude them sent, could not abstain,
 But on they rolled in heaps, and up the trees
 Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks
 560 That curled Megaera:⁹ greedily they plucked
 The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
 Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flamed;¹
 This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
 Deceived; they fondly" thinking to allay *foolishly*
 565 Their appetite with gust," instead of fruit *relish*
 Chewed bitter ashes, which th' offended taste
 With spattering noise rejected: oft they assayed," *attempted*
 Hunger and thirst constraining, drugged as oft,
 With hatefulest disrelish writhed their jaws
 570 With soot and cinders filled; so oft they fell
 Into the same illusion, not as man
 Whom they triumphed once lapsed.² Thus were they plagued
 And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,
 Till their lost shape, permitted, they resumed,³
 575 Yearly enjoined, some say, to undergo
 This annual humbling certain numbered days,
 To dash their pride, and joy for man seduced.
 Flowever some tradition they dispersed
 Among the heathen of their purchase" got, *plunder*
 580 And fabled how the serpent, whom they called
 Ophion with Eurynome, the wide-
 Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
 Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driv'n
 And Ops, ere yet Dictaeon Jove was born.⁴

9. One of three Furies with snaky hair.

1. Sodom apples reputedly grew on the spot where the accursed city once stood, now the Dead Sea ("that bituminous lake"); the apples look good but dissolve into ashes when eaten.

2. Unlike man who fell once, they try to eat the dissolving apples over and over again.

3. God permitted them to regain their "lost shape" as fallen angels; but they are undergoing a slower, natural metamorphosis into grosser substance by their continuing commitment to and choice of evil.

4. The Titan Ophion (whose name means "snake") and his wife Eurynome ("the wide-reacher") ruled Olympus until driven away by "Sat-

585 Meanwhile in Paradise the hellish pair
 Too soon arrived, Sin there in power before,
 Once actual, now in body, and to dwell
 Habitual habitant;⁵ behind her Death
 Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
 590 On his pale horse:⁶ to whom Sin thus began:
 "Second of Satan sprung, all-conquering Death,
 What think'st thou of our empire now, though earned
 With travail⁰ difficult, not better far *labor*
 Than still at Hell's dark threshold to have sat watch,
 595 Unnamed, undreaded, and thyself half-starved?"
 Whom thus the Sin-born monster answered soon:
 "To me, who with eternal famine pine,
 Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heaven,
 There best, where most with ravin⁰ I may meet; *prey*
 600 Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems
 To stuff this maw, this vast unhidebound corpse."⁷
 To whom th' incestuous mother thus replied:
 "Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flow'rs
 Feed first, on each beast next, and fish, and fowl,
 605 No homely morsels, and whatever thing
 Thy scythe of Time mows down, devour unspared,
 Till I in man residing through the race,
 His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect,
 And season him thy last and sweetest prey."
 610 This said, they both betook them several ways,
 Both to destroy, or unimmortal make
 All kinds, and for destruction to mature
 Sooner or later; which th' Almighty seeing,
 From his transcendent seat the saints among,
 615 To those bright orders uttered thus his voice:
 "See with what heat these dogs of Hell advance
 To waste and havoc⁰ yonder world, which I *plunder*
 So fair and good created, and had still
 Kept in that state, had not the folly of man
 620 Let in these wasteful furies, who impute
 Folly to me, so doth the Prince of Hell
 And his adherents, that with so much ease
 I suffer them to enter and possess
 A place so heav'nly, and conniving seem
 625 To gratify my scornful enemies,
 That laugh, as if transported with some fit
 Of passion, I to them had quitted all,^o *handed everything over*
 At random yielded up to their misrule;
 And know not that I called and drew them thither
 630 My hellhounds, to lick up the draff³ and filth *dregs*
 Which man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
 On what was pure, till crammed and gorged, nigh burst

urn" and his wife Ops, who were in turn
 overthrown by Jove, who lived on the mountain
 Dicte. Milton suggests that these may represent
 versions of the story transmitted by the fallen
 angels to the pagans (lines 578—79).

5. Sin was present in Eden in the actual sins committed by Adam and Eve; now she will dwell there

in her own body and in all other bodies.

6. Cf. Revelation 6.8: "behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him."

7. Its hide does not cling close to its bones: Death's hunger is such that it can never fill its skin.

With sucked and glutted offal, at one sling
 Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
 Both Sin, and Death, and yawning grave at last
 Through Chaos hurled, obstruct the mouth of Hell
 Forever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.
 Then Heav'n and earth renewed shall be made pure
 To sanctity that shall receive no stain:
 Till then the curse pronounced on both precedes."⁸

takes precedence

He ended, and the heav'nly audience loud
 Sung hallelujah, as the sound of seas,
 Through multitude that sung: "Just are thy ways,
 Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;
 Who can extenuate⁰ thee? Next, to the Son,
 Destined restorer of mankind, by whom
 New heav'n and earth shall to the ages rise,
 Or down from Heav'n descend." Such was their song,
 While the Creator calling forth by name
 His mighty angels gave them several charge,
 As sorted⁰ best with present things. The sun
 Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
 As might affect the earth with cold and heat
 Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call
 Decrepit winter, from the south to bring
 Solstitial summer's heat. To the blank⁰ moon
 Her office they prescribed, to th' other five
 Their planetary motions and aspects⁸
 In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite,
 Of noxious efficacy, and when to join
 In synod⁰ unbenign, and taught the fixed⁰
 Their influence malignant when to show'r,
 Which of them rising with the sun, or falling,
 Should prove tempestuous:⁰ to the winds they set
 Their corners, when with bluster to confound
 Sea, air, and shore, the thunder when to roll
 With terror through the dark aerial hall.
 Some say⁹ he bid his angels turn askance
 The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
 From the sun's axle; they with labor pushed
 Oblique the centric globe:⁰ some say the sun
 Was bid turn reins from th' equinoctial road⁰
 Like distant breadth to Taurus' with the sev'n
 Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins
 Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amain⁰
 By Leo and the Virgin and the Scales,
 As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change
 Of seasons to each clime; else⁰ had the spring
 Perpetual smiled on earth with vernant⁰ flow'rs,

disparage

suited

white, pale

conjunction I fixed stars

productive of storms

*the earth
the equator*

at full speed

*otherwise
spring*

8. Astrological positions. The next line names positions of 60, 90, 120, and 180 degrees, respectively.

9. The poem offers both a Ptolemaic and a Copernican explanation of the shifts made in the cosmic order so as to change the prelapsarian eternal spring. The Copernican explanation (offered first)

proposes that the earth's axis is now tilted (lines 668–71); the Ptolemaic explanation is that the plane of the sun's orbit is tilted (lines 671–78).

1. Lines 673–78 trace the sun's apparent (Ptolemaic) journey from Aries through Taurus and the rest of the zodiac over the course of the year.

680 Equal in days and nights, except to those
 Beyond the polar circles; to them day
 Had unbenighted⁰ shone, while the low sun *without any night*
 To recompense his distance, in their sight
 Had rounded still⁰ th' horizon, and not known *always*
 685 Or^o east or west, which had forbid the snow *either*
 From cold Estotiland, and south as far
 Beneath Magellan.² At that tasted fruit
 The sun, as from Thyestean banquet, turned
 His course intended;³ else how had the world
 690 Inhabited, though sinless, more than now,
 Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?
 These changes in the heav'ns, though slow, produced
 Like change on sea and land, sidereal blast,⁴
 Vapor, and mist, and exhalation hot,
 695 Corrupt and pestilent: now from the north
 Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore
 Bursting their brazen dungeon, armed with ice
 And snow and hail and stormy gust and flaw,⁰ *squall*
 Boreas and Caecias and Argestes loud
 700 And Thrascias rend the woods and seas upturn;
 With adverse blast upturns them from the south
 Notus and Afer black with thund'rous clouds
 From Serraliona,⁵ thwart of these as fierce
 Forth rush the Levant and the ponent⁰ winds *opposing*
 705 Eurus and Zephyr with their lateral noise,
 Sirocco and Libeccchio.⁶ Thus began
 Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first
 Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational,
 Death introduced through fierce antipathy:⁷
 710 Beast now with beast gan war, and fowl with fowl,
 And fish with fish; to graze the herb^o all leaving, *grass*
 Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
 Of man, but fled him, or with count'nance grim
 Glared on him passing: these were from without
 715 The growing miseries, which Adam saw
 Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
 To sorrow abandoned, but worse felt within,
 And in a troubled sea of passion tossed,
 Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint:
 720 "O miserable of happy!⁸ Is this the end
 Of this new glorious world, and me so late

2. The region of the Straits of Magellan, at the tip of South America. "Estotiland" (line 686): northern Labrador.

3. As a revenge, Atreus killed one of the sons of his brother Thyestes and served him in a banquet to that brother; the sun changed course to avoid the sight.

4. Malevolent stellar influences. "Norumbega" (line 696): northern New England and maritime Canada; "Samoed" Shore: northeastern Siberia.

5. Winds (701-6) from the south ("Notus," "Afer") come from Sierra Leone ("Serraliona") on the west coast of Africa; "Boreas," "Caecias," "Argestes," and "Thrascias" are all winds that blow from

the north, northeast, and northwest, bursting from the cave ("brazen dungeon") in which Aeolus imprisoned the winds (lines 695-700).

6. Crossing the north and south winds ("thwart," line 703) are the "Levant" (from the east) and "Eurus" (east southeast), from the west "Zephyr," the west wind; "Sirocco" and "Libeccchio" come from the southeast and southwest, respectively.

7. Discord (personified as daughter of Sin) introduced Death among the animals ("th' irrational") by stirring up "antipathy" among them.

8. Adam's complaint begins with the classical formula for a tragic fall, or *peripeteia*, the change from happiness to misery.

The glory of that glory, who now become
 Accurst of blessed, hide me from the face
 Of God, whom to behold was then my height
 725 Of happiness: yet well, if here would end
 The misery, I deserved it, and would bear
 My own deservings; but this will not serve;
 All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
 Is propagated⁹ curse. O voice once heard
 730 Delightfully, 'Increase and multiply,'
 Now death to hear! For what can I increase
 Or multiply, but curses on my head?
 Who of all ages to succeed, but feeling
 The evil on him brought by me, will curse
 735 My head: 'Ill fare our ancestor impure,
 For this we may thank Adam'; but his thanks
 Shall be the execration; so besides
 Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
 Shall with a fierce reflux on me redound,
 740 On me as on their natural center light
 Heavy, though in their place.¹ O fleeting joys
 Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!
 Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
 To mold me man, did I solicit thee
 745 From darkness to promote me, or here place
 In this delicious garden? As my will
 Concluded not to my being, it were but right
 And equal⁰ to reduce me to my dust, *just*
 Desirous to resign, and render back
 750 All I received, unable to perform
 Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
 The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
 Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
 The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable
 755 Thy justice seems; yet to say truth, too late
 I thus contest; then should have been refused
 Those terms whatever, when they were proposed:
 Thou² didst accept them; wilt thou enjoy the good,
 Then cavil⁰ the conditions? And though God *object frivolously to*
 760 Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son
 Prove disobedient, and reprov'd, retort,
 'Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not':
 Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
 That proud excuse? Yet him not thy election,⁰ *choice*
 765 But natural necessity begot.
 God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
 To serve him, thy reward was of his grace,
 Thy punishment then justly is at his will.
 Be it so, for I submit, his doom is fair,

9. Handed down from one generation to the next.
 1. I.e., Adam's 'own' curse will remain ('bide')
 with him, and the curse ('execration') of 'all' who
 descend from him will 'redound' on him as to their
 'natural center'; objects so placed ('in their

place") were thought to be weightless ("light"), but
 these curses will be "heavy."
 2. Adam turns from addressing God to address
 himself.

That dust I am, and shall to dust return:
 O welcome hour whenever! Why delays
 His hand to execute what his decree
 Fixed on this day? Why do I overlive,
 Why am I mocked with death, and lengthened out
 To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet
 Mortality my sentence, and be earth
 Insensible, how glad would lay me down
 As in my mother's lap! There I should rest
 And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more
 Would thunder in my ears, no fear of worse
 To me and to my offspring would torment me
 With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
 Pursues me still, lest all I^o cannot die,
 Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of man
 Which God inspired, cannot together perish
 With this corporeal clod; then in the grave,
 Or in some other dismal place, who knows
 But I shall die a living death? O thought
 Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath
 Of life that sinned; what dies but what had life
 And sin? The body properly hath neither.
 All of me then shall die:³ let this appease
 The doubt, since human reach no further knows.
 For though the Lord of all be infinite,
 Is his wrath also? Be it, man is not so,
 But mortal doomed. How can he exercise
 Wrath without end on man whom death must end?
 Can he make deathless death? That were to make
 Strange contradiction, which to God himself
 Impossible is held, as argument
 Of weakness, not of power. Will he draw out,
 For anger's sake, finite to infinite
 In punished man, to satisfy his rigor
 Satisfied never; that were to extend
 His sentence beyond dust and nature's law,
 By which all causes else according still
 To the reception of their matter act,
 Not to th' extent of their own sphere.⁴ But say
 That death be not one stroke, as I supposed,
 Bereaving" sense, but endless misery
 From this day onward, which I feel begun
 Both in me, and without^o me, and so last
 To perpetuity; ay me, that fear
 Comes thund'ring back with dreadful revolution^o
 On my defenseless head; both Death and I
 Am found eternal, and incorporate^o both,
 Nor I on my part single, in me all

*all of me**taking away**outside of**return**made one body*

3. After debating the matter, Adam concludes that the soul dies with the body; Milton in his *Christian Doctrine* worked out this "moralist" doctrine, with its corollary, that both soul and body rise at the Last Judgment.

4. Adam convinces himself that "finite" matter (line 802) cannot suffer "infinite" punishment by an axiom of traditional philosophy, that by "nature's law" (line 805) the actions of agents are limited by the nature of the object they act upon.

Posterity stands cursed: fair patrimony
 That I must leave ye, sons; O were I able
 820 To waste it all myself, and leave ye none!
 So disinherited how would ye bless
 Me now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind
 For one man's fault thus guiltless be condemned,
 If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
 825 But all corrupt, both mind and will depraved,
 Not to do^o only, but to will the same *act*
 With me? How can they then acquitted stand
 In sight of God? Him after all disputes
 Forced I absolve: all my evasions vain
 830 And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still
 But to my own conviction: first and last
 On me, me only, as the source and spring
 Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;
 So might the wrath.⁵ Fond^o wish! Couldst thou support *foolish*
 835 That burden heavier than the earth to bear,
 Than all the world much heavier, though divided
 With that bad woman? Thus what thou desir'st,
 And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
 Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
 840 Beyond all past example and future,
 To Satan only like both crime and doom.
 O conscience, into what abyss of fears
 And horrors hast thou driv'n me; out of which
 I find no way, from deep to deeper plunged!"
 845 Thus Adam to himself lamented loud
 Through the still night, not now, as ere man fell,
 Wholesome and cool, and mild, but with black air
 Accompanied, with damps" and dreadful gloom, *noxious vapors*
 Which to his evil conscience represented
 850 All things with double terror: on the ground
 Outstretched he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
 Cursed his creation, Death as oft accused
 Of tardy execution, since denounced" *pronounced*
 The day of his offense: "Why comes not Death,"
 855 Said he, "with one thrice-acceptable stroke
 To end me? Shall Truth fail to keep her word,
 Justice divine not hasten to be just?
 But Death comes not at call, Justice divine
 Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.
 860 O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bow'rs,
 With other echo late I taught your shades
 To answer, and resound far other song."⁶
 Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
 Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
 865 Soft words to his fierce passion she assayed;^o *attempted*
 But her with stern regard he thus repelled:
 "Out of my sight, thou serpent,⁷ that name best

5. Cf. the Son's offer to accept all humankind's guilt (3.236-41), and Eve's similar offer (10.933-36).

6. Cf. their morning hymn (5.1 53-208).

7. Adam's bitter, misogynistic outcry begins with reference to the patristic notion that the name Eve, aspirated, means "serpent."

Befits thee with him leagued, thyself as false
 And hateful; nothing wants," but that thy shape, *is lacking*
 870 Like his, and color serpentine may show
 Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee
 Henceforth; lest that too heav'nly form, pretended⁸
 To hellish falsehood, snare them. But" for thee *except*
 I had persisted happy, had not thy pride
 875 And wand'ring vanity, when least was safe,
 Rejected my forewarning, and disdained
 Not to be trusted, longing to be seen
 Though by the Devil himself, him overweening" *overconfident*
 To overreach, but with the serpent meeting
 880 Fooled and beguiled, by him thou, I by thee,
 To trust thee from my side, imagined wise,
 Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,
 And understood not all was but a show
 Rather than solid virtue, all but a rib
 885 Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,
 More to the part sinister" from me drawn, *the left side*
 Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
 To my just number found.⁹ O why did God,
 Creator wise, that peopled highest heav'n
 890 With Spirits masculine,¹ create at last
 This novelty on earth, this fair defect
 Of nature,² and not fill the world at once
 With men as angels without feminine,
 Or find some other way to generate
 895 Mankind? This mischief had not then befall'n,
 And more that shall befall, innumerable
 Disturbances on earth through female snares,
 And strait conjunction³ with this sex: for either
 He never shall find out fit mate, but such
 900 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake,
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
 Through her perverseness, but shall see her gained
 By a far worse, or if she love, withheld
 By parents, or his happiest choice too late
 905 Shall meet, already linked and wedlock-bound
 To a fell" adversary, his hate or shame: *hitter*
 Which infinite calamity shall cause
 To human life, and household peace confound."
 He added not, and from her turned, but Eve
 910 Not so repulsed, with tears that ceased not flowing,
 And tresses all disordered, at his feet
 Fell humble, and embracing them, besought
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint:
 "Forsake me not thus, Adam, witness Heav'n
 915 What love sincere, and reverence in my heart

8. Held in front, as a cover or mask.

9. It was supposed that Adam had thirteen ribs on the left side, so he could spare one for the creation of Eve and still retain the proper ("just") number, twelve.

1. The Miltonic bard indicated that angels can

assume at will "either sex . . . or both" (1.424).

2. Aristotle had claimed that the female is a defective male.

3. Close, hard-pressing, binding union: Adam then projects the problems of future marriages.

I bear thee, and unweeting⁰ have offended, *unintentionally*
 Unhappily deceived; thy suppliant
 I beg, and clasp thy knees;⁴ bereave me not,
 Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
 920 Thy counsel in this uttermost distress,
 My only strength and stay: forlorn of thee,
 Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
 While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
 Between us two let there be peace, both joining,
 925 As joined in injuries, one enmity
 Against a foe by doom express" assigned us, *explicit judgment*
 That cruel serpent: on me exercise not
 Thy hatred for this misery befall'n,
 On me already lost, me than thyself
 930 More miserable; both have sinned, but thou
 Against God only, I against God and thee,
 And to the place of judgment will return,
 There with my cries importune Heaven, that all
 The sentence from thy head removed may light
 935 On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe,
 Me me only just object of his ire."⁵
 She ended weeping, and her lowly plight," *posture*
 Immovable till peace obtained from fault
 Acknowledged and deplored, in Adam wrought
 940 Commiseration; soon his heart relented
 Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,
 Now at his feet submissive in distress,
 Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,
 His counsel whom she had displeased, his aid;
 945 As one disarmed, his anger all he lost,
 And thus with peaceful words upraised her soon:
 "Unwary, and too desirous, as before,
 So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st
 The punishment all on thyself; alas!
 950 Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain
 His full wrath whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
 And my displeasure bear'st so ill.⁶ If prayers
 Could alter high decrees, I to that place
 Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
 955 That on my head all might be visited,
 Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiv'n,
 To me committed and by me exposed.
 But rise, let us no more contend, nor blame
 Each other, blamed enough elsewhere, but strive
 960 In offices of love, how we may light'n
 Each other's burden in our share of woe;
 Since this day's death denounced, if aught I see,
 Will prove no sudden, but a slow-paced evil,
 A long day's dying to augment our pain,

4. Eve assumes the posture of the classical suppliant, clasping the knees of the one she begs from.

5. Eve also echoes the Son's offer (3.236-41). Cf. Adam's cry (10,832-34).

6. I.e., you could hardly bear God's "full wrath" since you are so distraught when you feel only the smallest part of it, and you can "ill" bear my displeasure.

965 And to our seed (O hapless seed!) derived."⁰ *passed on*
 To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied:
 "Adam, by sad experiment I know
 How little weight my words with thee can find,
 Found so erroneous, thence by just event⁰ *consequence*
 970 Found so unfortunate; nevertheless,
 Restored by thee, vile as I am, to place
 Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
 Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart
 Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
 975 What thoughts in my unquiet breast are ris'n,
 Tending to some relief of our extremes,
 Or end, though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
 As in our evils, and of easier choice.
 If care of our descent perplex us most,⁷
 980 Which must be born to certain woe, devoured
 By Death at last, and miserable it is
 To be to others cause of misery,
 Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
 Into this cursed world a woeful race,
 985 That after wretched life must be at last
 Food for so foul a monster, in thy power
 It lies, yet ere conception to prevent
 The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
 Childless thou art, childless remain; so Death
 990 Shall be deceived⁰ his glut, and with us two *cheated of*
 Be forced to satisfy his rav'nous maw.
 But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
 Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
 From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet,
 995 And with desire to languish without hope,
 Before the present object⁸ languishing
 With like desire, which would be misery
 And torment less than none of what we dread,
 Then both ourselves and seed at once to free
 1000 From what we fear for both, let us make short,⁰ *lose no time*
 Let us seek Death, or he not found, supply
 With our own hands his office on ourselves;
 Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
 That show no end but death, and have the power,
 1005 Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,
 Destruction with destruction to destroy."
 She ended here, or vehement despair
 Broke off the rest; so much of death her thoughts
 Had entertained, as dyed her cheeks with pale.
 1010 But Adam with such counsel nothing swayed,
 To better hopes his more attentive mind
 Laboring had raised, and thus to Eve replied.
 "Eve thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
 To argue in thee something more sublime

7. I.e., if concern for our descendants most torment ("perplex") us.

8. I.e., Eve herself, who then projects her own frustrated desire if they were to forgo sex.

1015 And excellent than what thy mind contemns;⁰ *despises*
 But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
 That excellence thought in thee, and implies,
 Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
 For loss of life and pleasure overloved.

1020 Or if thou covet death, as utmost end
 Of misery, so thinking to evade
 The penalty pronounced, doubt not but God
 Hath wiselier armed his vengeful ire than so
 To be forestalled; much more I fear lest death

1025 So snatched will not exempt us from the pain
 We are by doom to pay: rather such acts
 Of contumacy⁰ will provoke the Highest *contempt*
 To make death in us live. Then let us seek
 Some safer resolution, which methinks

1030 I have in view, calling to mind with heed
 Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
 The serpent's head; piteous amends, unless
 Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe
 Satan, who in the serpent hath contrived

1035 Against us this deceit: to crush his head
 Would be revenge indeed; which will be lost
 By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
 Resolved, as thou proposest; so our foe
 Shall scape his punishment ordained, and we

1040 Instead shall double ours upon our heads.
 No more be mentioned then of violence
 Against ourselves, and willful barrenness,
 That cuts us off from hope, and savors only
 Rancor and pride, impatience and despite,

1045 Reluctance⁰ against God and his just yoke *resistance*
 Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
 And gracious temper he both heard and judged
 Without wrath or reviling; we expected
 Immediate dissolution, which we thought

1050 Was meant by death that day, when lo, to thee
 Pains only in childbearing were foretold,
 And bringing forth, soon recompensed with joy,
 Fruit of thy womb:⁹ on me the curse aslope
 Glanced on the ground,¹ with labor I must earn

1055 My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse;
 My labor will sustain me; and lest cold
 Or heat should injure us, his timely care
 Hath unbesought provided, and his hands
 Clothed us unworthy, pitying while he judged;

1060 How much more, if we pray him, will his ear
 Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
 And teach us further by what means to shun
 Th' inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow,
 Which now the sky with various face begins

9. Adam's prophetic echo of Elizabeth's address to Mary, mother of Jesus (Luke 1.41-42), "blessed is the fruit of thy womb," lays the ground for their fuller understanding of the promise about the

"seed" of the woman.
 1. I.e., the curse, like a spear that almost missed its target, glanced aside and hit the ground,

1065 To show us in this mountain, while the winds
 Blow moist and keen, shattering⁰ the graceful locks *scattering*
 Of these fair spreading trees; which bids us seek
 Some better shroud,⁰ some better warmth to cherish *shelter*
 Our limbs benumbed, ere this diurnal star⁰ *the sim*
 1070 Leave cold the night, how we his gathered beams
 Reflected, may with matter sere⁰ foment, *dry*
 Or by collision of two bodies grind
 The air attrite to fire,² as late the clouds
 Justling or pushed with winds rude in their shock
 1075 Tine⁰ the slant lightning, whose thwart⁰ flame driv'n down *ignite / slanting*
 Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine,
 And sends a comfortable heat from far,
 Which might supply⁰ the sun: such fire to use, *take the place of*
 And what may else be remedy or cure
 1080 To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,
 He will instruct us praying, and of grace
 Beseeching him, so as we need not fear
 To pass commodiously this life, sustained
 By him with many comforts, till we end
 1085 In dust, our final rest and native home.
 What better can we do, than to the place
 Repairing where he judged us, prostrate fall
 Before him reverent, and there confess
 Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
 1090 Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
 Frequenting,⁰ sent from hearts contrite, in sign *filling*
 Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.
 Undoubtedly he will relent and turn
 From his displeasure; in whose look serene,
 1095 When angry most he seemed and most severe,
 What else but favor, grace, and mercy shone?"
 So spake our father penitent, nor Eve
 Felt less remorse: they forthwith to the place
 Repairing where he judged them prostrate fell
 1100 Before him reverent, and both confessed
 Humbly their faults, and pardon begged, with tears
 Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.³

Book 11

Thus they in lowliest plight repentant stood¹
 Praying, for from the mercy-seat above
 Preventive grace² descending had removed

2. Adam projects the invention of fire: they might, by striking two bodies together, rub ("attrite") the air into fire by friction; or else (lines 1070–71) focus reflected sunbeams (through some equivalent of glass) on dry ("sere") matter.
 3. The final six lines repeat, almost word for word, lines 1086–92, as the poet describes Adam's proposed gesture of repentance carried out in every

detail.

1. "Stood" may mean "remained," or that, after prostrating themselves (10.1099) they prayed standing upright; their demeanor ("port") was "Not of mean suitors" (11.8–9), and they had stood to pray before (4.720).

2. Grace given before the human will can turn from sin, enabling it to do so.

The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
 Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breathed
 Unutterable, which the spirit of prayer
 Inspired, and winged for Heav'n with speedier flight
 Than loudest oratory: yet their port
 Not of mean suitors, nor important less
 Seemed their petition, than when th' ancient pair
 In fables old, less ancient yet than these,
 Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha to restore
 The race of mankind drowned, before the shrine
 Of Themis stood devout.³ To Heav'n their prayers
 Flew up, nor missed the way, by envious winds
 Blown vagabond or frustrate:⁴ in they passed
 Dimensionless through heav'nly doors; then clad
 With incense, where the golden altar fumed,
 By their great Intercessor, came in sight
 Before the Father's throne: them the glad^o Son
 Presenting, thus to intercede began:

pleased

"See Father, what firstfruits on earth are sprung
 From thy implanted grace in man, these sighs
 And prayers, which in this golden censer, mixed
 With incense, I thy priest before thee bring,
 Fruits of more pleasing savor from thy seed
 Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
 Which his own hand manuring^o all the trees
 Of Paradise could have produced, ere fall'n
 From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear
 To supplication, hear his sighs though mute;
 Unskillful with what words to pray, let me
 Interpret for him, me his advocate
 And propitiation, all his works on me
 Good or not good ingraft,⁵ my merit those
 Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.
 Accept me, and in me from these receive
 The smell of peace toward mankind, let him live
 Before thee reconciled, at least his days
 Numbered, though sad, till death, his doom (which I
 To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse)
 To better life shall yield him, where with me
 All my redeemed may dwell in joy and bliss,
 Made one with me as I with thee am one."

cultivating

To whom the Father, without cloud, serene:
 "All thy request for man, accepted Son,
 Obtain, all thy request was my decree:
 But longer in that Paradise to dwell,
 The law I gave to nature him forbids:
 Those pure immortal elements that know

3. In Greek myth, when Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha (like Noah's family) alone survived a universal flood, they sought direction from Themis, goddess of justice; she told them to throw stones behind them, which became men and women.

4. I.e., their prayers were not scattered ("blown vagabond") by spiteful ("envious") winds, or pre-

vented ("frustrate") from reaching their goal. "Dimensionless": without physical extension.

5. The theological term for Christ's standing in the place of humankind, taking onto himself all their deeds, perfecting the good by his merit, and, by his death, "paying" (see next line) the debt due God's justice for their evil deeds.

No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
 Eject him tainted now, and purge him off
 As a distemper, gross to air as gross,
 And mortal food,⁶ as may dispose him best
 For dissolution⁰ wrought by sin, that first *death*
 Distempered all things, and of incorrupt
 Corrupted. I at first with two fair gifts
 Created him endowed, with happiness
 And immortality: that fondly⁰ lost, *foolishly*
 This other served but to eternize woe;
 Till I provided death; so death becomes
 His final remedy, and after life
 Tried in sharp tribulation, and refined
 By faith and faithful works, to second life,
 Waked in the renovation⁷ of the just,
 Resigns him up with Heav'n and earth renewed.
 But let us call to synod⁰ all the blest *assembly*
 Through Heav'n's wide bounds; from them I will not hide
 My judgments, how with mankind I proceed,
 As how with peccant⁰ angels late they saw; *sinning*
 And in their state, though firm, stood more confirmed."
 He ended, and the Son gave signal high
 To the bright minister that watched, he blew
 His trumpet, heard in Oreb⁸ since perhaps
 When God descended, and perhaps once more
 To sound at general doom. Th' angelic blast
 Filled all the regions: from their blissful bow'rs
 Of amarantine⁰ shade, fountain or spring, *unfading*
 By the waters of life, where'er they sat
 In fellowships of joy, the sons of light
 Hasted, resorting to the summons high,
 And took their seats; till from his throne supreme
 Th' Almighty thus pronounced his sov'reign will:
 "O sons, like one of us man is become
 To know both good and evil, since his taste
 Of that defended⁰ fruit; but let him boast *forbidden*
 His knowledge of good lost, and evil got,
 Happier, had it sufficed him to have known
 Good by itself, and evil not at all.
 He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite,
 My motions⁰ in him; longer than they move, *promptings*
 His heart I know, how variable and vain
 Self-left.⁹ Lest therefore his now bolder hand
 Reach also of the Tree of Life, and eat,
 And live forever, dream at least to live
 Forever,¹ to remove him I decree,

6. The pure elements of the Garden of Eden will themselves "purge" Adam and Eve as an impurity or disorder ("distemper"), ejecting them to a place where the air and food are more gross, like themselves.

7. The resurrection and renewal of body and soul on the Last Day.

8. Where God delivered the Ten Commandments

to the sound of a trumpet (Exodus 19.19); it will sound again at the Last judgment ("general doom," line 76).

9. Left to itself, without my continual promptings ("motions," line 91), I know his heart to be "variable and vain."

1. Milton adds the phrase "dream at least to live forever" to suggest that parts of God's speech

And send him from the garden forth to till
 The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.
 "Michael, this my behest have thou in charge,
 Take to thee from among the Cherubim
 Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the Fiend
 Or^o in behalf of man, or to invade *either*
 Vacant possession some new trouble raise:
 Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God
 Without remorse^o drive out the sinful pair, *pity*
 From hallowed ground th' unholy, and denounce
 To them and to their progeny from thence
 Perpetual banishment. Yet lest they faint^o *lose courage*
 At the sad sentence rigorously urged,
 For I behold them softened and with tears
 Bewailing their excess,^o all terror hide. *violation of law*
 If patiently thy bidding they obey,
 Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
 To Adam what shall come in future days,
 As I shall thee enlighten,² intermix
 My cov'nant in the woman's seed renewed;
 So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace:
 And on the east side of the garden place,
 Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
 Cherubic watch, and of a sword the flame
 Wide-waving, all approach far off to fright,
 And guard all passage to the Tree of Life:³
 Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
 To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey,
 With whose stol'n fruit man once more to delude."
 He ceased; and th' archangelic power prepared
 For swift descent, with him the cohort bright
 Of watchful Cherubim; four faces each⁴
 Had, like a double Janus, all their shape
 Spangled with eyes more numerous than those
 Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,
 Charmed with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed
 Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile
 To resalute the world with sacred light
 Leucothea⁵ waked, and with fresh dew embalmed
 The earth, when Adam and first matron Eve
 Had ended now their orisons, and found
 Strength added from above, new hope to spring
 Out of despair, joy, but with fear yet linked;

(especially lines 84—85 and 93—95, closely quoted from Genesis 3.22) are ironic.

2. God, it seems, has to "enlighten" Michael with knowledge of humankind's future at the same time Michael presents that future to Adam (cf. 12.128); Michael is told to "intermix" in his account God's "cov'nant in the woman's seed" (lines 115—16), the "mysterious" promise of the redeemer hinted when the Son pronounced judgment on the serpent (10.179-81).

3. Cf. Genesis 3.24: "he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword

which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

4. Ezekiel 1.6 Janus (line 129), the Roman god of doorways, had two faces; in one version he had four, corresponding to the four seasons and the four quarters of the earth. Argus (line 131), a giant with one hundred eyes, was set by Juno to watch Jove's mistress Io, but Hermes (Mercury) put all of his eyes to sleep with his music ("pipe") and his sleep-producing caduceus ("opiate rod").

5. Roman goddess of the dawn.

HO Which thus to Eve his welcome words renewed:
 "Eve, easily may faith admit, that all
 The good which we enjoy, from Heav'n descends;
 But that from us aught should ascend to Heav'n
 So prevalent" as to concern the mind *influential*

145 Of God high-blest, or to incline his will,
 Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer,
 Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
 Ev'n to the seat of God. For since I sought
 By prayer th' offended Deity to appease,

150 Kneeled and before him humbled all my heart,
 Methought I saw him placable and mild,
 Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew
 That I was heard with favor; peace returned
 Home to my breast, and to my memory

155 His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe;
 Which then not minded in dismay, yet now
 Assures me that the bitterness of death
 Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,
 Eve rightly called, mother of all mankind,

160 Mother of all things living, since by thee
 Man is to live, and all things live for man."⁶
 To whom thus Eve with sad demeanor meek:
 "Ill-worthy I such title should belong
 To me transgressor, who for thee ordained

165 A help, became thy snare; to me reproach
 Rather belongs, distrust and all dispraise:
 But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
 That I who first brought death on all, am graced
 The source of life; next favorable thou,

170 Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf' st,
 Far other name deserving. But the field
 To labor calls us now with sweat imposed,
 Though after sleepless night; for see the morn,
 All unconcerned with our unrest, begins

175 Her rosy progress smiling; let us forth,
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
 Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoined
 Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?

180 Here let us live, though in fall'n state, content."
 So spake, so wished much-humbled Eve, but fate
 Subscribed not; nature first gave signs," impressed *omens*
 On bird, beast, air, air suddenly eclipsed" *darkened*
 After short blush of morn; nigh in her sight

185 The bird of Jove, stooped from his airy tow'r,⁷
 Two birds of gayest plume before him drove:
 Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,⁸
 First hunter then, pursued a gentle brace," *pair*

6. The name Eve is cognate with the Hebrew word meaning "life." In Genesis 3.20 Adam names his wife Eve only after the Fall; Milton's Adam has named her before (4.481) and now affirms that

that name is right.

7. The eagle swooped ("stooped") from his soaring flight ("tow'r").

8. The lion.

- Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;
 190 Direct to th' eastern gate was bent their flight.
 Adam observed, and with his eye the chase
 Pursuing, not unmoved to Eve thus spake:
 "O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,
 Which Heaven by these mute signs in nature shows
 195 Forerunners of his purpose, or to warn
 Us haply too secure" of our discharge *overconfident*
 From penalty, because from death released
 Some days; how long, and what till then our life,
 Who knows, or more than this, that we are dust,
 200 And thither must return and be no more.
 Why else this double object in our sight
 Of flight pursued in th* air and o'er the ground
 One way the selfsame hour? Why in the east
 Darkness ere day's mid-course, and morning light
 205 More orient" in yon western cloud that draws *bright*
 O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
 And slow descends, with something heav'nly fraught."⁰
 He erred not, for by this⁰ the heav'nly bands *laden*
 Down from a sky of jasper lighted⁰ now *by this time*
 210 In Paradise, and on a hill made alt,^o *alighted, shone*
 A glorious apparition, had not doubt *halt*
 And carnal fear that day dimmed Adam's eye.
 Not that more glorious, when the angels met
 Jacob in Mahanaim,⁹ where he saw
 215 The field pavilioned with his guardians bright;
 Nor that which on the flaming mount appeared
 In Dothan, covered with a camp of fire,
 Against the Syrian king, who to surprise
 One man, assassin-like had levied war,
 220 War unproclaimed.' The princely hierarch²
 In their bright stand, there left his powers to seize
 Possession of the garden; he alone,
 To find where Adam sheltered, took his way,
 Not unperceived of Adam, who to Eve,
 225 While the great visitant approached, thus spake:
 "Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
 Of us will soon determine,^o or impose *make an end*
 New laws to be observed; for I descry
 From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill
 230 One of the heav'nly host, and by his gait
 None of the meanest, some great potentate
 Or of the Thrones above, such majesty
 Invests him coming; yet not terrible,
 That I should fear, nor sociably mild,
 235 As Raphael, that I should much confide,
 But solemn and sublime, whom not to offend,

9. Jacob gave that name, meaning "armies" or "camps" ("field pavilioned," line 215), to a place where he saw an army of angels (Genesis 32.2).

1. He had levied war against "Dothan" (line 217) in order to capture Elisha the prophet ("One man,"

line 219), but the Lord saved him by sending "horses and chariots of fire" (2 Kings 6.8ff.).

2. Michael, who left his angelic forces ("powers") in their formation ("stand") to take possession of the garden (lines 221—22).

With reverence I must meet, and thou retire."
 He ended; and th' Archangel soon drew nigh,
 Not in his shape celestial, but as man
 Clad to meet man; over his lucid arms
 A military vest of purple flowed
 Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain
 Of Sarra,³ worn by kings and heroes old
 In time of truce; Iris⁴ had dipped the woof;
 His starry helm unbuclled showed him prime
 In manhood where youth ended; by his side
 As in a glistering zodiac⁰ hung the sword, *belt*
 Satan's dire dread, and in his hand the spear.
 Adam bowed low, he kingly from his state⁰
 Inclined not, but his coming thus declared:
 "Adam, Heav'n's high behest no preface needs: *stately bearing*
 Sufficient that thy prayers are heard, and Death,
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
 Defeated⁰ of his seizure⁰ many days
 Giv'n thee of grace, wherein thou may'st repent,
 And one bad act with many deeds well done *cheated / possession*
 May'st cover: well may then thy Lord appeased
 Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell
 Permits not; to remove thee I am come,
 And send thee from the garden forth to till
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil."
 He added not, for Adam at the news
 Heart-strook with chilling gripe⁰ of sorrow stood, *spasm*
 That all his senses bound; Eve, who unseen
 Yet all had heard, with audible lament
 Discovered⁰ soon the place of her retire: *revealed*
 "O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death!
 Must I thus leave thee Paradise? thus leave
 Thee native soil,⁵ these happy walks and shades,
 Fit haunt of gods? where I had hope to spend,
 Quiet though sad, the respite⁰ of that day *delay*
 That must be mortal to us both. O flow'rs,
 That never will in other climate grow,
 My early visitation, and my last
 At ev'n which I bred up with tender hand
 From the first op'ning bud, and gave ye names,⁶
 Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
 Your tribes,⁰ and water from th' ambrosial⁰ fount? *species / fragrant*
 Thee lastly nuptial bower, by me adorned
 With what to sight or smell was sweet; from thee
 How shall I part, and whither wander down
 Into a lower world, to⁰ this obscure *compared to*
 And wild, how shall we breathe in other air

3. Both Meliboea and Tyre ("Sarrah") in Thessaly were famous for purple dye.

4. Goddess of the rainbow.

5. Unlike Adam, Eve was created in the Paradise of Eden.

6. Departing from Genesis 2.19–20, in which Adam alone gives names, Milton has Eve name the flowers, an action that signifies (like Adam's naming of the beasts, 8.352–54) intuitive knowledge of their nature.

285 Less pure, accustomed to immortal fruits?"
 Whom thus the angel interrupted mild:
 "Lament not Eve, but patiently resign
 What justly thou hast lost; nor set thy heart,
 Thus overfond, on that which is not thine;
 290 Thy going is not lonely, with thee goes
 Thy husband, him to follow thou art bound;
 Where he abides, think there thy native soil."
 Adam by this from the cold sudden damp⁰
 Recovering, and his scattered spirits returned,
 295 To Michael thus his humble words addressed:
 "Celestial, whether among the Thrones, or named
 Of them the highest, for such of shape may seem
 Prince above princes, gently hast thou told
 Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
 300 And in performing end us; what besides
 Of sorrow and dejection and despair
 Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,
 Departure from this happy place, our sweet
 Recess, and only consolation left
 305 Familiar to our eyes, all places else
 Inhospitable appear and desolate,
 Nor knowing us nor known: and if by prayer
 Incessant I could hope to change the will
 Of him who all things can," I would not cease
 To weary him with my assiduous cries:
 But prayer against his absolute decree
 No more avails than breath against the wind,
 Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
 Therefore to his great bidding I submit.
 315 This most afflicts me, that departing hence,
 As from his face I shall be hid, deprived
 His blessed count'nance; here I could frequent,
 With worship, place by place where he vouchsafed
 Presence Divine, and to my sons relate:
 320 'On this mount he appeared, under this tree
 Stood visible, among these pines his voice
 I heard, here with him at this fountain talked:
 So many grateful altars I would rear
 Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
 325 Of luster from the brook, in memory,
 Or monument to ages, and thereon
 Offer sweet-smelling gums and fruits and flow'rs:
 In yonder nether world where shall I seek
 His bright appearances, or footstep trace?
 330 For though I fled him angry, yet recalled
 To life prolonged and promised race,⁷ I now
 Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
 Of glory, and far off his steps adore."
 To whom thus Michael with regard benign:
 335 "Adam, thou know'st Heav'n his, and all the earth,

*dejection**knows, can do*

7. His descendants, from whom will spring the "promised Seed." See 10.180—81 and note 1, and 12.623.

Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills
 Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
 Fomented⁰ by his virtual⁰ power and warmed: *nurtured / potent*
 All th' earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
 340 No despicable gift; surmise not then
 His presence to these narrow bounds confined
 Of Paradise or Eden: this had been
 Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
 All generations, and had hither come
 345 From all the ends of th' earth, to celebrate
 And reverence thee their great progenitor.
 But this preeminence thou hast lost, brought down
 To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:
 Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain
 350 God is as here, and will be found alike
 Present, and of his presence many a sign
 Still following thee, still compassing thee round
 With goodness and paternal love, his face
 Express, and of his steps the track divine.
 355 Which that thou may'st believe, and be confirmed,
 Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent
 To show thee what shall come in future days
 To thee and to thy offspring,⁸ good with bad
 Expect to hear, supernal⁰ grace contending *heavenly*
 360 With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn
 True patience, and to temper joy with fear
 And pious sorrow, equally inured⁰ *tempered*
 By moderation either state to bare,
 Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
 365 Safest thy life, and best prepared endure
 Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
 This hill; let Eve (for I have drenched her eyes)⁹
 Here sleep below while thou to foresight wak'st,
 As once thou slept'st while she to life was formed."
 370 To whom thus Adam gratefully replied:
 "Ascend, I follow thee, safe guide, the path
 Thou lead'st me, and to the hand of Heav'n submit,
 However chast'ning, to the evil turn
 My obvious⁰ breast, arming to overcome *exposed*
 375 By suffering, and earn rest from labor won,
 If so I may attain." So both ascend
 In the visions of God: it was a hill
 Of Paradise the highest, from whose top
 The hemisphere of earth in clearest ken⁰ *view*
 380 Stretched out to amplest reach of prospect lay.
 Not higher that hill nor wider looking round,
 Whereon for different cause the Tempter set
 Our second Adam in the wilderness,
 To show him all earth's kingdoms and their glory.¹

8. Prophetic visions are a common feature in epic, e.g., Aeneas's vision of his descendants culminating in the Roman Empire (Virgil, *Aeneid* 6.754—854).

9. Put a soporific liquid ("drench") in her eyes.
 1. When Satan tempted Christ (the subject of Milton's "brief epic" *Paradise Regained*), he took him up to "an exceeding high mountain" and

His eye might there command wherever stood
 City of old or modern fame, the seat
 Of mightiest empire, from the destined walls
 Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,
 And Samarkand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
 To Paquin of Sinaean kings, and thence
 To Agra and Lahore of Great Mogul
 Down to the golden Chersonese,² or where
 The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
 In Hispahan, or where the Russian czar
 In Moscow, or the sultan in Bizance,
 Turkestan-born;³ nor could his eye not ken^o
 Th' empire of Negus to his utmost port
 Ercoco and the less maritime kings
 Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
 And Sofala thought Ophir, to the realm
 Of Congo, and Angola farthest south;⁴
 Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount
 The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,
 Marocco and Algiers, and Tremisen;⁵
 On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway
 The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw
 Rich Mexico the seat of Motezume,
 And Cuzsco in Peru, the richer seat
 Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoiled
 Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons
 Call El Dorado:⁶ but to nobler sights
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed
 Which that false fruit that promised clearer sight
 Had bred; then purged with euphrasy and rue⁷
 The visual nerve, for he had much to see;
 And from the well of life three drops instilled.
 So deep the power of these ingredients pierced,

showed him "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them" (Matthew 4.8). The passage that follows details the places "he" (Christ and / or Adam) might see (lines 386-411).

2. His first views are of "destined" (yet to come) great kingdoms in Asia: "Cambalu," capital of "Cathay," the region of North China ruled by such khans as Genghis and Kublai; "Samarkand," ruled by Tamburlaine ("Temir"), near the "Oxus" river near modern Uzbekistan; Beijing ("Paquin," Peking), ruled by Chinese ("Sinaean") kings; "Agra" and "Lahore," capitals in northern India ruled by the "Great Mogul"; "golden Chersonese," an area sometimes identified with the Malay Peninsula.

3. Next, Persian and Turkish kingdoms. From Persia (Iran): Ecbatana ("Ecbatan"), a summer residence of Persian kings, and the 16th-century Persian capital Isfahan ("Hispahan"); and Byzantium ("Bizance," Constantinople, Istanbul), capital of the Ottoman Empire after falling to the Turks in 1453.

4. From Africa: Abyssinia (empire of King "Negus"); Arkiko ("Ercoco") in Ethiopia, a Red Sea port; Mombasa ("Mombaza") and Malindi ("Melind") in Kenya; Kilwa ("Quiloa") in Tanzania; "Sofala," sometimes identified with the biblical

"Ophir" from which Solomon took gold for his Temple (1 Kings 9.28); and "Congo" and "Angola" on the west coast.

5. In North Africa: the kingdoms of "Almansor" (the name shared by various Muslim rulers, here referring probably to Abu-Amir al Ma-Ma'afiri, caliph of Cordova) reached from the "Niger" River in northern Morocco to the "Atlas" Mountains in Algeria, taking in Morocco (and its capital, "Fez"), Tunis ("Sus"), and part of Algeria called Tiemecen ("Tremisen").

6. Because they lay on the other side of the spherical earth, Christ and/or Adam could only see places in the New World "in spirit" (line 406): Mexico, the seat of Montezuma ("Motezume"), the last Aztec emperor; "Cuzsco in Peru," seat of Atahualpa ("Atabalipa"), the last Incan emperor (murdered by Pizarro); and "Guiana" (a region including Surinam, Guyana, and parts of Venezuela and Brazil). Unlike Mexico and Peru it was "yet unspoiled" by the Spaniards (sons of the evil monster "Geryon," in Spenser an allegory of the great power and oppression of Spain), though they identified its chief city, Manoa, with the fabled city of gold, "El Dorado."

7. Both herbs were thought to sharpen eyesight.

Ev'n to the inmost seat of mental sight,
 That Adam now enforced to close his eyes,
 420 Sunk down and all his spirits became entranced:
 But him the gentle angel by the hand
 Soon raised, and his attention thus recalled:
 "Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold
 Th' effects which thy original crime hath wrought
 425 In some to spring from thee, who never touched
 Th' excepted⁰ tree, nor with the snake conspired, *forbidden*
 Nor sinned thy sin, yet from that sin derive
 Corruption to bring forth more violent deeds."
 His eyes he opened, and beheld a field,
 430 Part arable and tilth,⁰ whereon were sheaves *cultivated*
 New-reaped, the other part sheep-walks and folds;
 I' th' midst an altar as the landmark⁰ stood *boundary marker*
 Rustic, of grassy sord;^o thither anon *turf*
 A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
 435 Firstfruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf,
 Unculled,^o as came to hand; a shepherd next *picked at random*
 More meek came with the firstlings of his flock
 Choicest and best; then sacrificing, laid
 The inwards and their fat, with incense strewed,
 440 On the cleft wood, and all due rites performed.
 His off'ring soon propitious fire from Heav'n
 Consumed with nimble glance, and grateful steam;
 The other's not, for his was not sincere;⁸
 Whereat he inly raged, and as they talked,
 445 Smote him into the midriff with a stone
 That beat out life; he fell, and deadly pale
 Groaned out his soul with gushing blood effused.
 Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
 Dismayed, and thus in haste to th' angel cried:
 450 "O teacher, some great mischief hath befall'n
 To that meek man, who well had sacrificed;
 Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?"
 T' whom Michael thus, he also moved, replied:
 "These two are brethren, Adam, and to come
 455 Out of thy loins;⁹ th' unjust the just hath slain,
 For envy that his brother's offering found
 From Heav'n acceptance; but the bloody fact⁰ *crime*
 Will be avenged, and th' other's faith approved
 Lose no reward, though here thou see him die,
 460 Rolling in dust and gore." To which our sire:
 "Alas, both for the deed and for the cause!
 But have I now seen death? Is this the way
 I must return to native dust? O sight
 Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
 465 Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!"
 To whom thus Michael: "Death thou hast seen

8. Milton's version of the Cain and Abel story (Genesis 4.1—16) provides a clear reason for God's rejection of Cain's sacrifice.

9. Adam has to be told that these are his own sons, not simply descendants,

In his first shape on man; but many shapes
 Of Death, and many are the ways that lead
 To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to sense
 470 More terrible at th' entrance than within.
 Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die,
 By fire, flood, famine; by intemperance more
 In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
 Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
 475 Before thee shall appear; that thou may'st know
 What misery th' inabstinence of Eve
 Shall bring on men." Immediately a place'
 Before his eyes appeared, sad,^o noisome, dark, *lamentable*
 A lazar-house it seemed, wherein were laid
 480 Numbers of all diseased, all maladies
 Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
 Of heartsick agony, all feverous kinds,
 Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
 Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,
 485 Demoniac frenzy, moping melancholy
 And moonstruck madness," pining atrophy,
 Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,² *lunacy*
 Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
 Dire was the tossing, deep the groans, Despair
 490 Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch;
 And over them triumphant Death his dart
 Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked
 With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
 Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
 495 Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept,
 Though not of woman born; compassion quelled
 His best of man,^o and gave him up to tears *manliness, courage*
 A space, till firmer thoughts restrained excess,
 And scarce recovering words his plaint renewed:
 500 "O miserable mankind, to what fall
 Degraded, to what wretched state reserved!
 Better end here unborn. Why is life giv'n
 To be thus wrested from us? Rather why
 Obtruded on us thus? who if we knew
 505 What we receive, would either not accept
 Life offered, or soon beg to lay it down,
 Glad to be so dismissed in peace. Can thus
 Th' image of God in man created once
 So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
 510 To such unsightly sufferings be debased
 Under inhuman pains? Why should not man,
 Retaining still divine similitude
 In part, from such deformities be free,
 And for his Maker's image sake exempt?"
 515 "Their Maker's image," answered Michael, "then
 Forsook them, when themselves they vilified^o *debased*

1. This is the only nonbiblical sight shown to Adam, a "lazar-house" (line 479)—a hospital for leprosy and infectious diseases, especially syphilis.

2. The plague. "Marasmus": a wasting disease of the body,

To serve ungoverned appetite, and took⁰ *took away*
 His image whom they served, a brutish vice,
 Inductive⁰ mainly to^o the sin of Eve. *produced /from*

520 Therefore so abject is their punishment,
 Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own,
 Or if his likeness, by themselves defaced
 While they pervert pure nature's healthful rules
 To loathsome sickness, worthily," since they *deservedly*

525 God's image did not reverence in themselves."
 "I yield it just," said Adam, "and submit.
 But is there yet no other way, besides
 These painful passages, how we may come
 To death, and mix with our connatural dust?"

530 "There is," said Michael, "if thou well observe
 The rule of not too much, by temperance taught
 In what thou eat'st and drink'st, seeking from thence
 Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
 Till many years over thy head return:

535 So may'st thou live, till like ripe fruit thou drop
 Into thy mother's³ lap, or be with ease
 Gathered, not harshly plucked, for death mature:
 This is old age; but then thou must outlive
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change

540 To withered weak and gray; thy senses then
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgo,
 To what thou hast, and for the air of youth
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
 A melancholy damp⁰ of cold and dry *depression of spirits*

545 To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume
 The balm^o of life." To whom our ancestor: *preservative essence*
 "Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
 Life much, bent rather how I may be quit
 Fairest and easiest of this cumbrous charge,

550 Which I must keep till my appointed day
 Of rend'ring up, and patiently attend⁰ *await*
 My dissolution." Michael replied:
 "Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'st
 Live well, how long or short permit to Heav'n:

555 And now prepare thee for another sight."
 He looked and saw a spacious plain,⁴ whereon
 Were tents of various hue; by some were herds
 Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound
 Of instruments that made melodious chime

560 Was heard, of harp and organ; and who moved
 Their stops and chords was seen: his volant touch
 Instinct through all proportions low and high
 Fleed and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.⁵
 In other part stood one⁶ who at the forge

3. "Mother" earth.

4. Adam's third vision is based on Genesis 4.19—22; "tents" (next line) identifies these as the descendants of Cain, described as "such as dwell in tents."

5. Genesis 4.21 describes Cain's descendant Jubal as "father of all such as handle the harp and

organ." "Volant": nimble; "instinct": instinctive; "proportions": ratios of pitches; "fugue": musical form in which one statement of the theme seems to chase another.

6. Tubal-cain, "instructor of every artificer in brass and iron" (Genesis 4.22).

565 Laboring, two massy clods of iron and brass
 Had melted (whether found where casual⁰ fire *accidental*
 Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,
 Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot
 To some cave's mouth, or whether washed by stream
 570 From underground) the liquid ore he drained
 Into fit molds prepared; from which he formed
 First his own tools; then, what might else be wrought
 Fusile⁰ or grav'n in metal. After these, *cast*
 But on the hither side a different sort⁷
 575 From the high neighboring hills, which was their seat,
 Down to the plain descended: by their guise
 Just men they seemed, and all their study bent
 To worship God aright, and know his works
 Not hid,⁸ nor those things last which might preserve
 580 Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain
 Long had not walked, when from the tents behold
 A bevy of fair women, richly gay
 In gems and wanton dress; to the harp they sung
 Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on:
 585 The men though grave, eyed them, and let their eyes
 Rove without rein, till in the amorous net
 Fast caught, they liked, and each his liking chose;
 And now of love they treat till th' evening star⁹
 Love's harbinger appeared; then all in heat
 590 They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke
 Hymen,¹ then first to marriage rites invoked;
 With feast and music all the tents resound.
 Such happy interview and fair event⁰ *outcome*
 Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flow'rs,
 595 And charming symphonies attached⁰ the heart
 Of Adam, soon⁰ inclined to admit delight,
 The bent of nature; which he thus expressed:
 "True opener of mine eyes, prime angel blest,
 Much better seems this vision, and more hope
 600 Of peaceful days portends, than those two past;
 Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse,
 Here nature seems fulfilled in all her ends."
 To whom thus Michael: "Judge not what is best
 By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,⁰ *appropriate*
 605 Created, as thou art, to nobler end
 Holy and pure, conformity divine.
 Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
 Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
 Who slew his brother; studious they appear
 610 Of arts that polish life, inventors rare,
 Unmindful of their Maker, though his spirit
 Taught them, but they his gifts acknowledged none.
 Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;

7. The descendants of Seth, Adam's third son (Genesis 5.3); "hither side": away from the "east" (Genesis 4.16), where Cain's sons lived.

8. They studied God's visible works, not the "mat-

ters hid" that Raphael had warned Adam against.

9. Venus.

1. God of marriage.

For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seemed
 Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
 Yet empty of all good wherein consists
 Woman's domestic honor and chief praise;
 Bred only and completed⁰ to the taste
 Of lustful appetite,⁰ to sing, to dance,
 To dress, and troll⁰ the tongue, and roll the eye.
 To these that sober race of men, whose lives
 Religious titled them the sons of God,²
 Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
 Ignobly, to the trains⁰ and to the smiles
 Of these fair atheists, and now swim in joy,
 (Erelong to swim at large) and laugh; for which
 The world erelong a world of tears must weep."

accomplished
desire
move

iviles, snares

To whom thus Adam of short joy bereft:
 "O pity and shame, that they who to live well
 Entered so fair, should turn aside to tread
 Paths indirect, or in the mid-way faint!
 But still I see the tenor of man's woe
 Holds on the same, from woman to begin."

"From man's effeminate slackness it begins,"
 Said th' angel, "who should better hold his place
 By wisdom, and superior gifts received.
 But now prepare thee for another scene."

He looked and saw wide territory spread
 Before him, towns, and rural works between,
 Cities of men with lofty gates and tow'rs,
 Concourse⁰ in arms, fierce faces threat'ning war,
 Giants³ of mighty bone, and bold emprise;⁰
 Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
 Single or in array of battle ranged⁰
 Both horse and foot, nor idly must'ring stood;
 One way a band select from forage drives
 A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine
 From a fat meadow ground; or fleecy flock,
 Ewes and their bleating lambs over the plain,
 Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly,
 But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray;
 With cruel tournament the squadrons join;
 Where cattle pastured late, now scattered lies
 With carcasses and arms th' ensanguined⁰ field
 Deserted: others to a city strong
 Lay siege, encamped; by battery, scale, and mine,⁴
 Assaulting; others from the wall defend
 With dart and jav'lin, stones and sulphurous fire;
 On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.
 In other part the sceptered heralds call

encounters
chivalric adventure

drawn up in raniS

blood-stained

2. Like many exegetes, Milton identifies the "sons of God" as the descendants of Seth, and the "daughters of men" whom they wed (Genesis 6.2) as the descendants of Cain.

3. Adam's fourth vision, based on Genesis 6.4, is of the "Giant" offspring of the previous marriages

(identified at lines 683-84); Milton makes them exemplify false heroism and false glory sought through military might and conquest (lines 689-99).

4. I.e., by battering, scaling, and tunneling under the walls.

To council in the city gates: anon
 Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mixed,
 Assemble, and harangues are heard, but soon
 In factious opposition, till at last
 665 Of middle age one⁵ rising, eminent
 In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
 Of justice, of religion, truth and peace,
 And judgment from above: him old and young
 Exploded,⁰ and had seized with violent hands, *mocked*
 670 Had not a cloud descending snatched him thence
 Unseen amid the throng: so violence
 Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law
 Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.
 Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
 675 Lamenting turned full sad; "O what are these,
 Death's ministers, not men, who thus deal death
 Inhumanly to men, and multiply
 Ten-thousandfold the sin of him who slew
 His brother; for of whom such massacre
 680 Make they but of their brethren, men of men?
 But who was that just man, whom had not Heav'n
 Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?"
 To whom thus Michael: "These are the product
 Of those ill-mated marriages thou saw'st:
 685 Where good with bad were matched, who of themselves
 Abhor to join; and by imprudence mixed,
 Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
 Such were these giants, men of high renown;
 For in those days might only shall be admired,
 690 And valor and heroic virtue called;
 To overcome in battle, and subdue
 Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
 Manslaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
 Of human glory, and for glory done
 695 Of triumph, to be styled great conquerors,
 Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods,
 Destroyers rightlier called and plagues of men.
 Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth,
 And what most merits fame in silence hid.
 700 But he the sev'nth from thee,⁶ whom thou beheld'st
 The only righteous in a world perverse,
 And therefore hated, therefore so beset
 With foes for daring single to be just,
 And utter odious truth, that God would come
 705 To judge them with his saints: him the Most High
 Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds
 Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God
 High in salvation and the climes of bliss,

5. Enoch, who "walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Genesis 5.24); Milton elaborates on the story.

6. Here Enoch is more precisely identified by generation, but neither he nor the other biblical per-

sonages in these pageants are named. Apparently, Michael and Adam together see the pageants, and Michael (by God's illumination) can interpret them rightly, but neither of the two knows the names these persons will later bear.

Exempt from death; to show thee what reward
 710 Awaits the good, the rest what punishment;
 Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold."
 He looked, and saw the face of things quite changed;
 The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar,
 All now was turned to jollity and game,
 -15 To luxury⁰ and riot,⁰ feast and dance, *lust / debauchery*
 Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
 Rape or adultery, where passing fair⁰ *surpassing beauty*
 Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils.
 At length a reverend sire⁷ among them came,
 720 And of their doings great dislike declared,
 And testified against their ways; he oft
 Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
 Triumphs or festivals, and to them preached
 Conversion and repentance, as to souls
 725 In prison under judgments imminent:
 But all in vain: which when he saw, he ceased
 Contending, and removed his tents far off;
 Then from the mountain hewing timber tall,
 Began to build a vessel of huge bulk,
 730 Measured by cubit, length, and breadth, and height,
 Smear'd round with pitch, and in the side a door
 Contrived, and of provisions laid in large
 For man and beast: when lo a wonder strange!
 Of every beast, and bird, and insect small
 735 Came sevens and pairs, and entered in, as taught
 Their order: last the sire and his three sons
 With their four wives; and God made fast the door.
 Meanwhile the south wind rose, and with black wings
 Wide hovering, all the clouds together drove
 740 From under heav'n; the hills to their supply⁰ *assistance*
 Vapor, and exhalation dusk⁰ and moist, *dark mist*
 Sent up amain;⁰ and now the thickened sky *with main force*
 Like a dark ceiling stood; down rushed the rain
 Impetuous, and continued till the earth
 745 No more was seen; the floating vessel swum
 Uplifted; and secure with beaked prow
 Rode tilting o'er the waves, all dwellings else
 Flood overwhelmed, and them with all their pomp
 Deep underwater rolled; sea covered sea,
 750 Sea without shore;⁸ and in their palaces
 Where luxury late reigned, sea monsters whelped
 And stabled; of mankind, so numerous late,
 All left, in one small bottom⁰ swum embarked. *boat*
 755 The end of all thy offspring, end so sad,
 Depopulation; thee another flood,
 Of tears and sorrow a flood thee also drowned,

7. Noah. Milton's account is based on Genesis 6-9.

8. The "sea without shore" and some other fea-

tures of this description are taken from Ovid's account of Deucalion's Flood (*Metamorphoses* 1.292-300, Sandys, translation).

And sunk thee as thy sons; till gently reared
 By th' angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
 760 Though comfortless, as when a father mourns
 His children, all in view destroyed at once;
 And scarce to th' angel utter'dst thus thy plaint:
 "O visions ill foreseen! Better had I
 Lived ignorant of future, so had borne
 765 My part of evil only, each day's lot
 Enough to bear; those now, that were dispensed
 The burd'n of many ages, on me light
 At once, by my foreknowledge⁹ gaining birth
 Abortive, to torment me ere their being,
 770 With thought that they must be. Let no man seek
 Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall
 Him or his children, evil he may be sure,
 Which neither his foreknowing can prevent,
 And he the future evil shall no less
 775 In apprehension than in substance feel
 Grievous to bear: but that care now is past,
 Man is not whom to warn:¹ those few escaped
 Famine and anguish will at last consume
 Wand'ring that wat'ry desert: I had hope
 780 When violence was ceased, and war on earth,
 All would have then gone well, peace would have crowned
 With length of happy days the race of man;
 But I was far deceived; for now I see
 Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
 785 How comes it thus? Unfold, celestial guide,
 And whether here the race of man will end."
 To whom thus Michael: "Those whom last thou saw'st
 In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
 First seen in acts of prowess eminent
 790 And great exploits, but of true virtue void;
 Who having spilt much blood, and done much waste
 Subduing nations, and achieved thereby
 Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey,
 Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,
 795 Surfeit, and lust, till wantonness and pride
 Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
 The conquered also, and enslaved by war
 Shall with their freedom lost all virtue lose
 And fear of God, from whom their piety feigned
 800 In sharp contest of battle found no aid
 Against invaders; therefore cooled in zeal
 Thenceforth shall practice how to live secure,
 Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords
 Shall leave them to enjoy, for th' earth shall bear
 805 More than enough, that temperance may be tried:
 So all shall turn degenerate, all depraved,
 Justice and temperance, truth and faith forgot;²

9. The term suggests that Adam is experiencing something akin to God's foreknowledge, which the poem insists is not predestination. Adam knows what is to happen but can neither cause it nor pre-

vent it.

1. I.e., there is no man to warn, all will die.

2. This passage (lines 797–807) may also allude to the backsliding Puritans who betrayed the Com-

One man except, the only son of light
 In a dark age, against example good,
 810 Against allurements, custom, and a world
 Offended;⁰ fearless of reproach and scorn, *hostile*
 Or violence, he of their wicked ways
 Shall them admonish, and before them set
 The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,
 sis And full of peace, denouncing⁰ wrath to come *proclaiming*
 On their impenitence; and shall return
 Of them derided, but of God observed
 The one just man alive; by his command
 Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheld'st,
 820 To save himself and household from amidst
 A world devote⁰ to universal wrack. *doomed*
 No sooner he with them of man and beast
 Select for life shall in the ark be lodged,
 And sheltered round, but all the cataracts⁰ *floodgates*
 825 Of heav'n set open on the earth shall pour
 Rain day and night, all fountains of the deep
 Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
 Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise
 Above the highest hills: then shall this mount
 830 Of Paradise by might of waves be moved
 Out of his place, pushed by the horned flood,³
 With all his verdure spoiled, and trees adrift
 Down the great river to the op'ning gulf,⁴
 And there take root an island salt and bare,
 835 The haunt of seals and ores,⁰ and sea mews" clang. *sea monsters / seagulls*
 To teach thee that God attributes to place
 No sanctity, if none be thither brought
 By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
 And now what further shall ensue, behold."
 840 He looked, and saw the ark hull⁰ on the flood, *drift*
 Which now abated, for the clouds were fled,
 Driv'n by a keen north wind, that blowing dry
 Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decayed;
 And the clear sun on his wide wat'ry glass
 845 Gazed hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,
 As after thirst, which made their flowing shrink
 From standing lake to tripping⁰ ebb, that stole *running*
 With soft foot towards the deep, who now had stopped
 His sluices, as the heav'n his windows shut.
 850 The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground
 Fast on the top of some high mountain fixed.⁵
 And now the tops of hills as rocks appear;
 With clamor thence the rapid currents drive
 Towards the retreating sea their furious tide.
 855 Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,
 And after him, the surer messenger,
 A dove sent forth once and again to spy

monwealth in 1660 and have now taken on the vices of the restored royalists.

3. Classical river gods were often depicted as

horned.

4. I.e., down the Euphrates to the Persian Gulf.

5. Mount Ararat (Genesis 8.4).

Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light;
 The second time returning, in his bill
 860 An olive leaf he brings, pacific sign:
 Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
 The ancient sire descends with all his train;
 Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
 Grateful to Heav'n, over his head beholds
 865 A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow
 Conspicuous with three listed colors gay,⁶
 Betok'ning peace from God, and cov'nant new.
 Whereat the heart of Adam erst so sad
 Greatly rejoiced, and thus his joy broke forth:
 870 "O thou who future things canst represent
 As present, heav'nly instructor, I revive
 At this last sight, assured that man shall live
 With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
 Far less I now lament for one whole world
 875 Of wicked sons destroyed, than I rejoice
 For one man found so perfect and so just,
 That God vouchsafes to raise another world
 From him, and all his anger to forget.⁷
 But say, what mean those colored streaks in heav'n,
 880 Distended⁰ as the brow of God appeased, *spread out*
 Or serve they as a flow'ry verge to bind
 The fluid skirts of that same wat'ry cloud,
 Lest it again dissolve and show'r the earth?"
 To whom th' Archangel: "Dextrously thou aim'st;
 885 So willingly doth God remit his ire,
 Though late repenting him of man depraved,
 Grieved at his heart, when looking down he saw
 The whole earth filled with violence, and all flesh
 Corrupting each their way; yet those removed,
 890 Such grace shall one just man find in his sight,
 That he relents, not to blot out mankind,
 And makes a cov'nant⁸ never to destroy
 The earth again by flood, nor let the sea
 Surpass his bounds, nor rain to drown the world
 895 With man therein or beast; but when he brings
 Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
 His triple-colored bow, whereon to look
 And call to mind his cov'nant: day and night,
 Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost
 900 Shall hold their course, till fire purge all things new,
 Both heav'n and earth, wherein the just shall dwell."⁹

6. The primary colors, red, yellow, and blue.

7. The language invites recognition of Noah as a type (foreshadowing) of Christ, the one "perfect" and "just" who will cause God to forget his anger.

8. The language of covenant makes this promise—that God will not again destroy the earth by flood—

a type of the "covenant of grace" through which God will save humankind.

9. The restoration of the orderly processes of nature after the Flood is identified as a type (foreshadowing) of the final renewal of all things after the final conflagration at the Last Judgment.

Book 12

As one who in his journey bates⁰ at noon, *stops for refreshment*
 Though bent on speed, so here the Archangel paused
 Betwixt the world destroyed and world restored,
 If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
 Then with transition sweet new speech resumes:¹
 "Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end;
 And man as from a second stock proceed.
 Much thou hast yet to see, but I perceive
 Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine
 Must needs impair and weary human sense:
 Henceforth what is to come I will relate,²
 Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.
 This second source of men, while yet but few,
 And while the dread of judgment past remains
 Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,
 With some regard to what is just and right
 Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace,
 Laboring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
 Corn, wine, and oil; and from the herd or flock,
 Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,
 With large wine-offerings poured, and sacred feast,
 Shall spend their days in joy unblamed, and dwell
 Long time in peace by families and tribes
 Under paternal rule; till one³ shall rise
 Of proud ambitious heart, who not content
 With fair equality, fraternal state,
 Will arrogate dominion undeserved
 Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
 Concord and law of nature from the earth;
 Hunting (and men not beasts shall be his game)
 With war and hostile snare such as refuse
 Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
 A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled⁰ *called*
 Before the Lord, as in despite of Heav'n,
 Or from Heav'n claiming second sov'reignty;⁴
 And from rebellion shall derive his name,
 Though of rebellion others he accuse.
 He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
 With him or under him to tyrannize,
 Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find
 The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge^o *whirlpool*

1. The first five lines were added when Book 10 of the 1667 edition was divided to make Books 11 and 12 of the 1674 edition.

2. Adam no longer sees visions or pageants, as before, but simply listens to Michael's narration.

3. Nimrod (Genesis 10.8–10) is described as the first king, in terms that equate kingship itself with tyranny (lines 25–29).

4. Milton offers two explanations of the biblical phrase "Before the Lord": either he openly defied

God ("despite") or he claimed divine right ("second sov'reignty") like the Stuart kings. Drawing on the (false) etymology linking the name Nimrod with the Hebrew word meaning "to rebel," Milton implies that the paradox developed in the next two lines (that he accuses others of rebellion but is himself a rebel against God) extends to other kings, especially Charles I, who accused his opponents in the civil war of rebellion.

Boils out from underground, the mouth of Hell;
 Of brick, and of that stuff they cast⁰ to build
 A city and tow'r,⁵ whose top may reach to Heav'n;
 And get themselves a name, lest far dispersed
 In foreign lands their memory be lost,
 Regardless whether good or evil fame.
 But God who oft descends to visit men
 Unseen, and through their habitations walks
 To mark their doings, them beholding soon,
 Comes down to see their city, ere the tower
 Obstruct Heav'n tow'rs, and in derision sets
 Upon their tongues a various⁰ spirit to raze
 Quite out their native language, and instead
 To sow a jangling noise of words unknown:
 Forthwith a hideous gabble⁶ rises loud
 Among the builders; each to other calls
 Not understood, till hoarse, and all in rage,
 As mocked they storm; great laughter was in Heav'n
 And looking down, to see the hubbub strange
 And hear the din; thus was the building left
 Ridiculous, and the work Confusion⁷ named."

*set about**divisive*

Whereto thus Adam fatherly displeas'd:
 "O execrable son so to aspire
 Above his brethren, to himself assuming
 Authority usurped, from God not giv'n:
 He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl
 Dominion absolute; that right we hold
 By his donation; but man over men
 He made not lord; such title to himself
 Reserving, human left from human free.⁸
 But this usurper his encroachment proud
 Stays not on man; to God his tower intends
 Siege and defiance: wretched man! What food
 Will he convey up thither to sustain
 Himself and his rash army, where thin air
 Above the clouds will pine^o his entrails gross,
 And famish him of breath, if not of bread?"

waste away

To whom thus Michael: "Justly thou abhorr'st
 That son, who on the quiet state of men
 Such trouble brought, affecting⁰ to subdue
 Rational liberty; yet know withal,
 Since thy original lapse, true liberty
 Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
 Twinned, and from her hath no dividuall⁰ being:⁹
 Reason in man obscured, or not obeyed,
 Immediately inordinate desires

*aspiring**separate*

5. Babylon is the city, Babel the tower.

6. Genesis 11.1–9 recounts the building of the Tower of Babel reaching to Heaven; God punished this presumption by confounding the builders' original language into multiple languages.

7. "Confusion" was taken to be the meaning of "Babel."

8. Adam states the assumption Milton often invokes to support republicanism.

9. As Milton (following classical theorists) often did, and as Abdiel did earlier (6.178–81), Michael links political to psychological servitude, and political liberty to inner freedom, i.e., the exercise of "right reason" and the control of passion. Loss of liberty is often (though not always) God's just punishment for national decline (lines 81–100). The long passage alludes to the "baseness" of the English in restoring monarchy in 1660.

And upstart passions catch the government
 From reason, and to servitude reduce
 90 Man till then free. Therefore since he permits
 Within himself unworthy powers to reign
 Over free reason, God in judgment just
 Subjects him from without to violent lords;
 Who oft as undeservedly enthrall
 95 His outward freedom: tyranny must be,
 Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
 Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
 From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
 But justice, and some fatal curse annexed
 100 Deprives them of their outward liberty,
 Their inward lost: witness th' irreverent son¹
 Of him who built the ark, who for the shame
 Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,
 'Servant of servants,' on his vicious race.²
 105 Thus will this latter, as the former world,
 Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last
 Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
 His presence from among them, and avert
 His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth
 110 To leave them to their own polluted ways;
 And one peculiar⁰ nation to select *special*
 From all the rest, of whom to be invoked,
 A nation from one faithful man³ to spring:
 Flim on this side Euphrates yet residing,
 us Bred up in idol-worship; O that men
 (Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
 While yet the patriarch⁴ lived, who scaped the Flood,
 As to forsake the living God, and fall
 To worship their own work in wood and stone
 120 For gods! Yet him God the Most High vouchsafes
 To call by vision from his father's house,
 His kindred and false gods, into a land
 Which he will show him, and from him will raise
 A mighty nation, and upon him show'r
 125 His benediction so, that in his seed
 All nations shall be blest; he straight⁰ obeys, *immediately*
 Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes:
 I see him, but thou canst not,⁵ with what faith
 He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil
 BO Ur⁶ of Chaldaeae, passing now the ford
 To Haran, after him a cumbrous train
 Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude;⁰ *servants and slaves*

1. Ham, son of Noah, who looked on the nakedness of his father and brought down the curse that his descendants would be 'servant of servants' to their brethren (Genesis 9.22–25).

2. Tribe. 'Race' did not then bear its modern sense, so Milton is probably thinking of the Canaanites (descendants of Ham's son Canaan), rather than black Africans; blacks were, however, classed among Ham's descendants, and this biblical text was often used to justify slavery.

3. Abraham, whose name means 'father of many nations'; the passage is based on Genesis 11.27 to 25.10.

4. Noah, who lived for 350 years after the Flood.

5. Michael evidently continues to see the stories he recounts as visionary scenes or pageants; Adam must accept the story of Abraham 'by faith,' analogous to the faith Abraham himself displays.

6. Ur was on one bank of the Euphrates, Haran (line 131) on the other, to the northwest.

- Not wand'ring poor, but trusting all his wealth
 With God, who called him, in a land unknown.
- 135 Canaan he now attains, I see his tents
 Pitched about Sechem, and the neighboring plain
 Of Moreh; there by promise he receives
 Gift to his progeny of all that land;
 From Hamath northward to the desert south
- 140 (Things by their names I call, though yet unnamed)
 From Hermon east to the great western sea,⁷
 Mount Hermon, yonder sea, each place behold
 In prospect, as I point them; on the shore
 Mount Carmel; here the double-founted stream
- 145 Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons
 Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.⁸
 This ponder, that all nations of the earth
 Shall in his seed be blessed; by that Seed
 Is meant thy great Deliverer,⁹ who shall bruise
- 150 The Serpent's head; whereof to thee anon
 Plainlier shall be revealed. This patriarch blest,
 Whom 'faithful Abraham'¹ due time shall call,
 A son, and of his son a grandchild leaves,
 Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown;
- 155 The grandchild with twelve sons increased, departs
 From Canaan, to a land hereafter called
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile;
 See where it flows,² disgorging at seven mouths
 Into the sea: to sojourn in that land
- 160 He comes invited by a younger son³
 In time of dearth,⁰ a son whose worthy deeds *famine*
 Raise him to be the second in that realm
 Of Pharaoh: there he dies, and leaves his race
 Growing into a nation, and now grown
- 165 Suspected to^o a sequent^o king, who seeks *by/successive*
 To stop their overgrowth, as inmate^o guests *foreign*
 Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
 Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:
 Till by two brethren (those two brethren call
- 170 Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim
 His people from enthrallment, they return
 With glory and spoil back to their promised land.⁴
 But first the lawless tyrant, who denies^o *refuses*

7. The Promised Land was bounded on the north by Hamath, a city on the Orontes River in west Syria; on the south by the wilderness "desert" of Zin; on the east by Mount Hermon; and on the west by the Mediterranean, the "great western sea."

8. "Mount Carmel": a mountain range near Haifa, on the Mediterranean coast of Israel; "Jordan": the river thought incorrectly to have two sources ("double-founted"), the Jor and the Dan; "Senir": a peak of Mount Hermon.

9. Michael interprets the promise to Abraham (Genesis 17.5, "a father of many nations have I made thee") typologically, as to be fulfilled in Christ, the "Woman's Seed." See 10.180-81 and

note 1, and 12.322-28, 12.600-601, 12.623.

1. Echoes Galatians 3.9: "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." His son (line 153) is Isaac, and his grandson, Jacob.

2. Adam can see geographical features from his mountaintop, though not the scenes Michael sees and describes.

3. Joseph, the next youngest of Jacob's twelve sons, invited the Israelites to Egypt to escape famine, but they were subsequently made slaves (Genesis 21-50).

4. The story of Moses and Aaron leading the Israelites from captivity to the Promised Land is told in Exodus and Deuteronomy.

To know their God, or message to regard,
 175 Must be compelled by signs and judgments dire;⁵
 To blood unshed the rivers must be turned,
 Frogs, lice, and flies must all his palace fill
 With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;
 His cattle must of rot and murrain⁰ die, *cattle plague*
 180 Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss,⁶
 And all his people; thunder mixed with hail,
 Hail mixed with fire must rend th' Egyptian sky
 And wheel on th' earth, devouring where it rolls;
 What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
 185 A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down
 Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green:
 Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
 Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;
 Last with one midnight stroke all the firstborn
 190 Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds⁰ *plagues*
 The river-dragon⁷ tamed at length submits
 To let his sojourners depart, and oft
 Humbles his stubborn heart, but still as ice
 More hardened after thaw, till in his rage
 195 Pursuing whom he late dismissed, the sea
 Swallows him with his host, but them lets pass
 As on dry land between two crystal walls,
 Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand
 Divided, till his rescued gain their shore:⁸
 200 Such wondrous power God to his saint will lend,
 Though present in his angel, who shall go
 Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire,
 By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire,
 To guide them in their journey,⁹ and remove
 205 Behind them, while th' obdurate king pursues:
 All night he will pursue, but his approach
 Darkness defends⁰ between till morning watch; *prevents*
 Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud
 God looking forth will trouble all his host
 210 And craze⁰ their chariot wheels: when by command *shatter*
 Moses once more his potent rod extends
 Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;
 On their embattled ranks the waves return,
 And overwhelm their war:⁰ the race elect *armies*
 215 Safe towards Canaan from the shore advance
 Through the wild desert, not the readiest way,
 Lest ent'ring on the Canaanite alarmed⁰ *prepared to fight*
 War terrify them inexpert, and fear
 Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather

5. The ten plagues, recounted in lines 176–90.

6. "Botches": boils; "blains": blisters; "emboss": cover as with studs.

7. The Egyptian pharaoh is termed "the great dragon that lieth in the midst of his rivers" (Ezekiel 29.3).

8. The Red Sea was parted by the rod of Moses; the Israelites passed through, but Pharaoh's pur-

suing forces drowned as the water rushed back (Exodus 13.17-22 and 14.5-31).

9. Milton repeats here a view developed in his *Christian Doctrine*, that God was "present in his angel," not in his own person, in the cloud and pillar of fire that led the Israelites on their journey (Exodus 13.21-22).

220 Inglorious life with servitude; for life
 To noble and ignoble is more sweet
 Untrained in arms, where rashness leads not on.¹
 This also shall they gain by their delay
 In the wide wilderness, there they shall found
 225 Their government, and their great senate² choose
 Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordained:
 God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top
 Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
 In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpet's sound
 230 Ordain them laws; part such as appertain
 To civil justice, part religious rites
 Of sacrifice,³ informing them, by types
 And shadows, of that destined Seed to bruise
 The Serpent, by what means he shall achieve
 235 Mankind's deliverance.⁴ But the voice of God
 To mortal ear is dreadful; they beseech
 That Moses might report to them his will,
 And terror cease; he grants what they besought
 Instructed that to God is no access
 240 Without mediator, whose high office now
 Moses in figure⁵ bears, to introduce
 One greater, of whose day he shall foretell,
 And all the prophets in their age the times
 Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites
 245 Established, such delight hath God in men
 Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
 Among them to set up his tabernacle,
 The Holy One with mortal men to dwell:
 By his prescript a sanctuary is framed
 250 Of cedar, overlaid with gold, therein
 An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
 The records of his cov'nant, over these
 A mercy-seat of gold between the wings
 Of two bright Cherubim, before him burn
 255 Seven lamps as in a zodiac⁶ representing *like the planets*
 The heav'nly fires; over the tent a cloud
 Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,
 Save when they journey, and at length they come,
 Conducted by his angel to the land
 260 Promised to Abraham and his seed: the rest
 Were long to tell, how many battles fought,
 How many kings destroyed, and kingdoms won,
 Or how the sun shall in mid-heav'n stand still
 A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
 265 Man's voice commanding, 'Sun in Gibeon stand,

1. I.e., unless prompted by "rashness," those "untrained in arms" will choose servitude rather than battle.

2. The "Seventy Elders" of the Sanhedrin, whom Milton cites as a model for republican government in his *Ready and Easy Way*.

3. God delivered ceremonial, civil, and moral/religious laws (the Ten Commandments) to Moses on

Mount Sinai, with thunder and lightning (lines 227-32; Exodus 19-31).

4. The principle of typology, whereby persons and events in the Old Testament are seen to prefigure Christ or matters pertaining to his life or the Christian church.

5. Moses is a type of Christ in his role as mediator between the people and God.

And thou moon in the vale of Aialon,
 Till Israel overcome';⁶ so call the third
 From Abraham, son of Isaac, and from him
 His whole descent,⁷ who thus shall Canaan win."
 270 Here Adam interposed: "O sent from Heav'n,
 Enlight'ner of my darkness, gracious things
 Thou hast revealed, those chiefly which concern
 Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find
 Mine eyes true op'ning, and my heart much eased,
 275 Erewhile perplexed with thoughts what would become
 Of me and all mankind; but now I see
 His day, in whom all nations shall be blest,⁸
 Favor unmerited by me, who sought
 Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
 280 This yet I apprehend not, why to those
 Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth
 So many and so various laws are giv'n;
 So many laws argue so many sins
 Among them; how can God with such reside?"
 285 To whom thus Michael: "Doubt not but that sin
 Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
 And therefore was law given them to evince⁰ *make evident*
 Their natural pravity,⁰ by stirring up *original sin*
 Sin against law to fight; that when they see
 290 Law can discover sin, but not remove,
 Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
 The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
 Some blood more precious must be paid for man,
 Just for unjust, that in such righteousness
 295 To them by faith imputed, they may find
 Justification towards God, and peace
 Of conscience,⁹ which the law by ceremonies
 Cannot appease, nor man the moral part
 Perform, and not performing cannot live.¹
 300 So law appears imperfect, and but giv'n
 With purpose to resign⁰ them in full time *yield*
 Up to a better cov'nant, disciplined
 From shadowy types to truth, from flesh to spirit,
 From imposition of strict laws, to free
 305 Acceptance of large grace, from servile fear
 To filial, works of law to works of faith.²
 And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
 Highly beloved, being but the minister

6. The story of Joshua, at whose bidding the sun stood still in Gibeon, and the moon in Ajalon (both a few miles north of Jerusalem), until Israel won its battle against the Amorites (Joshua 10.12–23).

7. Isaac's son Jacob was named Israel, and his descendants after him (Genesis 33.28).

8. Adam supposes that the promise made to him is fulfilled in the covenant with Abraham; he has yet to understand that in this Abraham is a type of Christ.

9. The ceremonial sacrifices of 'bulls and goats' under the Law are types, "shadowy expiations,"

pointing to Christ's efficacious sacrifice that alone can win "justification" for humankind, by Christ's merits being "imputed" (attributed vicariously) to them through faith (lines 290–96).

1. The theological doctrine that the Law is intended to lead humans to the "better cov'nant" (line 302) of grace, by demonstrating that fallen men cannot fulfill the commandments of the Law or appease God through ceremonial sacrifices (lines 297–302).

2. A more complete explanation of the principle of typology.

- Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
 310 But Joshua whom the Gentiles Jesus call,³
 His name and office bearing, who shall quell
 The adversary Serpent, and bring back
 Through the world's wilderness long-wandered man
 Safe to eternal paradise of rest.
- 315 Meanwhile they in their earthly Canaan placed
 Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins
 National interrupt their public peace,
 Provoking God to raise them enemies:
 From whom as oft he saves them penitent⁰ *when penitent*
- 320 By judges first, then under kings; of whom
 The second, both for piety renowned
 And puissant⁰ deeds, a promise shall receive *mighty*
 Irrevocable, that his regal throne
 Forever shall endure;⁴ the like shall sing
- 325 All prophecy, that of the royal stock
 Of David (so I name this king) shall rise
 A son, the Woman's Seed to thee foretold,⁵
 Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
 All nations, and to kings foretold, of kings
- 330 The last, for of his reign shall be no end.
 But first a long succession must ensue,
 And his next son for wealth and wisdom famed,
 The clouded ark of God till then in tents
 Wand'ring, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.⁶
- 335 Such follow him, as shall be registered
 Part good, part bad, of bad the longer scroll,
 Whose foul idolatries and other faults
 Heaped⁰ to the popular sum, will so incense *added*
 God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
- 340 Their city, his temple, and his holy ark
 With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
 To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st
 Left in confusion, Babylon thence called.
 There in captivity he lets them dwell
- 345 The space of seventy years,⁷ then brings them back,
 Rememb'ring mercy, and his cov'nant sworn
 To David, stablished as the days of Heav'n.
 Returned from Babylon by leave of kings⁸
 Their lords, whom God disposed,⁰ the house of God *made well-disposed*
- 350 They first re-edify, and for a while
 In mean estate live moderate, till grown
 In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;
 But first among the priests dissension springs,

3. "Jesus" is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "Joshua," who, rather than Moses, led the children of Israel into the Promised Land of Canaan, being in this a type of Christ.

4. The history summarized in lines 315—30 is recounted in Judges, Samuel, and Kings.

5. The Messiah was prophesied to come of David's line, and Jesus was referred to as the "Son of David."

6. Solomon, son of David, built a "glorious temple" to house the Ark of the Covenant.

7. The seventy-year Babylonian Captivity of the Jews and destruction of the Temple (6th century B.C.E.).

8. The Persian kings Cyrus the Great, Darius, and Artaxerxes allowed the Jews to return from Babylon and rebuild the Temple.

Men who attend the altar, and should most
 355 Endeavor peace: their strife pollution brings
 Upon the Temple itself: at last they seize
 The scepter, and regard not David's sons,⁰ *descendants*
 Then lose it to a stranger,⁹ that the true
 Anointed King Messiah might be born
 360 Barred of his right; yet at his birth a star
 Unseen before in heav'n proclaims him come,
 And guides the eastern sages,⁰ who inquire *the Magi*
 His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold;
 His place of birth a solemn⁰ angel tells *awe-inspiring*
 365 To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;
 They gladly thither haste, and by a choir
 Of squadroned angels hear his carol sung.
 A virgin is his mother, but his sire
 The Power of the Most High; he shall ascend
 370 The throne hereditary, and bound his reign
 With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the heav'ns."
 He ceased, discerning Adam with such joy
 Surcharged,⁰ as had like grief been dewed in tears, *overwhelmed*
 Without the vent of words, which these he breathed:
 375 "O prophet of glad tidings, finisher
 Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
 What oft my steadiest thoughts have searched in vain,
 Why our great expectation should be called
 The Seed of Woman: Virgin Mother, hail,
 380 High in the love of Heav'n, yet from my loins
 Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
 Of God Most High; so God with man unites.
 Needs must the Serpent now his capital⁰ bruise *on the head, fatal*
 Expect with mortal pain: say where and when
 385 Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel."
 To whom thus Michael: "Dream not of their fight,
 As of a duel, or the local wounds
 Of head or heel: not therefore joins the Son
 Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil
 390 Thy enemy; nor so is overcome
 Satan, whose fall from Heav'n, a deadlier bruise,
 Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound:
 Which he who comes thy Savior, shall recure,⁰ *heal*
 Not by destroying Satan, but his works
 395 In thee and in thy seed: nor can this be,
 But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,⁰ *lack*
 Obedience to the law of God, imposed
 On penalty of death, and suffering death,
 The penalty to thy transgression due,
 400 And due to theirs which out of thine will grow:
 So only can high justice rest apaid.⁰ *satisfied*

9. Antiochus, father of Herod the Great (who ruled at the time of Christ's birth), was made governor of Jerusalem in 61 b.c.e. by the Romans, and procurator of Judaea in 47 b.c.e. Prior to this (lines 353–57), strife among the priests allowed the

Seleucid king Antiochus IV to sack Jerusalem and pollute the Temple; then one of the Maccabees seized the throne, disregarding the claims of David's dynasty.

The law of God exact he shall fulfill
 Both by obedience and by love, though love
 Alone fulfill the law; thy punishment
 405 He shall endure by coming in the flesh
 To a reproachful life and cursed death,
 Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
 In his redemption, and that his obedience
 Imputed becomes theirs by faith, his merits
 410 To save them, not their own, though legal works.¹
 For this he shall live hated, be blasphemed,
 Seized on by force, judged, and to death condemned
 A shameful and accursed, nailed to the cross
 By his own nation, slain for bringing life;
 415 But to the cross he nails thy enemies,
 The law that is against thee, and the sins
 Of all mankind, with him there crucified,
 Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
 In this his satisfaction; so he dies,
 420 But soon revives, Death over him no power
 Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
 Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
 Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
 Thy ransom paid, which man from Death redeems,
 425 His death for man, as many as offered life
 Neglect not,² and the benefit embrace
 By faith not void of works: this Godlike act
 Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have died,
 In sin forever lost from life; this act
 430 Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength
 Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms,
 And fix far deeper in his head their stings
 Than temporal death shall bruise the victor's heel,
 Or theirs whom he redeems, a death like sleep,
 435 A gentle wafting to immortal life.
 Nor after resurrection shall he stay
 Longer on earth than certain times to appear
 To his disciples, men who in his life
 Still followed him; to them shall leave in charge
 440 To teach all nations what of him they learned
 And his salvation, them who shall believe
 Baptizing in the profluent⁰ stream, the sign *flowing*
 Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
 Pure, and in mind prepared, if so befall,
 445 For death, like that which the Redeemer died.
 All nations they shall teach; for from that day
 Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
 Salvation shall be preached, but to the sons
 Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;

1. Michael restates the theological doctrine that humans can only be saved by Christ's merits attributed to them vicariously ("imputed"), not by their own good works performed according to God's law

("legal").

2. i.e., for as many as accept ("neglect not") his offer of life,

450 So in his seed all nations shall be blest.³
 Then to the Heav'n of Heav'ns he shall ascend
 With victory, triumphing through the air
 Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
 The Serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains
 455 Through all his realm, and there confounded leave;
 Then enter into glory, and resume
 His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
 Above all names in Heav'n; and thence shall come,
 When this world's dissolution shall be ripe
 460 With glory and power to judge both quick⁰ and dead, *living*
 To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward
 His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
 Whether in Heav'n or earth, for then the earth
 Shall all be paradise, far happier place
 465 Than this of Eden, and far happier days."
 So spake th' Archangel Michael, then paused,
 As at the world's great period;⁰ and our sire *commutation*
 Replete with joy and wonder thus replied:
 "O goodness infinite, goodness immense!
 470 That all this good of evil shall produce,
 And evil turn to good; more wonderful
 Than that which by creation first brought forth
 Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,
 Whether I should repent me now of sin
 475 By me done and occasioned, or rejoice
 Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring,
 To God more glory, more good will to men
 From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.⁴
 But say, if our Deliverer up to Heav'n
 480 Must reascend, what will betide the few
 His faithful, left among th' unfaithful herd,
 The enemies of truth; who then shall guide
 His people, who defend? Will they not deal
 Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?"
 485 "Be sure they will," said th' angel; "but from Heav'n
 He to his own a Comforter will send,⁵
 The promise of the Father, who shall dwell
 His Spirit within them, and the law of faith
 Working through love, upon their hearts shall write,
 490 To guide them in all truth, and also arm
 With spiritual armor, able to resist
 Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts,⁶

3. Michael spells out the application to Christ of the promise offered typologically to Abraham's seed.

4. These lines do not formulate the medieval idea of the *felix culpa*—that the Fall was fortunate in bringing humans greater happiness than they would otherwise have enjoyed—only that the Fall has provided God an occasion to bring still greater good out of evil. The poem makes clear that Adam and Eve would have grown in perfection and

advanced to Heaven had they not sinned.

5. The Holy Spirit, who for Milton is much subordinate to both Father and Son.

6. Cf. Ephesians 6.11-16: "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. . . . Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." The subsequent history (lines 493—507) is that of the early Christian church in apostolic times.

What⁰ man can do against them, not afraid, *as much as*
 Though to the death, against such cruelties
 With inward consolations recompensed,
 And oft supported so as shall amaze
 Their proudest persecutors: for the Spirit
 Poured first on his apostles, whom he sends
 To evangelize the nations, then on all
 Baptized, shall them with wondrous gifts endue⁰ *endow*
 To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
 As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
 Great numbers of each nation to receive
 With joy the tidings brought from Heav'n: at length
 Their ministry performed, and race well run,
 Their doctrine and their story written left,⁷
 They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,
 Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
 Who all the sacred mysteries of Heav'n
 To their own vile advantages shall turn
 Of lucre⁰ and ambition, and the truth *wealth*
 With superstitions and traditions taint,⁸
 Left only in those written records pure,
 Though not but by the Spirit understood.
 Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,⁰ *honors*
 Places⁰ and titles, and with these to join *offices*
 Secular power, though feigning still to act
 By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
 The Spirit of God, promised alike and giv'n
 To all believers; and from that pretense,
 Spiritual laws by carnal⁰ power shall force *fleshly,* *worldly*
 On every conscience;⁹ laws which none shall find
 Left them enrolled, or what the Spirit within
 Shall on the heart engrave.¹ What will they then
 But force the Spirit of Grace itself, and bind
 His consort Liberty; what, but unbuild
 His living temples,² built by faith to stand,
 Their own faith not another's: for on earth
 Who against faith and conscience can be heard
 Infallible?³ Yet many will presume:
 Whence heavy persecution shall arise
 On all who in the worship persevere
 Of Spirit and Truth; the rest, far greater part,
 Will deem in outward rites and specious forms

7. I.e., in the Gospels and Epistles.

8. The history summarized in lines 508—40 is of the corruption of the Christian church by superstitions, traditions, and persecutions of conscience in patristic times under the popes and the Christian emperors, but also extending to the Last Day. The terms point especially to what Milton saw as the revival of "popish" superstitions in the English church of the Restoration and to the fierce persecution of dissenters.

9. These lines affirm the Protestant principle of every Christian's right to interpret Scripture according to the "inner light" of the Spirit, and denounce (as Milton consistently did in his tracts)

the use of civil ("carnal") power to enforce orthodoxy.

1. I.e., there is nothing in Scripture or in the Spirit's inner teaching that sanctions persecution for conscience.

2. Cf. 1 Corinthians 3.16: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God?" "His consort Liberty": Milton typically insists that Christ's gospel and the Spirit of God teach liberty, religious and civil, alluding as here to 2 Corinthians 3.17: "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

3. An attack on papal claims to infallibility, asserted though not yet proclaimed as doctrine.

535 Religion satisfied; Truth shall retire
 Bestuck with sland'rous darts, and works of faith
 Rarely be found: so shall the world go on,
 To good malignant, to bad men benign,
 Under her own weight groaning, till the day

540 Appear of respiration^o to the just, *respite*
 And vengeance to the wicked, at return
 Of him so lately promised to thy aid,
 The "Woman's Seed,"⁴ obscurely then foretold,
 Now amplier known thy Savior and thy Lord,

545 Last in the clouds from Heav'n to be revealed
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve
 Satan with his perverted world, then raise
 From the conflagr^oant mass,^o purged and refined, *the burning world*
 New heav'ns, new earth, ages of endless date

550 Founded in righteousness and peace of love,
 To bring forth fruits joy and eternal bliss."
 He ended; and thus Adam last replied:
 "How soon hath thy prediction, seer blest,
 Measured this transient world, the race of time,

555 Till time stand fixed: beyond is all abyss,
 Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
 Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
 Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
 Of knowledge, what^o this vessel can contain; *as much as*

560 Beyond which was my folly to aspire.
 Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
 And love with fear the only God, to walk
 As in his presence, ever to observe
 His providence, and on him sole depend,

565 Merciful over all his works, with good
 Still overcoming evil, and by small
 Accomplishing great things, by things deemed weak
 Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
 By simply meek; that suffering for truth's sake

570 Is fortitude to highest victory,
 And to the faithful death the gate of life;
 Taught this by his example whom I now
 Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest."
 To whom thus also th' angel last replied:

575 "This having learnt, thou hast attained the sum
 Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
 Thou knew'st by name,' and all th' ethereal powers,
 All secrets of the deep, all nature's works,
 Or works of God in heav'n, air, earth, or sea,

580 And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst,
 And all the rule, one empire; only add
 Deeds to thy knowledge answerable,^o add faith, *corresponding*

4. Michael's story ends with the full explication of the promised "Woman's Seed" as Christ, and with the renewal of all things after the Last Judgment (lines 545-51).

5. Michael glances back at Raphael's warning in

Book 8 that Adam should concern himself first with matters pertaining to his own life and world, rather than speculating overmuch about the cosmos.

Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love,
 By name to come called charity, the soul
 585 Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loath
 To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
 A paradise within thee, happier far.
 Let us descend now therefore from this top
 Of speculation;⁶ for the hour precise *hill of speculation*
 590 Exacts⁶ our parting hence; and see the guards, *requires*
 By me encamped on yonder hill, expect
 Their motion,⁶ at whose front a flaming sword, *await their orders*
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round;
 We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;
 595 Her also I with gentle dreams have calmed
 Portending good, and all her spirits composed
 To meek submission: thou at season fit
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard,
 Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,
 600 The great deliverance by her seed to come
 (For by the Woman's Seed) on all mankind.
 That ye may live, which will be many days,
 Both in one faith unanimous though sad,
 With cause for evils past, yet much more cheered
 605 With meditation on the happy end."
 He ended, and they both descend the hill;
 Descended, Adam to the bow'r where Eve
 Lay sleeping ran before, but found her waked;
 And thus with words not sad she him received:
 610 "Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;
 For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise,⁶
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
 Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
 Wearied I fell asleep: but now lead on;
 615 In me is no delay; with thee to go,
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
 Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me
 Art all things under heav'n, all places thou,⁷
 Who for my willful crime art banished hence.
 620 This further consolation yet secure
 I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
 Such favor I unworthy am vouchsafed,
 By me the promised Seed shall all restore."
 So spake our mother Eve, and Adam heard
 625 Well pleased, but answered not; for now too nigh
 Th' Archangel stood, and from the other hill
 To their fixed station, all in bright array
 The Cherubim descended; on the ground
 Gliding meteorous,⁸ as evening mist *like a meteor*
 630 Ris'n from a river o'er the marsh⁹ glides, *marsh*

6. The lines suggest that Eve's dream has provided her a parallel (if lesser) prophecy to Adam's visions and instruction. Cf. Numbers 12.6: "If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto

him in a dream."

7. Eve's lines—the final speech in the poem—recall her prelapsarian love song to Adam (4.641ff.) and Ruth's promise to accompany her mother-in-law, Naomi (Ruth 1.16).

And gathers ground fast at the laborer's heel
 Homeward returning. High in front advanced,
 The brandished sword of God before them blazed
 Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
 635 And vapor⁰ as the Libyan air adust,⁰ *smoke/-parched*
 Began to parch that temperate clime; whereat
 In either hand the hast'ning angel caught
 Our ling'ring parents, and to th' eastern gate
 Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
 640 To the subjected⁰ plain; then disappeared. *low-lying*
 They looking back, all th' eastern side beheld
 Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,⁰ *estate*
 Waved over by that flaming brand,⁰ the gate *sword*
 With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms:
 645 Some natural tears they dropped, 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 wand'ring steps and slow,
 Through Eden took their solitary way.

The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century 1660-1785

- 1660: Charles II restored to the English throne
- 1688—89: The Glorious Revolution: deposition of James II and accession of William of Orange
- 1700: Death of John Dryden
- 1707: Act of Union unites Scotland and England, creating the nation of "Great Britain"
- 1714: Rule by House of Hanover begins with accession of George I
- 1744[^]-5: Deaths of Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift
- 1784: Death of Samuel Johnson

The Restoration and the eighteenth century brought vast changes to the island of Great Britain, which became a single nation after 1707, when the Act of Union joined Scotland to England and Wales. After the prolonged civil and religious strife of the seventeenth century, Britain attained political stability and unprecedented commercial vigor. The countryside kept its seemingly timeless agricultural rhythms, even as the nation's great families consolidated their control over the land and those who worked it. Change came most dramatically to cities, which absorbed much of a national population that nearly doubled in the period, to ten million. Britons came together in civil society—the public but nongovernmental institutions and practices that became newly powerful in the period. The theaters (reopened at the Restoration), coffeehouses, concert halls, pleasure gardens, lending libraries, picture exhibitions, and shopping districts gave life in London and elsewhere a feeling of bustle and friction. Reflecting and stimulating this activity, an expanding assortment of printed works vied to interest literate women and men, whose numbers grew to include most of the middle classes and many among the poor. Civil society also linked people to an increasingly global economy, as they shopped for diverse goods from around the world. The rich and even the moderately well off could profit or go broke from investments in joint-stock companies, which controlled much of Britain's international trade, including its lucrative traffic in slaves. At home, new systems of canals and turnpikes stimulated domestic trade, industry, and travel, bringing distant parts of the country closer together. The cohesion of the nation also depended on ideas of social order—some old and clear, many subtle and new. An ethos of politeness came to prevail, a standard of social behavior to which more and more could aspire yet that served to distinguish the privileged sharply from the rude and vulgar. This and other ideas, of order and hierarchy, of liberty and rights, of sentiment

and sympathy, helped determine the ways in which an expanding diversity of people could seek to participate in Britain's thriving cultural life.

RELIGION AND POLITICS

The Restoration of 1660—the return of Charles Stuart and, with him, the monarchy to England—brought hope to a divided nation, exhausted by years of civil war and political turmoil. Almost all of Charles's subjects welcomed him home. After the abdication of Richard Cromwell in 1659 the country had seemed at the brink of chaos, and Britons were eager to believe that their king would bring order and law and a spirit of mildness back into the national life. But no political settlement could be stable until the religious issues had been resolved. The restoration of the monarchy meant that the established church would also be restored, and though Charles was willing to pardon or ignore many former enemies (such as Milton), the bishops and Anglican clergy were less tolerant of dissent. When Parliament reimposed the Book of Common Prayer in 1662 and then in 1664 barred Nonconformists from religious meetings outside the established church, thousands of clergymen resigned their livings, and the jails were filled with preachers like John Bunyan who refused to be silenced. In 1673 the Test Act required all holders of civil and military offices to take the sacrament in an Anglican church and to deny belief in transubstantiation. Thus Protestant Dissenters and Roman Catholics were largely excluded from public life; for instance, Alexander Pope, a Catholic, could not attend a university, own land, or vote. The scorn of Anglicans for Nonconformist zeal or "enthusiasm" (a belief in private revelation) bursts out in Samuel Butler's popular *Hudibras* (1663), a caricature of Presbyterians and Independents. And English Catholics were widely regarded as potential traitors and (wrongly) thought to have set the Great Fire that destroyed much of London in 1666.

Yet the triumph of the established church did not resolve the constitutional issues that had divided Charles I and Parliament. Charles II had promised to govern through Parliament but slyly tried to consolidate royal power. Steering away from crises, he hid his Catholic sympathies and avoided a test of strength with Parliament—except on one occasion. In 1678 the report of the Popish Plot, in which Catholics would rise and murder their Protestant foes, terrified London; and though the charge turned out to be a fraud, the House of Commons exploited the fear by trying to force Charles to exclude his Catholic brother, James, duke of York, from succession to the throne. The turmoil of this period is captured brilliantly by Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophiel* (1681). Finally, Charles defeated the Exclusion Bill by dissolving Parliament. But the crisis resulted in a basic division of the country between two new political parties: the Tories, who supported the king, and the Whigs, the king's opponents.

Neither party could live with James II. After he came to the throne in 1685, he claimed the right to make his own laws, suspended the Test Act, and began to fill the army and government with fellow Catholics. The birth of James's son in 1688 brought matters to a head, confronting the nation with the prospect of a Catholic dynasty. Secret negotiations paved the way for the Dutchman William of Orange, a champion of Protestantism and the husband of James's Protestant daughter Mary. William landed with a small army in southwestern England and marched toward London. As he advanced the king's allies

melted away, and James fled to a permanent exile in France. But the house of Stuart would be heard from again. For more than half a century some loyal Jacobites (from the Latin *Jacobus*, "James"), especially in Scotland, supported James, his son ("the Old Pretender"), and his grandson ("the Young Pretender" or "Bonnie Prince Charlie") as the legitimate rulers of Britain. Moreover, a good many writers, from Aphra Behn and Dryden (and arguably Pope and Johnson) to Robert Burns, privately sympathized with Jacobitism. But after the failure of one last rising in 1745, the cause would dwindle gradually into a wistful sentiment. In retrospect, the coming of William and Mary in 1688—the Glorious, or Bloodless, Revolution—came to be seen as the beginning of a stabilized, unified Great Britain.

A lasting settlement followed. In 1689 a Bill of Rights revoked James's actions; it limited the powers of the Crown, reaffirmed the supremacy of Parliament, and guaranteed some individual rights. The same year the Toleration Act relaxed the strain of religious conflict by granting a limited freedom of worship to Dissenters (although not to Catholics or Jews) so long as they swore allegiance to the Crown. This proved to be a workable compromise; and with the passage of the Act of Settlement in 1701, putting Sophia, electress of Hanover, and her descendants in line for the throne (as the granddaughter of James I, she was the closest Protestant relative of Princess Anne, James II's younger daughter, whose sole surviving child died in that year), the difficult problems that had so long divided England seemed resolved. The principles established in 1689 endured unaltered in essentials until the Reform Bill of 1832.

During Anne's reign (1702—14), new political tensions embittered the nation. In the War of the Spanish Succession (1702—13), England and its allies defeated France and Spain; as these commercial rivals were weakened and war profits flowed in, the Whig lords and London merchants supporting the war grew rich. The spoils included new colonies and the *asiento*, a contract to supply slaves to the Spanish Empire. The hero of the war, Captain-General John Churchill, duke of Marlborough, won the famous victory of Blenheim; was showered with honors and wealth; and, with his duchess, dominated the queen until 1710. But the Whigs and Marlborough pushed their luck too hard. When the Whigs tried to reward the Dissenters for their loyalty by removing the Test, Anne fought back to defend the established church. She dismissed her Whig ministers and the Marlboroughs and called in Robert Harley and the brilliant young Henry St. John to form a Tory ministry. These ministers employed prominent writers like Defoe and Swift and commissioned Matthew Prior to negotiate the Peace of Utrecht (1713). But to Swift's despair—he later burlesqued events at court in *Gulliver's Travels*—a bitter rivalry broke out between Harley (now earl of Oxford) and St. John (now Viscount Bolingbroke). Though Bolingbroke succeeded in ousting Oxford, the death of Anne in 1714 reversed his fortunes. The Whigs returned to power, and George I (Sophia's son) became the first Hanoverian king (he would reign until 1727). Harley was imprisoned in the Tower of London until 1717; and Bolingbroke, charged with being a Jacobite traitor, fled to France. Government was now securely in the hands of the Whigs.

The political principles of the Whig and Tory Parties, which bring so much fire to eighteenth-century public debate, evolved to address changing circumstances through the period. Now we tend to think of Tories as conservative and Whigs as liberal. (Members of today's Conservative Party in the United

Kingdom are sometimes called Tories.) During the Exclusion Crisis of the 1680s the Whigs asserted the liberties of the English subject against the royal prerogatives of Charles II, whom Tories such as Dryden supported. After both parties survived the 1688 Glorious Revolution, the Tories guarded the pre-eminence of the established church (sometimes styling themselves the Church Party), while Whigs tended to support toleration of Dissenters. Economically, too, Tories defined themselves as traditionalists, affirming landownership as the proper basis of wealth, power, and privilege (though most thought trade honorable), whereas the Whigs came to be seen as supporting a new "moneyed interest" (as Swift called it): managers of the Bank of England (founded 1694), contrivers of the system of public credit, and investors in the stock market. But conservatism and liberalism did not exist as coherent ideologies in the period, and the vicissitudes of party dispute offer many surprises. When Bolingbroke returned to England in 1724 after being pardoned, he led a Tory opposition that decried the "ministerial tyranny" of the Whig government. This opposition patriotically hailed liberty in a manner recalling the Whig rhetoric of earlier decades, appealed to both landed gentry and urban merchants, and arguably anticipated the antigovernment radicalism of the end of the eighteenth century. Conversely, the Whigs sought to secure a centralized fiscal and military state machine and a web of financial interdependence controlled by the wealthiest aristocrats.

The great architect of this Whig policy was Robert Walpole, who came to power as a result of the "South Sea bubble" (1720), a stock market crash. His ability to restore confidence and keep the country running smoothly, as well as to juggle money, would mark his long ascendancy. Coming to be known as Britain's first "prime" minister, he consolidated his power during the reign of George II (1727—60). More involved in British affairs than his essentially German father, George II came to appreciate the efficient administration of the patronage system under Walpole, who installed dependents in government offices and controlled the House of Commons by financially rewarding its members. Many great writers found these methods offensive and embraced Bolingbroke's new Tory rhetoric extolling the Englishman's fierce independence from the corrupting power of centralized government and concentrations of wealth. Gay's *Beggar's Opera* (1728) and Fielding's *Jonathan Wild* (1743) draw parallels between great criminals and great politicians, and Pope's *Dunciad* uses Walpole as an emblem of the venal commercialization of the whole social fabric. This distaste, however, did not prevent Pope himself from marketing his poems as cleverly as he wrote them.

Walpole fell in 1742 because he was unwilling to go to war against the French and Spanish, a war he thought would cost too much but that many perceived would enhance Britain's wealth still further. The next major English statesman, William Pitt the Elder, appealed to a spirit of national patriotism and called for the expansion of British power and commerce overseas. The defeat of the French in the Seven Years' War (1756—63), especially in North America, was largely his doing. The long reign of George III (1760—1820) was dominated by two great concerns: the emergence of Britain as a colonial power and the cry for a new social order based on liberty and radical reform. In 1763 the Peace of Paris consolidated British rule over Canada and India, and not even the later loss of the American colonies could stem the rise of the empire. Great Britain was no longer an isolated island but a nation with interests and responsibilities around the world.

At home, however, there was discontent. The wealth brought to England by industrialism and foreign trade had not spread to the great mass of the poor. For much of the century, few had questioned the idea that those at the top of the social hierarchy rightfully held power. Rich families' alliances and rivalries, national and local, dominated politics; while male property owners could vote in Parliamentary elections, they and others of the middle classes and the poor had mostly followed the powerful people who could best help them thrive or at least survive. But toward the end of the century it seemed to many that the bonds of custom that once held people together had finally broken, and now money alone was respected. Protestants turned against Catholics; in 1780 the Gordon Riots put London temporarily under mob rule. The king was popular with his subjects and tried to take government into his own hands, rising above partisanship, but his efforts often backfired—as when the American colonists took him for a tyrant. From 1788 to the end of his life, moreover, an inherited disease (porphyria) periodically unhinged his mind, as in a memorable scene described by Frances Rurney. Meanwhile, reformers such as John Wilkes and Richard Price called for a new political democracy. Fear of their radicalism would contribute to the British reaction against the French Revolution. In the last decades of the century British authors would be torn between two opposing attitudes: loyalty to the old traditions of subordination, mutual obligations, and local self-sufficiency, and yearning for a new dispensation founded on principles of liberty, the rule of reason, and human rights.

THE CONTEXT OF IDEAS

Much of the most powerful writing after 1660 exposed divisions in the nation's thinking that derived from the tumult of earlier decades. As the possibility of a Christian Commonwealth receded, the great republican John Milton published *Paradise Lost* (final version, 1674), and John Bunyan's immensely popular masterwork *Pilgrim's Progress* (1679) expressed the conscience of a Nonconformist. Conversely, an aristocratic culture, led by Charles II himself, aggressively celebrated pleasure and the right of the elite to behave extravagantly; members of the court scandalized respectable London citizens and considered their wives and daughters fair game. The court's hero, the earl of Rochester, became a celebrity for enacting the creed of a libertine and rake. The delights of the court also took more refined forms. French and Italian musicians, as well as painters from the Low Countries, migrated to England; and playhouses—closed by the Puritans since 1642—sprang back to life. In 1660 Charles authorized two new companies of actors, the King's Players and the Duke's; their repertory included witty, bawdy comedies written and acted by women as well as men. But as stark as the contrasts were during the Restoration between libertine and religious intellectuals, royalists and republicans, High Churchmen and Nonconformists, the court and the rest of the country, a spirit of compromise was brewing.

Perhaps the most widely shared intellectual impulse of the age was a distrust of dogmatism. Nearly everybody blamed it for the civil strife through which the nation had recently passed. Opinions varied widely about which dogmatism was most dangerous—Puritan enthusiasm, papal infallibility, the divine right of kings, medieval scholastic or modern Cartesian philosophy—but these were denounced in remarkably similar terms. As far apart intellectually and temperamentally as Rochester and Milton were, both portray overconfidence

in human reasoning as the supreme disaster. It is the theme of Butler's *Hudibras* and much of the work of Dryden. Many philosophers, scientists, and divines began to embrace a mitigated skepticism, which argued that human beings could readily achieve a sufficient degree of necessary knowledge (sometimes called "moral certainty") but also contended that the pursuit of absolute certainty was vain, mad, and socially calamitous. If, as the commentator Martin Clifford put it in *A Treatise of Humane Reason* (1675), "in this vast latitude of probabilities," a person thinks "there is none can lead one to salvation, but the path wherein he treads himself, we may see the evident and necessary consequence of eternal troubles and confusions." Such writers insist that a distrust of human capacities is fully compatible with religious faith: for them the inability of reason and sensory evidence to settle important questions reveals our need to accept Christian mysteries as our intellectual foundation. Dryden's poem *Religio Laid* (1682) explains: "So pale grows reason in religion's sight; / So dies, and so dissolves in supernatural light."

Far from inhibiting fresh thinking, however, the distrust of old dogmas inspired new theories, projects, and explorations. In *Leviathan* (1651), Thomas Hobbes jettisoned the notion of a divine basis for kingly authority, proposing instead a naturalistic argument for royal absolutism begun from the claim that mere "matter in motion" composes the universe: if not checked by an absolute sovereign, mankind's "perpetual and restless desire of power after power" could lead to civic collapse. Other materialist philosophies derived from ancient Epicurean thought, which was Christianized by the French philosopher Pierre Gassendi (1592–1655). The Epicurean doctrine that the universe consists only of minuscule atoms and void unnerved some thinkers—Swift roundly mocks it in *A Tale of a Tub*—but it also energized efforts to examine the world with deliberate, acute attention. This new scientific impulse advanced Francis Bacon's program of methodical experimentation and inductive reasoning formulated earlier in the century.

Charles II gave official approval to the scientific revolution by chartering the Royal Society of London for the Improving of Natural Knowledge in 1662. But observations of nature advanced both formally and informally in an eclectic range of areas: the specialized, professional "scientist" we know today did not yet exist. And new features of the world were disclosed to everyone who had the chance to look. Two wonderful inventions, the microscope and telescope, had begun to reveal that nature is more extravagant—teeming with tiny creatures and boundless galaxies—than anyone had ever imagined. One book that stayed popular for more than a century, Fontenelle's *Conversations on the Plurality of Worlds* (1686; translated from French by Behn and later by Burney), suggested that an infinite number of alternate worlds and living creatures might exist, not only in outer space but under our feet, invisibly small. Travels to unfamiliar regions of the globe also enlarged understandings of what nature could do: Behn's classifying and collecting of South American flora and fauna in *Oroonoko* show how the appetite for wondrous facts kept pace with the economic motives of world exploration and colonization. Encounters with hitherto little known societies in the Far East, Africa, and the Americas enlarged Europeans' understanding of human norms as well. In *Gidliiver's Travels*, Swift shows the comical, painful ways in which the discovery of new cultures forces one average Briton to reexamine his own. (See the topics "The Plurality of Worlds" and "Travel, Trade, and the Expansion of Empire" on Norton Literature Online.)

Scientific discovery and exploration also affected religious attitudes. Alongside "natural history" (the collection and description of facts of nature) and "natural philosophy" (the study of the causes of what happens in nature), thinkers of the period placed "natural religion" (the study of nature as a book written by God). Newly discovered natural laws, such as Newton's laws of optics and celestial mechanics, seemed evidence of a universal order in creation, which implied God's hand in the design of the universe, as a watch implies a watchmaker. Expanded knowledge of peoples around the world who had never heard of Christianity led theologians to formulate supposedly universal religious tenets available to all rational beings. Some intellectuals embraced Deism, the doctrine that religion need not depend on mystery or biblical truths and could rely on reason alone, which recognized the goodness and wisdom of natural law and its creator. Natural religion could not, however, discern an active God who punished vice and rewarded virtue in this life; evidently the First Cause had withdrawn from the universe He set in motion. Many orthodox Christians shuddered at the vision of a vast, impersonal machine of nature. Instead they rested their faith on the revelation of Scripture, the scheme of salvation in which Christ died to redeem our sins. Other Christians, such as Pope in *An Essay on Man* and Thomson in *The Seasons*, espoused arguments for natural religion that they felt did not conflict with or diminish orthodox belief.

Some people began to argue that the achievements of modern inquiry had eclipsed those of the ancients (and the fathers of the church), who had not known about the solar system, the New World, microscopic organisms, or the circulation of the blood. The school curriculum began with years of Latin and Greek, inculcating a long-established humanistic tradition that many authors, including Swift and Pope, still cherished. A battle of the books erupted in the late seventeenth century between champions of ancient and of modern learning. Swift crusaded fiercely in this battle: *Gulliver's Travels* denounces the pointlessness and arrogance he saw in experiments of the Royal Society, while "A Modest Proposal" depicts a peculiar new cruelty and indifference to moral purpose made possible by statistics and economics (two fields pioneered by Royal Society member Sir William Petty). But as sharp as such disagreements were, accommodation was also possible. Even as works such as Newton's *Principia* (1687) and *Opticks* (1704) revolutionized previously held views of the world, Newton himself maintained a seemly diffidence, comparing himself to "a boy playing on the sea-shore" "whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me." He and other modest modern inquirers such as Locke won the admiration of Pope and many ardent defenders of the past.

The widespread devotion to the direct observation of experience established empiricism as the dominant intellectual attitude of the age, which would become Britain's great legacy to world philosophy. Locke and his heirs George Berkeley and David Hume pursue the experiential approach in widely divergent directions. But even when they reach conclusions shocking to common sense, they tend to reassert the security of our prior knowledge. Berkeley insists we know the world only through our senses and thus cannot prove that any material thing exists, but he uses that argument to demonstrate the necessity of faith, because reality amounts to no more than a perception in the mind of God. Hume's famous argument about causation—that "causes and effects are discoverable, not by reason but by experience"—grounds our sense of the world not on rational reflection but on spontaneous, unreflective beliefs and

feelings. Perhaps Locke best expresses the temper of his times in the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690):

If by this inquiry into the nature of the understanding, I can discover the powers thereof; how far they reach; to what things they are in any degree proportionate; and where they fail us, I suppose it maybe of use, to prevail with the busy mind of man to be more cautious in meddling with things exceeding its comprehension; to stop when it is at the utmost extent of its tether; and to sit down in a quiet ignorance of those things which, upon examination, are found to be beyond the reach of our capacities. . . . Our business here is not to know all things, but those which concern our conduct.

Such a position is Swift's, when he inveighs against metaphysics, abstract logical deductions, and theoretical science. It is similar to Pope's warning against human presumption in *An Essay on Man*. It prompts Johnson to talk of "the business of living" and to restrain the flights of unbridled imagination. And it helps account for the Anglican clergy's dislike of emotion and "enthusiasm" in religion and for their emphasis on good works, rather than faith, as the way to salvation. Locke's empiricism pervaded eighteenth-century British thought on politics, education, and morals as well as philosophy; Johnson's great *Dictionary* (1755) uses more than fifteen hundred illustrations from his writings.

Yet perhaps the most momentous new idea at the turn of the eighteenth century was set against Lockean thinking. The groundbreaking intellectual Mary Astell, in *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (1694) and *Some Reflections upon Marriage* (1700, 1706), initiated a powerful strain of modern feminism, arguing for the establishment of women's educational institutions and decrying the tyranny that husbands legally exercised over their wives. She nonetheless mocked the calls for political rights and liberty by Locke and other Whig theorists, rights that pointedly did not extend to women. Instead, she and other early feminists, including Sarah Fyge Egerton and Mary, Lady Chudleigh, embraced the Tory principle of obedience to royal and church authority. Women's advocates had to fight "tyrant Custom" (in Egerton's words), rooted in ancient traditions of domestic power and enshrined in the Bible and mythic human prehistory. This struggle seemed distinct from public political denunciations of the tyranny of some relatively recent Charles or James. Astell feared that the doctrines of male revolutionaries could produce civil chaos and so jeopardize the best that women could hope for in her day: the freedom to become fully educated, practice their religion, and marry (or not) according to their own enlightened judgment.

Other thinkers, male and female, began to advocate improving women's education as part of a wider commitment to enhancing and extending sociability. Richard Steele's periodical *The Tatler* satirized Astell as "Madonella" because she seemed to recommend women to a nun-like, "recluse life." In *The Spectator* (1711–12; 1714), conversely, Steele and Joseph Addison encouraged women to learn to participate in an increasingly sociable, intellectually sophisticated, urbane world, where all sorts of people could mingle, as in the streets and parks of a thriving city like London. Such periodicals sought to teach as large a readership as possible to think and behave politely. On a more aristocratic plane, the *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times* (1711) by the third earl of Shaftesbury similarly asserted the naturally social

meaning of human character and meditated on the affections, the witty intercourse, and the standards of politeness that bind people together. Such ideas led to the popularity around mid-century of a new word, *sentimental*, which locates the bases of social conduct in instinctual feeling rather than divinely sanctioned moral codes. Religion itself, according to Laurence Sterne, might be a "Great Sensorium," a sort of central nervous system that connects the feelings of all living creatures in one great benevolent soul. And people began to feel, exquisite pleasure in the exercise of charity. The cult of sensibility fostered a philanthropy that led to social reforms seldom envisioned in earlier times—to the improvement of jails, the relief of imprisoned debtors, the establishment of foundling hospitals and of homes for penitent prostitutes, and ultimately the abolition of the slave trade. And it also loosed a ready flow of sympathetic responses to the joys and sorrows of fellow human beings.

Another passion that transformed British culture in the period was curiosity: scientific discoveries increasingly found practical applications in industry, the arts, and even entertainment. By the late 1740s, as knowledge of electricity advanced, public experiments offered fashionable British crowds the opportunity to electrocute themselves. Amateurs everywhere amused themselves with air pumps and chemical explosions. Birmingham became famous as a center where science and manufacturing were combining to change the world: in the early 1760s Matthew Boulton (1728-1809) established the most impressive factory of the age just outside town, producing vast quantities of pins, buckles, and buttons; in subsequent decades, his applications and manufacture of the new steam engine invented by Scotsman James Watt (1736—1819) helped build an industry to drive all others. Practical chemistry also led to industrial improvements: domestic porcelain production became established in the 1750s; and from the 1760s Josiah Wedgwood (1730—95) developed glazing, manufacturing, and marketing techniques that enabled British ceramics to compete with China for fashionable taste. (In 1765 he named his creamware "Queen's ware" to remind customers of its place on Queen Charlotte's table.) Wedgwood and others answered an ever-increasing demand in Britain for beautiful objects. Artist William Hogarth satirized this appetite of the upper and middle classes for the accumulation of finery: a chaotic collection of china figurines crowds the mantel in Plate 2 of *Marriage A-la-Mode* (1743—45). Yet the images that made Hogarth famous would soon decorate English ceramic teapots and plates and be turned into porcelain figurines themselves.

New forms of religious devotion sprang up amid Britain's spectacular material success. The evangelical revival known as Methodism began in the 1730s, led by three Oxford graduates: John Wesley (1703—1791), his brother Charles (1707-1788), and George Whitefield (1714-1770). The Methodists took their gospel to the common people, warning that all were sinners and damned, unless they accepted "amazing grace," salvation through faith. Often denied the privilege of preaching in village churches, evangelicals preached to thousands in barns or the open fields. The emotionalism of such revival meetings repelled the somnolent Anglican Church and the upper classes, who feared that the fury and zeal of the Puritan sects were returning. Methodism was sometimes related to madness; convinced that he was damned forever, the poet William Cowper broke down and became a recluse. But the religious awakening persisted and affected many clergymen and laymen within the Establishment, who reanimated the church and promoted unworldliness and

piety. Nor did the insistence of Methodists on faith over works as the way to salvation prevent them or their Anglican allies from fighting for social reforms. The campaign to abolish slavery and the slave trade was driven largely by a passion to save souls.

Sentimentalism, evangelicalism, and the pursuits of wealth and luxury in different ways all placed a new importance on individuals—the gratification of their tastes and ambitions or their yearning for personal encounters with each other or a personal God. Diary keeping, elaborate letter writing, and the novel also testified to the growing importance of the private, individual life. Few histories of kings or nations could rival Richardson's novel *Clarissa* in length, popularity, or documentary detail: it was subtitled "the History of a Young Lady." The older hierarchical system had tended to subordinate individuals to their social rank or station. In the eighteenth century that fixed system began to break down, and people's sense of themselves began to change. By the end of the century many issues of politics and the law revolve around rights, not traditions. The modern individual had been invented; no product of the age is more enduring.

CONDITIONS OF LITERARY PRODUCTION

Publishing boomed as never before in eighteenth-century Britain, as the number of titles appearing annually and the periodicals published in London and the provincial towns dramatically increased. This expansion in part resulted from a loosening of legal restraints on printing. Through much of the previous three centuries, the government had licensed the texts deemed suitable for publication and refused to license those it wanted suppressed (a practice called "prior restraint"). After the Restoration, the new Printing Act (1662) tightened licensing controls, though unlike his Stuart predecessors Charles II now shared this power with Parliament. But in 1695, during the reign of William III, the last in a series of printing acts was not renewed. Debate in Parliament on the matter was more practical than idealistic: it was argued that licensing fettered the printing trades and was ineffective at preventing obnoxious publications anyway, which could be better constrained after publication by enforcing laws against seditious libel, obscenity, and treason. As the two-party system consolidated, both Whigs and Tories seemed to realize that prepublication censorship could bite them when their own side happened to be out of power. Various governments attempted to revive licensing during political crises throughout the eighteenth century, but it was gone for good.

This did not end the legal liabilities, and the prosecutions, of authors. Daniel Defoe, for instance, was convicted of seditious libel and faced the pillory and jail for his satirical pamphlet "The Shortest Way with the Dissenters" (1702), which imitated High-Church zeal so extravagantly that it provoked both the Tories and the Dissenters he had set about to defend. And licensing of the stage returned: irritated especially by Henry Fielding's anti-government play *The Historical Register for the Year 1736*, Robert Walpole pushed the Stage Licensing Act through Parliament in 1737, which authorized the Lord Chamberlain to license all plays and reduced the number of London theaters to two (Drury Lane and Covent Garden), closing Fielding's New Theatre in the Haymarket and driving him to a new career as a novelist. But despite such constraints, Hume could begin his essay "Of the Liberty of the Press" (1741) by citing "the extreme liberty we enjoy in this country of communicating whatever

we please to the public" as an internationally recognized commonplace. This freedom allowed eighteenth-century Britain to build an exemplary version of what historians have called "the public sphere": a cultural arena, free of direct government control, consisting of not just published comment on matters of national interest but also the public venues—coffeehouses, clubs, taverns—where readers circulated, discussed, and conceived responses to it. The first regular daily London newspaper, the *Daily Courant*, appeared in 1702; in 1731, the first magazine, the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The latter was followed both by imitations and by successful literary journals like the *Monthly Review* (1749) and the *Critical Review* (1756). Each audience attracted some periodical tailored to it, as with the *Female Tatler* (1709) and Eliza Haywood's *Female Spectator* (1744–46).

After 1695, the legal status of printed matter became ambiguous, and in 1710 Parliament enacted the Statute of Anne—"An Act for the Encouragement of Learning by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of Such Copies"—the first copyright law in British history not tied to government approval of works' contents. Typically, these copyrights were held by booksellers, who operated much as publishers do today (in the eighteenth century, *publisher* referred to one who distributed books). A bookseller paid an author for a work's copyright and, after registering the work with the Stationers' Company for a fee, had exclusive right for fourteen years to publish it; if alive when this term expired, he owned it another fourteen years. Payments to authors for copyright varied. Pope got £15 for the 1714 version of *The Rape of the Lock*, while Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas* earned him £100. The Statute of Anne spurred the book trade by enhancing booksellers' control over works and hence their chance to profit by them. But the government soon introduced a new constraint. In 1712, the first Stamp Act put a tax on all newspapers, advertisements, paper, and pamphlets (effectively any work under a hundred pages or so): all printed matter had to carry the stamp indicating the taxes had been paid. Happily for Anne and her ministry, the act both raised government revenue and drove a number of the more irresponsible, ephemeral newspapers out of business, though the *Spectator* simply doubled its price and thrived. Stamp Acts were in effect throughout the century, and duties tended to increase when the government needed to raise money and rein in the press, as during the Seven Years' War in 1757.

But such constraints were not heavy enough to hold back the publishing market, which began to sustain the first true professional class of authors in British literary history. The lower echelon of the profession was called "Grub Street," which was, as Johnson's *Dictionary* explains, "originally the name of a street in Moorfields in London, much inhabited by writers of small histories, dictionaries, and temporary poems." The market increasingly motivated the literary elite too, and Johnson himself came to remark that "no man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money." As a young writer, he sold articles to the *Gentleman's Magazine*, and many other men and women struggled to survive doing piecework for periodicals. The enhanced opportunity to sell their works on the open market meant that fewer authors needed to look to aristocratic patrons for support. But a new practice, publication by subscription, blended elements of patronage and literary capitalism and created the century's most spectacular authorial fortunes. Wealthy readers could subscribe to a work in progress, usually by agreeing to pay the author half in advance and half upon receipt of the book. Subscribers were rewarded with an edition

more sumptuous than the common run and the appearance of their names in a list in the book's front pages. Major works by famous authors, such as Dryden's translation of Virgil (1697) and the 1718 edition of Prior's poems, generated the most subscription sales; the grandest success was Pope's translation of Homer's *Iliad* (1715—20), which gained him about £5000; his *Odyssey* (1725—26) raised nearly that much. But smaller projects deemed to need special encouragement also sold by subscription, including nearly all books of poetry by women, such as Mary Leapor's poems (1751).

Not all entered the literary market with equal advantages; and social class played a role, though hardly a simple one, in preparing authors for success. The better educated were better placed to be taken seriously: many eminent male writers, including Dryden, Locke, Addison, Swift, Hume, Johnson, Burke—the list could go on and on—had at least some university education, either at Oxford or Cambridge or at Scottish or Irish universities, where attendance by members of the laboring classes was virtually nil. Also, universities were officially closed to non-Anglicans. Some important writers attended the Dissenting academies that sprang up to fulfill Nonconformists' educational aspirations: Defoe went to an excellent one at Newington Green. A few celebrated authors such as Rochester and Henry Fielding had aristocratic backgrounds, but many came from the "middle class," though those in this category show how heterogeneous it was. Pope, a Catholic, obtained his education privately, and his father was a linen wholesaler, but he eventually became intimate with earls and viscounts, whereas Richardson, who had a family background in trade and (as he said) "only common school-learning," was a successful printer before he became a novelist. Roth were middle class in a sense and made their own fortunes in eighteenth-century print culture, yet they inhabited vastly different social worlds.

Despite the general exclusion of the poor from education and other means of social advancement, some self-educated writers of the laboring classes fought their way into print. A few became celebrities, aided by the increasing popularity of the idea, famously expressed by Gray in his "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard," that there must be unknown geniuses among the poor. Stephen Duck, an agricultural worker from Wiltshire, published his popular *Poems on Several Subjects* in 1730, which included "The Thresher's Labor" (he became known as the Thresher Poet). Queen Caroline herself retained him to be keeper of her library in Richmond. Several authors of the "common sort" followed in Duck's wake, including Mary Collier, whose poem "The Woman's Labor: An Epistle to Mr. Duck" (1739) defended country women against charges of idleness. Apart from such visible successes, eighteenth-century print culture afforded work for many from lower socioeconomic levels, if not as authors, then as hawkers of newspapers on city streets and singers of political ballads (who were often illiterate and female), bookbinders, paper-makers, and printing-press workers. The vigor of the literary market demanded the labor of all classes.

As all women were barred from universities and faced innumerable other disadvantages and varieties of repression, the story of virtually every woman author in the period is one of self-education, courage, and extraordinary initiative. Yet women did publish widely for the first time in the period, and the examples that can be assembled are as diverse as they are impressive. During the Restoration and early eighteenth century, a few aristocratic women poets were hailed as marvelous exceptions and given fanciful names: the poems of Katherine Philips (1631—1664), "the matchless Orinda," were published post-

humously in 1667; and others, including Anne Finch, Anne Killigrew, and later, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, printed poems or circulated them in manuscript among fashionable circles. A more broadly public sort of female authorship was more ambivalently received. Though Aphra Behn built a successful career in the theater and in print, her sexually frank works were sometimes denounced as unbecoming a woman. Many women writers of popular literature after her in the early eighteenth century assumed "scandalous" public roles. Delarivier Manley published transparent fictionalizations of the doings of the Whig nobility, including *The New Atalantis* (1709), while Eliza Haywood produced stories about seduction and sex (though her late works, including *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, 1751, courted a rising taste for morality). Male defenders of high culture found it easy to denounce these women and their works as affronts simultaneously to sexual decency and good literary taste: Pope's *Dunciad* (1728) awards Haywood as the prize in a pissing contest between scurrilous male booksellers.

Many women writers after mid-century were determined to be more moral than their predecessors. Around 1750, intellectual women established clubs of their own under the leadership of Elizabeth Vesey and Elizabeth Montagu, cousin to Lady Mary. Proclaiming a high religious and intellectual standard, these women came to be called "bluestockings" (after the inelegant worsted hose of an early member). Eminent men joined the bluestockings for literary conversation, including Samuel Johnson, Samuel Richardson, Horace Walpole (novelist, celebrated letter writer, and son of the prime minister), and David Garrick, preeminent actor of his day. The literary accomplishments of bluestockings ranged widely: in 1758 Elizabeth Carter published her translation of the Greek philosopher Epictetus, while Hannah More won fame as a poet, abolitionist, and educational theorist. Some of the most considerable literary achievements of women after mid-century came in the novel, a form increasingly directed at women readers, often exploring the moral difficulties of young women approaching marriage. The satirical novel *The Female Quixote* (1752) by Charlotte Lennox describes one such heroine deluded by the extravagant romances she reads, while Frances Rurney's *Evelina* (1778) unfolds the sexual and other dangers besetting its naive but good-hearted heroine.

Readers' abilities and inclinations to consume literature helped determine the volume and variety of published works. While historians disagree about how exactly the literacy rate changed in Britain through the early modern period, there is widespread consensus that by 1800 between 60 and 70 percent of adult men could read, in contrast to 25 percent in 1600. Since historians use the ability to sign one's name as an indicator of literacy, the evidence is even sketchier for women, who were less often parties to legal contracts: perhaps a third of women could read by the mid-eighteenth century. Reading was commoner among the relatively well off than among the very poor, and among the latter, more prevalent in urban centers than the countryside. Most decisively, cultural commentators throughout the century portrayed literacy as a good in itself: everyone in a Protestant country such as Britain, most thought, would benefit from direct access to the Bible and devotional works, and increasingly employers found literacy among servants and other laborers useful, especially those working in cities. Moral commentators did their best to steer inexperienced readers away from the frivolous and idle realm of popular imaginative literature, though literacy could not but give its new possessors freedom to explore their own tastes and inclinations.

Cost placed another limit on readership: few of the laboring classes would have disposable income to buy a cheap edition of Milton (around two shillings at mid-century) or even a copy of the *Gentleman's Magazine* (six pence), let alone the spare time or sense of entitlement to peruse such things. Nonetheless, reading material was widely shared (Addison optimistically calculated "twenty readers to every paper" of the *Spectator*), and occasionally servants were given access to the libraries of their employers or the rich family of the neighborhood. In the 1740s, circulating libraries began to emerge in cities and towns throughout Britain. Though the yearly fee they usually charged put them beyond the reach of the poor, these libraries gave the middle classes access to a wider array of books than they could afford to assemble on their own. Records of such libraries indicate that travels, histories, letters, and novels were most popular, though patrons borrowed many specialized, technical works as well. One fascinating index of change in the character of the reading public was the very look of words on the page. In the past, printers had rather capriciously capitalized many nouns—words as common as *Wood* or *Happiness*—and frequently italicized various words for emphasis. But around the middle of the eighteenth century, new conventions arose: initial capitals were reserved for proper names, and the use of italics was reduced. Such changes indicate that the reading public was becoming sophisticated enough not to require such overt pointing to the meanings of what they read. The modern, eighteenth-century reader had come to expect that all English writing, no matter how old or new, on any topic, in any genre, would be printed in the same consistent, uncluttered style. No innovation of the eighteenth-century culture of reading more immediately demonstrates its linkage to our own.

LITERARY PRINCIPLES

The literature appearing between 1660 and 1785 divides conveniently into three lesser periods of about forty years each. The first, extending to the death of Dryden in 1700, is characterized by an effort to bring a new refinement to English literature according to sound critical principles of what is fitting and right; the second, ending with the deaths of Pope in 1744 and Swift in 1745, extends that effort to a wider circle of readers, with special satirical attention to what is unfitting and wrong; the third, concluding with the death of Johnson in 1784 and the publication of Cowper's *The Task* in 1785, confronts the old principles with revolutionary ideas that would come to the fore in the Romantic movement of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

A sudden change of taste seemed to occur around 1660. The change had been long prepared, however, by a trend in European culture, especially in seventeenth-century France: the desire for an elegant simplicity. Reacting against the difficulty and occasional extravagance of late Renaissance literature, writers and critics called for a new restraint, clarity, regularity, and good sense. Donne's "metaphysics" and Milton's bold storming of heaven, for instance, seemed overdone to some Restoration readers. Hence Dryden and Andrew Marvell both were tempted to revise *Paradise Lost*, smoothing away its sublime but arduous idiosyncrasies. As daring and imaginative as Dryden's verse is, he tempers even its highly dramatic moments with an ease and sense of control definitive of the taste of his times.

This movement produced in France an impressive body of classical literature that distinguished the age of Louis XIV. In England it produced a literature often termed "Augustan," after the writers who flourished during the

reign of Augustus Caesar, the first Roman emperor. Rome's Augustan Age reestablished stability after the civil war that followed the assassination of Julius Caesar. Its chief poets, Virgil, Horace, and Ovid, addressed their polished works to a sophisticated aristocracy among whom they looked for patrons. Dryden's generation took advantage of the analogy between post-civil war England and Augustan Rome. Later generations would be suspicious of that analogy; after 1700 most writers stressed that Augustus had been a tyrant who thought himself greater than the law. But in 1660 there was hope that Charles would be a better Augustus, bringing England the civilized virtues of an Augustan age without its vices.

Charles and his followers brought back from exile an admiration of French literature as well as French fashions, and the theoretical "correctness" of such writers as Pierre Corneille, Rene Rapin, and Nicolas Roileau came into vogue. England also had a native tradition of classicism, derived from Ben Jonson and his followers, whose couplets embodied a refinement Dryden eagerly inherited and helped codify. The effort to formulate rules of good writing appealed to many critics of the age. Even Shakespeare had sometimes been careless; and although writers could not expect to surpass his genius, they might hope to avoid his faults. But "neoclassical" English literature aimed to be not only classical but *new*. Rochester and Dryden drew on literary traditions of variety, humor, and freewheeling fancy represented by Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Jonson, and Milton to infuse fresh life into Greek or Latin or French classical models.

Above all, the new simplicity of style aimed to give pleasure to readers—to express passions that everyone could recognize in language that everyone could understand. According to Dryden, Donne's amorous verse misguidedly "perplexes the minds of the fair sex with nice speculations of philosophy, when he should engage their hearts, and entertain them with the softnesses of love." Dryden's poems would not make that mistake; like subsequent English critics, he values poetry according to its power to move an audience. Thus Timotheus, in Dryden's "Alexander's Feast," is not only a musician but an archetypal poet who can make Alexander tearful or loving or angry at will. Readers, in turn, were supposed to cooperate with authors through the exercise of their own imaginations, creating pictures in the mind. When Timotheus describes vengeful ghosts holding torches, Alexander hallucinates in response and seizes a torch "with zeal to destroy." Much eighteenth-century poetry demands to be visualized. A phrase from Horace's *Art of Poetry, ut pictura poesis* (as in painting, so in poetry), was interpreted to mean that poetry ought to be a visual as well as verbal art. Pope's "Eloisa to Abelard," for instance, begins by picturing two rival female personifications: "heavenly-pensive contemplation" and "ever-musing melancholy" (in the older typographical style, the nouns would be capitalized). Readers were expected to *see* these figures: Contemplation, in the habit of a nun, whose eyes roll upward toward heaven; and the black goddess Melancholy, in wings and drapery, who broods upon the darkness. These two competing visions fight for Eloisa's soul throughout the poem, which we see entirely through her perspective. Eighteenth-century readers knew how to translate words into pictures, and modern readers can share their pleasure by learning to see poetic images in the mind's eye.

What poets most tried to see and represent was *Nature*—a word of many meanings. The Augustans focused especially on one: Nature as the universal and permanent elements in human experience. External nature, the landscape, attracted attention throughout the eighteenth century as a source of

pleasure and an object of inquiry. But as Finch muses on the landscape, in "A Nocturnal Reverie," it is her own soul she discovers. Pope's injunction to the critic, "First follow Nature," has primarily *human* nature in view. Nature consists of the enduring, general truths that have been, are, and will be true for everyone in all times, everywhere. Hence the business of the poet, according to Johnson's *Rasselas*, is "to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances . . . to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind." Yet if human nature was held to be uniform, human beings were known to be infinitely varied. Pope praises Shakespeare's characters as "Nature herself," but continues that "every single character in Shakespeare is as much an individual as those in life itself; it is . . . impossible to find any two alike." The general need not exclude the particular. In *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, Johnson describes the sorrows of an old woman: "Now kindred Merit fills the sable Bier, / Now lacerated Friendship claims a tear." Here "kindred Merit" refers particularly to a worthy relative who has died, and "lacerated Friendship" refers to a friend who has been wasted by violence or disease. Yet Merit and Friendship are also personifications, and the lines imply that the woman may be mourning the passing of goodness like her own or a broken friendship; values and sympathies can die as well as people. This play on words is not a pun. Rather, it indicates a state of mind in which life assumes the form of a perpetual allegory and some abiding truth shines through each circumstance as it passes. The particular is already the general, in good eighteenth-century verse.

To study Nature was also to study the ancients. Nature and Homer, according to Pope, were the same; and both Pope and his readers applied Horace's satires on Rome to their own world, because Horace had expressed the perennial forms of life. Moreover, modern writers could learn from the ancients how to practice their craft. If a poem is an object to be made, the poet (a word derived from the Greek for "maker") must make the object to proper specifications. Thus poets were taught to plan their works in one of the classical "kinds" or genres—epic, tragedy, comedy, pastoral, satire, or ode—to choose a language appropriate to that genre, and to select the right style and tone and rhetorical figures. The rules of art, as Pope had said, "are Nature methodized." At the same time, however, writers needed *wit*: quickness of mind, inventiveness, a knack for conceiving images and metaphors and for perceiving resemblances between things apparently unlike. Shakespeare had surpassed the ancients themselves in wit, and no one could deny that Pope was witty. Hence a major project of the age was to combine good method with wit, or judgment with fancy. Nature intended them to be one, and the role of judgment was not to suppress passion, energy, and originality but to make them more effective through discipline: "The winged courser, like a generous horse, / Shows most true mettle when you check his course."

The test of a poet's true mettle is language. When Wordsworth, in the preface to *Lyrical Ballads* (1800), declared that he wrote "in a selection of the language really used by men," he went on to attack eighteenth-century poets for their use of an artificial and stock "poetic diction." Many poets did employ a special language. It is characterized by personification, representing a thing or abstraction in human form, as when an "Ace of Hearts steps forth" or "Melancholy frowns"; by periphrasis (a roundabout way of avoiding homely words: "finny tribes" for *fish*, or "household feathery people" for *chickens*), by

stock phrases such as "shining sword," "verdant mead," "bounding main," and "checkered shade"; by words used in their original Latin sense, such as "genial," "gelid," and "horrid"; and by English sentences forced into Latin syntax ("Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth / A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown," where *youth* is the subject of the verb *rests*). This language originated in the attempt of Renaissance poets to rival the elegant diction of Virgil and other Roman writers, and Milton depended on it to help him obtain "answerable style" for the lofty theme of *Paradise Lost*. When used mechanically it could become a mannerism. But Thomas Gray contrives subtle, expressive effects from artificial diction and syntax, as in the ironic inflation of "Ode on the Death of a Favorite Cat" or a famous stanza from "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard":

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

It is easy to misread the first sentence. What is the subject of *awaits*? The answer must be *hour* (the only available singular noun), which lurks at the end of the sentence, ready to spring a trap not only on the reader but on all those aristocratic, powerful, beautiful, wealthy people who forget that their hour will come. Moreover, the intricacy of that sentence sets off the simplicity of the next, which says the same thing with deadly directness. The artful mix in the "Elegy" of a special poetic language—a language that nobody speaks—with sentiments that everybody feels helps account for the poem's enduring popularity.

Versification also tests a poet's skill. The heroic couplet was brought to such perfection by Pope, Johnson thought, that "to attempt any further improvement of versification will be dangerous." Pope's couplets, in rhymed iambic pentameter, typically present a complete statement, closed by a punctuation mark. Within the binary system of these two lines, a world of distinctions can be compressed. The second line of the couplet might closely parallel the first in structure and meaning, for instance, or the two lines might antithetically play against each other. Similarly, because a slight pause called a "caesura" often divides the typical pentameter line ("Know then thyself, presume not God to scan"), one part of the line can be made parallel with or antithetical to the other or even to one part of the following line. An often quoted and parodied passage of Sir John Denham's "Cooper's Hill" (1642) illustrates these effects. The poem addresses the Thames and builds up a witty comparison between the flow of a river and the flow of verse (*italics* are added to highlight the terms compared):

	O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream
Parallelism:	<i>My great exam-pie,</i>] as it is <i>my theme!</i>
Double balance:	Though <i>deep,</i> yet <i>clear,</i> though <i>gentle,</i> yet not <i>dull,</i>
Double balance:	<i>Strong</i> without <i>rage,</i> without <i>o'erfkrwing, full.</i>

Once Dryden and Pope had bound such passages more tightly together with alliteration and assonance, the typical metrical-rhetorical wit of the new age had been perfected. For most of the eighteenth century its only metrical rival

was blank verse: iambic pentameter that does not rhyme and is not closed in couplets. Milton's blank verse in *Paradise Lost* provided one model, and the dramatic blank verse of Shakespeare and Dryden provided another. This more expansive form appealed to poets who cared less for wit than for stories and thoughts with plenty of room to develop. Blank verse was favored as the best medium for descriptive and meditative poems, from Thomson's *Seasons* (1726—30) to Cowper's *The Task* (1785), and the tradition continued in Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey" and *Prelude*.

Yet not all poets chose to compete with Pope's wit or Milton's heroic striving. Ordinary people also wrote and read verse, and many of them neither knew nor regarded the classics. Only a minority of men, and very few women, had the chance to study Latin and Greek, but that did not keep a good many from playing with verse as a pastime or writing about their own lives. Hence the eighteenth century is the first age to reflect the modern tension between "high" and "low" art. While the heroic couplet was being perfected, doggerel also thrived, and Milton's blank verse was sometimes reduced to describing a drunk or an oyster. Burlesque and broad humor characterize the common run of eighteenth-century verse. As the audience for poetry became more diversified, so did the subject matter. No readership was too small to address; Isaac Watts, and later Anna Laetitia Barbauld and William Blake, wrote songs for children. The rise of unconventional forms and topics of verse subverted an older poetic ideal: the Olympian art that only a handful of the elect could possibly master. The eighteenth century brought poetry down to earth. In the future, art that claimed to be high would have to find ways to distinguish itself from the low.

BESTORATION LITERATURE, 1660-1700

Dryden brought England a modern literature between 1660 and 1700. He combined a cosmopolitan outlook on the latest European trends with some of the richness and variety he admired in Chaucer and Shakespeare. In most of the important contemporary forms—occasional verse, comedy, tragedy, heroic play, ode, satire, translation, and critical essay—both his example and his precepts influenced others. As a critic, he spread the word that English literature, particularly his own, could vie with the best of the past. As a translator, he made such classics as Ovid and Virgil available to a wide public; for the first time, a large number of women and men without a formal education could feel included in the literary world.

Restoration prose clearly indicated the desire to reach a new audience. The styles of Donne's sermons, Milton's pamphlets, or Browne's treatises now seemed too elaborate and rhetorical for simple communication. By contrast, Pepys and Behn head straight to the point, informally and unself-consciously. The Royal Society asked its members to employ a plain, utilitarian prose style that spelled out scientific truths; rhetorical flourishes and striking metaphors might be acceptable in poetry, which engaged the emotions, but they had no place in rational discourse. In polite literature, exemplified by Cowley, Dryden, and Sir William Temple, the ideal of good prose came to be a style with the ease and poise of well-bred urbane conversation. This is a social prose for a sociable age. Later, it became the mainstay of essayists like Addison and Steele, of eighteenth-century novelists, and of the host of brilliant eighteenth-century letter writers, including Montagu, Horace Walpole, Gray, Cowper, and Burney, who still give readers the sense of being their intimate friends.

Yet despite its broad appeal to the public, Restoration literature kept its ties

to an aristocratic heroic ideal. The "fierce wars and faithful loves" of epic poems were expected to offer patterns of virtue for noble emulation. These ideals lived on in popular French prose romances and in Behn's *Oroonoko*. But the ideal was most fully expressed in heroic plays like those written by Dryden, which push to extremes the conflict between love and honor in the hearts of impossibly valiant heroes and impossibly high-minded and attractive heroines. Dryden's best serious drama, however, was his blank verse tragedy *All for Love* (produced 1677), based on the story of Antony and Cleopatra. Instead of Shakespeare's worldwide panorama, his rapid shifts of scene and complex characters, this version follows the unities of time, place, and action, compressing the plot to the tragic last hours of the lovers. Two other tragic playwrights were celebrated in the Restoration and for a long time to come: Nathaniel Lee (ca. 1649—1692), known for violent plots and wild ranting, and the passionately sensitive Thomas Otway (1652—1685).

Rut comedy was the real distinction of Restoration drama. The best plays of Sir George Etherege (*The Man of Mode*, 1676), William Wycherley (*The Country Wife*, 1675), Aphra Behn (*The Rover*, 1677), William Congreve (*Love for Love*, 1695; *The Way of the World*, 1700), and later George Farquhar (*The Beaux' Stratagem*, 1707) can still hold the stage today. These "comedies of manners" pick social behavior apart, exposing the nasty struggles for power among the upper classes, who use wit and manners as weapons. Human nature in these plays often conforms to the worst fears of Hobbes; sensual, false-hearted, selfish characters prey on each other. The male hero lives for pleasure and for the money and women that he can conquer. The object of his game of sexual intrigue is a beautiful, witty, pleasure-loving, and emancipated lady, every bit his equal in the strategies of love. What makes the favored couple stand out is the true wit and well-bred grace with which they step through the minefield of the plot. But during the 1690s "Societies for the Reformation of Manners" began to attack the blasphemy and obscenity they detected in such plays, and they sometimes brought offenders to trial. When Dryden died in 1700, a more respectable society was coming into being.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LITERATURE, 1700-1745

Early in the eighteenth century a new and brilliant group of writers emerged: Swift, with *A Tale of a Tub* (1704—10); Addison, with *The Campaign* (1705), a poetic celebration of the battle of Blenheim; Prior, with *Poems on Several Occasions* (1707); Steele, with the *Tatler* (1709); and the youthful Pope, in the same year, with his *Pastorals*. These writers consolidate and popularize the social graces of the previous age. Determined to preserve good sense and civilized values, they turn their wit against fanaticism and innovation. Hence this is a great age of satire. Deeply conservative but also playful, their finest works often cast a strange light on modern times by viewing them through the screen of classical myths and classical forms. Thus Pope exposes the frivolity of fashionable London, in *The Rape of the Lock*, through the incongruity of verse that casts the idle rich as epic heroes. Similarly, Swift uses epic similes to mock the moderns in *Tine Battle of the Books*, and John Gay's *Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets of London* (1716) uses mock georgics to order his tour of the city. Such incongruities are not entirely negative. They also provide a fresh perspective on things that had once seemed too low for poetry to notice—for instance, in *The Rape of the Lock*, a girl putting on her makeup. In this way a parallel with classical literature can show not only how far the

modern world has fallen but also how fascinating and magical it is when seen with "quick, poetic eyes."

The Augustans' effort to popularize and enforce high literary and social values was set against the new mass and multiplicity of writings that responded more spontaneously to the expanding commercial possibilities of print. The array of popular prose genres—news, thinly disguised political allegories, biographies of notorious criminals, travelogues, gossip, romantic tales—often blended facts and patently fictional elements, cemented by a rich lode of exaggeration, misrepresentations, and outright lies. Out of this matrix the modern novel would come to be born. The great master of such works was Daniel Defoe, producing first-person accounts such as *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) the famous castaway, or *Moll Flanders* (1722), mistress of lowlife crime. Claims that such works present (as the "editor" of *Crusoe* says) "a just history of fact," believed or not, sharpened the public's avidity for them. Defoe shows his readers a world plausibly like the one they know, where ordinary people negotiate familiar, entangled problems of financial, emotional, and spiritual existence. Jane Barker, Mary Davys, and many others brought women's work and daily lives as well as love affairs to fiction. Such stories were not only amusing but also served as models of conduct; they influenced the stories that real people told about themselves.

The theater also began to change its themes and effects to appeal to a wider audience. The clergyman Jeremy Collier had vehemently taken Dryden, Wycherley, and Congreve to task in *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698), which spoke for the moral outrage of the pious middle classes. The wits retreated. The comedy of manners was replaced by a new kind, later called "sentimental" not only because goodness triumphs over vice but also because it deals in high moral sentiments rather than witty dialogue and because the embarrassments of its heroines and heroes move the audience not to laughter but to tears. Virtue refuses to bow to aristocratic codes. In one crucial scene of Steele's influential play *The Conscious Lovers* (1722) the hero would rather accept dishonor than fight a duel with a friend. Piety and middle-class values typify tragedies such as George Lillo's *London Merchant* (1731). One luxury invented in eighteenth-century Europe was the delicious pleasure of weeping, and comedies as well as tragedies brought that pleasure to playgoers through many decades. Some plays resisted the tide. Gay's cynical *Beggar's Opera* (1728) was a tremendous success, and later in the century the comedies of Goldsmith and Sheridan proved that sentiment is not necessarily an enemy to wit and laughter. (For the complete text of one of Sheridan's best plays, *The School for Scandal*, go to Norton Literature Online.) Yet larger and larger audiences responded more to spectacles and special effects than to sophisticated writing. Although the *stage* prospered during the eighteenth century, and the star system produced idolized actors and actresses (such as David Garrick and Sarah Siddons), the authors of *drama* tended to fade to the background.

Despite the sociable impulses of much the period's writing, readers also craved less crowded, more meditative works. Since the seventeenth century, no poems had been more popular than those about the pleasures of retirement, which invited the reader to dream about a safe retreat in the country or to meditate, like Finch, on scenery and the soul. But after 1726, when Thomson published *Winter*, the first of his cycle on the seasons, the poetry of natural description came into its own. A taste for gentle, picturesque beauty found expression not only in verse but in the elaborate, cultivated art of landscape

gardening, and finally in the cherished English art of landscape painting in watercolor or oils (often illustrating Thomson's *Seasons*). Many readers also learned to enjoy a thrilling pleasure or fear in the presence of the sublime in nature: rushing waters, wild prospects, and mountains shrouded in mist. Whether enthusiasts went to the landscape in search of God or merely of heightened sensations, they came back feeling that they had been touched by something beyond the life they knew, by something that could hardly be expressed. Tourists as well as poets roamed the countryside, frequently quoting verse as they gazed at some evocative scene. A partiality for the sublime passed from Thomson to Collins to inspire the poetry of the Romantic age to come.

THE EMERGENCE OF NEW LITERARY THEMES AND MODES, 1740-85

When Matthew Arnold called the eighteenth century an "age of prose," he meant to belittle its poetry, but he also stated a significant fact: great prose does dominate the age. Until the 1740s, poetry tended to set the standards of literature. But the growth of new kinds of prose took the initiative away from verse. Novelists became better known than poets. Intellectual prose also flourished, with the achievements of Johnson in the essay and literary criticism, of Boswell in biography, of Hume in philosophy, of Burke in politics, of Edward Gibbon in history, of Sir Joshua Reynolds in aesthetics, of Gilbert White in natural history, and of Adam Smith in economics. Each of these authors is a master stylist, whose effort to express himself clearly and fully demands an art as carefully wrought as poetry. Other writers of prose were more informal. The memoirs of such women as Laetitia Pilkington, Charlotte Charke, Hester Thrale Piozzi, and Frances Burney bring each reader into their private lives and also remind us that the new print culture created celebrities, who wrote not only about themselves but about other celebrities they knew. The interest of readers in Samuel Johnson helped sell his own books as well as a host of books that quoted his sayings. But the prose of the age also had to do justice to difficult and complicated ideas. An unprecedented effort to formulate the first principles of philosophy, history, psychology, and art required a new style of persuasion.

Johnson helped codify that language, not only with his writings but with the first great English *Dictionary* (1755). This work established him as a national man of letters; eventually the period would be known as "the Age of Johnson." But his dominance was based on an ideal of service to others. The *Dictionary* illustrates its definitions with more than 114,000 quotations from the best English writers, thus building a bridge from past to present usage; and Johnson's essays, poems, and criticism also reflect his desire to preserve the lessons of the past. Yet he looks to the future as well, trying both to reach and to mold a nation of readers. If Johnson speaks for his age, one reason is his faith in common sense and the common reader. "By the common sense of readers uncorrupted with literary prejudices," he wrote in the last of his *Lives of the Poets* (1781), "must be finally decided all claim to poetical honors." A similar respect for the good judgment of ordinary people, and for standards of taste and behavior that anyone can share, marks many writers of the age. Both Burke, the great conservative statesman and author, and Thomas Paine, his radical adversary, proclaim themselves apostles of common sense.

No prose form better united availability to the common reader and serious-

ness of artistic purpose than the novel in the hands of two of its early masters, Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding. Like many writers of fiction earlier in the century, Richardson initially did not set out to entertain the public with an avowedly invented tale: he conceived *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* (1740) while compiling a little book of model letters. The letters grew into a story about a captivating young servant who resists her master's base designs on her virtue until he gives up and marries her. The combination of a high moral tone with sexual titillation and a minute analysis of the heroine's emotions and state of mind proved irresistible to readers, in Britain and in Europe at large. Richardson topped *Pamela's* success with *Clarissa* (1747–48), another epistolary novel, which explored the conflict between the libertine Lovelace, an attractive and diabolical aristocrat, and the angelic Clarissa, a middle-class paragon who struggles to stay pure. The sympathy that readers felt for Clarissa was magnified by a host of sentimental novels, including Frances Sheridan's *Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bididph* (1761), Rousseau's *Julie, or The New Heloise* (1761), and Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771).

Henry Fielding made his entrance into the novel by turning *Pamela* farcically upside-down, as the hero of *Joseph Andrews* (1742), Pamela's brother, defends his chastity from the lewd advances of Lady Booby. Fielding's true model, however, is Cervantes's great *Don Quixote* (1605–15), from which he took an ironic, antiromantic style; a plot of wandering around the countryside; and an idealistic central character (Parson Adams) who keeps mistaking appearances for reality. The ambition of writing what Fielding called "a comic epic-poem in prose" went still further in *The History of Tom Jones, A Foundling* (1749). Crowded with incidents and comments on the state of England, the novel contrasts a good-natured, generous, wayward hero (who needs to learn prudence) with cold-hearted people who use moral codes and the law for their own selfish interests. This emphasis on instinctive virtue and vice, instead of Richardson's devotion to good principles, put off respectable readers like Johnson and Burney. But Coleridge thought that *Tom Jones* (along with *Oedipus Rex* and Jonson's *Alchemist*) was one of "the three most perfect plots ever planned."

An age of great prose can burden its poets. To Gray, Collins, Mark Akenside, and the brothers Joseph and Thomas Warton, it seemed that the spirit of poetry might be dying, driven out by the spirit of prose, by uninspiring truth, by the end of superstitions that had once peopled the land with poetic fairies and demons. In an age barren of magic, they ask, where has poetry gone? That question haunts many poems, suffusing them with melancholy. Poets who muse in silence are never far from thoughts of death, and a morbid fascination with suicide and the grave preoccupies many at midcentury. Such an attitude has little in common with that of poets like Dryden and Pope, social beings who live in a crowded world and seldom confess their private feelings in public. Pope's *Essay on Man* had taken a sunny view of providence; Edward Young's *The Complaint: or Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality* (1742–46), an immensely long poem in blank verse, is darkened by Christian fear of the life to come.

Often the melancholy poet withdraws into himself and yearns to be living in some other time and place. In his "Ode to Fancy" (1746), Joseph Warton associated "fancy" with visions in the wilderness and spontaneous passions; the true poet was no longer defined as a craftsman or maker but as a seer or nature's priest. "The public has seen all that art can do," William Shenstone

wrote in 1761, welcoming James Macpherson's *Ossian*, "and they want the more striking efforts of wild, original, enthusiastic genius." Macpherson filled the bill. His primitive, sentimental epics, supposedly translated from an ancient Gaelic warrior-bard, won the hearts of readers around the world; Napoleon and Thomas Jefferson, for instance, both thought that *Ossian* was greater than Homer. Poets began to cultivate archaic language and antique forms. Inspired by Thomas Percy's edition of *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), Thomas Chatterton passed off his own ballads as medieval; he died at seventeen, soon after his forgeries were exposed, but the Romantics later idolized his precocious genius.

The most remarkable consequence of the medieval revival, however, was the invention of the Gothic novel. Horace Walpole set *The Castle of Otranto* (1765), a dreamlike tale of terror, in a simulacrum of Strawberry Hill, his own tiny, pseudo-medieval castle, which helped revive a taste for Gothic architecture. Walpole created a mode of fiction that retains its popularity to the present day. In a typical Gothic romance, amid the glooms and secret passages of some remote castle, the laws of nightmare replace the laws of probability. Forbidden themes—incest, murder, necrophilia, atheism, and the torments of sexual desire—are allowed free play. Most such romances, like William Beckford's *Vathek* (1786) and Matthew Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), revel in sensationalism and the grotesque. The Gothic vogue suggested that classical canons of taste—simplicity and harmonious balance—might count for less than the pleasures of fancy—intricate puzzles and a willful excess. But Gothicism also resulted in works, like Ann Radcliffe's, that temper romance with reality as well as in serious novels of social purpose, like William Godwin's *Caleb Williams* (1794) and Mary Wollstonecraft's *Maria, or The Wrongs of Woman* (1798); and Mary Shelley, the daughter of Wollstonecraft and Godwin, eventually composed a romantic nightmare, *Frankenstein* (1818), that continues to haunt our dreams.

The century abounded in other remarkable experiments in fiction, anticipating many of the forms that novelists still use today. Tobias Smollett's picaresque *Roderick Random* (1748) and *Humphry' Clinker* (1771) delight in coarse practical jokes, the freaks and strong odors of life. But the most *novel* novelist of the age was Laurence Sterne, a humorous, sentimental clergyman who loves to play tricks on his readers. *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (1760–67) abandons clock time for psychological time, whimsically follows chance associations, interrupts its own stories, violates the conventions of print by putting chapters 18 and 19 after chapter 25, sneaks in double entendres, and seems ready to go on forever. And yet these games get us inside the characters' minds, as if the world were as capricious as our thoughts. Sterne's self-conscious art implies that people's private obsessions shape their lives—or help create reality itself. As unique as Sterne's fictional world is, his interest in private life matched the concerns of the novel toward the end of the century: depictions of characters' intimate feelings dominated the tradition of domestic fiction that included Burney, Radcliffe, and, later, Maria Edgeworth, culminating in the masterworks of Jane Austen. A more "masculine" orientation emerged at the beginning of the next century, as Walter Scott's works, with their broad historical scope and outdoor scenes of men at work and war, appealed to a large readership. Yet the copious, acute, often ironic attention to details of private life by Richardson, Sterne, and Austen continued to influence the novel profoundly through its subsequent history.

CONTINUITY AND REVOLUTION

The history of eighteenth-century literature was first composed by the Romantics, who wrote it to serve their own interests. Prizing originality, they naturally preferred to stress how different they were from writers of the previous age. Later historians have tended to follow their lead, competing to prove that everything changed in 1776, or 1789, or 1798. This revolutionary view of history accounts for what happened to the word *revolution*. The older meaning referred to a movement around a point, a recurrence or cycle, as in the revolutions of the planets; the newer meaning signified a violent break with the past, an overthrow of the existing order, as in the Big Bang or the French Revolution. Romantic rhetoric made heavy use of such dramatic upheavals. Yet every history devoted to truth must take account of both sorts of revolution, of continuities as well as changes. The ideals that many Romantics made their own—the passion for liberty and equality, the founding of justice on individual rights, the distrust of institutions, the love of nature, the reverence for imagination, and even the embrace of change—grew from seeds that had been planted long before. Nor did Augustan literature abruptly vanish on that day in 1798 when Wordsworth and Coleridge anonymously published a small and unsuccessful volume of poems called *Lyrical Ballads*. Even when they rebel against the work of Pope and Johnson and Gray, Romantic writers incorporate much of their language and values.

What Restoration and eighteenth-century literature passed on to the future, in fact, was chiefly a set of unresolved problems. The age of Enlightenment was also, in England, an age that insisted on holding fast to older beliefs and customs; the age of population explosion was also an age of individualism; the age that developed the slave trade was also the age that gave rise to the abolitionist movement; the age that codified rigid standards of conduct for women was also an age when many women took the chance to read and write and think for themselves; the age of reason was also the age when sensibility flourished; the last classical age was also the first modern age. These contradictions are far from abstract; writers were forced to choose their own directions. When young James Boswell looked for a mentor whose biography he might write, he considered not only Samuel Johnson but also David Hume, whose skeptical views of morality, truth, and religion were everything Johnson abhorred. The two writers seem to inhabit different worlds, yet Boswell traveled freely between them. That was exciting and also instructive. "Without Contraries is no progression," according to one citizen of Johnson's London, William Blake, who also thought that "Opposition is true Friendship." Good conversation was a lively eighteenth-century art, and sharp disagreements did not keep people from talking. The conversations the period started have not ended yet.

Additional information about the Restoration and the Eighteenth Century, including primary texts and images, is available at Norton Literature Online (www.norton.com/nlo). Online topics are

- A Day in Eighteenth-Century London
- Slavery and the Slave Trade in Britain
- The Plurality of Worlds
- Travel, Trade, and the Expansion of Empire

THE RESTORATION AND
THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

TEXTS	CONTEXTS
1660 Samuel Pepys begins his diary	1660 Charles II restored to the throne. Reopening of the theaters
1662 Samuel Butler, <i>Hudibras</i> , part 1	1662 Act of Uniformity requires all clergy to obey the Church of England. Chartering of the Royal Society
	1664—66 Great Plague of London
	1666 Fire destroys the City of London
1667 John Milton, <i>Paradise Lost</i>	
1668 John Dryden, <i>Essay of Dramatic Poesy</i>	1668 Dryden becomes poet laureate
	1673 Test Act requires all officeholders to swear allegiance to Anglicanism
1678 John Bunyan, <i>Pilgrim's Progress</i> , part 1	1678 The "Popish Plot" inflames anti-Catholic feeling
1681 Dryden, <i>Absalom and Achitophel</i>	1681 Charles II dissolves Parliament
	1685 Death of Charles II. James II, his Catholic brother, takes the throne
1687 Sir Isaac Newton, <i>Principia Mathematica</i>	
1688 Aphra Behn, <i>Oroonoko</i>	1688—89 The Glorious Revolution. James II exiled and succeeded by his Protestant daughter, Mary, and her husband, William of Orange
1690 John Locke, <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i>	
1700 William Congreve, <i>The Way of the World</i> . Mary Astell, <i>Some Reflections upon Marriage</i>	
1704 Jonathan Swift, <i>A Tale of a Tub</i> . Newton, <i>Opticks</i>	1701 War of the Spanish Succession begins
	1702 Death of William III. Succession of Anne (Protestant daughter of James II)
	1707 Act of Union with Scotland
	1710 Tories take power
1711 Alexander Pope, <i>An Essay on Criticism</i> . Joseph Addison and Sir Richard Steele, <i>Spectator</i> (1711-12, 1714)	1713 Treaty of Utrecht ends War of the Spanish Succession
	1714 Death of Queen Anne. George I (great-grandson of James I) becomes the first Hanoverian king. Tory government replaced by Whigs

T E X T S	C O N T E X T S
1716 Lady Mary Wortley Montagu writes her letters from Turkey (1716-18)	
1717 Pope, <i>The Rape of the Lock</i> (final version)	
1719 Daniel Defoe, <i>Robinson Crusoe</i>	1720 South Sea Bubble collapses
1726 Swift, <i>Gulliver's Travels</i>	1721 Robert Walpole comes to power
1728 John Gay, <i>The Beggar's Opera</i>	1727 George I dies. George II succeeds
1733 Pope, <i>An Essay on Man</i>	1737 Licensing Act censors the stage
1740 Samuel Richardson, <i>Pamela</i>	1742 Walpole resigns
1742 Henry Fielding, <i>Joseph Andrews</i>	1746 Charles Edward Stuart's defeat at Culloden ends the last Jacobite rebellion
1743 Pope, <i>The Dunciad</i> (final version). William Hogarth, <i>Marriage A-la-Mode</i>	
1746 William Collins's <i>Odes</i>	1751 Robert Clive seizes Arcot, the prelude to English control of India
1747 Richardson, <i>Clarissa</i>	1756 Beginning of Seven Years' War
1749 Fielding, <i>Tom Jones</i>	1759 James Wolfe's capture of Quebec ensures British control of Canada
1751 Thomas Gray, "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard"	1760 George III succeeds to the throne
1755 Samuel Johnson, <i>Dictionary</i> ¹	1768 Captain James Cook voyages to Australia and New Zealand
1759 Johnson, <i>Rasselas</i> . Voltaire, <i>Candide</i>	1775 American Revolution (1775-83). James Watt produces steam engines
1760 Laurence Sterne, <i>Tristram Shandy</i> (1760--67)	
1765 Johnson's edition of Shakespeare	
1770 Oliver Goldsmith, "The Deserted Village"	1780 Gordon Riots in London
1776 Adam Smith, <i>The Wealth of Nations</i>	1783 William Pitt becomes prime minister
1778 Frances Burney, <i>Evelina</i>	
1779 Johnson, <i>Lives of the Poets</i> (1779--81)	
1783 George Crabbe, <i>The Village</i>	
1785 William Cowper, <i>The Task</i>	

JOHN DRYDEN

1631-1700

Although John Dryden's parents seem to have sided with Parliament against the king, there is no evidence that the poet grew up in a strict Puritan family. His father, a country gentleman of moderate fortune, gave his son a gentleman's education at Westminster School, under the renowned Dr. Richard Busby, who used the rod as a pedagogical aid in imparting a sound knowledge of the learned languages and literatures to his charges (among others John Locke and Matthew Prior). From Westminster, Dryden went to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he took his A.B. in 1654. His first important poem, "Heroic Stanzas" (1659), was written to commemorate the death of Cromwell. The next year, however, in "Astraea Redux," Dryden joined his countrymen in celebrating the return of Charles II to his throne. During the rest of his life Dryden was to remain entirely loyal to Charles and to his successor, James II.

Dryden is the commanding literary figure of the last four decades of the seventeenth century. Every important aspect of the life of his times—political, religious, philosophical, artistic—finds expression somewhere in his writings. Dryden is the least personal of poets. He is not at all the solitary, subjective poet listening to the murmur of his own voice and preoccupied with his own feelings but rather a citizen of the world commenting publicly on matters of public concern.

From the beginning to the end of his literary career, Dryden's nondramatic poems are most typically occasional poems, which commemorate particular events of a public character—a coronation, a military victory, a death, or a political crisis. Such poems are social and often ceremonial, written not for the self but for the nation. Dryden's principal achievements in this form are the two poems on the king's return and his coronation; *Annus Mirabilis* (1667), which celebrates the English naval victory over the Dutch and the fortitude of the people of London and the king during the Great Fire, both events of that "wonderful year," 1666; the political poems; the lines on the death of Oldham (1684); and odes such as "Alexander's Feast."

Between 1664 and 1681, however, Dryden was mainly a playwright. The newly chartered theaters needed a modern repertory, and he set out to supply the need. Dryden wrote his plays, as he frankly confessed, to please his audiences, which were not heterogeneous like Shakespeare's but were largely drawn from the court and from people of fashion. In the style of the time, he produced rhymed heroic plays, in which incredibly noble heroes and heroines face incredibly difficult choices between love and honor; comedies, in which male and female rakes engage in intrigue and bright repartee; and later, libretti for the newly introduced dramatic form, the opera. His one great tragedy, *All for Love* (1677), in blank verse, adapts Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* to the unities of time, place, and action. As his *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668) shows, Dryden had studied the works of the great playwrights of Greece and Rome, of the English Renaissance, and of contemporary France, seeking sound theoretical principles on which to construct the new drama that the age demanded. Indeed, his fine critical intelligence always supported his creative powers, and because he took literature seriously and enjoyed discussing it, he became, almost casually, what Samuel Johnson called him: "the father of English criticism." His abilities as both poet and dramatist brought him to the attention of the king, who in 1668 made him poet laureate. Two years later the post of historiographer royal was added to the laureateship at a combined stipend of £200, enough money to live comfortably on.

Between 1678 and 1681, when he was nearing fifty, Dryden discovered his great gift for writing formal verse satire. A quarrel with the playwright Thomas Shadwell prompted the mock-heroic episode "Mac Flecknoe," probably written in 1678 or 1679 but not published until 1682. Out of the stresses occasioned by the Popish Plot (1678) and its political aftermath came his major political satires, *Absalom and Ach-*

itophel (1681), and "The Medal" (1682), his final attack on the villain of *Absalom and Achitophel*, the earl of Shaftesbury. Twenty years' experience as poet and playwright had prepared him technically for the triumph of *Absalom and Achitophel*. He had mastered the heroic couplet, having fashioned it into an instrument suitable in his hands for every sort of discourse from the thrust and parry of quick logical argument, to lyric feeling, rapid narrative, or forensic declamation. Thanks to this long discipline, he was able in one stride to rival the masters of verse satire: Horace, Juvenal, Persius, in ancient Rome, and Boileau, his French contemporary.

The consideration of religious and political questions that the events of 1678-81 forced on Dryden brought a new seriousness to his mind and works. In 1682 he published *Religio Laid*, a poem in which he examined the grounds of his religious faith and defended the middle way of the Anglican Church against the rationalism of Deism on the one hand and the authoritarianism of Rome on the other. But he had moved closer to Rome than he perhaps realized when he wrote the poem. Charles II died in 1685 and was succeeded by his Catholic brother, James II. Within a year Dryden and his two sons converted to Catholicism. Though his enemies accused him of opportunism, he proved his sincerity by his steadfast loyalty to the Roman Church after James abdicated and the Protestant William and Mary came in; as a result he was to lose his offices and their much-needed stipends. From his new position as a Roman Catholic, Dryden wrote in 1687 *The Hind and the Panther*, in which a milk-white Hind (the Roman Church) and a spotted Panther (the Anglican Church) eloquently debate theology. The Hind has the better of the argument, but Dryden already knew that James's policies were failing, and with them the Catholic cause in England.

Dryden was now nearing sixty, with a family to support on a much-diminished income. To earn a living, he resumed writing plays and turned to translations. In 1693 appeared his versions of Juvenal and Persius, with a long dedicatory epistle on satire; and in 1697, his greatest achievement in this mode, the works of Virgil. At the very end, two months before his death, came the *Fables Ancient and Modern*, prefaced by one of the finest of his critical essays and made up of translations from Ovid, Boccaccio, and Chaucer. (For additional works by Dryden, go to Norton Literature Online.)

Dryden's foremost achievement was to bring the pleasures of literature to the ever-increasing reading public of Britain. As a critic and translator, he made many classics available to men and women who lacked a classical education. His canons of taste and theoretical principles would set the standard for the next generation. As a writer of prose, he helped establish a popular new style, shaped to the cadences of good conversation. Johnson praised its apparent artlessness: "every word seems to drop by chance, though it falls into its proper place. Nothing is cold or languid; the whole is airy, animated, and vigorous . . . though all is easy, nothing is feeble; though all seems careless, there is nothing harsh." Although Dryden's plays went out of fashion, his poems did not. His satire inspired the most brilliant verse satirist of the next century, Alexander Pope, and the energy and variety of his metrics launched the long-standing vogue of heroic couplets. Augustan style is at its best in his poems: lively, dignified, precise, and always musical—a flexible instrument of public speech. "By him we were taught *sapere et fari*, to think naturally and express forcibly," Johnson concluded. "What was said of Rome, adorned by Augustus, may be applied by an easy metaphor to English poetry embellished by Dryden, *lateritiam invenit, marmoream reliquit*, he found it brick, and he left it marble."

*From Annus Mirabilis*¹

. s s

[LONDON REBORN]

845 Yet London, empress of the northern clime,
 By an high fate thou greatly didst expire;
 Oreat as the world's, which at the death of time
 Must fall, and rise a nobler frame by fire.²

As when some dire usurper Heaven provides,
 850 To scourge his country with a lawless sway:³
 His birth, perhaps, some petty village hides,
 And sets his cradle out of fortune's way:

Till fully ripe his swelling fate breaks out,
 And hurries him to mighty mischiefs on:
 855 His Prince, surprised at first, no ill could doubt,⁰ *fear*
 And wants the power to meet it when 'tis known:

Such was the rise of this prodigious fire,
 Which in mean buildings first obscurely bred,
 From thence did soon to open streets aspire,
 860 And straight to palaces and temples spread.

. . #

Me-thinks already, from this chymic⁰ flame, *alchemic, transmuting*
 ii70 I see a city of more precious mold:
 Rich as the town which gives the Indies name,⁰ *Mexico*
 With silver paved, and all divine with gold.

Already, laboring with a mighty fate,
 She shakes the rubbish from her mounting brow,
 1175 And seems to have renewed her charter's date,
 Which Heaven will to the death of time allow.

More great than human, now, and more August,⁴
 New deified she from her fires does rise:

1. 1666 was a "year of wonders" (*annus mirabilis*)-war, plague, and the Great Fire of London. According to the enemies of Charles II, God was visiting His wrath on the English people to signify that the reign of an unholy king would soon come to an end. Dryden's long "historical poem" *Annus Mirabilis*, written the same year, interprets the wonders differently: as trials sent by God to punish rebellious spirits and to bind the king and his people together. "Never had prince or people more mutual reason to love each other," Dryden wrote, "if suffering for each other can endear affection." Charles had endured rejection and exile, England had been torn by civil wars. Dryden views these sufferings as a covenant, a pledge of better times to come. Out of Charles's troubles, he predicts in heroic stanzas modeled on Virgil, the king shall

arise like a new Augustus, the ruler of a great empire, and out of fire, London shall arise like the phoenix, ready to take its place as trade center for the world, in the glory of a new Augustan age.

2. Dryden's footnote cites Ovid, *Metamorphoses I*, which foretells that the world will be purged by fire. The fire of London, which utterly consumed the central city, burned for four days, September 2-6. By September 10, Christopher Wren had already submitted a plan, much of it later adopted, for rebuilding the city on a grander scale. For a dramatic contemporary depiction of the event, see *The Great Fire of London, 1666*, in the color insert in this volume.

3. Probably a reference to Oliver Cromwell.

4. Augusta, the old name of London [Dryden's note].

Her widening streets on new foundations trust,
 1180 And, opening, into larger parts she flies.

Before, she like some shepherdess did show,
 Who sat to bathe her by a river's side:
 Not answering to her fame, but rude and low,
 Nor taught the beauteous arts of modern pride.

us? - Now, like a Maiden Queen, she will behold,
 From her high turrets, hourly suitors come:
 The East with incense, and the West with gold,
 Will stand, like suppliants, to receive her doom.⁰

judgment, decree

H90 The silver Thames, her own domestic flood,
 Shall bear her vessels like a sweeping train;
 And often wind (as of his mistress proud)
 With longing eyes to meet her face again.

The wealthy Tagus, and the wealthier Rhine,
 The glory of their towns no more shall boast;
 1195 And Seine, that would with Belgian rivers join,⁵
 Shall find her luster stained, and traffic lost.

The venturous merchant, who designed⁰ more far,
 And touches on our hospitable shore,
 Charmed with the splendor of this northern star,
 1200 Shall here unlade him, and depart no more.

intended to go

Our powerful navy shall no longer meet,
 The wealth of France or Holland to invade;
 The beauty of this Town, without a fleet,
 From all the world shall vindicate⁰ her trade.

defend, protect

1205 And while this famed emporium we prepare,
 The British ocean shall such triumphs boast,
 That those who now disdain our trade to share,
 Shall rob like pirates on our wealthy coast.

1210 Already we have conquered half the war,
 And the less dangerous part is left behind:
 Our trouble now is but to make them dare,
 And not so great to vanquish as to find.

Thus to the eastern wealth through storms we go,
 But now, the Cape once doubled,⁰ fear no more;
 1215 A constant trade-wind will securely blow,
 And gently lay us on the spicy shore.

sailed around

1666

1667

5. France and Holland (which then included Belgium) had made an alliance for trade, as well as war, against England. The river Tagus flows into the Atlantic at Lisbon.

Song from *Marriage a la Mode*

Why should a foolish marriage vow,
 Which long ago was made,
 Oblige us to each other now,
 When passion is decayed?
 5 We loved, and we loved, as long as we could,
 Till our love was loved out in us both;
 But our marriage is dead when the pleasure is fled:
 'Twas pleasure first made it an oath.

2

If I have pleasures for a friend,
 10 And farther love in store,
 What wrong has he whose joys did end,
 And who could give no more?
 'Tis a madness that he should be jealous of me,
 Or that I should bar him of another:
 15 For all we can gain is to give ourselves pain,
 When neither can hinder the other.

ca. 1672

1673

Absalom and Achitophel In 1678 a dangerous crisis, both religious and political, threatened to undo the Restoration settlement and to precipitate England once again into civil war. The Popish Plot and its aftermath not only whipped up extreme anti-Catholic passions, but led between 1679 and 1681 to a bitter political struggle between Charles II (whose adherents came to be called Tories) and the earl of Shaftesbury (whose followers were termed Whigs). The issues were nothing less than the prerogatives of the crown and the possible exclusion of the king's Catholic brother, James, duke of York, from his position as heir-presumptive to the throne. Charles's cool courage and brilliant, if unscrupulous, political genius saved the throne for his brother and gave at least temporary peace to his people.

Charles was a Catholic at heart—he received the last rites of that church on his deathbed—and was eager to do what he could do discreetly for the relief of his Catholic subjects, who suffered severe civil and religious disabilities imposed by their numerically superior Protestant compatriots. James openly professed the Catholic religion, an awkward fact politically, for he was next in line of succession because Charles had no legitimate children. The household of the duke, as well as that of Charles's neglected queen, Catherine of Braganza, inevitably became the center of Catholic life and intrigue at court and consequently of Protestant prejudice and suspicion.

No one understood, however, that the situation was explosive until 1678, when Titus Oates (a renegade Catholic convert of infamous character) offered sworn testimony of the existence of a Jesuit plot to assassinate the king, burn London, massacre Protestants, and reestablish the Roman Church.

The country might have kept its head and come to realize (what no historian has doubted) that Oates and his confederates were perjured rascals, as Charles himself quickly perceived. But panic was created by the discovery of the body of a prominent

London justice of the peace, Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey, who a few days before had received for safekeeping a copy of Oates's testimony. The murder, immediately ascribed to the Catholics, has never been solved. Fear and indignation reached a hysterical pitch when the seizure of the papers of the duke of York's secretary revealed that he had been in correspondence with the confessor of Louis XIV regarding the reestablishment of the Roman Church in England. Before the terror subsided many innocent men were executed on the increasingly bold and always false evidence of Oates and his accomplices.

The earl of Shaftesbury, the duke of Buckingham, and others quickly took advantage of the situation. With the support of the Commons and the City of London, they moved to exclude the duke of York from the succession. Between 1679 and 1681 Charles and Shaftesbury were engaged in a mighty struggle. The Whigs found a candidate of their own in the king's favorite illegitimate son, the handsome and engaging duke of Monmouth, whom they advanced as a proper successor to his father. They urged Charles to legitimize him, and when he refused, they whispered that there was proof that the king had secretly married Monmouth's mother. The young man allowed himself to be used against his father. He was sent on a triumphant progress through western England, where he was enthusiastically received. Twice an Exclusion Bill nearly passed both houses. But by early 1681 Charles had secured his own position by secretly accepting from Louis XIV a three-year subsidy that made him independent of Parliament, which had tried to force his hand by refusing to vote him funds. He summoned Parliament to meet at Oxford in the spring of 1681, and a few moments after the Commons had passed the Exclusion Bill, in a bold stroke he abruptly dissolved Parliament, which never met again during his reign. Already, as Charles was aware, a reaction had set in against the violence of the Whigs. In mid-summer, when he felt it safe to move against his enemies, Shaftesbury was sent to the Tower of London, charged with high treason. In November, the grand jury, packed with Whigs, threw out the indictment, and the earl was free, but his power was broken, and he lived only two more years.

Shortly before the grand jury acted, Dryden published anonymously the first part of *Absalom and Achitophel*, apparently hoping to influence their verdict. The issues in question were grave; the chief actors, the most important men in the realm. Dryden, therefore, could not use burlesque and caricature as had Butler, or the mock heroic as he himself had done in "Mac Flecknoe." Only a heroic style and manner were appropriate to his weighty material, and the poem is most original in its blending of the heroic and the satiric. Dryden's task called for all his tact and literary skill; he had to mention, but to gloss over, the king's faults: his indolence and love of pleasure; his neglect of his wife, and his devotion to his mistresses—conduct that had left him with many children, but no heir except his Catholic brother. He had to deal gently with Monmouth, whom Charles still loved. And he had to present, or appear to present, the king's case objectively.

The remarkable parallels between the rebellion of Absalom against his father King David (2 Samuel 13–18) had already been remarked in sermons, satires, and pamphlets. Dryden took the hint and gave contemporary events a due distance and additional dignity by approaching them indirectly through their biblical analogues. The poem is famous for its brilliant portraits of the king's enemies and friends, but equally admirable are the temptation scene (which, like other passages, is indebted to *Paradise Lost*) and the remarkably astute analysis of the Popish Plot itself.

A second part of *Absalom and Achitophel* appeared in 1682. Most of it is the work of Nahum Tate, but lines 310–509, which include the devastating portraits of Doeg and Og (two Whig poets, Elkanah Settle and Thomas Shadwell), are certainly by Dryden.

Absalom and Achitophel: A Poem

In pious times, ere priestcraft¹ did begin,
 Before polygamy was made a sin;
 When man on many multiplied his kind,
 Ere one to one was cursedly confined;
 5 When nature prompted and no law denied
 Promiscuous use of concubine and bride;
 Then Israel's monarch after Heaven's own heart,²
 His vigorous warmth did variously impart
 To wives and slaves; and, wide as his command,
 10 Scattered his Maker's image through the land.
 Michal,³ of royal blood, the crown did wear,
 A soil ungrateful to the tiller's care:
 Not so the rest; for several mothers bore
 To godlike David several sons before.
 15 But since like slaves his bed they did ascend,
 No true succession could their seed attend.
 Of all this numerous progeny was none
 So beautiful, so brave, as Absalom:⁴
 Whether, inspired by some diviner lust,
 20 His father got him with a greater gust,^o *relish, -pleasure*
 Or that his conscious destiny made way,
 By manly beauty, to imperial sway.
 Early in foreign fields he won renown,
 With kings and states allied to Israel's crown:⁵
 25 In peace the thoughts of war he could remove,
 And seemed as he were only born for love.
 Whate'er he did, was done with so much ease,
 In him alone 'twas natural to please;
 His motions all accompanied with grace;
 30 And paradise was opened in his face.
 With secret joy indulgent David viewed
 His youthful image in his son renewed:
 To all his wishes nothing he denied;
 And made the charming Annabel⁶ his bride.
 35 What faults he had (for who from faults is free?)
 His father could not, or he would not see.
 Some warm excesses which the law forbore,
 Were construed youth that purged by boiling o'er:
 And Amnon's murder,⁷ by a specious name,
 40 Was called a just revenge for injured fame.
 Thus praised and loved the noble youth remained,
 While David, undisturbed, in Sion^o reigned. *London*

1. "Religious frauds; management of wicked priests to gain power" (Johnson's *Dictionary*).

2. David ("a man after [God's] own heart," according to 1 Samuel 13.14) represents Charles II.

3. One of David's wives, who represents the childless queen, Catherine of Braganza.

4. James Scott, duke of Monmouth (1649-1685).

5. Monmouth had won repute as a soldier fighting for France against Holland and for Holland against

France.

6. Anne Scott, duchess of Buccleuch (pronounced *Bue-cloo*), a beauty and a great heiress.

7. Absalom killed his half-brother Amnon, who had raped Absalom's sister Tamar (2 Samuel 13.28-29). The parallel with Monmouth is vague. He is known to have committed acts of violence in his youth, but certainly not fratricide.

But life can never be sincerely⁰ blest;
 Heaven punishes the bad, and proves⁰ the best.
 The Jews,⁰ a headstrong, moody, murmuring race,
 As ever tried the extent and stretch of grace;
 God's pampered people, whom, debauched with ease,
 No king could govern, nor no God could please
 (Gods they had tried of every shape and size
 That god-smiths could produce, or priests devise);⁸
 These Adam-wits, too fortunately free,
 Began to dream they wanted liberty;⁹
 And when no rule, no precedent was found,
 Of men by laws less circumscribed and bound,
 They led their wild desires to woods and caves,
 And thought that all but savages were slaves.
 They who, when Saul was dead, without a blow,
 Made foolish Ishbosheth¹ the crown forgo;
 Who banished David did from Hebron² bring,
 And with a general shout proclaimed him king:
 Those very Jews, who, at their very best,
 Their humor⁰ more than loyalty expressed,
 Now wondered why so long they had obeyed
 An idol monarch, which their hands had made;
 Thought they might ruin him they could create,
 Or melt him to that golden calf,³ a state.⁰
 But these were random bolts;⁰ no formed design
 Nor interest made the factious crowd to join:
 The sober part of Israel, free from stain,
 Well knew the value of a peaceful reign;
 And, looking backward with a wise affright,
 Saw seams of wounds, dishonest⁰ to the sight:
 In contemplation of whose ugly scars
 They cursed the memory of civil wars.
 The moderate sort of men, thus qualified,⁰
 Inclined the balance to the better side;
 And David's mildness managed it so well,
 The bad found no occasion to rebel.
 But when to sin our biased⁴ nature leans,
 The careful Devil is still at hand with means;
 And providently pimps for ill desires:
 The Good Old Cause⁵ revived, a plot requires.
 Plots, true or false, are necessary things,
 To raise up commonwealths and ruin kings.
 The inhabitants of old Jerusalem
 Were Jebusites;⁶ the town so called from them;

wholly
tests
English

caprice

epuhlic
shots

disgraceful

assuaged

8. Dryden recalls the political and religious controversies that, since the Reformation, had divided England and finally caused civil wars.

9. Adam rebelled because he felt that he lacked ("wanted") liberty, because he was forbidden to eat the fruit of one tree.

1. Saul's son. He stands for Richard Cromwell, who succeeded his father as lord protector. "Saul": Oliver Cromwell.

2. Where David reigned over Judah after the death of Saul and before he became king of Israel (2

Samuel 1–5). Charles had been crowned in Scotland in 1651.

3. The image worshiped by the children of Israel during the period that Moses spent on Mount Sinai, receiving the law from God.

4. Inclined (cf. "Mac Flecknoe," line 189 and n. 5, p. 2116).

5. The Commonwealth. Dryden stigmatizes the Whigs by associating them with subversion.

6. Roman Catholics. The original name of Jerusalem (here, London) was Jebus.

And theirs the native right.
 But when the chosen people⁰ grew more strong, *Protestants*
 The rightful cause at length became the wrong;
 90 And every loss the men of Jebus bore,
 They still were thought God's enemies the more.
 Thus worn and weakened, well or ill content,
 Submit they must to David's government:
 Impoverished and deprived of all command,
 95 Their taxes doubled as they lost their land;
 And, what was harder yet to flesh and blood,
 Their gods disgraced, and burnt like common wood.⁷
 This set the heathen priesthood⁰ in a flame; *Roman Catholic clergy*
 For priests of all religions are the same:
 100 Of whatsoe'er descent their godhead be,
 Stock, stone, or other homely pedigree,
 In his defense his servants are as bold,
 As if he had been born of beaten gold.
 The Jewish rabbins,⁰ though their enemies, *Anglican clergy*
 105 In this conclude them honest men and wise:
 For 'twas their duty, all the learned think,
 To espouse his cause, by whom they eat and drink.
 From hence began that Plot, the nation's curse,
 Bad in itself, but represented worse;
 no Raised in extremes, and in extremes decried;
 With oaths affirmed, with dying vows denied;
 Not weighed or winnowed by the multitude;
 But swallowed in the mass, unchewed and crude.
 Some truth there was, but dashed⁰ and brewed with lies, *adulterated*
 115 To please the fools, and puzzle all the wise.
 Succeeding times did equal folly call,
 Believing nothing, or believing all.
 The Egyptian rites the Jebusites embraced,
 Where gods were recommended by their taste.⁸
 120 Such savory deities must needs be good,
 As served at once for worship and for food.
 By force they could not introduce these gods,
 For ten to one in former days was odds;
 So fraud was used (the sacrificer's trade):
 125 Fools are more hard to conquer than persuade.
 Their busy teachers mingled with the Jews,
 And raked for converts even the court and *s t e w s b r o t h e l s*
 Which Hebrew priests the more unkindly took,
 Because the fleece accompanies the flock.⁹
 130 Some thought they God's anointed⁰ meant to slay *the king*
 By guns, invented since full many a day:
 Our author swears it not; but who can know
 How far the Devil and Jebusites may go?
 This Plot, which failed for want of common sense,

7. Such oppressive laws against Roman Catholics date from the time of Elizabeth I.

8. Here Dryden sneers at the doctrine of transubstantiation. "Egyptian": French, therefore Catholic.

9. Dryden charges that the Anglican clergy ("Hebrew priests") resented proselytizing by Catholics chiefly because they stood to lose their tithes ("fleece").

- 135 Had yet a deep and dangerous consequence:
 For, as when raging fevers boil the blood,
 The standing lake soon floats into a flood,
 And every hostile humor,¹ which before
 Slept quiet in its channels, bubbles o'er;
- 140 So several factions from this first ferment
 Work up to foam, and threat the government.
 Some by their friends, more by themselves thought wise,
 Opposed the power to which they could not rise.
 Some had in courts been great, and thrown from thence,
- 145 Like fiends were hardened in impenitence;
 Some, by their monarch's fatal mercy, grown
 From pardoned rebels kinsmen to the throne,
 Were raised in power and public office high;
 Strong bands, if bands ungrateful men could tie.
- 150 Of these the false Achitophel² was first;
 A name to all succeeding ages cursed:
 For close designs, and crooked counsels fit;
 Sagacious, bold, and turbulent of wit;⁰ *unruly imagination*
 Restless, unfixed in principles and place;
- 155 In power unpleased, impatient of disgrace:
 A fiery soul, which, working out its way, 1
 Fretted the pygmy body to decay, f
 And o'er-informed the tenement of clay.³ J
 A daring pilot in extremity;
- 160 Pleased with the danger, when the waves went high,
 He sought the storms; but, for a calm unfit,
 Would steer too nigh the sands, to boast his wit.
 Great wits^o are sure to madness near allied,⁴ *men of genius*
 And thin partitions do their bounds divide;
- 165 Else why should he, with wealth and honor blest,
 Refuse his age the needful hours of rest?
 Punish a body which he could not please;
 Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease?
 And all to leave what with his toil he won,
- 170 To that unfeathered two-legged thing,⁵ a son;
 Got, while his soul did huddled^o notions try; *confused, hurried*
 And born a shapeless lump, like anarchy.
 In friendship false, implacable in hate,
 Resolved to ruin or to rule the state.
- 175 To compass this the triple bond⁶ he broke, 1
 The pillars of the public safety shook,
 And fitted Israel for a foreign yoke; J

1. Bodily fluid. Such fluids were thought to determine health and temperament.

2. Anthony Ashley Cooper, first earl of Shaftesbury (1621—1683). He had served in the parliamentary army and been a member of Cromwell's council of state. He later helped bring back Charles and, in 1670, was made a member of the notorious Cabal Ministry, which formed an alliance with Louis XIV in which England betrayed her ally, Holland, and joined France in war against that country. In 1672 he became lord chancellor, but with the dissolution of the cabal in 1673, he was removed from

office. Lines 146—49 apply perfectly to him.

3. The soul is thought of as the animating principle, the force that puts the body in motion. Shaftesbury's body seemed too small to house his fiery, energetic soul.

4. That genius and madness are akin is a very old idea.

5. Cf. Plato's definition of a human: "a featherless biped."

6. The triple alliance of England, Sweden, and Holland against France, 1668. Shaftesbury helped bring about the war against Holland in 1672.

Then seized with fear, yet still affecting fame,
 Usurped a patriot's all-atoning name.
 180 So easy still it proves in factious times,
 With public zeal to cancel private crimes.
 How safe is treason, and how sacred ill,
 Where none can sin against the people's will!
 Where crowds can wink, and no offense be known,
 185 Since in another's guilt they find their own!
 Yet fame deserved, no enemy can grudge;
 The statesman we abhor, but praise the judge.
 In Israel's courts ne'er sat an Abbethdin⁷
 With more discerning eyes, or hands more clean;
 190 Unbribed, unsought, the wretched to redress;
 Swift of dispatch, and easy of access.
 Oh, had he been content to serve the crown,
 With virtues only proper to the gown" *judge's robe*
 Or had the rankness of the soil been freed
 195 From cockle," that oppressed the noble seed; *weeds*
 David for him his tuneful harp had strung,
 And Heaven had wanted one immortal song.⁸
 But wild Ambition loves to slide, not stand,
 And Fortune's ice prefers to Virtue's land.
 200 Achitophel, grown weary to possess
 A lawful fame, and lazy happiness,
 Disdained the golden fruit to gather free,
 And lent the crowd his arm to shake the tree.
 Now, manifest oP crimes contrived long since, *detected in*
 205 He stood at bold defiance with his prince;
 Held up the buckler of the people's cause
 Against the crown, and skulked behind the laws.
 The wished occasion of the Plot he takes;
 Some circumstances finds, but more he makes.
 210 By buzzing emissaries fills the ears
 Of listening crowds with jealousies" and fears *suspicious*
 Of arbitrary counsels brought to light,
 And proves the king himself a Jebusite.
 Weak arguments! which yet he knew full well
 215 Were strong with people easy to rebel.
 For, governed by the moon, the giddy Jews
 Tread the same track when she the prime renews;
 And once in twenty years, their scribes record,⁹
 By natural instinct they change their lord.
 220 Achitophel still wants a chief, and none
 Was found so fit as warlike Absalom:
 Not that he wished his greatness to create

7. The chief of the seventy elders who composed the Jewish supreme court. The allusion is to Shaftesbury's serving as lord chancellor from 1672 to 1673. Dryden's praise of Shaftesbury's integrity in this office, by suggesting a balanced judgment, makes his condemnation of the statesman more effective than it might otherwise have been.

8. I.e., David would have had occasion to write one fewer song of praise to heaven. The reference

may be to 2 Samuel 22 or to Psalm 4.

9. The moon "renews her prime" when its several phases recur on the same day of the solar calendar (i.e., complete a cycle) as happens approximately every twenty years. The crisis between Charles I and Parliament began to grow acute about 1640; Charles II returned in 1660; it is now 1680 and a full cycle has been completed.

(For politicians neither love nor hate),
 But, for he knew his title not allowed,
 225 Would keep him still depending on the crowd,
 That⁰ kingly power, thus ebbing out, might be *so that*
 Drawn to the dregs of a democracy.¹
 Him he attempts with studied arts to please,
 And sheds his venom in such words as these:
 230 "Auspicious prince, at whose nativity
 Some royal planet² ruled the southern sky;
 Thy longing country's darling and desire;
 Their cloudy pillar and their guardian fire:
 Their second Moses, whose extended wand
 235 Divides the seas, and shows the promised land;³
 Whose dawning day in every distant age
 Has exercised the sacred prophet's rage:
 The people's prayer, the glad diviners' theme,
 The young men's vision, and the old men's dream!⁴
 240 Thee, savior, thee, the nation's vows' confess,
 And, never satisfied with seeing, bless:
 Swift unspoken⁰ pomps thy steps proclaim, *spontaneous*
 And stammering babes are taught to lisp thy name.
 How long wilt thou the general joy detain,
 245 Starve and defraud the people of thy reign?
 Content ingloriously to pass thy days
 Like one of Virtue's fools that feeds on praise;
 Till thy fresh glories, which now shine so bright,
 Grow stale and tarnish with our daily sight.
 250 Believe me, royal youth, thy fruit must be
 Or gathered ripe, or rot upon the tree.
 Heaven has to all allotted, soon or late,
 Some lucky revolution of their fate;
 Whose motions if we watch and guide with skill
 255 (For human good depends on human will),
 Our Fortune rolls as from a smooth descent,
 And from the first impression takes the bent;
 But, if unseized, she glides away like wind,
 And leaves repenting Folly far behind.
 260 Now, now she meets you with a glorious prize,
 And spreads her locks before her as she flies.⁶
 Had thus old David, from whose loins you spring,
 Not dared, when Fortune called him, to be Icing,
 At Gath⁷ an exile he might still remain,
 265 And heaven's anointing⁸ oil had been in vain.
 Let his successful youth your hopes engage;

1. I.e., mob rub. To Dryden, *democracy* meant popular government.

2. A planet whose influence destines him to kingship.

3. After their exodus from Egypt under the leadership of Moses, whose "extended wand" separated the waters of the Red Sea so that they crossed over on dry land, the Israelites were led in their forty-year wandering in the wilderness by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Exodus 13-14).

4. Cf. Joel 2.28.

5. Solemn promises of fidelity.

6. Achitophel gives to Fortune the traditional attributes of the allegorical personification of Opportunity: bald except for a forelock, she can be seized only as she approaches.

7. Brussels, where Charles spent his last years in exile. David took refuge from Saul in Gath (1 Samuel 27.4).

8. After God rejected Saul, he sent Samuel to anoint the boy David, as a token that he should

But shun the example of declining age;
 Behold him setting in his western skies,
 The shadows lengthening as the vapors rise.
 270 He is not now, as when on Jordan's sand⁹ |
 The joyful people thronged to see him land, >
 Covering the beach, and blackening all the strand; J
 But, like the Prince of Angels, from his height
 Comes tumbling downward with diminished light;¹
 275 Betrayed by one poor plot to public scorn
 (Our only blessing since his cursed return),
 Those heaps of people which one sheaf did bind,
 Blown off and scattered by a puff of wind.
 What strength can he to your designs oppose,
 280 Naked of friends, and round beset with foes?
 If Pharaoh's² doubtful succor he should use,
 A foreign aid would more incense the Jews:
 Proud Egypt would dissembled friendship bring;
 Foment the war, but not support the king:
 285 Nor would the royal party e'er unite
 With Pharaoh's arms to assist the Jebusite;
 Or if they should, their interest soon would break,
 And with such odious aid make David weak.
 All sorts of men by my successful arts,
 290 Abhorring kings, estrange their altered hearts
 From David's rule: and 'tis the general cry,
 'Religion, commonwealth, and liberty.'³
 If you, as champion of the public good,
 Add to their arms a chief of royal blood,
 295 What may not Israel hope, and what applause
 Might such a general gain by such a cause?
 Not barren praise alone, that gaudy flower
 Fair only to the sight, but solid power;
 And nobler is a limited command,
 300 Given by the love of all your native land,
 Than a successive title,⁴ long and dark,
 Drawn from the moldy rolls of Noah's ark."
 What cannot praise effect in mighty minds,
 When flattery soothes, and when ambition blinds!
 305 Desire of power, on earth a vicious weed,
 Yet, sprung from high, is of celestial seed:
 In God 'tis glory; and when men aspire,
 'Tis but a spark too much of heavenly fire.
 The ambitious youth, too covetous of fame,
 310 Too full of angels' metal⁵ in his frame,
 Unwarily was led from virtue's ways,
 Made drunk with honor, and debauched with praise.

finally come to the throne (1 Samuel 16.1—13).

9. The seashore at Dover, where Charles landed (May 25, 1660).

1. Cf. the fall of Satan in *Paradise Lost* 1.50-124, which dims the brightness of the archangel. The choice of the undignified word *tumbling* is deliberate.

2. Pharaoh is Louis XIV of France.

3. Cf. line 82 and n. 5.

4. A title to the crown based on succession.

5. An alternative spelling of *mettle* (i.e., spirit). But a pun on *metal* is intended, as is obvious from the pun *angel* (a purely intellectual being and a coin). Ambition caused the revolt of the angels in heaven.

Half loath, and half consenting to the ill
 (For loyal blood within him struggled still),
 315 He thus replied: "And what pretense have I
 To take up arms for public liberty?
 My father governs with unquestioned right;
 The faith's defender, and mankind's delight,
 Good, gracious, just, observant of the laws:
 320 And heaven by wonders has espoused his cause.
 Whom has he wronged in all his peaceful reign?
 Who sues for justice to his throne in vain?
 What millions has he pardoned of his foes,
 Whom just revenge did to his wrath expose?
 325 Mild, easy, humble, studious of our good,
 Inclined to mercy, and averse from blood;
 If mildness ill with stubborn Israel suit,
 His crime is God's beloved attribute.
 What could he gain, his people to betray,
 330 Or change his right for arbitrary sway?
 Let haughty Pharaoh curse with such a reign
 His fruitful Nile, and yoke a servile train.
 If David's rule Jerusalem displease,
 The Dog Star⁶ heats their brains to this disease.
 335 Why then should I, encouraging the bad,
 Turn rebel and run popularly mad?
 Were he a tyrant, who, by lawless might
 Oppressed the Jews, and raised the Jebusite,
 Well might I mourn; but nature's holy bands
 340 Would curb my spirits and restrain my hands:
 The people might assert⁹ their liberty, *claim*
 But what was right in them were crime in me.
 His favor leaves me nothing to require,
 Prevents my wishes, and outruns desire.
 345 What more can I expect while David lives?
 All but his kingly diadem he gives:
 And that"—But there he paused; then sighing, said—
 "Is justly destined for a worthier head.
 For when my father from his toils shall rest
 350 And late augment the number of the blest,
 His lawful issue shall the throne ascend,
 Or the collateral line,⁷ where that shall end.
 His brother, though oppressed with vulgar spite,⁸
 Yet dauntless, and secure of native right,
 355 Of every royal virtue stands possessed;
 Still dear to all the bravest and the best.
 His courage foes, his friends his truth proclaim;
 His loyalty the king, the world his fame.
 His mercy even the offending crowd will find,
 360 For sure he comes of a forgiving kind.⁹
 Why should I then repine at heaven's decree,

6. Sirius, which in midsummer rises and sets with the sun and is thus associated with the maddening heat of the "dog days."

7. In the event of Charles's dying without legitimate issue, the throne would constitutionally pass

to his brother, James, or his descendants, the "collateral line."

8. Anger of the common people.

9. Race, in the sense of family.

Which gives me no pretense to royalty?
 Yet O that fate, propitiously inclined,
 Had raised my birth, or had debased my mind;
 365 To my large soul not all her treasure lent,
 And then betrayed it to a mean descent!
 I find, I find my mounting spirits bold,
 And David's part disdains my mother's mold.
 Why am I scanted by a niggard birth?¹
 370 My soul disclaims the kindred of her earth;
 And, made for empire, whispers me within,
 'Desire of greatness is a godlike sin.' "
 Him staggering so when hell's dire agent found,
 While fainting Virtue scarce maintained her ground,
 375 He pours fresh forces in, and thus replies:
 "The eternal god, supremely good and wise,
 Imparts not these prodigious gifts in vain:
 What wonders are reserved to bless your reign!
 Against your will, your arguments have shown,
 380 Such virtue's only given to guide a throne.
 Not that your father's mildness I contemn,
 But manly force becomes the diadem.
 'Tis true he grants the people all they crave;
 And more, perhaps, than subjects ought to have:
 385 For lavish grants suppose a monarch tame,
 And more his goodness than his wit^o proclaim.
 But when should people strive their bonds to break,
 If not when kings are negligent or weak?
 Let him give on till he can give no more,
 390 The thrifty Sanhedrin² shall keep him poor;
 And every shekel which he can receive,
 Shall cost a limb of his prerogative.³
 To ply him with new plots shall be my care;
 Or plunge him deep in some expensive war;
 395 Which when his treasure can no more supply,
 He must, with the remains of kingship, buy.
 His faithful friends our jealousies and fears
 Call Jebusites, and Pharaoh's pensioners;
 Whom when our fury from his aid has torn,
 400 He shall be naked left to public scorn.
 The next successor, whom I fear and hate,
 My arts have made obnoxious to the state;
 Turned all his virtues to his overthrow,
 And gained our elders⁴ to pronounce a foe.
 405 His right, for sums of necessary gold,
 Shall first be pawned, and afterward be sold;
 Till time shall ever-wanting David draw,
 To pass your doubtful title into law:
 If not, the people have a right supreme

intelligence

1. I.e., why does my mean birth impose such limits on me?

2. The highest judicial counsel of the Jews, here, Parliament.

3. The Whigs hoped to limit the special privileges of the Crown (the royal "prerogative") by refusing

to vote money to Charles. He circumvented them by living on French subsidies and refusing to summon Parliament.

4. The chief magistrates and rulers of the Jews. Shaftesbury had won over ("gained") country gentlemen and nobles to his hostile view of James.

410 To make their kings; for kings are made for them.
 All empire is no more than power in trust,
 Which, when resumed,⁰ can be no longer just. *taken back*
 Succession, for the general good designed,
 In its own wrong a nation cannot bind;
 415 If altering that the people can relieve,
 Better one suffer than a nation grieve.
 The Jews well know their power: ere Saul they chose,⁵
 God was their king, and God they durst depose.
 Urge now your piety,⁶ your filial name,
 420 A father's right and fear of future fame;
 The public good, that universal call,
 To which even heaven submitted, answers all.
 Nor let his love enchant your generous mind;
 Tis Nature's trick to propagate her kind.
 425 Our fond begetters, who would never die,
 Love but themselves in their posterity.
 Or let his kindness by the effects be tried,
 Or let him lay his vain pretense aside.
 God said he loved your father; could he bring
 430 A better proof than to anoint him king?
 It surely showed he loved the shepherd well,
 Who gave so fair a flock as Israel.
 Would David have you thought his darling son?
 What means he then, to alienate⁷ the crown?
 435 The name of godly he may blush to bear:
 'Tis after God's own heart⁸ to cheat his heir.
 He to his brother gives supreme command;
 To you a legacy of barren land,⁹
 Perhaps the old harp, on which he thrums his lays,
 440 Or some dull Hebrew ballad in your praise.
 Then the next heir, a prince severe and wise,
 Already looks on you with jealous eyes;
 Sees through the thin disguises of your arts,
 And marks your progress in the people's hearts.
 445 Though now his mighty soul its grief contains,
 He meditates revenge who least complains;
 And, like a lion, slumbering in the way,
 Or sleep dissembling, while he waits his prey,
 His fearless foes within his distance draws,
 450 Constrains his roaring, and contracts his paws;
 Till at the last, his time for fury found,
 He shoots with sudden vengeance from the ground;
 The prostrate vulgar⁰ passes o'er and spares, *common people*
 But with a lordly rage his hunters tears.
 455 Your case no tame expedients will afford:
 Besolve on death, or conquest by the sword,

5. Before Saul, the first king of Israel, came to the throne, the Jews were governed by judges. Similarly Oliver Cromwell as lord protector took over the reins of government, after he had dissolved the Rump Parliament in 1653.

6. Dutifulness to a parent.

7. In law, to convey the title to property to another person.

8. An irony (cf. line 7 and n. 2).

9. James was given the title of generalissimo in 1678. In 1679 Monmouth was banished and withdrew to Holland.

Which for no less a stake than life you draw;
 And self-defense is nature's eldest law.
 Leave the warm people no considering time;
 460 For then rebellion may be thought a crime.
 Prevail yourself of what occasion gives,
 But try your title while your father lives;
 And that your arms may have a fair pretense," pretext
 Proclaim you take them in the king's defense;
 465 Whose sacred life each minute would expose
 To plots, from seeming friends, and secret foes.
 And who can sound the depth of David's, soul?
 Perhaps his fear his kindness may control.
 He fears his brother, though he loves his son,
 470 For plighted vows too late to be undone.
 If so, by force he wishes to be gained,
 Like women's lechery, to seem constrained.⁰ forced
 Doubt not; but when he most affects the frown,
 Commit a pleasing rape upon the crown.
 475 Secure his person to secure your cause:
 They who possess the prince, possess the laws."
 He said, and this advice above the rest
 With Absalom's mild nature suited best:
 Unblamed of life (ambition set aside),
 480 Not stained with cruelty, nor puffed with pride,
 How happy had he been, if destiny
 Had higher placed his birth, or not so high!
 His kingly virtues might have claimed a throne,
 And blest all other countries but his own.
 485 But charming greatness since so few refuse,
 'Tis juster to lament him than accuse.
 Strong were his hopes a rival to remove,
 With blandishments to gain the public love;
 To head the faction while their zeal was hot,
 490 And popularly prosecute the Plot.
 To further this, Achitophel unites
 The malcontents of all the Israelites;
 Whose differing parties he could wisely join,
 For several ends, to serve the same design:
 495 The best (and of the princes some were such),
 Who thought the power of monarchy too much;
 (Mistaken men, and patriots in their hearts;
 Not wicked, but seduced by impious arts.
 By these the springs of property were bent,
 500 And wound so high, they cracked the government.
 The next for interest sought to embroil the state,
 To sell their duty at a dearer rate;
 And make their Jewish markets of the throne,
 Pretending public good, to serve their own.
 505 Others thought kings an useless heavy load,
 Who cost too much, and did too little good.
 These were for laying honest David by,
 On principles of pure good husbandry.⁰ economy
 With them joined all the haranguers of the throng,

510 That thought to get preferment by the tongue.
 Who follow next, a double danger bring,
 Not only hating David, but the king:
 The Solymaeen rout,¹ well-versed of old
 In godly faction, and in treason bold;
 515 Cowering and quaking at a conqueror's sword,
 But lofty to a lawful prince restored;
 Saw with disdain an ethnic² plot begun,
 And scorned by Jebusites to be outdone.
 Hot Levites³ headed these; who, pulled before
 520 From the ark, which in the Judges' days they bore,
 Resumed their cant, and with a zealous cry
 Pursued their old beloved theocracy:
 Where Sanhedrin and priest enslaved the nation,
 And justified their spoils by inspiration:
 525 For who so fit for reign as Aaron's race,⁴
 If once dominion they could found in grace?
 These led the pack; though not of surest scent,
 Yet deepest-mouthed⁵ against the government.
 A numerous host of dreaming saints⁶ succeed,
 530 Of the true old enthusiastic breed:
 'Gainst form and order they their power employ,
 Nothing to build, and all things to destroy.
 But far more numerous was the herd of such,
 Who think too little, and who talk too much.
 535 These out of mere instinct, they knew not why,
 Adored their fathers' God and property;
 And, by the same blind benefit of fate,
 The Devil and the Jebusite did hate:
 Born to be saved, even in their own despite,
 540 Because they could not help believing right.
 Such were the tools; but a whole Hydra more
 Remains, of sprouting heads too long to score.⁰ *count*
 Some of their chiefs were princes of the land:
 In the first rank of these did Zimri⁷ stand;
 545 A man so various, that he seemed to be
 Not one, but all mankind's epitome:

1. I.e., London rabble. Solyma was a name for Jerusalem.

2. Gentile; here, Roman Catholic.

3. I.e., Presbyterian clergymen. The tribe of Levi, assigned to duties in the tabernacle, carried the Ark of the Covenant during the forty-year sojourn in the wilderness (Numbers 4). Under the Commonwealth ("in the Judges' days") Presbyterianism became the state religion, and its clergy, therefore, "bore the ark." The Act of Uniformity (1662) forced the Presbyterian clergy out of their livings: in short, before the Popish Plot, they had been "pulled from the ark." They are represented here as joining the Whigs in the hope of restoring the commonwealth, "their old beloved theocracy."

4. Priests had to be descendants of Aaron (Exodus 28.1, Numbers 18.7).

5. Loudest. The phrase is applied to hunting dogs. "Pack" and "scent" sustain the image.

6. Term used by certain Dissenters for those

elected to salvation. The extreme fanaticism of the "saints" and their claims to inspiration are characterized as a form of religious madness ("enthusiastic," line 530).

7. George Villiers, second duke of Buckingham (1628-1687), wealthy, brilliant, dissolute, and unstable. He had been an influential member of the cabal, but after 1673 had joined Shaftesbury in opposition to the court party. This is the least political of the satirical portraits in the poem. Buckingham had been the chief author of *The Rehearsal* (1671), the play that satirized heroic tragedy and ridiculed Dryden in the character of Mr. Bayes. Politics gave Dryden an opportunity to retaliate. He comments on this portrait in his "A Discourse Concerning the Original and Progress of Satire." Dryden had two biblical Zimris in mind: the Zimri destroyed for his lustfulness and blasphemy (Numbers 25) and the conspirator and regicide of 1 Kings 16.8-20 and 2 Kings 9.31.

Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
 Was everything by starts, and nothing long;
 But, in the course of one revolving moon,
 550 Was chymist,^o fiddler, statesman, and buffoon: *chemist*
 Then all for women, painting, rhyming, drinking,
 Besides ten thousand freaks that died in thinking.
 Blest madman, who could every hour employ,
 With something new to wish, or to enjoy!
 555 Railing^o and praising were his usual themes; *reviling, abusing*
 And both (to show his judgment) in extremes:
 So over-violent, or over-civil,
 That every man, with him, was God or Devil.
 In squandering wealth was his peculiar art:
 560 Nothing went unrewarded but desert.
 Beggared by fools, whom still^o he found^o too late, *constantly / found out*
 He had his jest, and they had his estate.
 He laughed himself from court; then sought relief
 By forming parties, but could ne'er be chief;
 565 For, spite of him, the weight of business fell
 On Absalom and wise Achitophel:
 Thus, wicked but in will, of means bereft,
 He left not faction, but of that was left.
 Titles and names 'twere tedious to rehearse
 570 Of lords, below the dignity of verse.
 Wits, warriors, Commonwealth's men, were the best;
 Kind husbands, and mere nobles, all the rest.
 And therefore, in the name of dullness, be
 The well-hung Balaam and cold Caleb, free;
 575 And canting Nadab let oblivion damn,
 Who made new porridge for the paschal lamb.⁸
 Let friendship's holy band some names assure;
 Some their own worth, and some let scorn secure.
 Nor shall the rascal rabble here have place,
 580 Whom kings no titles gave, and God no grace:
 Not bull-faced Jonas,⁹ who could statutes draw
 To mean rebellion, and make treason law.
 But he, though bad, is followed by a worse,
 The wretch who heaven's anointed dared to curse:
 585 Shimei,¹ whose youth did early promise bring
 Of zeal to God and hatred to his king,
 Did wisely from expensive sins refrain,
 And never broke the Sabbath, but for gain;
 Nor ever was he known an oath to vent,

8. The lamb slain during Passover; here, Christ. The identities of Balaam, Caleb, and Nadab have not been certainly established, although various Whig nobles have been suggested. For Balaam see Numbers 22-24; for Caleb, Numbers 13-14; and for Nadab, Leviticus 10.1-2. "Well-hung": fluent of speech or sexually potent or both. "Cold": contrasts with the second meaning of *xvell-hung*. "Canting": points to a Nonconformist, as does "new porridge," for Dissenters referred to the Book of Common Prayer contemptuously as "porridge," a hodgepodge, unsubstantial stuff.

9. Sir William Jones, attorney general, had been largely responsible for the passage of the first Exclusion Bill by the House of Commons. He prosecuted the accused in the Popish Plot.

1. Shimei cursed and stoned David when he fled into the wilderness during Absalom's revolt (2 Samuel 16.5-14). His name is used here for one of the two sheriffs of London: Slingsby Bethel, a Whig, former republican, and virulent enemy of Charles. He packed juries with Whigs and so secured the acquittal of enemies of the court, among them Shaftesbury himself.

580 Or curse, unless against the government.
 Thus heaping wealth, by the most ready way
 Among the Jews, which was to cheat and pray,
 The city, to reward his pious hate
 Against his master, chose him magistrate.
 595 His hand a vare^o of justice did uphold; staff
 His neck was loaded with a chain of gold.
 During his office, treason was no crime;
 The sons of Belial² had a glorious time;
 For Shimei, though not prodigal of pelf,
 600 Yet loved his wicked neighbor as himself.
 When two or three were gathered to declaim 1
 Against the monarch of Jerusalem, >•
 Shimei was always in the midst of them; J
 And if they cursed the king when he was by,
 605 Would rather curse than break good company.
 If any durst his factious friends accuse,
 He packed a jury of dissenting Jews;
 Whose fellow-feeling in the godly cause
 Would free the suffering saint from human laws.
 610 For laws are only made to punish those
 Who serve the king, and to protect his foes.
 If any leisure time he had from power
 (Because 'tis sin to misemploy an hour),
 His business was, by writing, to persuade
 615 That kings were useless, and a clog to trade;
 And, that his noble style he might refine,
 No Rechabite³ more shunned the fumes of wine.
 Chaste were his cellars, and his shrieval board⁴
 The grossness of a city feast abhorred:
 620 His cooks, with long disuse, their trade forgot;
 Cool was his kitchen, though his brains were hot,
 Such frugal virtue malice may accuse,
 But sure 'twas necessary to the Jews:
 For towns once burnt⁵ such magistrates require
 625 As dare not tempt God's providence by fire.
 With spiritual food he fed his servants well,
 But free from flesh that made the Jews rebel;
 And Moses' laws he held in more account,
 For forty days of fasting in the mount.⁶
 630 To speak the rest, who better are forgot,
 Would tire a well-breathed witness of the Plot.
 Yet, Corah,⁷ thou shalt from oblivion pass:
 Erect thyself, thou monumental brass,
 High as the serpent of thy metal made,⁸

2. Sons of wickedness (cf. Milton, *Paradise Lost* 1.490–505). Dryden probably intended a pun on Balliol, the Oxford college in which leading Whigs stayed during the brief and fateful meeting of Parliament at Oxford in 1681.

3. An austere Jewish sect that drank no wine (Jeremiah 35.2–19).

4. Sheriff's dinner table.

5. London burned in 1666.

6. Mount Sinai, where, during a fast of forty days.

Moses received the law (Exodus 34.28).

7. Or Korah, a rebellious Levite, swallowed up by the earth because of his crimes (Numbers 16). Corah is Titus Oates, the self-appointed, perjured, and "well-breathed" (long-winded) witness of the plot.

8. Moses erected a brazen serpent to heal the Jews bitten by fiery serpents (Numbers 21.4–9). Brass also means impudence or shamelessness.

- 635 While nations stand secure beneath thy shade.
 What though his birth were base, yet comets rise
 From earthy vapors, ere they shine in skies.
 Prodigious actions may as well be done
 By weaver's issue,⁹ as by prince's son.
- 640 This arch-attestor for the public good
 By that one deed ennobles all his blood.
 Who ever asked the witnesses' high race
 Whose oath with martyrdom did Stephen¹ grace?
 Ours was a Levite, and as times went then,
- 645 His tribe were God Almighty's gentlemen.
 Sunk were his eyes, his voice was harsh and loud,
 Sure signs he neither choleric⁰ was nor proud: *prone to anger*
 His long chin proved his wit; his saintlike grace
 A church vermilion, and a Moses' face.²
- 650 His memory, miraculously great,
 Could plots, exceeding man's belief, repeat;
 Which therefore cannot be accounted lies,
 For human wit could never such devise.
 Some future truths are mingled in his book;
- 655 But where the witness failed, the prophet spoke:
 Some things like visionary flights appear;
 The spirit caught him up, the Lord knows where,
 And gave him his rabbinical degree,
 Unknown to foreign university.³
- 660 His judgment yet his memory did excel;
 Which pieced his wondrous evidence so well,
 And suited to the temper of the times,
 Then groaning under Jebusitic crimes.
 Let Israel's foes suspect his heavenly call,
- 665 And rashly judge his writ apocryphal;⁴
 Our laws for such affronts have forfeits made:
 He takes his life, who takes away his trade.
 Were I myself in witness Corah's place,
 The wretch who did me such a dire disgrace
- 670 Should whet my memory, though once forgot,
 To make him an appendix of my plot.
 His zeal to heaven made him his prince despise,
 And load his person with indignities;
 But zeal peculiar privilege affords,
- 675 Indulging latitude to deeds and words;
 And Corah might for Agag's⁵ murder call,
 In terms as coarse as Samuel used to Saul.
 What others in his evidence did join

9. Oates's father, a clergyman, belonged to an obscure family of ribbon weavers.

1. The first Christian martyr, accused by false witnesses (Acts 6–7).

2. Moses' face shone when he came down from Mount Sinai with the tables of the law (Exodus 34.29–30). Oates's face suggests high living, not spiritual illumination.

3. Oates falsely claimed to be a doctor of divinity in the University of Salamanca.

4. Not inspired and hence excluded from Holy Writ.

5. Agag is probably one of the five Catholic peers executed for the Popish Plot in 1680, most likely Lord Stafford, against whom Oates fabricated testimony. He is almost certainly not, as is usually suggested, Sir Edmund Berry Godfrey (see headnote, pp. 2087–88). "Agag's murder" and Samuel's coarse terms to Saul are in 1 Samuel 15.

(The best that could be had for love or coin),
 680 In Corah's own predicament will fall;
 For *witness* is a common name to all.
 Surrounded thus with friends of every sort,
 Deluded Absalom forsakes the court:
 Impatient of high hopes, urged with renown,
 685 And fired with near possession of a crown.
 The admiring crowd are dazzled with surprise,
 And on his goodly person feed their eyes:
 His joy concealed, he sets himself to show,
 On each side bowing popularly⁶ low;
 690 His looks, his gestures, and his words he frames,
 And with familiar ease repeats their names.
 Thus formed by nature, furnished out with arts,
 He glides unfelt into their secret hearts.
 Then, with a kind compassionating look,
 695 And sighs, bespeaking pity ere he spoke,
 Few words he said; but easy those and fit,
 More slow than Hybla-drops,⁷ and far more sweet.
 "I mourn, my countrymen, your lost estate;
 Though far unable to prevent your fate:
 700 Behold a banished man, for your dear cause
 Exposed a prey to arbitrary laws!
 Yet oh! that I alone could be undone,
 Cut off from empire, and no more a son!
 Now all your liberties a spoil are made;]
 705 Egypt" and Tyrus° intercept your trade, t
 And Jebusites your sacred rites invade. J
 My father, whom with reverence yet I name,
 Charmed into ease, is careless of his fame;
 And, bribed with petty sums of foreign gold,
 710 Is grown in Bathsheba's⁸ embraces old;
 Exalts his enemies, his friends destroys;
 And all his power against himself employs.
 He gives, and let him give, my right away;
 But why should he his own, and yours betray?
 715 He only, he can make the nation bleed,
 And he alone from my revenge is freed.
 Take then my tears (with that he wiped his eyes),
 'Tis all the aid my present power supplies:
 No court-informer can these arms accuse;
 720 These arms may sons against their fathers use:
 And 'tis my wish, the next successor's reign
 May make no other Israelite complain."
 Youth, beauty, graceful action seldom fail;
 But common interest always will prevail;
 725 And pity never ceases to be shown
 To him who makes the people's wrongs his own.
 The crowd (that still believe their kings oppress)

France/Holland

6. "So as to please the crowd" (Johnson's *Dictionary*).

7. The famous honey of Hybla in Sicily.

8. Bathsheba is the woman with whom David

committed adultery (2 Samuel 11). Here, Charles II's French mistress, Louise de Keroualle, duchess of Portsmouth.

With lifted hands their young Messiah bless:
 Who now begins his progress to ordain
 730 With chariots, horsemen, and a numerous train;
 From east to west his glories he displays,⁹
 And, like the sun, the promised land surveys.
 Fame runs before him as the morning star,
 And shouts of joy salute him from afar:
 735 Each house receives him as a guardian god,
 And consecrates the place of his abode:
 But hospitable treats did most commend
 Wise Issachar,¹ his wealthy western friend.
 This moving court, that caught the people's eyes,
 740 And seemed but pomp, did other ends disguise:
 Achitophel had formed it, with intent
 To sound the depths, and fathom, where it went,
 The people's hearts; distinguish friends from foes,
 And try their strength, before they came to blows.
 745 Yet all was colored with a smooth pretense
 Of specious love, and duty to their prince.
 Religion, and redress of grievances,
 Two names that always cheat and always please,
 Are often urged; and good King David's life
 750 Endangered by a brother and a wife.²
 Thus, in a pageant show, a plot is made,
 And peace itself is war in masquerade.
 O foolish Israel! never warned by ill,
 Still the same bait, and circumvented still!
 755 Did ever men forsake their present ease,
 In midst of health imagine a disease;
 Take pains contingent mischiefs to foresee,
 Make heirs for monarchs, and for God decree?
 What shall we think! Can people give away
 760 Both for themselves and sons, their native sway?
 Then they are left defenseless to the sword
 Of each unbounded, arbitrary lord:
 And laws are vain, by which we right enjoy,
 If kings unquestioned can those laws destroy.
 765 Yet if the crowd be judge of fit and just,
 And kings are only officers in trust,
 Then this resuming covenant was declared
 When kings were made, or is forever barred.
 If those who gave the scepter could not tie
 770 By their own deed their own posterity,
 How then could Adam bind his future race?
 How could his forfeit on mankind take place?
 Or how could heavenly justice damn us all,
 Who ne'er consented to our father's fall?
 775 Then kings are slaves to those whom they command,

9. In 1680 Monmouth made a progress through the west of England, seeking popular support for his cause.

1. Thomas Thynne of Longleat. He entertained Monmouth on his journey in the west. *Wise is, of*

course, ironic.

2. Titus Oates had sworn that both James, duke of York, and the queen were involved in a similar plot to poison Charles II.

And tenants to their people's pleasure stand.
 Add, that the power for property allowed
 Is mischievously seated in the crowd;
 For who can be secure of private right,
 780 If sovereign sway may be dissolved by might?
 Nor is the people's judgment always true:
 The most may err as grossly as the few;
 And faultless kings run down, by common cry,
 For vice, oppression, and for tyranny.
 785 What standard is there in a fickle rout,
 Which, flowing to the mark,⁰ runs faster out? *highwater mark*
 Nor only crowds, but Sanhedrins may be
 Infected with this public lunacy,³
 And share the madness of rebellious times,
 790 To murder monarchs for imagined crimes.⁴
 If they may give and take whene'er they please,
 Not kings alone (the Godhead's images),
 But government itself at length must fall
 To nature's state, where all have right to all.
 795 Yet, grant our lords the people kings can make,
 What prudent men a settled throne would shake?
 For whatsoever their sufferings were before,
 That change they covet makes them suffer more.
 All other errors but disturb a state,
 800 But innovation is the blow of fate.
 If ancient fabrics nod, and threat to fall,
 To patch the flaws, and buttress up the wall,
 Thus far 'tis duty; but here fix the mark;
 For all beyond it is to touch our ark.⁵
 805 To change foundations, cast the frame anew,
 Is work for rebels, who base ends pursue,
 At once divine and human laws control,
 And mend the parts by ruin of the whole.
 The tampering world is subject to this curse,
 810 To physic their disease into a worse.
 Now what relief can righteous David bring?
 How fatal 'tis to be too good a king!
 Friends he has few, so high the madness grows:
 Who dare be such, must be the people's foes:
 815 Yet some there were, even in the worst of days;
 Some let me name, and naming is to praise.
 In this short file Barzillai⁶ first appears;
 Barzillai, crowned with honor and with years:
 Long since, the rising rebels he withstood
 820 In regions waste, beyond the Jordan's flood:
 Unfortunately brave to buoy the State;
 But sinking underneath his master's fate:

3. The fickle crowd flows and ebbs like the tide, which is pulled back and forth by the moon (hence "lunacy," after the Latin *luna*, or "moon").

4. An allusion to the execution of Charles I.

5. U/zah was struck dead because he sacrilegiously touched the Ark of the Covenant (2 Samuel 6.6-7).

6. James Butler, duke of Ormond (1610-1688).

He was famous for his loyalty to the Stuart cause. He fought for Charles I in Ireland, and when that cause was hopeless, he joined Charles II in his exile abroad. He spent a large fortune on behalf of the king and continued to serve him loyally after the Restoration. Six of his ten children were dead (see line 830). Cf. 2 Samuel 19.31-39.

In exile with his godlike prince he mourned;
 For him he suffered, and with him returned.
 825 The court he practiced, not the courtier's art:
 Large was his wealth, but larger was his heart:
 Which well the noblest objects knew to choose,
 The fighting warrior, and recording Muse.
 His bed could once a fruitful issue boast;
 830 Now more than half a father's name is lost.
 His eldest hope,⁷ with every grace adorned,
 By me (so Heaven will have it) always mourned,
 And always honored, snatched in manhood's prime
 By unequal fates, and Providence's crime:
 835 Yet not before the goal of honor won,
 All parts fulfilled of subject and of son; r
 Swift was the race, but short the time to run. J
 O narrow circle, but of power divine,
 Scanted in space, but perfect in thy line!
 840 By sea, by land, thy matchless worth was known,
 Arms thy delight, and war was all thy own:
 Thy force, infused, the fainting Tyrians⁹ propped; *the Dutch*
 And haughty Pharaoh found his fortune stopped.
 Oh ancient honor! Oh unconquered hand,
 845 Whom foes unpunished never could withstand!
 But Israel was unworthy of thy name:
 Short is the date of all immoderate fame.
 It looks as Heaven our ruin had designed,
 And durst not trust thy fortune and thy mind.
 850 Now, free from earth, thy disencumbered soul
 Mounts up, and leaves behind the clouds and starry pole:
 From thence thy kindred legions mayst thou bring,
 To aid the guardian angel of thy king.
 Here stop my Muse, here cease thy painful flight;
 855 No pinions can pursue immortal height:
 Tell good Barzillai thou canst sing no more,
 And tell thy soul she should have fled before:
 Or fled she with his life, and left this verse
 To hang on her departed patron's hearse?
 860 Now take thy steepy flight from heaven, and see
 If thou canst find on earth another *he*:
 Another *he* would be too hard to find;
 See then whom thou canst see not far behind.
 Zadoc the priest, whom, shunning power and place,
 865 His lowly mind advanced to David's grace:
 With him the Sagan⁸ of Jerusalem,
 Of hospitable soul, and noble stem;
 Him of the western dome, whose weighty sense
 Flows in fit words and heavenly eloquence.
 870 The prophets' sons,⁹ by such example led,
 To learning and to loyalty were bred:
 For colleges on bounteous kinds depend,

7. Ormond's son, Thomas, earl of Ossory (1634—1680), a famous soldier and, like his father, devoted to Charles II.

8. Henry Compton, bishop of London. "Zadoc":

William Sancroft, archbishop of Canterbury.

9. The boys of Westminster School, which Dryden had attended. "Him of the western dome": John Dolben, dean of Westminster.

And never rebel was to arts a friend.
 To these succeed the pillars of the laws,
 875 Who best could plead, and best can judge a cause.
 Next them a train of loyal peers ascend;
 Sharp-judging Adriel,¹ the Muses' friend,
 Himself a Muse—in Sanhedrin's debate
 True to his prince, but not a slave of state;
 880 Whom David's love with honors did adorn,
 "That from his disobedient son were torn.
 Jotham² of piercing wit, and pregnant thought.
 Indued by nature, and by learning taught
 To move assemblies, who but only tried
 885 The worse a while, then chose the better side;
 Nor chose alone, but turned the balance too;
 So much the weight of one brave man can do.
 Hushai,³ the friend of David in distress,
 In public storms, of manly steadfastness:
 890 By foreign treaties he informed his youth,
 And joined experience to his native truth.
 His frugal care supplied the wanting throne,
 Frugal for that, but bounteous of his own:
 'Tis easy conduct when exchequers flow,
 895 But hard the task to manage well the low;
 For sovereign power is too depressed or high,
 When kings are forced to sell, or crowds to buy.
 Indulge one labor more, my weary Muse,
 For Amiel:⁴ who can Amiel's praise refuse?
 900 Of ancient race by birth, but nobler yet
 In his own worth, and without title great:
 The Sanhedrin long time as chief he ruled,
 Their reason guided, and their passion cooled:
 So dexterous was he in the crown's defense,
 905 So formed to speak a loyal nation's sense,
 That, as their band was Israel's tribes in small,
 So fit was he to represent them all.
 Now rasher charioteers the seat ascend,
 Whose loose careers his steady skill commend": *set off to advantage*
 910 They like the unequal ruler of the day,
 Misguide the seasons, and mistake the way;
 While he withdrawn at their mad labor smiles,
 And safe enjoys the sabbath of his toils.
 These were the chief, a small but faithful band "1
 915 Of worthies, in the breach who dared to stand,
 And tempt the united fury of the land. J
 With grief they viewed such powerful engines bent,
 To batter down the lawful government:
 A numerous faction, with pretended frights,
 920 In Sanhedrins to plume" the regal rights; *pluck, plunder*
 The true successor from the court removed:⁵

1. John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave.

2. George Savile, marquis of Halifax.

3. Laurence Hyde, earl of Rochester.

4. Edward Seymour, speaker of the House of

Commons.

5. The duke of York had been banished from England.

The Plot, by hireling witnesses, improved.
 These ills they saw, and, as their duty bound,
 They showed the king the danger of the wound:
 925 That no concessions from the throne would please,
 But lenitives⁰ fomented the disease; *pain relievers*
 That Absalom, ambitious of the crown,
 Was made the lure to draw the people down;
 That false Achitophel's pernicious hate
 930 Had turned the Plot to ruin Church and State:
 The council violent, the rabble worse;
 That Shimei taught Jerusalem to curse.
 With all these loads of injuries oppressed,
 And long revolving, in his careful breast,
 935 The event of things, at last, his patience tired,
 Thus from his royal throne, by Heaven inspired,
 The godlike David spoke: with awful fear
 His train their Maker in their master hear.
 "Thus long have I, by native mercy swayed,
 940 My wrongs dissembled, my revenge delayed:
 So willing to forgive the offending age,
 So much the father did the king assuage.
 But now so far my clemency they slight,
 The offenders question my forgiving right.
 945 That one was made for many, they contend;
 But 'tis to rule; for that's a monarch's end.
 They call my tenderness of blood, my fear;
 Though manly tempers can the longest bear.
 Yet, since they will divert my native course,
 950 'Tis time to show I am not good by force.
 Those heaped affronts that haughty subjects bring,
 Are burdens for a camel, not a king:
 Kings are the public pillars of the State,
 Born to sustain and prop the nation's weight:
 955 If my young Samson will pretend a call
 To shake the column, let him share the fall:⁶
 But, oh, that yet he would repent and live!
 How easy 'tis for parents to forgive!
 With how few tears a pardon might be won
 960 From nature, pleading for a darling son!
 Poor pitied youth, by my paternal care
 Raised up to all the height his frame could bear:
 Had God ordained his fate for empire born,
 He would have given his soul another turn:
 965 Gulled⁰ with a patriot's name, whose modern sense *deceived*
 Is one that would by law supplant his prince:
 The people's brave,⁰ the politician's tool; *bully*
 Never was patriot yet, but was a fool.
 Whence comes it that religion and the laws
 970 Should more be Absalom's than David's cause?
 His old instructor,⁷ ere he lost his place,
 Was never thought indued with so much grace.

6. Judges 16.

7. The earl of Shaftesbury.

Good heavens, how faction can a patriot paint!
 My rebel ever proves my people's saint:
 975 Would *they* impose an heir upon the throne?
 Let Sanhedrins be taught to give their own.
 A king's at least a part of government,
 And mine as requisite as their consent;
 Without my leave a future king to choose,
 980 Infers a right the present to depose:
 True, they petition me to approve their choice;
 But Esau's hands suit ill with Jacob's voice.⁸
 My pious subjects for my safety pray,
 Which to secure, they take my power away.
 985 From plots and treasons Heaven preserve my years,
 But save me most from my petitioners.
 Unsatiated as the barren womb or grave;
 God cannot grant so much as they can crave.
 What then is left but with a jealous eye
 990 To guard the small remains of royalty?
 The law shall still direct my peaceful sway,
 And the same law teach rebels to obey:
 Votes shall no more established power control—
 Such votes as make a part exceed the whole:
 995 No groundless clamors shall my friends remove,
 Nor crowds have power to punish ere they prove:
 For gods and godlike kings, their care express,
 Still to defend their servants in distress.
 O that my power to saving were confined:
 1000 Why am I forced, like Heaven, against my mind, ^F
 To make examples of another kind? ^J
 Must I at length the sword of justice draw?
 O curst effects of necessary law!
 How ill my fear they by my mercy scan!⁰ judge
 1005 Beware the fury of a patient man.
 Law they require, let Law then show her face;
 They could not be content to look on Grace,
 Her hinder parts, but with a daring eye
 To tempt the terror of her front and die.⁹
 1010 By their own arts, 'tis righteously decreed,
 Those dire artificers of death shall bleed.
 Against themselves their witnesses will swear,
 Till viper-like their mother Plot they tear:
 And suck for nutriment that bloody gore,
 1015 Which was their principle of life before.
 Their Belial with their Belzebub¹ will fight;
 Thus on my foes, my foes shall do me right:
 Nor doubt the event; for factious crowds engage,
 In their first onset, all their brutal rage.
 1020 Then let 'em take an unresisted course,
 Retire and traverse,⁰ and delude their force: *thwart*

8. Genesis 27.22.

9. Moses was not allowed to see the countenance of Jehovah (Exodus 33.20-23).

1. A god of the Philistines. "Belial": the incarnation of all evil,

But when they stand all breathless, urge the fight,
 And rise upon 'em with redoubled might:
 For lawful power is still superior found,
 1025 When long driven back, at length it stands the ground."
 He said. The Almighty, nodding, gave consent;
 And peals of thunder shook the firmament.
 Henceforth a series of new time began,
 The mighty years in long procession ran:
 1030 "Once more the godlike David was restored,
 And willing nations knew their lawful lord.

1681

Mac Flecknoe The target of this superb satire, which is cast in the form of a mock-heroic episode, is Thomas Shadwell (1640-1692), the playwright, with whom Dryden had been on good terms for a number of years, certainly as late as March 1678. Shadwell considered himself the successor of Ben Jonson and the champion of the type of comedy that Jonson had written, the "comedy of humors," in which each character is presented under the domination of a single psychological trait or eccentricity, his humor. His plays are not without merit, but they are often clumsy and prolix and certainly much inferior to Jonson's. For many years he had conducted a public argument with Dryden on the merits of Jonson's comedies, which he thought Dryden undervalued. Exactly what moved Dryden to attack him is a matter of conjecture: he may simply have grown progressively bored and irritated by Shadwell and his tedious argument. The poem seems to have been written in late 1678 or 1679 and to have circulated only in manuscript until it was printed in 1682 in a pirated edition by an obscure publisher. By that time, the two playwrights were alienated by politics as well as by literary quarrels. Shadwell was a violent Whig and the reputed author of a sharp attack on Dryden as the Tory author of *Absalom and Achitophel* and "The Medal." It was probably for this reason that the printer added the subtitle referring to Shadwell's Whiggism in the phrase "true-blue-Protestant poet." Political passions were running high, and sales would be helped if the poem seemed to refer to the events of the day.

Whereas Butler had debased and degraded his victims by using burlesque, caricature, and the grotesque, Dryden exposed Shadwell to ridicule by using the devices of mock epic, which treats the low, mean, or absurd in the grand language, lofty style, and solemn tone of epic poetry. The obvious disparity between subject and style makes the satiric point. In 1678, a prolific, untalented writer, Richard Flecknoe, died. Dryden conceived the idea of presenting Shadwell (the self-proclaimed heir of Ben Jonson, the laureate) as the son and successor of Flecknoe (an irony also because Flecknoe was a Catholic priest)—hence *Mac* (i.e., son of) *Flecknoe*—from whom he inherits the throne of dullness. Flecknoe in the triple role of king, priest, and poet hails his successor, pronounces a panegyric on his perfect fitness for the throne, anoints and crowns him, foretells his glorious reign, and as he sinks (leaden dullness cannot soar), leaves his mantle to fall symbolically on Shadwell's shoulders. The poem abounds in literary allusions—to Soman legend and history and to the *Aeneid*, to Cowley's fragmentary epic *The Dai'ideis*, to *Paradise Lost*, and to Shadwell's own plays. Biblical allusions add an unexpected dimension of incongruous dignity to the low scene. The coronation takes place in the City, to the plaudits of the citizens, who are fit to admire only what is dull. In 217 lines, Dryden created an image of Shadwell that has fixed his reputation to this day.

Mac Flecknoe

Or a Satire u-pon the True-Blue-Protestant Poet, T. S.

- All human things are subject to decay,
 And when fate summons, monarchs must obey.
 This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus,¹ young
 Was called to empire, and had governed long;
 5 In prose and verse, was owned, without dispute,
 Through all the realms of Nonsense, absolute.
 This aged prince, now flourishing in peace,
 And blest with issue of a large increase,
 Worn out with business, did at length debate
 10 To settle the succession of the state;
 And, pondering which of all his sons was fit
 To reign, and wage immortal war with wit,
 Cried: " 'Tis resolved; for nature pleads that he
 Should only rule, who most resembles me.
 15 Sh ² alone my perfect image bears,
~~Mature~~ in dullness from his tender years:
 Sh alone, of all my sons, is he
 Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.
 The ~~rest~~ to some faint meaning make pretense,
 20 But Sh never deviates into sense.
 Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,
 Strike ~~through~~, and make a lucid interval;
 But Sh 's genuine night admits no ray,
 His rising fogs prevail upon the day.
 25 Besides, his goodly fabric³ fills the eye,
 And seems designed for thoughtless majesty:
 Thoughtless as monarch oaks that shade the plain,
 And, spread in solemn state, supinely reign.
 Heywood and Shirley were but types of thee,⁴
 30 Thou last great prophet of tautology.⁵
 Even I, a dunce of more renown than they,
 Was sent before but to prepare thy way;
 And, coarsely clad in Norwich drugget,⁶ *coarse woolen cloth*
 To teach the nations in thy greater name.⁶
 35 My warbling lute, the lute I whilom⁷ strung, *formerly*
 When to King John of Portugal⁷ I sung,
 Was but the prelude to that glorious day,
 When thou on silver Thames didst cut thy way,
 With well-timed oars before the royal barge,

1. In 31 B.C.E. Octavian became the first Roman emperor at the age of thirty-two. He assumed the title Augustus in 27 B.C.E.

2. Thomas Shadwell. The initial and second letter of the name followed by a dash give the appearance, but only the appearance, of protecting Dryden's victim by concealing his name. A common device in the satire of the period.

3. His body. Shadwell was a corpulent man.

4. Thomas Heywood (ca. 1570—1641) and James Shirley (1596—1666), playwrights popular before the closing of the theaters in 1642 but now out of fashion. They are introduced here as "types" (i.e.,

prefigurings) of Shadwell, in the sense that Solomon was regarded as an Old Testament prefiguring of Christ, the "last [final] great prophet."

5. Unnecessary repetition of meaning in different words.

6. The parallel between Flecknoe, as forerunner of Shadwell, and John the Baptist, as forerunner of Jesus, is made plain in lines 32—34 by the use of details and even words taken from Matthew 3.3—4 and John 1.23.

7. Flecknoe boasted of the patronage of the Portuguese king.

Swelled with the pride of thy celestial charge;
 And big with hymn, commander of a host,
 The like was ne'er in Epsom blankets tossed.⁸
 Methinks I see the new Arion⁹ sail,
 The lute still trembling underneath thy nail.
 At thy well-sharpened thumb from shore to shore
 The treble squeaks for fear, ~~the~~ basses roar;
 Echoes ~~from~~ Pissing Alley Sh call,
 And Sh they resound from Aston Hall.
 About thy boat the little fishes throng,
 As at the morning toast⁰ that floats along.
 Sometimes, as prince of thy harmonious band,
 Thou wield'st thy papers in thy threshing hand,
 St. Andre's¹ feet ne'er kept more equal time,
 Not ev'n the feet of thy own *Psyche's* rhyme;
 Though they in number as in sense excel:
 So just, so like tautology, they fell,
 That, pale with envy, Singleton² forswore i
 The lute and sword, which he in triumph bore, >
 And vowed he ne'er would act Villerius³ more." J
 Here stopped the good old sire, and wept for joy
 In silent raptures of the hopeful boy.
 All arguments, but most his plays, persuade,
 That for anointed dullness⁴ he was made.

Close to the walls which fair Augusta⁰ bind London
 (The fair Augusta much to fears inclined),⁵
 An ancient fabric,⁰ raised to inform the sight, building
 There stood of yore, and Barbican it hight:⁰ was called
 A watchtower once; but now, so fate ordains,
 Of all the pile an empty name remains.
 From its old ruins brothel houses rise,
 Scenes of lewd loves, and of polluted joys,
 Where their vast courts the mother-strumpets keep,
 And, undisturbed by watch, in silence sleep.
 Near these a Nursery⁶ erects its head,
 Where queens are formed, and future heroes bred;
 Where unfledged actors learn to laugh and cry, l
 Where infant punks⁰ their tender voices try, f prostitutes
 And little Maximins⁷ the gods defy. J
 Great Fletcher never treads in buskins here,
 Nor greater Jonson dares in socks⁸ appear;
 But gentle Simkin⁹ just reception finds
 Amidst this monument of vanished minds:

8. A reference to Shadwell's comedy *Epsom Wells* and to the farcical scene in his *Virtuoso*, in which Sir Samuel Hearty is tossed in a blanket.

9. A legendary Greek poet. Returning home by sea, he was robbed and thrown overboard by the sailors, but was saved by a dolphin that had been charmed by his music.

1. A French dancer who designed the choreography of Shadwell's opera *Psyche* (1675). Dryden's sneer at the mechanical metrics of the songs in *Psyche* is justified.

2. John Singleton (d. 1686), a musician at the Theatre Royal.

3. A character in Sir William Davenant's *Siege of*

Rhodes (1656), the first English opera.

4. The anticipated phrase is "anointed majesty." English kings are anointed with oil at their coronations.

5. This line alludes to the fears excited by the Popish Plot (cf. *Absalom and Achitophel*, p. 2087).

6. The name of a training school for young actors.

7. Maximin is the cruel emperor in Dryden's *Tyrannic Love* (1669), notorious for his bombast.

8. "Buskins" and "socks" were the symbols of tragedy and comedy, respectively. John Fletcher (1579–1625), the playwright and collaborator with Francis Beaumont (ca. 1584–1616).

9. A popular character in low farces.

Pure clinches⁰ the suburban Muse affords,
 And Panton¹ waging harmless war with words.
 85 Here Flecknoe, as a place ~~to fame~~ well known,
 Ambitiously design'd his Sh _____'s throne;
 For ancient Dekker² prophesied long since, 1
 That in this pile would reign a mighty prince, f
 Born for a scourge of wit, and flail of sense; J
 90 To whom true dullness should some *Psyches* owe,
 But worlds of *Misers* from his pen should flow;
Humorists and *Hypocrites*³ it should produce,
 Whole Raymond families, and tribes of Bruce.
 Now ~~Empress~~ Fame had published the renown
 95 Of Sh _____'s coronation through the town.
 Roused by report of Fame, the nations meet,
 From near Bunhill, and distant Watling Street.⁴
 No Persian carpets spread the imperial way,
 But scattered limbs of mangled poets lay;
 100 From dusty shops neglected authors come,
 Martyrs of pies, and relics of the bum.⁵
 Much Heywood, ~~Shirley~~, Ogilby⁶ there lay,
 But loads of Sh _____ almost choked the way.
 Bilked stationers for yeomen stood prepared,
 105 And Herringman was captain of the guard.⁷
 The hoary prince in majesty appeared,
 High on a throne of his own labors reared.
 At his right hand our young Ascanius sate,
 Rome's other hope, and pillar of the state.
 110 His brows thick fogs, instead of glories, grace,
 And lambent dullness played around his face.⁸
 As Hannibal did to the altars come,
 Sworn ~~by his~~ sire a mortal foe to Rome,⁹
 So Sh _____ swore, nor should his vow be vain,
 115 That he till death true dullness would maintain;
 And, in his father's right, and realm's defense,
 Ne'er to have peace with wit, nor truce with sense.
 The king himself the sacred unction¹ made,
 As king by office, and as priest by trade.
 120 In his sinister⁰ hand, instead of ball, left
 He placed a mighty mug of potent ale;
Love's Kingdom to his right he did convey,

1. Said to have been a celebrated punster.

2. Thomas Dekker (ca. 1572-1632), the playwright, whom Jonson had satirized in *The Poetaster*.

3. Three of Shadwell's plays; *The Hypocrite*, a failure, was not published. "Raymond" and "Bruce" (line 93) are characters in *The Humorists* and *The Virtuoso*, respectively.

4. Because Bunhill is about a quarter mile and Watling Street little more than a half mile from the site of the Nursery, where the coronation is held, Shadwell's fame is narrowly circumscribed. Moreover, his subjects live in the heart of the City, regarded by men of wit and fashion as the abode of bad taste and middle-class vulgarity.

5. Unsold books were used to line pie plates and as toilet paper.

6. John Ogilby, a translator of Homer and Virgil, ridiculed by both Dryden and Pope as a bad poet.

7. "Bilked stationers"; cheated publishers, acting as "yeomen" of the guard, led by Henry Herringman, who until 1679 was the publisher of both Shadwell and Dryden.

8. Ascanius, or Iulus, was the son of Aeneas. Virgil referred to him as "*spes altera Romae*" ("Rome's other hope," *Aeneid* 12.168). As Troy fell, he was marked as favored by the gods when a flickering ("lambent") flame played round his head (*Aeneid* 2.680-84).

9. Hannibal, who almost conquered Rome in 216 B.C.E., during the second Punic War, took this oath at the age of nine (Livy 21.1).

1. The sacramental oil, used in the coronation.

At once his scepter, and his rule of sway;
 Whose righteous lore the prince had practiced young,
 125 And from whose loins recorded *Psyche* sprung.
 His temples, last, with poppies were o'erspread,
 That nodding seemed to consecrate his head.²
 Just at that point of time, if fame not lie,
 On his left hand twelve reverend owls did fly.³
 130 So Romulus, 'tis sung, by Tiber's brook,
 Presage of sway from twice six vultures took.
 The admiring throng loud acclamations make,
 And omens of his future empire take.
 The sire then shook the honors⁴ of his head,
 135 And from his brows damps of oblivion shed
 Full on the filial dullness: long he stood, 1
 Repelling from his breast the raging god; f
 At length burst out in this prophetic mood: J
 "Heavens bless my son, from Ireland let him reign
 MO To far Barbadoes on the western main;⁵
 Of his dominion may no end be known,
 And greater than his father's be his throne;
 Beyond *Love's Kingdom* let him stretch his pen!"
 He paused, and all the people cried, "Amen."
 145 Then thus continued he: "My son, advance
 Still in new impudence, new ignorance.
 Success let others teach, learn thou from me
 Pangs without birth, and fruitless industry.
 Let *Virtuosos* in five years be writ;
 150 Yet not one thought accuse thy toil of wit.
 Let gentle George⁶ in triumph tread the stage,
 Make Dorimant betray, and Loveit rage;
 Let Cully, Cockwood, Fopling, charm the pit,
 And in their folly show the writer's wit.
 155 Yet still thy fools shall stand in thy defense,
 And justify their author's want of sense.
 Let 'em be all by thy own model made
 Of dullness, and desire no foreign aid;
 That they to future ages may be known,
 160 Not copies drawn, but issue of thy own.
 Nay, let thy men of wit too be the same,
 All full of thee, and differing but in name.
 But let no alien S—dl—y⁷ interpose,
 To lard with wit⁸ thy hungry *Epsom* prose.
 165 And when false flowers of rhetoric thou wouldst cull,
 Trust nature, do not labor to be dull;

2. During the coronation a British monarch holds two symbols of the throne: a globe ("ball") representing the world in the left hand and a scepter in the right. Shadwell's symbols of monarchy are a mug of ale; Flecknoe's drear' play *Love's Kingdom*; and a crown of poppies, which suggest heaviness, dullness, and drowsiness. The poppies also refer obliquely to Shadwell's addiction to opium.

3. Birds of night. Appropriate substitutes for the twelve vultures whose flight confirmed to Romulus the destined site of Rome, of which he was founder and king.

4. Ornaments, hence locks.

5. Shadwell's empire is vast but empty.

6. Sir George Etherege (ca. 1635—1691), a writer of brilliant comedies. In the next couplet Dryden names characters from his plays.

7. Sir Charles Sedley (1638-1701), wit, rake, poet, and playwright. Dryden hints that he contributed more than the prologue to Shadwell's *Epsom Wells*.

8. This phrase recalls a sentence in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*: "They lard their lean books with the fat of others' works."

But write thy best, and top; and, in each line,
 Sir Formal's⁹ oratory will be thine:
 Sir Formal, though unsought, attends thy quill,
 And does thy northern dedications¹ fill.
 Nor let false friends seduce thy mind to fame,
 By arrogating Jonson's hostile name.
 Let father Flecknoe fire thy mind with praise,
 And uncle Ogilby thy envy raise.
 Thou art my blood, where Jonson has no part:
 What share have we in nature, or in art?
 Where did his wit on learning fix a brand,
 And rail at arts he did not understand?
 Where made he love in Prince Nicander's vein,²
 Or swept the dust in *Psyche's* humble strain?
 Where sold he bargains, 'whip-stitch,³ kiss my arse,'
 Promised a play and dwindled to a farce?⁴
 When did his Muse from Fletcher scenes purloin,
 As thou whole Eth'rege dost transfuse to thine?
 But so transfused, as oil on water's flow,
 His always floats above, thine sinks below.
 This is thy province, this thy wondrous way,
 New humors to invent for each new play:
 This is that boasted bias⁵ of thy mind,
 By which one way, to dullness, 'tis inclined;
 Which makes thy writings lean on one side still,
 And, in all changes, that way bends thy will.
 Nor let thy mountain-belly make pretense
 Of likeness; thine's a tympany⁶ of sense.
 A tun^o of man in thy large bulk is writ, *large cask*
 But sure thou'rt but a kilderkin^o of wit. *small cask*
 Like mine, thy gentle numbers feebly creep;
 Thy tragic Muse gives smiles, thy comic sleep.
 With whate'er gall thou sett'st thyself to write,
 Thy inoffensive satires never bite.
 In thy felonious heart though venom lies,
 It does but touch thy Irish pen,⁷ and dies.
 Thy genius calls thee not to purchase fame
 In keen iambs,^o but mild anagram. *sharp satire*
 Leave writing plays, and choose for thy command
 Some peaceful province in acrostic land.
 There thou may'st wings display and altars raise,⁸
 And torture one poor word ten thousand ways.

9. Sir Formal] Trifle, the ridiculous and vapid orator in *The Virtuoso*.

1. Shadwell frequently dedicated his works to the duke of Newcastle and members of his family.

2. In *Psyche*.

3. A nonsense word frequently used by Sir Samuel Hearty in *The Virtuoso*. "Sell bargains": to answer an innocent question with a coarse or indecent phrase, as in this line.

4. Low comedy that depends largely on situation rather than wit, consistently condemned by Dryden and other serious playwrights.

5. In bowling, the spin given to the bowl that causes it to swerve. Dryden closely parodies a passage in Shadwell's epilogue to *The Humorists*.

6. A swelling in some part of the body caused by wind.

7. Dryden accuses Flecknoe and his "son" of being Irish. Ireland suggested only poverty, superstition, and barbarity to 17th-century Londoners.

8. "Wings" and "altars" refer to poems in the shape of these objects as in George Herbert's "Easter Wings" (p. 1609) and "The Altar" (p. 1607). "Anagram": the transposition of letters in a word so as to make a new one. "Acrostic": a poem in which the first letter of each line, read downward, makes up the name of the person or thing that is the subject of the poem. Dryden is citing instances of triviality and overingenuity in literature.

Or, if thou wouldst thy different talent suit,
 210 Set thy own songs, and sing them to thy lute."
 He said: but his last words were scarcely heard 1
 For Bruce and Longville had a trap prepared,
 And down they sent the yet declaiming bard.⁹ J
 Sinking he left his drugget robe behind,
 215 Borne upwards by a subterranean wind.
 The mantle fell to the young prophet's part,¹
 With double portion of his father's art.

ca. 1679

1682

To the Memory of Mr. Oldham¹

Farewell, too little, and too lately known,
 Whom I began to think and call my own:
 For sure our souls were near allied, and thine
 Cast in the same poetic mold with mine.
 5 One common note on either lyre did strike,
 And knaves and fools² we both abhorred alike.
 To the same goal did both our studies drive;
 The last set out the soonest did arrive.
 Thus Nisus fell upon the slippery place,
 10 While his young friend³ performed and won the race.
 O early ripe! to thy abundant store
 What could advancing age have added more?
 It might (what nature never gives the young)
 Have taught the numbers⁰ of thy native tongue. *metrics, verse*
 15 But satire needs not those, and wit will shine
 Through the harsh cadence of a rugged line.⁴
 A noble error, and but seldom made,
 When poets are by too much force betrayed.
 Thy generous fruits, though gathered ere their prime,
 20 \$till showed a quickness;⁵ and maturing time
 But mellows what we write to the dull sweets of rhyme,
 (bnce more, hail and farewell;⁵ farewell, thou young,
 Jut ah too short, Marcellus⁷ of our tongue;
 Hy brows with ivy, and with laurels bound;⁸
 25 But fate and gloomy night encompass thee around.

1684

9. In *The Virtuoso*, Bruce and Longville play this trick on Sir Formal Trifle while he makes a speech.

1. When the prophet Elijah was carried to heaven in a chariot of fire borne on a whirlwind, his mantle fell on his successor, the younger prophet Elisha (2 Kings 2.8—14). Flecknoe, prophet of dullness, naturally cannot ascend, but must sink.

1. John Oldham (1653-1683), the young poet whose *Satires upon the Jesuits* (1681), which Dryden admired, were written in 1679, before Dryden's major satires appeared (see line 8). This elegy was published in Oldham's *Remains in Verse and Prose* (1684).

2. Objects of satire.

3. Nisus, on the point of winning a footrace, slipped in a pool of blood. His "young friend" was

Euryalus (Virgil's *Aeneid* 5.315—39).

4. Dryden repeats the Renaissance idea that the satirist should avoid smoothness and affect rough meters ("harsh cadence").

5. Sharpness of flavor.

6. Dryden echoes the famous words that conclude Catullus's elegy to his brother: "*Atque in perpetuum, frater, ave atque vale*" (And forever, brother, hail and farewell!).

7. The nephew of Augustus, adopted by him as his successor. After winning military fame as a youth, he died at the age of twenty. Virgil celebrated him in the *Aeneid* 6.854—86. The last line of Dryden's poem is a reminiscence of *Aeneid* 6.866.

8. The poet's wreath (cf. Milton's *Lycidas*, lines 1—2, p. 1806).

A Song for St. Cecilia's Day¹

i

From harmony, from heavenly harmony
 This universal frame began:
 When Nature underneath a heap
 Of jarring atoms lay,
 s And could not heave her head,
 The tuneful voice was heard from high:
 "Arise, ye more than dead." ·
 Then cold, and hot, and moist, and dry,²
 In order to their stations leap,
 10 And Music's power obey.
 From harmony, from heavenly harmony
 This universal frame began:
 From harmony to harmony
 Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
 15 The diapason³ closing full in man.

2

What passion cannot Music raise and quell!⁴
 When Jubal struck the corded shell,⁵
 His listening brethren stood around,
 And, wondering, on their faces fell
 20 To worship that celestial sound.
 Less than a god they thought there could not dwell
 Within the hollow of that shell
 That spoke so sweetly and so well.
 What passion cannot Music raise and quell!

3

25 The trumpet's loud clangor
 Excites us to arms,
 With shrill notes of anger,
 And mortal alarms.
 The double double double beat

1. St. Cecilia, a Roman lady, was an early Christian martyr. She has long been regarded as the patroness of music and the supposed inventor of the organ. Celebrations of her festival day (November 22) in England were usually devoted to music and the praise of music, and from about 1683 to 1703 the Musical Society in London annually commemorated it with a religious service and a public concert. This concert always included an ode written and set to music for the occasion, of which the two by Dryden ("A Song for St. Cecilia's Day," 1687, and "Alexander's Feast," 1697) are the most distinguished. G. B. Draghi, an Italian brought to England by Charles II, set this ode to music; but Handel's fine score, composed in 1739, has completely obscured the original setting. This is an irregular ode in the manner of Cowley. In stanzas 3–6, Dryden boldly attempted to suggest in the sounds of his words the characteristic tones of the instruments mentioned.

2. "Nature": created nature, ordered by the Divine Wisdom out of chaos, which Dryden, adopting the

physics of the Greek philosopher Epicurus, describes as composed of the warring and discordant ("jarring") atoms of the four elements: earth, fire, water, and air ("cold," "hot," "moist," and "dry").

3. The entire compass of tones in the scale. Dryden is thinking of the Chain of Being, the ordered creation from inanimate nature up to humans, God's latest and final work. The just gradations of notes in a scale are analogous to the equally just gradations in the ascending scale of created beings. Both are the result of harmony.

4. The power of music to describe, evoke, or subdue emotion ("passion") is a frequent theme in 17th-century literature. In stanzas 2–6, the poet considers music as awakening religious awe, warlike courage, sorrow for unrequited love, jealousy and fury, and the impulse to worship God.

5. According to Genesis 4.21, Jubal was the inventor of the lyre and the pipe. Dryden imagines Jubal's lyre to have been made of a tortoiseshell ("corded shell").

30 Of the thundering drum
 Cries: "Hark! the foes come;
 Charge, charge, 'tis too late to retreat."

4

The soft complaining flute
 In dying notes discovers
 35 The woes of hopeless lovers,
 Whose dirge is whispered by the warbling lute.

5

Sharp violins⁶ proclaim
 Their jealous pangs, and desperation,
 Fury', frantic indignation,
 40 Depth of pains, and height of passion,
 For the fair, disdainful dame.

6

But O! what art can teach,
 What human voice can reach,
 The sacred organ's praise?
 45 Notes inspiring holy love,
 Notes that wing their heavenly ways
 To mend the choirs above.

7

Orpheus' could lead the savage race;
 And trees unrooted left their place,
 50 Sequacious of³ the lyre; *following*
 But bright Cecilia raised the wonder higher:
 When to her organ vocal breath was given,
 An angel heard, and straight appeared,⁸
 Mistaking earth for heaven.

GRAND CHORUS

55 *As from the -power of sacred lays
 The spheres began to move,
 And sung the great Creator's praise⁹
 To all the hlest above;
 So, when the last and dreadful hour*
 60 *This crumbling pageant¹ shall devour,
 The trumpet shall be heard on high, l
 The dead shall live, the living die, f
 And Music shall untune the sky.² J*

1687

6. A reference to the bright tone of the modern violin, introduced into England at the Restoration. The tone of the old-fashioned viol is much duller.

7. Legendary poet, son of one of the Muses, who played so wonderfully on the lyre that wild beasts ("the savage race") grew tame and followed him, as did even rocks and trees.

8. According to the legend, it was Cecilia's piety, not her music, that brought an angel to visit her.

9. As it was harmony that ordered the universe, so

it was angelic song ("sacred lays") that put the celestial bodies ("spheres") in motion. The harmonious chord that results from the traditional "music of the spheres" is a hymn of "praise" sung by created nature to its "Creator."

1. The universe, the stage on which the drama of human salvation has been acted out.

2. The "last trump" of 1 Corinthians 15.52, which will announce the Resurrection and the Last Judgment.

Epigram on Milton¹

Three poets,² in three distant ages born,
 Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
 The first in loftiness of thought surpassed,
 The next in majesty, in both the last:
 5 The force of Nature could no farther go;
 To make a third, she joined the former two.

1688

Alexander's Feast¹

Or the Power of Music; An Ode in Honor of St. Cecilia's Day

'Twas at the royal feast, for Persia won
 By Philip's² warlike son:
 Aloft in awful state
 The godlike hero sate
 5 On his imperial throne;
 His valiant peers were placed around;
 Their brows with roses and with myrtles³ bound:
 (So should desert in arms be crowned).
 The lovely Thai's, by his side,
 10 Sate like a blooming Eastern bride
 In flower of youth and beauty's pride.
 Happy, happy, happy pair!
 None but the brave,
 None but the brave,
 15 None but the brave deserves the fair.

CHORUS

Happy, happy, happ)' pair!
None hut the hrave,
None hut the hrave,
None hut the hrave deserves the fair.

1. Engraved beneath the portrait of Milton in Jacob Tonson's edition of *Paradise Lost* (1688).

2. I.e., Homer, Virgil, and Milton.

3. After his defeat of the Persian emperor Darius III and the fall of the Persian capital Persepolis (331 B.C.E.), Alexander the Great, held a feast for his officers. Thai's, his Athenian mistress, persuaded him to set fire to the palace in revenge for the burning of Athens by the Persians under Xerxes in 480 B.C.E. According to Plutarch, Alexander was moved by love and wine, not by music, but Dryden,

perhaps altering an old tradition that Alexander's musician Timotheus once by his flute-playing caused the hero to start up and arm himself, attributes the burning of Persepolis to the power of music. The original music was by Jeremiah Clarke, but Handel's score of 1736 is better known.

2. King Philip II of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great.

3. Emblems of love. The Greeks and Romans wore wreaths of flowers at banquets.

Timotheus, placed on high
 Amid the tuneful choir,
 With flying fingers touched the lyre:
 The trembling notes ascend the sky,
 And heavenly joys inspire.
 The song began from Jove,
 Who left his blissful seats above
 (Such is the power of mighty love).
 A dragon's fiery form belied the god:⁴
 Sublime on radiant spires⁵ he rode,
 When he to fair Olympia pressed;
 And while he sought her snowy breast:
 Then, round her slender waist he curled,
 And stamped an image of himself, a sovereign of the world.
 The listening crowd admire⁰ the lofty sound: *wonder at*
 "A present deity," they shout around;
 "A present deity," the vaulted roofs rebound.
 With ravished ears
 The monarch hears,
 Assumes the god,
 Affects to nod,
 And seems to shake the spheres.⁶

CHORUS

*With ravished ears
 The monarch hears,
 Assumes the god,
 Affects to nod,
 And seems to shake the spheres.*

3

The praise of Bacchus⁰ then the sweet musician sung, *god of wine*
 Of Bacchus ever fair and ever young:
 The jolly god in triumph comes;
 Sound the trumpets; beat the drums;
 Flushed with a purple grace
 He shows his honest face:
 Now give the hautboys⁰ breath; he comes, he comes! *oboes*
 Bacchus, ever fair and young
 Drinking joys did first ordain;
 Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
 Drinking is a soldier's pleasure;
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 Sweet is pleasure after pain.

4. An oracle had declared that Alexander was the son of Zeus ("Jove") by Philip's wife Olympias (not, as Dryden calls her in line 30, "Olympia"), thus conferring on him that semidivinity often claimed by heroes. Zeus habitually conducted his amours with mortals in the guise of an animal, in this case a dragon.

5. High on shining coils ("radiant spires"). "Spires" for the coils of a serpent is derived from the Latin word *spira*, which Virgil uses in this sense, *Aeneid* 2.217 (cf. *Paradise Lost* 9.502).

6. According to Virgil (*Aeneid* 10.115) the nod of Jove causes earthquakes.

CHORUS

*Bacchus' blessings are a treasure,
 Drinking is the soldier's pleasure;
 Rich the treasure,
 Sweet the pleasure,
 65 Sweet is pleasure after pain.*

4

Soothed with the sound, the king grew vain;
 Fought all his battles o'er again,
 And thrice he routed all his foes, and thrice he slew the slain.
 The master saw the madness rise,
 70 His glowing cheeks, his ardent eyes;
 And, while he^o heaven and earth defied, *Alexander*
 Changed his^o hand, and checked his^o pride. *Timotheus's/Alexander's*
 He chose a mournful Muse,
 Soft pity to infuse:
 75 He sung Darius great and good,
 By too severe a fate
 Fallen, fallen, fallen, fallen,
 Fallen from his high estate,
 And weltering in his blood;
 80 Deserted at his utmost need
 By those his former bounty fed;
 On the bare earth exposed he lies,
 With not a friend to close his eyes.⁷
 With downcast looks the joyless victor sate,
 85 Revolving^o in his altered soul *pondering*
 The various turns of chance below;
 And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
 And tears began to flow.

CHORUS

*Revolving in his altered soul
 90 The various turns of chance helcnv;
 And, now and then, a sigh he stole,
 And tears hegan to flow.*

5

The mighty master smiled to see
 That love was in the next degree;
 95 'Twas but⁸ a kindred sound to move,
 For pity melts the mind to love.
 Softly sweet, in Lydian⁹ measures,
 Soon he soothed his soul to pleasures.
 "War," he sung, "is toil and trouble;
 100 Honor, but an empty bubble.
 Never ending, still beginning,

7. After his final defeat by Alexander, Darius was assassinated by his own followers.

8. I.e., it was necessary only.

9. In Greek music the Lydian mode expressed the plaintive and the sad.

Fighting still, and still destroying:
 If the world be worth thy winning,
 Think, O think it worth enjoying.
 105 Lovely Thai's sits beside thee,
 Take the good the gods provide thee."
 The many⁰ rend the skies with loud applause; *crowd, retinue*
 So Love was crowned, but Music won the cause.
 The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
 no Gazed on the fair
 Who caused his care,
 And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
 Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
 At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
 15 The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

CHORUS

The prince, unable to conceal his pain,
Gazed on the fair
Who caused his care,
 20 *And sighed and looked, sighed and looked,*
 Sighed and looked, and sighed again:
 At length, with love and wine at once oppressed,
 The vanquished victor sunk upon her breast.

6

Now strike the golden lyre again:
 A louder yet, and yet a louder strain.
 U5 Break his bands of sleep asunder,
 And rouse him, like a rattling peal of thunder.
 Hark, hark, the horrid⁰ sound *rough*
 Has raised up his head:
 As waked from the dead,
 B0 And amazed, he stares around,
 "Revenge, revenge!" Timotheus cries,
 "See the Furies' arise!
 See the snakes that they rear,
 How they hiss in their hair,
 15 And the sparkles that flash from their eyes!
 Behold a ghastly band,
 Each a torch in his hand!
 Those are Grecian ghosts, that in battle were slain,
 And unburied remain²
 H0 Inglorious on the plain:
 Give the vengeance due
 To the valiant crew.
 Behold how they toss their torches on high,
 How they point to the Persian abodes,
 145 And glittering temples of their hostile gods!"
 The princes applaud, with a furious joy;

I. The Erinyes of the Greeks, avengers of crimes against the natural and the social orders. They are described as women with snakes in their hair and

wrapped around their waists and arms.
 2. According to Greek beliefs, the shades of the dead could not rest until their bodies were buried.

And the king seized a flambeau⁰ with zeal to destroy; *torch*
 Thais led the way,
 To light him to his prey,
 150 And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.³

CHORUS

*And the king seized a flambeau with zeal to destroy;
 Thais led the way,
 To light him to his prey',
 And, like another Helen, fired another Troy.*

7

Thus long ago,
 Ere heaving bellows learned to blow,
 While organs yet were mute;
 Timotheus, to his breathing flute,
 And sounding lyre,
 160 Could swell the soul to rage, or kindle soft desire.
 At last, divine Cecilia came,
 Inventress of the vocal frame;⁰ *organ*
 The sweet enthusiast,⁴ from her sacred store,
 Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
 165 And added length to solemn sounds,
 With nature's mother wit, and arts unknown before.
 Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
 Or both divide the crown:
 He raised a mortal to the skies;
 She drew an angel down.

GRAND CHORUS

*At last, divine Cecilia came,
 Inventress of the vocal frame;
 The sweet enthusiast, from her sacred store,
 Enlarged the former narrow bounds,
 175 And added length to solemn sounds,
 With nature's mother wit, and arts unknown before.
 Let old Timotheus yield the prize,
 Or both divide the crown:
 He raised a mortal to the skies;
 180 She drew an angel down.*

1697

3. Helen's elopement to Troy with Paris brought on the Trojan War and the ultimate destruction of the city by the Greeks.

4. Usually at this time a disparaging word, frequently, though not always, applied to a religious

zealot or fanatic. Here it is used approvingly and in its literal sense, "possessed by a god," an allusion to Cecilia's angelic companion referred to in line 170 (but see "Song for St. Cecilia's Day," line 53 and n. 8, p. 2119).

CRITICISM

Dryden's impulse to write criticism came from his practical urge to explain and justify his own writings; his attraction to clear, ordered theoretical principles; and his growing sense of himself as a leader of English literary taste and judgment. The Elizabethans, largely impelled by the example of Italian humanists, had produced an interesting but unsystematic body of critical writings. Dryden could look back to such pioneer works as George Puttenham's *Art of English Poesy* (1589), Sir Philip Sidney's *Defense of Poesy* (1595), Samuel Daniel's *Defense of Rhyme* (ca. 1603), and Ben Jonson's *Timber, or Discoveries* (1641). These and later writings Dryden knew, as he knew the ancients and the important contemporary French critics, notably Pierre Corneille, Rene Rapin, and Nicolas Boileau. Taken as a whole, his critical prefaces and dedications, which appeared between 1664 and 1700, are the work of a man of independent mind who has made his own synthesis of critical canons from wide reading, a great deal of thinking, and the constant practice of the art of writing. As a critic he is no one's disciple, and he has the saving grace of being always willing to change his mind.

All but a very few of Dryden's critical works (most notably *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy*) grew out of the works to which they served as prefaces: comedies, heroic plays, tragedies, translations, and poems of various sorts. Each work posed problems that Dryden was eager to discuss with his readers, and the topics that he treated proved to be important in the development of the new literature of which he was the principal apologist. He dealt with the processes of literary creation, the poet's relation to tradition, the forms of modern drama, the craft of poetry, and above all the genius of earlier poets: Shakespeare, Jonson, Chaucer, Juvenal, Horace, Homer, and Virgil. For nearly forty years this voice was heard in the land; and when it was finally silenced, a set of critical standards had come into existence and a new age had been given its direction.

From An Essay of Dramatic Poesy¹

[TWO SORTS OF BAD POETRY]

* * * have a mortal apprehension of two poets,² whom this victory, with the help of both her wings, will never be able to escape." " 'Tis easy to guess whom you intend," said Lisideius; "and without naming them, I ask you if one

1. With the reopening of the theaters in 1660, older plays were revived, but despite their power and charm, they seemed old-fashioned. Although new playwrights, ambitious to create a modern English drama, soon appeared, they were uncertain of their direction. What, if anything, useful could they learn from the dramatic practice of the ancients? Should they ignore the English dramatists of the late 16th and early 17th centuries? Should they make their example the vigorous contemporary drama of France? Dryden addresses himself to these and other problems in this essay, his first extended piece of criticism. Its purpose, he tells us, was "chiefly to vindicate the honor of our English writers from the censure of those who unjustly prefer the French before them." Its method is skeptical: Dryden presents several points of view, but imposes none. The form is a dialogue among friends, like the *Tusculan Disputations* or the *Brutus* of Cicero. Crites praises the drama of

the ancients; Eugenius protests against their authority and argues for the idea of progress in the arts; Lisideius urges the excellence of French plays; and Neander, speaking in the climactic position, defends the native tradition and the greatness of Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Jonson. The dialogue takes place on June 3, 1665, in a boat on the Thames. The four friends are rowed downstream to listen to the cannonading of the English and Dutch fleets, engaged in battle off the Suffolk coast. As the gunfire recedes they are assured of victory and order their boatman to return to London, and naturally enough they fall to discussing the number of bad poems that the victory will evoke.

2. Crites here is probably referring to Robert Wilde and possibly to Richard Flecknoe, whom Dryden later ridiculed in "Mac Flecknoe." Their actual identity is unimportant, for they merely represent two extremes in poetry, both deplorable: the

of them does not perpetually pay us with clenches³ upon words, and a certain clownish kind of raillery?⁴ if now and then he does not offer at a catachresis or Clevelandism, wresting and torturing a word into another meaning: in fine, if he be not one of those whom the French would call *un mauvais buffon*:⁵ one who is so much a well-wilier to the satire, that he spares no man; and though he cannot strike a blow to hurt any, yet ought to be punished for the malice of the action, as our witches are justly hanged, because they think themselves so, and suffer deservedly for believing they did mischief, because they meant it." "You have described him," said Crites, "so exactly that I am afraid to come after you with my other extremity of poetry. He is one of those who, having had some advantage of education and converse, knows better than the other what a poet should be, but puts it into practice more unluckily than any man; his style and matter are everywhere alike: he is the most calm, peaceable writer you ever read: he never disquiets your passions with the least concernment, but still leaves you in as even a temper as he found you; he is a very Leveller⁶ in poetry: he creeps along with ten little words in every line, and helps out his numbers with *for to*, and *unto*, and all the pretty expletives⁷ he can find, till he drags them to the end of another line; while the sense is left tired halfway behind it: he doubly starves all his verses, first for want of thought, and then of expression; his poetry neither has wit in it, nor seems to have it; like him in Martial:

*Pauper videri Cinna vidt, et est pauper.*⁸

"He affects plainness, to cover his want of imagination: when he writes the serious way, the highest flight of his fancy is some miserable antithesis, or seeming contradiction; and in the comic he is still reaching at some thin conceit, the ghost of a jest, and that too flies before him, never to be caught; these swallows which we see before us on the Thames are the just resemblance of his wit: you may observe how near the water they stoop, how many proffers they make to dip, and yet how seldom they touch it; and when they do, it is but the surface: they skim over it but to catch a gnat, and then mount into the air and leave it."

[THE WIT OF THE ANCIENTS: THE UNIVERSAL]⁹

⁴ * ⁴ "A thing well said will be wit in all languages; and though it may lose something in the translation, yet to him who reads it in the original, 'tis still the same: he has an idea of its excellency, though it cannot pass from his mind into any other expression or words than those in which he finds it. When Phaedria, in the *Eunuch* had a command from his mistress to be absent two days, and, encouraging himself to go through with it, said, *Tan-dem ego non*

fantastic and extravagant manner of decadent metaphysical wit and its opposite, the flat and the dull. The new poetry was to seek a mean between these extremes (cf. Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* 2.239² and 289-300, pp. 2502 and 2503).

3. Puns.

4. Boorish banter.

5. A malicious jester (French). "Catachresis": the use of a word in a sense remote from its normal meaning. A legitimate figure of speech used by all poets, it had been abused by John Cleveland (1613-1658), who was at first admired for his ingenuity, but whose reputation declined rapidly after the Restoration. A Clevelandism: "The mari-

gold, whose courtier's face / Echoes the sun."

6. The Levellers were radical egalitarians and republicans, a powerful political force in the Puritan army about 1648. They were suppressed by Cromwell. "Passions": emotions. "Still": always.

7. Words used merely to fill out a line of verse (cf. Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* 2346-17, p. 2504).

8. Cinna wishes to seem poor, and he is poor (Latin; *Epigrams* 8.19).

9. Eugenius is in the midst of remarks about the limitations of the ancients.

I. A comedy by the Roman poet Terence (ca. 185-159 B.C.E.).

*ilia caream, si sit opus, vel totum triduum?*²—Parmeno, to mock the softness of his master, lifting up his hands and eyes, cries out, as it were in admiration, *'Hui! universum triduum!*³ the elegancy of which *universum*, though it cannot be rendered in our language, yet leaves an impression on our souls: but this happens seldom in him; in Plautus⁴ oftener, who is infinitely too bold in his metaphors and coining words, out of which many times his wit is nothing; which questionless was one reason why Horace falls upon him so severely in those verses:

*Sed proavi nostri Plautinos et numeros et
Laudavere sales, nimium patientex utrumque,
Ne dicam stolidè*

For Horace himself was cautious to obtrude a new word on his readers, and makes custom and common use the best measure of receiving it into our writings:

*Multa renascentur quae nunc cecidere, cadentque
Quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus,
Quem penes arbitrium est, et jus, et norma loquendi.*⁶

"The not observing this rule is that which the world has blamed in our satirist, Cleveland: to express a thing hard and unnaturally is his new way of elocution. 'Tis true no poet but may sometimes use a catachresis: Virgil does it—

*Mistake ridenti colocasia fundet acantho—*⁷

in his eclogue of Pollio; and in his seventh *Aeneid*:

*mirantur et undae,
Miratur netnus insuetum fidgentia longe
Scuta virum fluvio pictasque innare carinas. **

And Ovid once so modestly that he asks leave to do it:

*quem, si verbo audacia detur,
Haud metuam summi dixisse Palatia caeli.*⁹

calling the court of Jupiter by the name of Augustus his palace; though in another place he is more bold, where he says, *'et longas visent Capitolia pompas.'* But to do this always, and never be able to write a line without it, though it may be admired by some few pedants, will not pass upon those who know

2. Shall I not then do without her, if need be, for three whole days? (Latin).

3. The wit of Parmeno's exclamation. "Oh, three entire days," depends on *universum*, which suggests that a lover may regard three days as an eternity. "Admiration": wonder.

4. Titus Maccus Plautus, (ca. 254-184 B.C.E.), Roman comic poet.

5. But our ancestors too tolerantly (I do not say foolishly) praised both the verse and the wit of Plautus (Latin; *Art of Poetry*, lines 270-72). Dryden misquotes slightly.

6. Many words that have perished will be born again, and those shall perish that are now esteemed, if usage wills it, in whose power are the judgment, the law, and the pattern of speech

(Latin; *Art of Poetry*, lines 70-72).

7. [The earth] shall give forth the Egyptian bean, mingled with the smiling acanthus (Latin; *Eclogues* 4.20). "Smiling acanthus" is a catachresis.

8. Actually *Aeneid* 8.91-93. Dryden's paraphrase makes the point clearly: "The woods and waters wonder at the gleam / Of shields and painted ships that stem the stream" (Latin; *Aeneid* 8.125-26). "Wonder" is a catachresis.

9. [This is the place] which, if boldness of expression be permitted. I shall not hesitate to call the Palace of high heaven (Latin; *Metamorphoses* 1.175-76).

1. And the Capitol shall see the long processions (Latin; *Metamorphoses* 1.561).

that wit is best conveyed to us in the most easy language; and is most to be admired when a great thought comes dressed in words so commonly received that it is understood by the meanest apprehensions, as the best meat is the most easily digested: but we cannot read a verse of Cleveland's without making a face at it, as if every word were a pill to swallow: he gives us many times a hard nut to break our teeth, without a kernel for our pains. So that there is this difference betwixt his satires and Doctor Donne's; that the one gives us deep, thoughts in common language, though rough cadence; the other gives us common thoughts in abstruse words: 'tis true in some places his wit is independent of his words, as in that of the *Rebel Scot*:

Had Cain been Scot, God would have changed his doom;
Not forced him wander, but confined him home.²

"St *sic omnia dixisset!*³ This is wit in all languages: it is like mercury, never to be lost or killed: and so that other—

For beauty, like white powder, makes no noise,
And yet the silent hypocrite destroys.⁴

You see that the last line is highly metaphorical, but it is so soft and gentle that it does not shock us as we read it."

[SHAKESPEARE AND REN JONSON COMPARED]⁵

"To begin, then, with Shakespeare. He was the man who of all modern, and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of Nature were still present to him, and he drew them, not laboriously, but luckily; when he describes anything, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read Nature; he looked inwards, and found her there. I cannot say he is everywhere alike; were he so, I should do him injury to compare him with the greatest of mankind. He is many times flat, insipid; his comic wit degenerating into clenches, his serious swelling into bombast. But he is always great when some great occasion is presented to him; no man can say he ever had a fit subject for his wit and did not then raise himself as high above the rest of poets,

*Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi*⁶

The consideration of this made Mr. Hales⁷ of Eton say that there was no subject of which any poet ever writ, but he would produce it much better treated of in Shakespeare; and however others are now generally preferred before him, yet the age wherein he lived, which had contemporaries with him Fletcher and Jonson, never equaled them to him in their esteem: and in the last king's court, when Ben's reputation was at highest, Sir John Suckling,⁸ and with him the greater part of the courtiers, set our Shakespeare far above him. . . .

"As for Jonson, to whose character I am now arrived, if we look upon him

2. Lines 63—64.

3. Had he said everything thus! (Latin; Juvenal's *Satires* 10.123-24).

4. From *Rupertismus*, lines 39—40. Mercury is said to be "killed" if its fluidity is destroyed.

5. Neander's contrast of Shakespeare and Jonson introduces an extended commentary on the latter's play *Epicœne; or the Silent Woman*.

6. As do cypresses among the bending shrubs (Latin; Virgil's *Ecloques* 1.25).

7. The learned John Hales (1584-1656), provost of Eton. He is reputed to have said this to Jonson himself.

8. Courtier, poet, playwright, much admired in Dryden's time for his wit and the easy naturalness of his style. "King's court"; that of Charles I.

while he was himself (for his last plays were but his dotages), I think him the most learned and judicious writer which any theater ever had. He was a most severe judge of himself, as well as others. One cannot say he wanted wit, but rather that he was frugal of it. In his works you find little to retrench⁹ or alter. Wit, and language, and humor also in some measure, we had before him; but something of art¹ was wanting to the drama till he came. He managed his strength to more advantage than any who preceded him. You seldom find him malting love in any of his scenes or endeavoring to move the passions; his genius was too sullen and saturnine² to do it gracefully, especially when he knew he came after those who had performed both to such an height. Humor was his proper sphere: and in that he delighted most to represent mechanic people.³ He was deeply conversant in the ancients, both Greek and Latin, and he borrowed boldly from them: there is scarce a poet or historian among the Roman authors of those times whom he has not translated in *Sejanus* and *Catiline*.⁴ But he has done his robberies so openly, that one may see he fears not to be taxed by any law. He invades authors like a monarch; and what would be theft in other poets is only victory in him. With the spoils of these writers he so represents old Rome to us, in its rites, ceremonies, and customs, that if one of their poets had written either of his tragedies, we had seen less of it than in him. If there was any fault in his language, 'twas that he weaved it too closely and laboriously, in his serious plays:⁵ perhaps, too, he did a little too much Romanize our tongue, leaving the words which he translated almost as much Latin as he found them: wherein, though he learnedly followed the idiom of their language, he did not enough comply with the idiom of ours. If I would compare him with Shakespeare, I must acknowledge him the more correct poet, but Shakespeare the greater wit.⁶ Shakespeare was the Homer, or father of our dramatic poets; Jonson was the Virgil, the pattern of elaborate writing; I admire him, but I love Shakespeare. To conclude of him; as he has given us the most correct plays, so in the precepts which he has laid down in his *Discoveries*, we have as many and profitable rules for perfecting the stage, as any wherewith the French can furnish us."

1668

*From The Author's Apology for Heroic Poetry and Heroic License*¹

["BOLDNESS" OF FIGURES AND TROPES DEFENDED:
THE APPEAL TO "NATURE"]

* 4 * They, who would combat general authority with particular opinion, must first establish themselves a reputation of understanding better than other men.

9. Delete.

1. Craftsmanship.

2. Heavy.

3. I.e., artisans. In Jonson's comedies the characters are seen under the domination of some psychological trait, ruling passion, or affectation—i.e., some "humor"—that makes them unique and ridiculous.

4. Jonson's two Roman plays, dated 1605 and

1611, respectively.

5. This is the reading of the first edition. Curiously enough, in the second edition Dryden altered the phrase to "in his comedies especially."

6. Genius.

1. This essay was prefixed to Dryden's *State of Innocence*, the libretto for an opera (never produced), based on *Paradise Lost*. Dryden had been ridiculed for the extravagant and bold imagery and

Are all the flights of heroic poetry to be concluded bombast, unnatural, and mere madness, because they are not affected with their excellencies? It is just as reasonable as to conclude there is no day, because a blind man cannot distinguish of light and colors. Ought they not rather, in modesty, to doubt of their own judgments, when they think this or that expression in Homer, Virgil, Tasso, or Milton's *Paradise* to be too far strained, than positively to conclude that 'tis all fustian and mere nonsense? 'Tis true there are limits to be set betwixt the boldness and rashness of a poet; but he must understand those limits who pretends to judge as well as he who undertakes to write: and he who has no liking to the whole ought, in reason, to be excluded from censuring of the parts. He must be a lawyer before he mounts the tribunal; and the judicature of one court, too, does not qualify a man to preside in another. He may be an excellent pleader in the Chancery, who is not fit to rule the Common Pleas.² But I will presume for once to tell them that the boldest strokes of poetry, when they are managed artfully, are those which most delight the reader.

Virgil and Horace, the severest writers of the severest age, have made frequent use of the hardest metaphors and of the strongest hyperboles; and in this case the best authority is the best argument, for generally to have pleased, and through all ages, must bear the force of universal tradition. And if you would appeal from thence to right reason, you will gain no more by it in effect than, first, to set up your reason against those authors, and, secondly, against all those who have admired them. You must prove why that ought not to have pleased which has pleased the most learned and the most judicious; and, to be thought knowing, you must first put the fool upon all mankind. If you can enter more deeply than they have done into the causes and resorts³ of that which moves pleasure in a reader, the field is open, you may be heard: but those springs of human nature are not so easily discovered by every superficial judge: it requires philosophy, as well as poetry, to sound the depth of all the passions, what they are in themselves, and how they are to be provoked; and in this science the best poets have excelled. * * * From hence have sprung the tropes and figures,⁴ for which they wanted a name who first practiced them and succeeded in them. Thus I grant you that the knowledge of Nature was the original rule, and that all poets ought to study her, as well as Aristotle and Horace, her interpreters.' But then this also undeniably follows, that those things which delight all ages must have been an imitation of Nature—which is all I contend. Therefore is rhetoric made an art; therefore the names of so many tropes and figures were invented, because it was observed they had such and such effect upon the audience. Therefore catachreses and hyperboles⁶ have found their place amongst them; not that they were to be avoided, but to be used judiciously and placed in poetry as heightenings and shadows are in painting, to make the figure bolder, and cause it to stand off to sight. 4 * *

rhetorical figures that are typical of the style of his rhymed heroic plays. This preface is a defense not only of his own predilection for what Samuel Johnson described as "wild and daring sallies of sentiment, in the irregular and eccentric violence of wit" but also of the theory that heroic and idealized materials should be treated in lofty and boldly metaphorical style; hence his definition of wit as propriety.

2. Court in which civil actions could be brought by one subject against another. "Chancery": a high court presided over by the lord chancellor.

3. Mechanical springs that set something in

motion.

4. I.e., such figures of speech as metaphors and similes. "Tropes": the uses of words in a figurative sense.

5. In the words of the French critic Rene Rapin, the rules (largely derived from Aristotle's *Poetics* and Horace's *Art of Poetry*) were made to "reduce Nature to method" (cf. Pope, *An Essay on Criticism* 1.88-89, p. 2499).

6. Deliberate overstatement or exaggeration. "Catachresis": the use of a word in a sense remote from its normal meaning.

[WIT AS "PROPRIETY"]

* * * [Wit] is a propriety of thoughts and words; or, in other terms, thought and words elegantly adapted to the subject. If our critics will join issue on this definition, that we may *convenire in aliquo tertio*;⁷ if they will take it as a granted principle, it will be easy to put an end to this dispute. No man will disagree from another's judgment concerning the dignity of style in heroic poetry; but all reasonable men will conclude it necessary that sublime subjects ought to be adorned with the sublimest, and, consequently, often with the most figurative expressions. * * *

1677

*From A Discourse Concerning the Original and
Progress of Satire*¹

[THE ART OF SATIRE]

* * * How easy is it to call rogue and villain, and that wittily! But how hard to make a man appear a fool, a blockhead, or a knave without using any of those opprobrious terms! To spare the grossness of the names, and to do the thing yet more severely, is to draw a full face, and to make the nose and cheeks stand out, and yet not to employ any depth of shadowing.² This is the mystery of that noble trade, which yet no master can teach to his apprentice; he may give the rules, but the scholar is never the nearer in his practice. Neither is it true that this fineness of raillery³ is offensive. A witty man is tickled while he is hurt in this manner, and a fool feels it not. The occasion of an offense may possibly be given, but he cannot take it. If it be granted that in effect this way does more mischief; that a man is secretly wounded, and though he be not sensible himself, yet the malicious world will find it out for him; yet there is still a vast difference betwixt the slovenly butchering of a man, and the fineness of a stroke that separates the head from the body, and leaves it standing in its place. A man may be capable, as Jack Ketch's⁴ wife said of his servant, of a plain piece of work, a bare hanging; but to make a malefactor die sweetly was only belonging to her husband. I wish I could apply it to myself, if the reader would be kind enough to think it belongs to me. The character of Zimri in my *Absalom*⁵ is, in my opinion, worth the whole poem: it is not bloody, but it is ridiculous enough; and he, for whom it was intended, was too witty to resent it as an injury. If I had railed,⁶ I might have suffered for it justly; but I managed my own work more happily, perhaps more dexterously. I avoided the mention

7. To find some means of agreement, in a third term, between the two opposites [Latin].

1. This passage is an excerpt from the long and rambling preface that served as the dedication of a translation of the satires of the Roman satirists Juvenal and Persius to Charles Sackville, sixth earl of Dorset. The translations were made by Dryden and other writers, among them William Congreve. Dryden traces the origin and development of verse satire in Rome and in a very fine passage contrasts Horace and Juvenal as satiric poets. It is plain that he prefers the "tragic" satire of Juvenal to the urbane and laughing satire of Horace. But in the passage printed here, he praises his own satiric character of Zimri (the duke of Buckingham) in

Absalom and Achitophel for the very reason that it is modeled on Horatian "raillery," not Juvenalian invective.

2. Early English miniaturists prided themselves on the art of giving roundness to the full face without painting in shadows.

3. Satirical mirth, good-natured satire.

4. A notorious public executioner of Dryden's time (d. 1686). His name later became a generic term for all members of his profession.

5. *Absalom and Achitophel*, lines 544—68 (pp. 2100-01).

6. Reviled, abused. Observe that the verb differed in meaning from its noun, defined above.

of great crimes, and applied myself to the representing of blindsides, and little extravagancies; to which, the wittier a man is, he is generally the more obnoxious.⁷ It succeeded as I wished; the jest went round, and he was laughed at in his turn who began the frolic. * * *

1693

*From The Preface to Fables Ancient and Modern*¹

[IN PRAISE OF CHAUCER]

In the first place, as he is the father of English poetry, I hold him in the same degree of veneration as the Grecians held Homer, or the Romans Virgil. He is a perpetual fountain of good sense; learned in all sciences;² and, therefore, speaks properly on all subjects. As he knew what to say, so he knows also when to leave off; a continence which is practiced by few writers, and scarcely by any of the ancients, excepting Virgil and Horace. * * *

Chaucer followed Nature everywhere, but was never so bold to go beyond her; and there is a great difference of being *poeta* and *nimis poeta*,³ if we may believe Catullus, as much as betwixt a modest behavior and affectation. The verse of Chaucer, I confess, is not harmonious to us; but 'tis like the eloquence of one whom Tacitus commends, it was *auribus istius temporis accommodata*:⁴ they who lived with him, and some time after him, thought it musical; and it continues so, even in our judgment, if compared with the numbers of Lydgate and Gower,⁵ his contemporaries; there is the rude sweetness of a Scotch tune in it, which is natural and pleasing, though not perfect. 'Tis true I cannot go so far as he who published the last edition of him;⁶ for he would make us believe the fault is in our ears, and that there were really ten syllables in a verse where we find but nine; but this opinion is not worth confuting; 'tis so gross and obvious an error that common sense (which is a rule in everything but matters of faith and revelation) must convince the reader that equality of numbers in every verse which we call heroic⁷ was either not known, or not always practiced in Chaucer's age. It were an easy matter to produce some thousands of his verses which are lame for want of half a foot, and sometimes a whole one, and which no pronunciation can make otherwise. We can only say that he lived in the infancy of our poetry, and that nothing is brought to perfection at the first. * * *

7. Liable.

1. Dryden's final work, published in the year of his death, was a collection of translations from Homer, Ovid, Boccaccio, and Chaucer, and one or two other pieces. The Preface is Dryden's ripest and finest critical essay. He is not concerned here with critical theory or with a formalistic approach to literature but is simply a man, grown old in the reading and writing of poetry, who is eager to talk informally with his readers about some of his favorite authors. His praise of Chaucer (unusually sympathetic and perceptive for 1700) is animated by that love of great literature that is manifest in everything that Dryden wrote.

2. Branches of learning.

3. A poet ("*poeta*") and too much of a poet ("*nimis poeta*"). The phrase is not from Catullus but from

Martial (*Epigrams* 3.44).

4. Suitable to the ears of that time (Latin). Tacitus (ca. 55-ca. 117 C.E.), Roman historian and writer on oratory.

5. John Gower (d. 1408), poet and friend of Chaucer. "Numbers": versification. John Lydgate (ca. 1370-ca. 1449) wrote poetry that shows the influence of Chaucer.

6. Thomas Speght's Chaucer, which Dryden used, was first published in 1598; the second edition, published in 1602, was reprinted in 1687.

7. The pentameter line. In Dryden's time few readers knew how to pronounce Middle English, especially the syllabic *e*. Moreover, Chaucer's works were known only in corrupt printed texts. As a consequence Chaucer's verse seemed rough and irregular.

He must have been a man of a most wonderful comprehensive nature, because, as it has been truly observed of him, he has taken into the compass of his *Canterbury Tales* the various manners and humors (as we now call them) of the whole English nation in his age. Not a single character has escaped him. All his pilgrims are severally distinguished from each other; and not only in their inclinations but in their very physiognomies and persons. Baptista Porta⁸ could not have described their natures better than by the marks which the poet gives them. The matter and manner of their tales, and of their telling, are so suited to their different educations, humors, and callings that each of them would be improper in any other mouth. Even the grave and serious characters are distinguished by their several sorts of gravity: their discourses are such as belong to their age, their calling, and their breeding; such as are becoming of them, and of them only. Some of his persons are vicious, and some virtuous; some are unlearned, or (as Chaucer calls them) lewd, and some are learned. Even the ribaldry of the low characters is different: the Reeve, the Miller, and the Cook are several⁹ men, and distinguished from each other as much as the mincing Lady Prioress and the broad-speaking, gap-toothed Wife of Bath. But enough of this; there is such a variety of game springing up before me that I am distracted in my choice, and know not which to follow. 'Tis sufficient to say, according to the proverb, that here is God's plenty. * * *

1700

8. Giambattista della Porta (ca. 1535-1615), author of a Latin treatise on physiognomy. 9. Different,

SAMUEL PEPYS 1633-1703

Samuel Pepys (pronounced "Peeps") was the son of a London tailor. With the help of a scholarship he took a degree at Cambridge; with the help of a cousin he found a place in the Navy Office. Eventually, through hard work and an eye for detail, he rose to secretary of the Admiralty. His defense of the Navy Office and himself before Parliament in 1668 won him a reputation as a good administrator, and his career continued to prosper until it was broken, first by false accusations of treason in 1679 and finally by the fall of James II in 1688. But Pepys was more than a bureaucrat. A Londoner to his core, he was interested in all the activities of the city: the theater, music, the social whirl, business, religion, literary life, and the scientific experiments of the Royal Society (which he served as president from 1684 to 1686). He also found plenty of chances to indulge his two obsessions: chasing after women and making money.

Pepys kept his diary from 1660 to 1669 (when his eyesight began to fail). Writing in shorthand and sometimes in code, he was utterly frank in recording the events of his day, both public and private, the major affairs of state or his quarrels with his wife. Altogether he wrote about 1.3 million words. When the diary was first deciphered and published in the nineteenth century, it made him newly famous. As a document of social history it is unsurpassed for its rich detail, honesty, and immediacy. But more than that, it gives us a sense of somebody else's world: what it was like to live in the Restoration, and what it was like to see through the eyes of Pepys.

From The Diary

[THE GREAT FIRE]

September 2, 1666

Lords day. Some of our maids sitting up late last night to get things ready against our feast today, Jane called us up, about 3 in the morning, to tell us of a great fire they saw in the City.¹ So I rose, and slipped on my nightgown and went to her window, and thought it to be on the back side of Mark Lane² at the furthest; but being unused to such fires as followed, I thought it far enough off, and so went to bed again and to sleep. About 7 rose again to dress myself, and there looked out at the window and saw the fire not so much as it was, and further off. So to my closet³ to set things to rights after yesterday's cleaning. By and by Jane comes and tells me that she hears that above 300 houses have been burned down tonight by the fire we saw, and that it was now burning down all Fish Street by London Bridge. So I made myself ready presently, and walked to the Tower and there got up upon one of the high places, Sir J. Robinson's little son going up with me; and there I did see the houses at that end of the bridge all on fire, and an infinite great fire on this and the other side the end of the bridge—which, among other people, did trouble me for poor little Michell and our Sarah⁵ on the Bridge. So down, with my heart full of trouble, to the Lieutenant of the Tower, who tells me that it begun this morning in the King's baker's house in Pudding Lane, and that it hath burned down St. Magnus' Church and most part of Fish Street already. So I down to the waterside and there got a boat and through bridge, and there saw a lamentable fire. Poor Michell's house, as far as the Old Swan,⁶ already burned that way and the fire running further, that in a very little time it got as far as the Steelyard while I was there. Everybody endeavoring to remove their goods, and flinging into the river or bringing them into lighters⁷ that lay off. Poor people staying in their houses as long as till the very fire touched them, and then running into boats or clambering from one pair of stair by the waterside to another. And among other things, the poor pigeons I perceive were loath to leave their houses, but hovered about the windows and balconies till they were some of them burned, their wings, and fell down.

Having stayed, and in an hour's time seen the fire rage every way, and nobody to my sight endeavoring to quench it, but to remove their goods and leave all to the fire; and having seen it get as far as the Steelyard, and the wind mighty high and driving it into the city, and everything, after so long a drought, proving combustible, even the very stones of churches, and among other things, the poor steeple by which pretty Mrs. ⁸ lives, and whereof my old school-fellow Elborough is parson, taken fire in the very top and there burned till it fell down—I to Whitehall⁹ with a gentleman with me who desired to get off from the Tower to see the fire in my boat—to Whitehall, and there

1. The fire of London, which was to destroy four-fifths of the central city, had begun an hour earlier. For another description see Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* (p. 2085).

2. Near Pepys's own house in Seething Lane.

3. A small private room or study.

4. Immediately.

5. William Michell and his wife, Betty, one of

Pepys's old flames, lived near London Bridge. Sarah had been a maid of the Pepyses'.

6. A tavern in Thames Street, near the source of the fire.

7. Barges.

8. Mrs. Horsely, a beauty admired and pursued by Pepys.

9. Palace in central London.

up to the King's closet in the chapel, where people came about me and I did give them an account dismayed them all; and word was carried in to the King, so I was called for and did tell the King and Duke of York what I saw, and that unless his Majesty did command houses to be pulled down, nothing could stop the fire. They seemed much troubled, and the King commanded me to go to my Lord Mayor from him and command him to spare no houses but to pull down before the fire every way. The Duke of York bid me tell him that if he would have any more soldiers, he shall; and so did my Lord Arlington afterward, as a great secret. Here meeting with Captain Cocke, I in his coach, which he lent me, and Creed with me, to Paul's;¹ and there walked along Watling Street as well as I could, every creature coming away laden with goods to save—and here and there sick people carried away in beds. Extraordinary good goods carried in carts and on backs. At last met my Lord Mayor in Canning Street, like a man spent, with a hankercher² about his neck. To the King's message, he cried like a fainting woman, "Lord, what can I do? I am spent. People will not obey me. I have been pulling down houses. But the fire overtakes us faster than we can do it." That he needed no more soldiers; and that for himself, he must go and refresh himself, having been up all night. So he left me, and I him, and walked home—seeing people all almost distracted and no manner of means used to quench the fire. The houses too, so very thick thereabouts, and full of matter for burning, as pitch and tar, in Thames Street—and warehouses of oil and wines and brandy and other things. Here I saw Mr. Isaak Houblon, that handsome man—prettily dressed and dirty at his door at Dowgate, receiving some of his brothers' things whose houses were on fire; and as he says, have been removed twice already, and he doubts³ (as it soon proved) that they must be in a little time removed from his house also—which was a sad consideration. And to see the churches all filling with goods, by people who themselves should have been quietly there at this time.

By this time it was about 12 o'clock, and so home and there find my guests, which was Mr. Wood and his wife, Barbary Shelden, and also Mr. Moone—she mighty fine, and her husband, for aught I see, a likely⁴ man. But Mr. Moone's design and mine, which was to look over my closet and please him with the sight thereof, which he hath long desired, was wholly disappointed, for we were in great trouble and disturbance at this fire, not knowing what to think of it. However, we had an extraordinary good dinner, and as merry as at this time we could be.

While at dinner, Mrs. Batelier came to enquire after Mr. Woolfe and Stanes (who it seems are related to them), whose houses in Fish Street are all burned, and they in a sad condition. She would not stay in the fright.

As soon as dined, I and Moone away and walked through the City, the streets full of nothing but people and horses and carts laden with goods, ready to run over one another, and removing goods from one burned house to another—they now removing out of Canning Street (which received goods in the morning) into Lombard Street and further; and among others, I now saw my little goldsmith Stokes receiving some friend's goods, whose house itself was burned the day after. We parted at Paul's, he home and I to Paul's Wharf, where I had appointed a boat to attend me; and took in Mr. Carcasse and his brother, whom I met in the street, and carried them below and above bridge,

1. St. Paul's Cathedral, later ravaged by the fire.
2. Handkerchief.

3. Fears.
4. Promising.

to and again, to see the fire, which was now got further, both below and above, and no likelihood of stopping it. Met with the King and Duke of York in their barge, and with them to Queenhithe and there called Sir Rd. Browne⁵ to them. Their order was only to pull down houses apace, and so below bridge at the waterside; but little was or could be done, the fire coming upon them so fast. Good hopes there was of stopping it at the Three Cranes above, and at Buttolph's Wharf below bridge, if care be used; but the wind carries it into the City, so as we know not by the waterside what it doth there. River full of lighters and boats taking in goods, and good goods swimming in the water; and only, I observed that hardly one lighter or boat in three that had the goods of a house in, but there was a pair of virginals⁶ in it. Having seen as much as I could now, I away to Whitehall by appointment, and there walked to St. James's Park, and there met my wife and Creed and Wood and his wife and walked to my boat, and there upon the water again, and to the fire up and down, it still increasing and the wind great. So near the fire as we could for smoke; and all over the Thames, with one's face in the wind you were almost burned with a shower of firedrops—this is very true—so as houses were burned by these drops and flakes of fire, three or four, nay five or six houses, one from another. When we could endure no more upon the water, we to a little alehouse on the Bankside over against the Three Cranes, and there stayed till it was dark almost and saw the fire grow; and as it grew darker, appeared more and more, and in corners and upon steeples and between churches and houses, as far as we could see up the hill of the City, in a most horrid malicious bloody flame, not like the fine flame of an ordinary fire. Barbary⁷ and her husband away before us. We stayed till, it being darkish, we saw the fire as only one entire arch of fire from this to the other side the bridge, and in a bow up the hill, for an arch of above a mile long. It made me weep to see it. The churches, houses, and all on fire and flaming at once, and a horrid noise the flames made, and the cracking of houses at their ruin. So home with a sad heart, and there find everybody discoursing and lamenting the fire; and poor Tom Hater came with some few of his goods saved out of his house, which is burned upon Fish Street hill. I invited him to lie at my house, and did receive his goods: but was deceived in his lying there,⁸ the noise coming every moment of the growth of the fire, so as we were forced to begin to pack up our own goods and prepare for their removal. And did by moonshine (it being brave,⁹ dry, and moonshine and warm weather) carry much of my goods into the garden, and Mr. Hater and I did remove my money and iron chests into my cellar—as thinking that the safest place. And got my bags of gold into my office ready to carry away, and my chief papers of accounts also there, and my tallies¹ into a box by themselves. So great was our fear, as Sir W. Batten had carts come out of the country to fetch away his goods this night. We did put Mr. Hater, poor man, to bed a little; but he got but very little rest, so much noise being in my house, taking down of goods.

5. Sir Richard Browne was a former lord mayor. "Queenhithe": harbor in Thames Street.

6. Table-size harpsichord, popular at the time.

7. The actress Elizabeth Knapp, another of Pepys's mistresses. He calls her "Barbary" because

she had enchanted him by singing *Barbary Allen*.

8. I.e., mistaken in asking him to stay.

9. Fine.

1. Receipts notched on sticks.

September 5, 1666

I lay down in the office again upon W. Hewer's² quilt, being mighty weary and sore in my feet with going till I was hardly able to stand. About 2 in the morning my wife calls me up and tells of new cries of "Fire!"—it being come to Barking Church, which is the bottom of our lane. I up; and finding it so, resolved presently to take her away; and did, and took my gold (which was about £2350), W. Hewer, and Jane down by Poundy's boat to Woolwich.³ But Lord, what a sad sight it was by moonlight to see the whole City almost on fire—that you might see it plain at Woolwich, as if you were by it. There when I came, I find the gates shut, but no guard kept at all; which troubled me, because of discourses now begun that there is plot in it and that the French had done it.⁴ I got the gates open, and to Mr. Shelden's,⁵ where I locked up my gold and charged my wife and W. Hewer never to leave the room without one of them in it night nor day. So back again, by the way seeing my goods well in the lighters at Deptford and watched well by people. Home, and whereas I expected to have seen our house on fire, it being now about 7 o'clock, it was not. But to the fire, and there find greater hopes than I expected; for my confidence of finding our office on fire was such, that I durst not ask anybody how it was with us, till I came and saw it not burned. But going to the fire, I find, by the blowing up of houses and the great help given by the workmen out of the King's yards, sent up by Sir W. Penn, there is a good stop given to it, as well at Mark Lane end as ours—it having only burned the dial⁶ of Barking Church, and part of the porch, and was there quenched. I up to the top of Barking steeple, and there saw the saddest sight of desolation that I ever saw. Everywhere great fires. Oil cellars and brimstone and other things burning. I became afeared to stay there long; and therefore down again as fast as I could, the fire being spread as far as I could see it, and to Sir W. Penn's and there eat a piece of cold meat, having eaten nothing since Sunday but the remains of Sunday's dinner.

Here I met with Mr. Young and Whistler; and having removed all my things, and received good hopes that the fire at our end is stopped, they and I walked into the town and find Fanchurch Street, Gracious Street, and Lumbard Street all in dust. The Exchange a sad sight, nothing standing there of all the statues or pillars but Sir Tho. Gresham's picture in the corner.⁷ Walked into Moorefields (our feet ready to burn, walking through the town among the hot coals) and find that full of people, and poor wretches carrying their goods there, and everybody keeping his goods together by themselves (and a great blessing it is to them that it is fair weather for them to keep abroad⁸ night and day); drank there, and paid twopence for a plain penny loaf.

Thence homeward, having passed through Cheapside and Newgate Market, all burned—and seen Anthony Joyce's house in fire. And took up (which I keep by me) a piece of glass of Mercer's Chapel in the street, where much more was, so melted and buckled with the heat of the fire, like parchment. I also did see a poor cat taken out of a hole in the chimney joining to the wall of the Exchange, with the hair all burned off the body and yet alive. So home

2. William Hewer, Pepys's chief clerk. Pepys had packed or sent away all his own goods.

3. Suburb on the east side of London.

4. There were rumors that the French had set the fire and were invading the city. "Gates": at the dockyard.

5. William Shelden, a Woolwich official at whose

home Mrs. Pepys had stayed the year before, during the plague.

6. Clock. "Yards": i.e., dockyards.

7. Sir Thomas Gresham had founded the Royal Exchange, a center for shopping and trading, in 1568. It was rebuilt in 1669.

8. Out of doors.

at night, and find there good hopes of saving our office—but great endeavors of watching all night and having men ready; and so we lodged them in the office and had drink and bread and cheese for them. And I lay down and slept a good night about midnight—though when I rose, I hear that there had been a great alarm of French and Dutch being risen—which proved nothing. But it is a strange thing to see how long this time did look since Sunday, having been always full of variety of actions, and little sleep, that it looked like a week or more. And I had forgot almost the day of the week.⁹

[THE DEB WILLET AFFAIR]

October 25, 1668

Lords day. Up, and discoursing with my wife about our house and many new things we are doing of; and so to church I, and there find Jack Fen come, and his wife, a pretty black¹ woman; I never saw her before, nor took notice of her now. So home and to dinner; and after dinner, all the afternoon got my wife and boy² to read to me. And at night W. Batelier comes and sups with us; and after supper, to have my head combed by Deb,³ which occasioned the greatest sorrow to me that ever I knew in this world; for my wife, coming up suddenly, did find me embracing the girl con my hand sub su coats; and indeed, I was with my main in her cunny.⁴ I was at a wonderful loss upon it, and the girl also; and I endeavored to put it off, but my wife was struck mute and grew angry, and as her voice came to her, grew quite out of order; and I do say little, but to bed; and my wife said little also, but could not sleep all night; but about 2 in the morning waked me and cried, and fell to tell me as a great secret that she was a Roman Catholic and had received the Holy Sacrament;⁵ which troubled me but I took no notice of it, but she went on from one thing to another, till at last it appeared plainly her trouble was at what she saw; but yet I did not know how much she saw and therefore said nothing to her. But after her much crying and reproaching me with inconstancy and preferring a sony girl before her, I did give her no provocations but did promise all fair usage to her, and love, and foreswore any hurt that I did with her—till at last she seemed to be at ease again; and so toward morning, a little sleep; [Oct. 26] and so I, with some little repose and rest, rose, and up and by water to Whitehall, but with my mind mightily troubled for the poor girl, whom I fear I have undone by this, my wife telling me that she would turn her out of door. However, I was obliged to attend the Duke of York, thinking to have had a meeting of Tanger⁶ today, but had not; but he did take me and Mr. Wren into his closet, and there did press me to prepare what I had to say upon the answers of my fellow-officers to his great letter; which I promised to do against⁷ his coming to town again the next week; and so to other discourse, finding plainly that he is in trouble and apprehensions of the reformers, and would be found to do what he can towards reforming himself. And so thence to my Lord Sandwich; where after long stay, he being in talk with others privately, I to him; and there he taking physic and keeping his chamber, I had an hour's

9. A day later the fire was under control. Pepys's own house was spared.

1. Dark-haired.

2. Servant. Pepys had no children.

3. Deborah Willett. Mrs. Pepys's maid.

4. With his hand under her skirts and in her vulva.

5. When unhappy with her husband, Elizabeth Pepys sometimes threatened to convert to the

Church of Rome. She never did.

6. Committee supervising the British naval base at Tangier, later evacuated under Pepys's supervision.

7. Before. Pepys had drafted a letter for the duke of York (later James II), high admiral of the navy, defending him from charges of mismanagement.

talk with him about the ill posture of things at this time, while the King gives countenance to Sir Ch. Sidly and Lord Buckhurst,⁸ telling him their late story of running up and down the streets a little while since all night, and their being beaten and clapped up all night by the constable, who is since chid and imprisoned for his pains.

He tells me that he thinks his matters do stand well with the King—and hopes to have dispatch to his mind;⁹ but I doubt it, and do see that he doth fear it too. He told me my Lady Carteret's trouble about my writing of that letter of the Duke of York's lately to the office; which I did not own, but declared to be of no injury to G. Carteret,¹ and that I would write a letter to him to satisfy him therein. But this I am in pain how to do without doing myself wrong, and the end I had, of preparing a justification to myself hereafter, when the faults of the Navy come to be found out. However, I will do it in the best manner I can.

Thence by coach home and to dinner, finding my wife mightily discontented and the girl sad, and no words from my wife to her. So after dinner, they out² with me about two or three things; and so home again, I all the evening busy and my wife full of trouble in her looks; and anon to bed—where about midnight, she wakes me and there falls foul on me again, affirming that she saw me hug and kiss the girl; the latter I denied, and truly; the other I confessed and no more. And upon her pressing me, did offer to give her under my hand that I would never see Mrs. Pierce more, nor Knepp, but did promise her particular demonstrations of my true love to her, owning some indiscretion in what I did, but that there was no harm in it. She at last on these promises was quiet, and very kind we were, and so to sleep; [Oct. 27] and in the morning up, but with my mind troubled for the poor girl, with whom I could not get opportunity to speak; but to the office, my mind mighty full of sorrow for her, where all the morning, and to dinner with my people and to the office all the afternoon; and so at night home and there busy to get some things ready against tomorrow's meeting of Tanger; and that being done and my clerks gone, my wife did towards bedtime begin to be in a mighty rage from some new matter that she had got in her head, and did most part of the night in bed rant at me in most high terms, of threats of publishing³ my shame; and when I offered to rise, would have rose too, and caused a candle to be lit, to burn by her all night in the chimney while she ranted; while I, that knew myself to have given some grounds for it, did make it my business to appease her all I could possibly, and by good words and fair promises did make her very quiet; and so rested all night and rose with perfect good peace, being heartily afflicted for this folly of mine that did occasion it; but was forced to be silent about the girl, which I have no mind to part with, but much less that the poor girl should be undone by my folly. [Oct. 28] So up, with mighty kindness from my wife and a thorough peace; and being up, did by a note advise the girl what I had done and owned, which note I was in pain for till she told me that she had burned it. This evening, Mr. Spong came and sat late with me, and first told me of the instrument called Parrallogram,⁴ which I must have one of, showing me his practice thereon by a map of England.

8. Sir Charles Sedley and Lord Buckhurst were riotous rakes and well-known writers; they are often identified with Lisideius and Eugenius in Dryden's *Essay of Dramatic Poesy*.

9. A message to his liking.

1. Sir George Carteret, former treasurer of the

naw (which Pepys had plans to reform), was later censured for having kept poor accounts.

2. Went out.

3. Making public.

4. The pantograph, a mechanism for copying maps or plans.

November 14, 1668

Up, and had a mighty mind to have seen or given a note to Deb or to have given her a little money; to which purpose I wrapped up 40s in a paper, thinking to give her; but my wife rose presently, and would not let me be out of her sight; and went down before me into the kitchen, and came up and told me that she was in the kitchen, and therefore would have me go round the other way; which she repeating, and I vexed at it, answered her a little angrily; upon which she instantly flew out into a rage, calling me dog and rogue, and that I had a rotten heart; all which, knowing that I deserved it, I bore with; and word being brought presently up that she was gone away by coach with her things, my wife was friends; and so all quiet, and I to the office with my heart sad, and find that I cannot forget the girl, and vexed I know not where to look for her—and more troubled to see how my wife is by this means likely for ever to have her hand over me, that I shall for ever be a slave to her; that is to say, only in matters of pleasure, but in other things she will make her business, I know, to please me and to keep me right to her—which I will labor to be indeed, for she deserves it of me, though it will be I fear a little time before I shall be able to wear Deb out of my mind. At the office all the morning, and merry at noon at dinner; and after dinner to the office, where all the afternoon and doing much business late; my mind being free of all troubles, I thank God, but⁵ only for my thoughts of this girl, which hang after her. And so at night home to supper, and there did sleep with great content with my wife. I must here remember that I have lain with my moher⁶ as a husband more times since this falling-out then in I believe twelve months before—and with more pleasure to her then I think in all the time of our marriage before.

November 18, 1668

Lay long in bed, talking with my wife, she being unwilling to have me go abroad, being and declaring herself jealous of my going out, for fear of my going to Deb; which I do deny—for which God forgive me, for I was no sooner out about noon but I did go by coach directly to Somerset House and there inquired among the porters there for Dr. Allbun;⁷ and the first I spoke with told me he knew him, and that he was newly gone into Lincoln's Inn fields, but whither he could not tell me, but that one of his fellows, not then in the way, did carry a chest of drawers thither with him, and that when he comes he would ask him. This put me in some hopes; and I to Whitehall and thence to Mr. Povy's, but he at dinner; and therefore I away and walked up and down the Strand between the two turnstiles,⁸ hoping to see her out of a window; and then employed a porter, one Osbeston, to find out this doctor's lodgings thereabouts; who by appointment comes to me to Hercules' Pillars, where I dined alone, but tells me that he cannot find out any such but will inquire further. Thence back to Whitehall to the treasury a while, and thence to the Strand; and towards night did meet with the porter that carried the chest of drawers with this doctor, but he would not tell me where he lived, being his good master he told me; but if I would have a message to him, he would deliver it. At last, I told him my business was not with him, but a little gentlewoman,

5. Except.

6. Woman or wife (*mujer* in Spanish).

7. Pepys's wife had told him that Deb was staying

with a man named Allbon.

8. To keep traffic, except for pedestrians, out of the street.

one Mrs. Willet, that is with him; and sent him to see how she did, from her friend in London, and no other token. He goes while I walk in Somerset House walk there in the court; at last he comes back and tells me she is well, and that I may see her if I will—but no more. So I could not be commanded by my reason, but I must go this very night; and so by coach, it being now dark, I to her, close by my tailor's; and there she came into the coach to me, and yo did besar her and tocar her thing, but ella was against it and labored with much earnestness, such as I believed to be real; and yet at last yo did make her tener mi cosa in her mano, while mi mano was sopra her pectus, and so did hazer⁹ with grand delight. I did nevertheless give her the best counsel I could, to have a care of her honor and to fear God and suffer no man para haver to do con her—as yo have done—which she promised. Yo did give her 20s and directions para laisser sealed in paper at any time the name of the place of her being, at Herringman's my bookseller in the Change¹—by which I might go para her. And so bid her good-night, with much content to my mind and resolution to look after her no more till I heard from her. And so home, and there told my wife a fair tale, God knows, how I spent the whole day; with which the poor wretch was satisfied, or at least seemed so; and so to supper and to bed, she having been mighty busy all day in getting of her house in order against tomorrow, to hang up our new hangings and furnishing our best chamber.

November 19, 1668

Up, and at the office all the morning, with my heart full of joy to think in what a safe condition all my matters now stand between my wife and Deb and me; and at noon, running upstairs to see the upholsters, who are at work upon hanging my best room and setting up my new bed, I find my wife sitting sad in the dining-room; which inquiring into the reason of, she begun to call me all the false, rotten-hearted rogues in the world, letting me understand that I was with Deb yesterday; which, thinking impossible for her ever to understand, I did a while deny; but at last did, for the ease of my mind and hers, and for ever to discharge my heart of this wicked business, I did confess all; and above-stairs in our bed-chamber there, I did endure the sorrow of her threats and vows and curses all the afternoon. And which was worst, she swore by all that was good that she would slit the nose of this girl, and be gone herself this very night from me; and did there demand 3 or 400/ of me to buy my peace, that she might be gone without making any noise, or else protested that she would make all the world know of it. So, with most perfect confusion of face and heart, and sorrow and shame, in the greatest agony in the world, I did pass this afternoon, fearing that it will never have an end; but at last I did call for W. Hewer, who I was forced to make privy now to all; and the poor fellow did cry like a child and obtained what I could not, that she would be pacified, upon condition that I would give it under my hand never to see or speak with Deb while I live, as I did before of Pierce and Knepp; and which I did also, God knows, promise for Deb too, but I have the confidence to deny it, to the perjuring of myself. So before it was late, there was, beyond my hopes as well as desert, a tolerable peace; and so to supper, and pretty kind words, and to

9. Carry on. "Besar": kiss. "Tocar": touch. "Ella": she. "Tener mi cosa in her mano": take my thing in her hand. "Mi mano was sopra her pectus": my

hand was on her breast.

1. I.e., the Royal Exchange, a center for shopping, business, and trade. "Para laisser": to leave.

bed, and there yo did hazer con ella to her content; and so with some rest spent the night in bed, being most absolutely resolved, if ever I can master this bout, never to give her occasion while I live of more trouble of this or any other kind, there being no curse in the world so great as this of the difference between myself and her; and therefore I do by the grace of God promise never to offend her more, and did this night begin to pray to God upon my knees alone in my chamber; which God knows I cannot yet do heartily, but I hope God will give me the grace more and more every day to fear Him, and to be true to my poor wife. This night the upholsters did finish the hanging of my best chamber, but my sorrow and trouble is so great about this business, that put me out of all joy in looking upon it or minding how it was.²

2. Despite his promises, Pepys continued to hanker for Deb, and they had a few brief encounters. Mrs. Pepys accused him of talking to Deb in his

dreams and she once threatened him with red-hot tongs. But so far as is known the affair was never consummated.

JOHN BUNYAN 1628-1688

John Bunyan is one of the most remarkable figures in seventeenth-century literature. The son of a poor Bedfordshire tinker (a maker and mender of metal pots), he received only meager schooling and then learned his father's craft. Nothing in the circumstances of his early life could have suggested that he would become a writer known the world over.

Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners (1666), his spiritual autobiography, records his transformation from a self-doubting sinner into an eloquent and fearless Baptist preacher (for a selection from *Grace Abounding*, go to Norton Literature Online). Preachers, both male and female, often even less educated than Bunyan, were common phenomena among the sects during the Commonwealth. They wished no ordination but the "call," and they could dispense with learning because they abounded in inspiration, inner light, and the gifts conferred by the Holy Spirit. In November 1660, the Anglican Church began to persecute and silence the dissenting sects. Jails filled with unlicensed Nonconformist preachers, and Bunyan was one of the prisoners. Refusing to keep silent, he chose imprisonment and so for twelve years remained in Bedford jail, preaching to his fellow prisoners and writing religious books. Upon his release, he was called to the pastorate of a Nonconformist group in Bedford. It was during a second imprisonment, in 1675, when the Test Act was once again rigorously enforced against Nonconformists, that he wrote his greatest work, *The Pilgrim's Progress from This World to That Which Is to Come* (1678), revised and augmented in the third edition (1679). Bunyan was a prolific writer: part 2 of *The Pilgrim's Progress*, dealing with the journey of Christian's wife and children, appeared in 1684; *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, in 1680; *The Holy War*, in 1682. And these major works form only a small part of all his writings.

The Pilgrim's Progress is the most popular allegory in English. Its basic metaphor—life is a journey—is simple and familiar; the objects that the pilgrim Christian meets are homely and commonplace: a quagmire, the highway, the bypaths and shortcuts through pleasant meadows, the inn, the steep hill, the town fair on market day, and the river that must be forded. As in the equally homely parables of Jesus, however, these simple things are charged with spiritual significance. Moreover, this is a tale of adventure. If the road that Christian travels is the King's Highway, it is also a perilous path along which we encounter giants, wild beasts, hobgoblins, and the terrible Apol-

lyon, "the angel of the bottomless pit," whom Christian must fight. Bunyan keeps the tale firmly based on human experience, and his style, modeled on the prose of the English Bible, together with his concrete language and carefully observed details, enables even the simplest reader to share the experiences of the characters. What could be better than the following sentence? "Some cry out against sin even as the mother cries out against her child in her lap, when she calleth it slut and naughty girl, and then falls to hugging and kissing it." *The Pilgrim's Progress* is no longer a household book, but it survives in the phrases it gave to our language: "the slough of despond," "the house beautiful," "Mr. Worldly-Wiseman," and "Vanity Fair." And it lives again for anyone who reads beyond the first page.

From The Pilgrim's Progress

*From This World to That Which Is to Come:
Delivered under the Similitude of a Dream*

[CHRISTIAN SETS OUT FOR THE CELESTIAL CITY]

As I walked through the wilderness of this world, I lighted on a certain place where was a den, 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 (Isaiah lxiv.6; Luke xiv.33; Psalms xxxviii.4; Habakkuk ii.2; Acts xvi.31). 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?" (Acts ii.37).

In this plight, therefore, he went home and refrained 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 distemper¹ had got into his head; therefore, it drawing towards night, and they 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 carriages² to him: sometimes they would deride, sometimes they would chide, and sometimes they would quite neglect

1. A malady causing madness. The use of *frenzy* as an adjective was not uncommon in the 17th

century,
2. Behavior.

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 this book, 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 Evangelist³ coming to him, who asked, Wherefore dost thou cry? (Job xxxiii.23). He answered, Sir, I perceive by the book in my hand that I am condemned to die, and after that to come to judgment (Hebrews ix.27), and I find that I am not willing to do the first (Job xvi.21), nor able to do the second (Ezekiel xxii. 14). . . .

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 Tophet⁴ (Isaiah xxx.33). 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" (Matthew iii.7).

The man therefore read it, and looking upon Evangelist very carefully,⁶ said, Whither must I fly? Then said Evangelist, pointing with his finger over a very wide field, Do you see yonder wicketgate?⁷ (Matthew vii. 13, 14.) The man said, No. Then said the other, Do you see yonder shining light? (Psalms cxix.105; II Peter i.19.) 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 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! (Luke xiv.26.) So he looked not behind him, but fled towards the middle of the plain (Genesis xix. 17).

The neighbors also came out to see him run (Jeremiah xx. 10); and as he ran some mocked, others threatened, and some cried after him to return; and, among those that did so, there were two that resolved to fetch him back by force. The name of the one was Obstinate, and the name of the other Pliable. Now by this time the man was got a good distance from them; but, however, they were resolved to pursue him, which they did, and in a little time they overtook him. Then said the man, Neighbors, wherefore are ye come? They said, To persuade you to go back with us. But he said. That can by no means be; you dwell, said he, in the City of Destruction (the place also where I was born) I see it to be so; and, dying there, sooner or later, you will sink lower than the grave, into a place that burns with fire and brimstone; be content, good neighbors, and go along with me.

3. A preacher of the Gospel; literally, a bearer of good news.

4. The place near Jerusalem where bodies and filth were burned; hence, by association, a name

for hell,

5. Cry out.

6. Sorrowfully.

7. A small gate in or beside a larger gate.

OBST. What! said Obstinate, and leave our friends and our comforts behind us?

CHR. Yes, said Christian (for that was his name), because that ALL which you shall forsake is not worthy to be compared with a little of that which I am seeking to enjoy (II Corinthians v. 17); and, if you will go along with me, and hold it, you shall fare as I myself; for there, where I go, is enough and to spare (Luke xv. 17). Come away, and prove my words.

OBST. What are the things you seek, since you leave all the world to find them?

CHR. I seek an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away (I Peter i.4), and it is laid up in heaven, and safe there (Hebrews xi.16), to be bestowed, at the time appointed, on them that diligently seek it. Read it so, if you will, in my book.

OBST. Tush! said Obstinate, away with your book; will you go back with us or no?

CHR. No, not I, said the other, because I have laid my hand to the plow (Luke ix.62).

OBST. Come, then, neighbor Pliable, let us turn again, and go home without him; there is a company of these crazed-headed coxcombs, that, when they take a fancy⁸ by the end, are wiser in their own eyes than seven men that can render a reason (Proverbs xxvi.16).

PLI. Then said Pliable, Don't revile; if what the good Christian says is true, the things he looks after are better than ours; my heart inclines to go with my neighbor.

OBST. What! more fools still? Be ruled by me, go back; who knows whither such a brain-sick fellow will lead you? Go back, go back, and be wise.

CHR. Nay, but do thou come with thy neighbor, Pliable; there are such things to be had which I spoke of, and many more glories besides. If you believe not me, read here in this book; and for the truth of what is expressed therein, behold, all is confirmed by the blood of Him that made it (Hebrews ix. 17—22; xiii.20).

PLI. Well, neighbor Obstinate, said Pliable, I begin to come to a point,⁹ I intend to go along with this good man, and to cast in my lot with him: but, my good companion, do you know the way to this desired place?

CHR. I am directed by a man, whose name is Evangelist, to speed me to a little gate that is before us, where we shall receive instructions about the way.

PLI. Come, then, good neighbor, let us be going. Then they went both together. ⁴ * ⁴

[THE SLOUGH OF DESPOND]

Now I saw in my dream, that just as they had ended this talk they drew near to a very miry slough,¹ that was in the midst of the plain; and they, being heedless, did both fall suddenly into the bog. The name of the slough was Despond. Here, therefore, they wallowed for a time, being grievously bedaubed with dirt; and Christian, because of the burden that was on his back, began to sink in the mire.

PLI. Then said Pliable, Ah, neighbor Christian, where are you now?

CHR. Truly, said Christian, I do not know.

PLI. At that Pliable began to be offended, and angrily said to his fellow, Is

8. Delusion. "Coxcombs": fools.

9. Decision.

1. Swamp (pronounced to rhyme with *now*).

this the happiness you have told me all this while of? If we have such ill speed at our first setting out, what may we expect 'twixt this and our journey's end? Mav I get out again with my life, you shall possess the brave² country alone for me. And, with that, he gave a desperate struggle or two, and got out of the mire on that side of the slough which was next³ to his own house: so away he went, and Christian saw him no more.

Wherefore Christian was left to tumble in the Slough of Despond alone: but still he endeavored to struggle to that side of the slough that was further from his own house, and next to the wicket-gate; the which he did, but could not get out, because of the burden that was upon his back: but I beheld in my dream, that a man came to him, whose name was Help, and asked him what he did there?

CHR. Sir, said Christian, I was bid go this way by a man called Evangelist, who directed me also to yonder gate, that I might escape the wrath to come; and as I was going thither I fell in here.

HELP. But why did not you look for the steps?

CHR. Fear followed me so hard that I fled the next way, and fell in.

HELP. Then said he, Give me thy hand; so he gave him his hand, and he drew him out, and set him upon sound ground, and bid him go on his way.

Then I stepped to him that plucked him out, and said, Sir, wherefore, since over this place is the way from the City of Destruction to yonder gate, is it that this plat⁴ is not mended, that poor travelers might go thither with more security? And he said unto me, This miry slough is such a place as cannot be mended; it is the descent whither the scum and filth that attends conviction for sin doth continually run, and therefore it was called the Slough of Despond; for still, as the sinner is awakened about his lost condition, there ariseth in his soul many fears, and doubts, and discouraging apprehensions, which all of them get together, and settle in his place. And this is the reason of the badness of this ground. ⁴ * *

[VANITY FAIR]⁵

Then I saw in my dream, that when they 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; 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" (Ecclesiastes i.2, 14; ii. 11, 17; xi.8; Isaiah xl. 17).

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

2. Fine.

3. Nearest.

4. A plot of ground.

5. In this, perhaps the best-known episode in the book, Bunyan characteristically turns one of the most familiar institutions in contemporary England—annual fairs—into an allegory of universal spiritual significance. Christian and his companion Faithful pass through the town of Vanity at the season of the local fair. *Vanity* means "emptiness" or "worthlessness," and hence the fair

is an allegory of worldliness and the corruption of the religious life through the attractions of the world. From earliest times numerous fairs were held for stated periods throughout Britain; to them the most important merchants from all over Europe brought their wares. The serious business of buying and selling was accompanied by all sorts of diversions—eating, drinking, and other fleshly pleasures, as well as spectacles of strange animals, acrobats, and other wonders.

Legion,⁶ 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, honors, preferments,⁷ titles, countries, 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 jugglings, 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 color.

And as in other fairs of less moment, there are the several rows and streets, under their proper names, where such and 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 merchandise⁸ is greatly promoted in this fair; only our English nation, with some others, have taken a dislike thereat.

Now, as I said, the way to the Celestial City lies just through this town where this lusty⁹ 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" (I Corinthians v. 10). The Prince of princes himself, when here, went through this town to his own country, and that upon a fair-day too,¹ 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. (Matthew iv.8; Luke iv.5—7.) Yea, because he was such a person of honor, 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- 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, and some they are outlandish' men. (I Corinthians ii.7, 8.)

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

6. The "unclean spirit" sent by Jesus into the Gadarene swine (Mark 5.9). Beelzebub, prince of the devils (Matthew 12.24). Apollyon, the destroyer, "the Angel of the bottomless pit" (Revelation 9.1 1).

7. Appointments and promotions to political or ecclesiastical positions.

8. The practices and the temporal power of the

Roman Catholic Church.

9. Cheerful, lustful.

1. The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness (Matthew 4.1-11).

2. Ask the price of.

3. Foreign. "Bedlams": lunatics from Bethlehem Hospital, the insane asylum in London.

the language of Canaan, but they that kept the fair were the men of this world; so that, from one end of the fair to the other, they seemed barbarians⁴ 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 cared 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. (Psalms cxix.37; Philippians iii.19, 20.)

One chanced mockingly, beholding the carriages of the men, to say unto them, What will ye buy? But they, looking gravely upon him, said, "We buy the truth" (Proverbs xxiii.23). 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 an 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. So the men were brought to examination; and they that sat upon them' asked them whence they came, whither they went, and what they did there, in such an unusual garb? The men told them that they were pilgrims and strangers in the world, and that they were going to their own country, which was the Heavenly Jerusalem (Hebrews xi. 13—16); and that they had given no occasion to the men of the town, nor yet to the merchandisers, thus to abuse them, and to let⁶ them in their journey, except it was for that, when one asked them what they would buy, they said they would buy the truth. But they that were appointed to examine them did not believe them to be any other than bedlams and mad, or else such as came to put all things into a confusion in the fair. Therefore they took them and beat them, and besmeared them with dirt, and then put them into the cage, that they might be made a spectacle to all the men of the fair.

[THE RIVER OF DEATH AND THE CELESTIAL CITY]

So I saw that when they⁷ awoke, they addressed themselves to go up to the City; but, as I said, the reflection of the sun upon the City (for the City was pure gold, Revelation xxi.18) was so extremely glorious, that they could not, as yet, with open face behold it, but through an instrument made for that purpose. (II Corinthians iii. 18.) So I saw that as I went on, there met them two men, in raiment that shone like gold; also their faces shone as the light.

These men asked the pilgrims whence they came; and they told them. They also asked them where they had lodged, what difficulties and dangers, what comforts and pleasures they had met in the way; and they told them. Then said the men that met them, You have but two difficulties more to meet with, and then you are in the City.

Christian then and his companion asked the men to go along with them; so

4. The Greeks and Romans so designated all those who spoke a foreign tongue. "Canaan": the Promised Land, ultimately conquered by the Children of Israel (Joshua 4) and settled by them; hence the pilgrims speak the language of the Bible and of the true religion. Dissenters were notorious for their habitual use of biblical language.

5. Interrogated and tried them.

6. Hinder.

7. Christian and his companion. Hopeful. Ignorance, who appears tragically in the final paragraph, had tried to accompany the two pilgrims but had dropped behind because of his hobbling gait.

they told them they would. But, said they, you must obtain it by your own faith. So I saw in my dream that they went on together till they came in sight of the gate.

Now I further saw that betwixt them and the gate was a river, but there was no bridge to go over; the river was very deep. At the sight, therefore, of this river, the pilgrims were much stunned;⁸ but the men that went with them said, You must go through, or you cannot come at the gate.

The-pilgrims then began to inquire if there was no other way to the gate; to which they answered, Yes; but there hath not any, save two, to wit, Enoch and Elijah,⁹ been permitted to tread that path, since the foundation of the world, nor shall, until the last trumpet shall sound. (I Corinthians xv.51, 52.) The pilgrims then, especially Christian, began to despond in his mind, and looked this way and that, but no way could be found by them by which they might escape the river. Then they asked the men if the waters were all of a depth. They said no; yet they could not help them in that case; for, said they, you shall find it deeper or shallower, as you believe in the King of the place.

They then addressed themselves to the water; and entering, Christian began to sink, and crying out to his good friend Hopeful, he said, I sink in deep waters; the billows go over my head, all his waves go over me! Selah.¹

Then said the other, Be of good cheer, my brother, I feel the bottom, and it is good. Then said Christian, Ah, my friend, the sorrows of death have compassed me about; I shall not see the land that flows with milk and honey. And with that a great darkness and horror fell upon Christian, so that he could not see before him. Also here he in great measure lost his senses, so that he could neither remember nor orderly talk of any of those sweet refreshments that he had met with in the way of his pilgrimage. But all the words that he spake still tended to discover² that he had horror of mind, and heart-fears that he should die in that river, and never obtain entrance in at the gate. Here also, as they that stood by perceived, he was much in the troublesome thoughts of the sins that he had committed, both since and before he began to be a pilgrim. 'Twas also observed that he was troubled with apparitions of hobgoblins and evil spirits; for ever and anon he would intimate so much by words. Hopeful, therefore, here had much ado to keep his brother's head above water; yea, sometimes he would be quite gone down, and then, ere a while, he would rise up again half dead. Hopeful also would endeavor to comfort him, saying, Brother, I see the gate and men standing by to receive us; but Christian would answer, 'Tis you, 'tis you they wait for; you have been Hopeful ever since I knew you. And so have you, said he to Christian. Ah, brother, said he, surely if I was right he would now arise to help me; but for my sins he hath brought me into the snare, and hath left me. Then said Hopeful, My brother, you have quite forgot the text, where it is said of the wicked, "There are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm. They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men" (Psalms lxxiii.4, 5). These troubles and distresses that you go through in these waters are no sign that God hath forsaken you, but are sent to try you, whether you will call to mind that which heretofore you have received of his goodness, and live upon him in your distresses.

Then I saw in my dream that Christian was as in a muse³ a while, to whom

8. Amazed.

9. Both were "translated" alive to heaven (Genesis 5,24, Hebrews 11.5, 2 Kings 2.11-12).

1. A word of uncertain meaning that occurs fre-

quently at the end of a verse in the Psalms. Bunyan may have supposed it to signify the end.

2. Reveal.

3. A deep meditation.

also Hopeful added this word. Be of good cheer. Jesus Christ maketh thee whole. And with that Christian brake out with a loud voice, Oh, I see him again! and he tells me, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee" (Isaiah xliii.2). Then they both took courage, and the Enemy was after that as still as a stone, until they were gone over. Christian therefore presently found ground to stand upon, and so it followed that the rest of the river was but shallow. Thus they got over. Now, upon the bank of the river on the other side, they saw the two Shining Men again, who there waited for them. Wherefore, being come out of the river, they saluted⁴ them saying. We are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those that shall be heirs of salvation. Thus they went along towards the gate. * * *

Now when they were come up to the gate, there was written over it in letters of gold, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation xxii.14).

Then I saw in my dream, that the Shining Men bid them call at the gate; the which, when they did, some from above looked over the gate, to wit, Enoch, Moses, and Elijah, etc., to whom it was said, These pilgrims are come from the City of Destruction, for the love that they bear to the King of this place; and then the pilgrims gave in unto them each man his certificate, which they had received in the beginning; those, therefore, were carried in to the King, who, when he had read them, said, Where are the men? To whom it was answered, They are standing without the gate. The King then commanded to open the gate, "That the righteous nation," said he, "which keepeth the truth, may enter in" (Isaiah xxvi.2).

Now 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 was also that met them with harps and crowns, and gave them to them: the harps to praise withal, and the crowns in token of honor. 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 OUR LORD" (Matthew xxv.21). I also heard the men themselves, that they sang with a loud voice, saying, "BLESSING AND HONOR, GLORY AND POWER, BE TO HIM THAT SITTETH UPON THE THRONE, AND TO THE LAMB FOREVER AND EVER" (Revelation v. 13).

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" (Revelation iv.8). And after that they shut up the gates, which when I had seen I wished myself among them.

Now while I was gazing upon all these things, I turned my head to look back, and saw Ignorance come up to the riverside; but he soon got over, and that without half that difficulty which the other two men met with. For it happened that there was then in that place one Vain-hope, a ferryman, that with his boat helped him over; so he, as the other, I saw, did ascend the hill to come up to the gate, only he came alone; neither did any man meet him with the least encouragement. When he was come up to the gate, he looked

4. Greeted.

up to the writing that was above, and then began to knock, supposing that entrance should have been quickly administered to him; but he was asked by the men that looked over the top of the gate, Whence came you? and what would you have? He answered, I have eat and drank in the presence of the King, and he has taught in our streets. Then they asked him for his certificate, that they might go in and show it to the King; so he fumbled in his bosom for one, and found none. Then said they, Have you none? But the man answered never a word. So they told the King, but he would not come down to see him, but commanded the two Shining Ones that conducted Christian and Hopeful to the City, to go out and take Ignorance, and bind him hand and foot, and have him away. Then they took him up, and carried him through the air, to the door that I saw in the side of the hill, and put him in there. Then I saw that there was a way to hell, even from the gates of heaven, as well as from the City of Destruction. So I awoke, and behold it was a dream.

1 6 7 8

JOHN LOCKE

1632-1704

John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690) is "a history-book," according to Laurence Sterne, "of what passes in a man's own mind." Like Montaigne's essays, it aims to explore the human mind in general by closely watching one particular mind. When Locke analyzed his ideas, the ways they were acquired and put together, he found they were clear when they were based on direct experience and adequate when they were clear. Usually, it appeared, problems occurred when basic ideas were blurred or confused or did not refer to anything determinate. Thus a critical analysis of the ideas in an individual mind could lead straight to a rule about adequate ideas in general and the sort of subject where adequate ideas were possible. On the basis of such a limitation, individuals might reach rational agreement with one another and so set up an area of natural law, within which a common rule of understanding was available.

Locke's new "way of ideas" strikes a humble, antidogmatic note, but readers quickly perceived its far-reaching implications. By basing knowledge on the ideas immediately "before the mind," Locke comports with and helps codify the movement of his times away from the authority of traditions of medieval, scholastic philosophy. His approach also alarmed some divines who argued that the foundation of human life—the mysteries of faith—could never be reduced to clear, distinct ideas. Locke indirectly accepts the Christian scriptures in the *Essay* in the midst of his famous critique of "enthusiasm," the belief in private revelation, but his main impulse is to restrain rather than to encourage religious speculations. (His fullest theological work, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*, 1695, argues that scriptural revelation is necessary for right-thinking people but not incompatible with ordinary reasonable beliefs gathered from personal experience and history.) The *Essay* also contains an unsettling discussion of personal identity (in the chapter "Of Identity and Diversity" added to the second edition in 1694). Locke argues that a person's sense of selfhood derives not from the "identity of soul" but rather from "consciousness of present and past actions": I am myself now because I remember my past, not because a unique substance ("me") underlies everything I experience. This account drew critical responses from numerous distinguished thinkers throughout the eighteenth century, notably Bishop Joseph Butler (1692-1752).

Locke spent his life in thought. His background and connections were all with the Puritan movement, but he was disillusioned early with the enthusiastic moods and persecutions to which he found the Puritans prone. Having a small but steady private income, he became a student, chiefly at Oxford, learning enough medicine to act as a physician, holding an occasional appointive office, but never allowing any of these activities to limit his controlling passion: the urge to think. After 1667, he was personal physician and tutor in the household of a violent, crafty politician, the first earl of Shaftesbury (Dryden's "Achitophel"). But Locke himself was always a grave, dispassionate man. On one occasion, Shaftesbury's political enemies at Oxford had Locke watched for several years on end, during which he was not heard to say one word either critical of the government or favorable to it. When times are turbulent, so much discretion is suspicious in itself, and Locke found it convenient to go abroad for several years during the 1680s. He lived quietly in Holland and pursued his thoughts. The Glorious Revolution of 1688—89 and the accession of William III brought him back to England and made possible the publication of the *Essay*, on which he had been working for many years. Its publication foreshadowed the coming age, not only in the positive ideas that the book advanced but in the quiet way it set aside as insoluble a range of problems about absolute authority and absolute assurance that had torn society apart earlier in the seventeenth century.

From An Essay Concerning Human Understanding

From The Epistle to the Reader

Reader,

I here put into thy hands what has been the diversion of some of my idle and heavy hours; if it has the good luck to prove so of any of thine, and thou hast but half so much pleasure in reading as I had in writing it, thou wilt as little think thy money, as I do my pains, ill-bestowed. Mistake not this for a commendation of my work; nor conclude, because I was pleased with the doing of it, that therefore I am fondly taken with it now it is done. He that hawks at larks and sparrows, has no less sport, though a much less considerable quarry, than he that flies at nobler game: and he is little acquainted with the subject of this treatise, the Understanding, who does not know, that as it is the most elevated faculty of the soul, so it is employed with a greater and more constant delight than any of the other. Its searches after truth are a sort of hawking and hunting, wherein the very pursuit makes a great part of the pleasure. Every step the mind takes in its progress towards knowledge makes some discovery, which is not only new, but the best, too, for the time at least.

For the understanding, like the eye, judging of objects only by its own sight, cannot but be pleased with what it discovers, having less regret for what has escaped it, because it is unknown. Thus he who has raised himself above the alms-basket, and, not content to live lazily on scraps of begged opinions, sets his own thoughts on work to find and follow truth, will (whatever he lights on) not miss the hunter's satisfaction; every moment of his pursuit will reward his pains with some delight, and he will have reason to think his time not ill-spent, even when he cannot much boast of any great acquisition.

This, reader, is the entertainment of those who let loose their own thoughts, and follow them in writing; which thou oughtest not to envy them, since they afford thee an opportunity of the like diversion, if thou wilt make use of thy own thoughts in reading. It is to them, if they are thy own, that I refer myself; but if they are taken upon trust from others, it is no great matter what they

are, they not following truth, but some meaner consideration; and it is not worthwhile to be concerned what he says or thinks, who says or thinks only as he is directed by another. If thou judgest for thyself, I know thou wilt judge candidly; and then I shall not be harmed or offended, whatever be thy censure. For, though it be certain that there is nothing in this treatise of the truth whereof I am not fully persuaded, yet I consider myself as liable to mistakes as I can think thee; and know that this book must stand or fall with thee, not by any opinion I have of it, but thy own. If thou findest little in it new or instructive to thee, thou art not to blame me for it. It was not meant for those that had already mastered this subject, and made a thorough acquaintance with their own understandings, but for my own information, and the satisfaction of a few friends, who acknowledged themselves not to have sufficiently considered it. Were it fit to trouble thee with the history of this Essay, I should tell thee, that five or six friends, meeting at my chamber, and discoursing on a subject very remote from this, found themselves quickly at a stand by the difficulties that rose on every side. After we had awhile puzzled ourselves, without coming any nearer a resolution of those doubts which perplexed us, it came into my thoughts, that we took a wrong course; and that, before we set ourselves upon inquiries of that nature, it was necessary to examine our own abilities, and see what objects our understandings were or were not fitted to deal with. This I proposed to the company, who all readily assented; and thereupon it was agreed, that this should be our first inquiry. Some hasty and undigested thoughts, on a subject I had never before considered, which I set down against¹ our next meeting, gave the first entrance into this discourse, which, having been thus begun by chance, was continued by entreaty; written by incoherent parcels; and, after long intervals of neglect, resumed again, as my humor or occasions permitted; and at last, in a retirement, where an attendance on my health gave me leisure, it was brought into that order thou now seest it.

This discontinued way of writing may have occasioned, besides others, two contrary faults; viz., that too little and too much may be said in it. If thou findest anything wanting, I shall be glad that what I have writ gives thee any desire that I should have gone farther: if it seems too much to thee, thou must blame the subject; for when I first put pen to paper, I thought all I should have to say on this matter would have been contained in one sheet of paper; but the farther I went, the larger prospect I had: new discoveries led me still on, and so it grew insensibly to the bulk it now appears in. I will not deny but possibly it might be reduced to a narrower compass than it is; and that some parts of it might be contracted; the way it has been writ in, by catches,² and many long intervals of interruption, being apt to cause some repetitions. But, to confess the truth, I am now too lazy or too busy to make it shorter.

^{4 * 4} I pretend not to publish this Essay for the information of men of large thoughts and quick apprehensions; to such masters of knowledge, I profess myself a scholar, and therefore warn them beforehand not to expect anything here but what, being spun out of my own coarse thoughts, is fitted to men of my own size, to whom, perhaps, it will not be unacceptable that I have taken some pains to make plain and familiar to their thoughts some truths, which established prejudice or the abstractness of the ideas themselves might render difficult. ^{4 4 4}

^{4 4 4} The commonwealth of learning is not at this time without master-

1. Before.

2. Fragments.

builders, whose mighty designs in advancing the sciences will leave lasting monuments to the admiration of posterity: but everyone must not hope to be a Boyle or a Sydenham; and in an age that produces such masters as the great Huygenius, and the incomparable Mr. Newton,³ with some other of that strain, it is ambition enough to be employed as an under-laborer in clearing the ground a little, and removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way to knowledge; which certainly had been very much more advanced in the world, if the endeavors of ingenious and industrious men had not been much cumbered with the learned but frivolous use of uncouth, affected, or unintelligible terms introduced into the sciences, and there made an art of to that degree that philosophy, which is nothing but the true knowledge of things, was thought unfit or incapable to be brought into well-bred company and polite conversation.⁴ Vague and insignificant forms of speech, and abuse of language, have so long passed for mysteries of science; and hard or misapplied words, with little or no meaning, have, by prescription, such a right to be mistaken for deep learning and height of speculation; that it will not be easy to persuade either those who speak or those who hear them, that they are but the covers of ignorance, and hindrance of true knowledge. * * *

The booksellers, preparing for the fourth edition of my Essay, gave me notice of it, that I might, if I had leisure, make any additions or alterations I should think fit. Whereupon I thought it convenient to advertise the reader, that besides several corrections I had made here and there, there was one alteration which it was necessary to mention, because it ran through the whole book, and is of consequence to be rightly understood. What I thereupon said, was this:—

"Clear and distinct ideas" are terms which, though familiar and frequent in men's mouths, I have reason to think everyone who uses does not perfectly understand. And possibly it is but here and there one who gives himself the trouble to consider them so far as to know what he himself or others precisely mean by them. I have therefore, in most places, chose to put "determinate" or "determined,"⁵ instead of "clear" and "distinct," as more likely to direct men's thoughts to my meaning in this matter. By those denominations, I mean some object in the mind, and consequently determined, i.e., such as it is there seen and perceived to be. This, I think, may fitly be called a "determinate" or "determined" idea, when such as it is at any time objectively in the mind, and so determined there, it is annexed, and without variation determined, to a name or articulate sound which is to be steadily the sign of that very same object of the mind, or determinate idea.

To explain this a little more particularly: By "determinate," when applied to a simple idea, I mean that simple appearance which the mind has in its view, or perceives in itself, when that idea is said to be in it. By "determined," when applied to a complex idea, I mean such an one as consists of a determinate number of certain simple or less complex ideas, joined in such a proportion and situation as the mind has before its view, and sees in itself, when that

3. Sir Isaac Newton. Robert Boyle, the great Anglo-Irish chemist and physicist. Thomas Sydenham, a physician and authority on the treatment of fevers. Christiaan Huygens, Dutch mathematician and astronomer.

4. Locke was tutor to Anthony Ashley Cooper, third earl of Shaftesbury, whose philosophical writ-

ings make of genteel social conversation and civilized good humor something like guides to ultimate truth. See Shaftesbury's *Sensus Communis: An Essay on the Freedom of Wit and Humor*, p. 2838.

5. Definite, limited, fixed in value.

idea is present in it, or should be present in it, when a man gives a name to it. I say "should be"; because it is not everyone, nor perhaps anyone, who is so careful of his language as to use no word till he views in his mind the precise determined idea which he resolves to make it the sign of. The want of this is the cause of no small obscurity and confusion in men's thoughts and discourses.

I know there are not words enough in any language to answer all the variety of ideas that enter into men's discourses and reasonings. But this hinders not but that when anyone uses any term, he may have in his mind a determined idea which he makes it the sign of, and to which he should keep it steadily annexed during that present discourse. Where he does not or cannot do this, he in vain pretends to clear or distinct ideas: it is plain his are not so; and therefore there can be expected nothing but obscurity and confusion, where such terms are made use of which have not such a precise determination.

Upon this ground I have thought "determined ideas" a way of speaking less liable to mistake than "clear and distinct"; and where men have got such determined ideas of all that they reason, inquire, or argue about, they will find a great part of their doubts and disputes at an end; the greatest part of the questions and controversies that perplex mankind depending on the doubtful and uncertain use of words, or (which is the same) indetermined ideas, which they are made to stand for. I have made choice of these terms to signify, 1. Some immediate object of the mind, which it perceives and has before it, distinct from the sound it uses as a sign of it. 2. That this idea, thus determined, i.e., which the mind has in itself, and knows and sees there, be determined without any change to that name, and that name determined to that precise idea. If men had such determined ideas in their inquiries and discourses, they would both discern how far their own inquiries and discourses went, and avoid the greatest part of the disputes and wranglings they have with others.

s & s

1690, 1700

SIR ISAAC NEWTON

1642-1727

Isaac Newton was the posthumous son of a Lincolnshire farmer. As a boy, he invented machines; as an undergraduate, he made major discoveries in optics and mathematics; and in 1667—at twenty-five—he was elected a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. Two years later his teacher, Isaac Barrow, resigned the Lucasian Chair of Mathematics in his favor. By then, in secret, Newton had already begun to rethink the universe. His mind worked incessantly, at the highest level of insight, both theoretical and experimental. He designed the first reflecting telescope and explained why the sky looks blue; contemporaneously with Leibniz, he invented calculus; he revolutionized the study of mechanics and physics with three basic laws of motion; and as everyone knows, he discovered the universal law of gravity. Although Newton's *Principia (Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy, 1687)* made possible the

modern understanding of the cosmos, his *Opticks* (1704) had a still greater impact on his contemporaries, not only for its discoveries about light and color but also for its formulation of a proper scientific method.

Newton reported most of his scientific findings in Latin, the language of international scholarship; but when he chose, he could express himself in crisp and vigorous English. His early experiments on light and color were described in a letter to Henry Oldenburg, secretary of the Royal Society, and quickly published in the society's journal. By analyzing the spectrum, Newton had discovered something amazing, the "oddest if not the most considerable detection, which hath hitherto been made in the operations of nature": light is not homogeneous, as everyone thought, but a compound of heterogeneous rays, and white is not the absence of color but a composite of all sorts of colors. Newton assumes that a clear account of his experiments and reasoning will compel assent; when, at the end of his summary, he drops a very heavy word, he clinches the point like a carpenter nailing a box shut. But other scientists resisted the theory. In years to come, Newton would be more wary; eventually he would leave the university to become master of the mint in London and to devote himself to religious studies. Yet all the while his fame would continue to grow. "There could be only one Newton," Napoleon was told a century later: "there was only one world to discover."

**From A Letter of Mr. Isaac Newton, Professor of the
Mathematics in the University of Cambridge, Containing His
New Theory about Light and Colors**

*Sent by the Author to the Publisher from Cambridge, Febr. 6, 1672, in
order to Be Communicated to the Royal Society*

Sir,

To perform my late promise to you, I shall without further ceremony acquaint you that in the beginning of the year 1666 (at which time I applied myself to the grinding of optic glasses of other figures than spherical) I procured me a triangular glass prism to try therewith the celebrated phenomena of colors. And in order thereto having darkened my chamber and made a small hole in my window-shuts to let in a convenient quantity of the sun's light, I placed my prism at his entrance that it might be thereby refracted¹ to the opposite wall. It was at first a very pleasing divertissement to view the vivid and intense colors produced thereby; but after a while, applying myself to consider them more circumspectly, I became surprised to see them in an *oblong* form, which according to the received laws of refraction I expected should have been *circular*.

They were terminated at the sides with straight lines, but at the ends the decay of light was so gradual that it was difficult to determine justly what was their figure; yet they seemed *semicircular*.

Comparing the length of this colored spectrum with its breadth, I found it about five times greater, a disproportion so extravagant that it excited me to a more than ordinary curiosity of examining from whence it might proceed. I could scarce think that the various thickness of the glass or the termination with shadow or darkness could have any influence on light to produce such an effect; yet I thought it not amiss first to examine those circumstances, and

1. I.e., that the light's direction might be diverted from a straight path.

so tried what would happen by transmitting light through parts of the glass of divers thicknesses, or through holes in the window of divers bignesses, or by setting the prism without, so that the light might pass through it and be refracted before it was terminated by the hole. But I found none of those circumstances material. The fashion of the colors was in all these cases the same.

Then I suspected whether by any unevenness in the glass or other contingent irregularity these colors might be thus dilated. And to try this, I took another prism like the former and so placed it that the light, passing through them both, might be refracted contrary ways, and so by the latter returned into that course from which the former had diverted it. For by this means I thought the regular effects of the first prism would be destroyed by the second prism, but the irregular ones more augmented by the multiplicity of refractions. The event was that the light, which by the first prism was diffused into an oblong form, was by the second reduced into an orbicular one with as much regularity as when it did not at all pass through them. So that, whatever was the cause of that length, 'twas not any contingent irregularity.²

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The gradual removal of these suspicions at length led me to the *exferimentum crucis*,³ which was this: I took two boards, and placed one of them close behind the prism at the window, so that the light might pass through a small hole made in it for the purpose and fall on the other board, which I placed at about 12 foot distance, having first made a small hole in it also, for some of that incident⁴ light to pass through. Then I placed another prism behind this second board so that the light, trajected through both the boards, might pass through that also, and be again refracted before it arrived at the wall. This done, I took the first prism in my hand, and turned it to and fro slowly about its axis, so much as to make the several parts of the image, cast on the second board, successively pass through the hole in it, that I might observe to what places on the wall the second prism would refract them. And I saw by the variation of those places that the light, tending to that end of the image towards which the refraction of the first prism was made, did in the second prism suffer a refraction considerably greater than the light tending to the other end. And so the true cause of the length of that image was detected to be no other than that light consists of *rays differently refrangible*, which, without any respect to a difference in their incidence, were, according to their degrees of refrangibility, transmitted towards divers parts of the wall.⁵

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I shall now proceed to acquaint you with another more notable difformity⁶ in its rays, wherein the *origin of colors* is infolded. A naturalist⁷ would scarce expect to see the science of those become mathematical, and yet I dare affirm

2. Newton goes on to describe several experiments and calculations by which he disposed of alternative theories—that rays coming from different parts of the sun caused the diffusion of light into an oblong, or that the rays of light traveled in curved paths after leaving the prism.

3. Crucial experiment (Latin); turning point.

4. From the Latin *incidere*, to fall into or onto. Newton uses it of light striking an obstacle.

5. This insight enables Newton to design a greatly

improved telescope, which uses reflections to correct the distortions caused by the scattering of refracted rays. He adds in passing that his experiments were interrupted for two years by the plague: but at last he returns to some further and even more important characteristics of light. "Refrangible": susceptible to being refracted.

6. Diversity of forms.

7. A student of physics or "natural philosophy."

that there is as much certainty in it as in any other part of optics. For what I shall tell concerning them is not an hypothesis but most rigid consequence, not conjectured by barely inferring 'tis thus because not otherwise or because it satisfied all phenomena (the philosophers' universal topic) but evinced by the mediation of experiments concluding directly and without any suspicion of doubt.

The doctrine you will find comprehended and illustrated in the following propositions.

1. As the rays of light differ in degrees of refrangibility, so they also differ in their disposition to exhibit this or that particular color. Colors are not *qualifications of light*, derived from refractions or reflections of natural bodies (as 'tis generally believed), but *original and connate properties* which in divers rays are divers. Some rays are disposed to exhibit a red color and no other; some a yellow and no other, some a green and no other, and so of the rest. Nor are there only rays proper and particular to the more eminent colors, but even to all their intermediate gradations.

2. To the same degree of refrangibility ever belongs the same color, and to the same color ever belongs the same degree of refrangibility. The least refrangible rays are all disposed to exhibit a red color, and contrarily those rays which are disposed to exhibit a red color are all the least refrangible. So the most refrangible rays are all disposed to exhibit a deep violet color, and contrarily those which are apt to exhibit such a violet color are all the most refrangible. And so to all the intermediate colors in a continued series belong intermediate degrees of refrangibility. And this analogy 'twixt colors and refrangibility is very precise and strict; the rays always either exactly agreeing in both or proportionally disagreeing in both.

3. The species of color and degree of refrangibility proper to any particular sort of rays is not mutable by refraction, nor by reflection from natural bodies, nor by any other cause that I could yet observe. When any one sort of rays hath been well parted from those of other kinds, it hath afterwards obstinately retained its color, notwithstanding my utmost endeavors to change it. I have refracted it with prisms and reflected it with bodies which in daylight were of other colors; I have intercepted it with the colored film of air interceding two compressed plates of glass; transmitted it through colored mediums and through mediums irradiated with other sorts of rays, and diversely terminated it; and yet could never produce any new color out of it. It would by contracting or dilating become more brisk or faint and by the loss of many rays in some cases very obscure and dark; but I could never see it changed *in specie*.⁸

4. Yet seeming transmutations of colors may be made, where there is any mixture of divers sorts of rays. For in such mixtures, the component colors appear not, but by their mutual allaying each other constitute a middling color. And therefore, if by refraction or any other of the aforesaid causes the difform rays latent in such a mixture be separated, there shall emerge colors different from the color of the composition. Which colors are not new generated, but only made apparent by being parted; for if they be again entirely mixed and blended together, they will again compose that color which they did before separation. And for the same reason, transmutations made by the convening of divers colors are not real; for when the difform rays are again severed, they will exhibit the very same colors which they did before they entered the com-

8. In kind.

position—as you see blue and yellow powders when finely mixed appear to the naked eye green, and yet the colors of the component corpuscles are not thereby transmuted, but only blended. For, when viewed with a good microscope, they still appear blue and yellow interspersedly.

5. There are therefore two sorts of colors: the one original and simple, the other compounded of these. The original or primary colors are red, yellow, green, blue, and a violet-purple, together with orange, indigo, and an indefinite variety of intermediate graduations.

6. The same colors *in specie* with these primary ones may be also produced by composition. For a mixture of yellow and blue makes green; of red and yellow makes orange; of orange and yellowish green makes yellow. And in general, if any two colors be mixed which, in the series of those generated by the prism, are not too far distant one from another, they by their mutual alloy compound that color which in the said series appeareth in the mid-way between them. But those which are situated at too great a distance, do not so. Orange and indigo produce not the intermediate green, nor scarlet and green the intermediate yellow.

7. But the most surprising and wonderful composition was that *of whiteness*. There is no one sort of rays which alone can exhibit this. 'Tis ever compounded, and to its composition are requisite all the aforesaid primary colors, mixed in a due proportion. I have often with admiration beheld that all the colors of the prism, being made to converge, and thereby to be again mixed as they were in the light before it was incident upon the prism, reproduced light entirely and perfectly white, and not at all sensibly differing from a direct light of the sun, unless when the glasses I used were not sufficiently clear; for then they would a little incline it to *their* color.

8. Hence therefore it comes to pass that *whiteness* is the usual color of light, for light is a confused aggregate of rays endued with all sorts of colors, as they are promiscuously darted from the various parts of luminous bodies. And of such a confused aggregate, as I said, is generated whiteness, if there be a due proportion of the ingredients; but if any one predominate, the light must incline to that color, as it happens in the blue flame of brimstone, the yellow flame of a candle, and the various colors of the fixed stars.

9. These things considered, the manner how colors are produced by the prism is evident. For of the rays constituting the incident light, since those which differ in color proportionally differ in refrangibility, they by their unequal refractions must be severed and dispersed into an oblong form in an orderly succession from the least refracted scarlet to the most refracted violet. And for the same reason it is that objects, when looked upon through a prism, appear colored. For the difform rays, by their unequal refractions, are made to diverge towards several parts of the retina, and there express the images of things colored, as in the former case they did the sun's image upon a wall. And by this inequality of refractions they become not only colored, but also very confused and indistinct.

10. Why the colors of the rainbow appear in falling drops of rain is also from hence evident. For those drops which refract the rays disposed to appear purple in greatest quantity to the spectator's eye, refract the rays of other sorts so much less as to make them pass beside it;⁹ and such are the drops on the inside of the primary bow and on the outside of the secondary or exterior one.

9. I.e., disappear alongside it.

So those drops which refract in greatest plenty the rays apt to appear red toward the spectator's eye, refract those of other sorts so much more as to make them pass beside it; and such are the drops on the exterior part of the primary and interior part of the secondary bow.

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13. I might add more instances of this nature, but I shall conclude with this general one, that the colors of all natural bodies have no other origin than this, that they are variously qualified to reflect one sort of light in greater plenty than another. And this I have experimented in a dark room by illuminating those bodies with uncompounded light of divers colors. For by that means any body may be made to appear of any color. They have there no appropriate color, but ever appear of the color of the light cast upon them, but yet with this difference, that they are most brisk and vivid in the light of their own daylight color. *Minium* appeareth there of any color indifferently with which 'tis illustrated, but yet most luminous in red, and so *Bise*' appeareth indifferently of any color with which 'tis illustrated, but yet most luminous in blue. And therefore *minium* reflecteth rays of any color, but most copiously those endued with red; and consequently when illustrated with daylight, that is, with all sorts of rays promiscuously blended, those qualified with red shall abound most in the reflected light, and by their prevalence cause it to appear of that color. And for the same reason *bise*, reflecting blue most copiously, shall appear blue by the excess of those rays in its reflected light; and the like of other bodies. And that this is the entire and adequate cause of their colors is manifest, because they have no power to change or alter the colors of any sort of rays incident apart, but put on all colors indifferently with which they are enlightened.

These things being so, it can no longer be disputed whether there be colors in the dark, nor whether they be the qualities of the objects we see, no, nor perhaps whether light be a body. For since colors are the qualities of light, having its rays for their entire and immediate subject,² how can we think those rays qualities also, unless one quality may be the subject of and sustain another—which in effect is to call it substance. We should not know bodies for substances were it not for their sensible qualities, and the principal of those being now found due to something else, we have as good reason to believe that to be a substance also.³

Besides, who ever thought any quality to be a heterogeneous aggregate, such as light is discovered to be? But to determine more absolutely what light is, after what manner refracted, and by what modes or actions it produceth in our minds the phantasms of colors, is not so easy. And I shall not mingle conjectures with certainties.

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1. Azurite blue. "Minium": red lead. "Illustrated": illuminated.

2. That of which a thing consists.

3. I.e., the only way we know bodies are substances is that our senses perceive their qualities.

The chief of these qualities, color, is now known to be a quality of light, not body; our conclusion can perfectly well be that light is a form of substance, as well as body, and that we know it to be so through its quality, color.

SAMUEL BUTLER

1612-1680

Samuel Butler passed his middle years during the fury of the civil wars and under the Commonwealth, sardonically observing the behavior and lovingly memorizing the faults of the Puritan rulers. He despised them and found relief for his feelings by satirizing them, though, naturally enough, he could not publish while they were in power. He served as clerk to several Puritan justices of the peace in the west of England, one of whom, according to tradition, was the original of Sir Hudibras (the *s* is pronounced). *Hudibras*, part 1, was published in 1662 (the edition bears the date 1663) and pleased the triumphant Royalists. King Charles II admired and often quoted the poem and rewarded its author with a gift of £300; it was, after all, a relief to laugh at what he had earlier hated and feared. The first part, attacking Presbyterians and Independents, proved more vigorous and effective than parts 2 and 3, which followed in 1664 and 1678, respectively. After his initial success, Butler was neglected by the people he had pleased. He died in poverty, and not until 1721 was a monument to his memory erected in Westminster Abbey.

Hudibras is a travesty, or burlesque: it takes a serious subject and debases it by using a low style or distorts it by grotesque exaggeration. Butler carried this mode even into his verse, for he reduced the iambic tetrameter line (used subtly and seriously by such seventeenth-century poets as John Donne, John Milton, and Andrew Marvell) to something approaching doggerel, and his boldly comic rhymes add to the effect of broad comedy that he sought to create. Burlesque was a popular form of satire during the seventeenth century, especially after the French poet Paul Scarron published his *Virgile Travesti* (1648), which retells the *Aeneid* in slang. Butler's use of burlesque expresses his contempt for the Puritans and their commonwealth; the history of England from 1642 to 1660 is made to appear mere sound and fury.

Butler took his hero's name from Spenser's *Faerie Queene* 2.2, where Sir Huddibras appears briefly as a rash adventurer and lover. The questing knight of chivalric romance is degraded into the meddling, hypocritical busybody Hudibras, who goes out, like an officer in Cromwell's army, "a-coloneling" against the popular sport of bear baiting. The knight and his squire, Balph, suggest Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, but the temper of Butler's mind is as remote from Cervantes's warm humanity as it is from Spenser's ardent idealism. Butler had no illusions; he was skeptical in philosophy and conservative in politics, distrusting theoretical reasoning and the new science, disdainful of claims of inspiration and illumination, contemptuous of Catholicism and dubious of bishops, Anglican no less than Roman. It is difficult to think of anything that he approved unless it was peace, common sense, and the wisdom that emerges from the experience of humankind through the ages.

From Hudibras

From Part 1, Canto 1

THE ARGUMENT

*Sir Hudibras, his passing worth,
The manner how he sallied forth,
His arms and equipage are shown,
His horse's virtues and his own:
The adventure of the Bear and Fiddle
Is sung, hut breaks off in the middle.*

When civil fury¹ first grew high,
 And men fell out, they knew not why;
 When hard words, jealousies, and fears
 Set folks together by the ears
 5 And made them fight, like mad or drunk,
 For Dame Religion as for punk,^o *prostitute*
 Whose honesty they all durst swear for,
 Though not a man of them knew wherefore;
 When gospel-trumpeter, surrounded
 10 With long-eared rout,² to battle sounded,
 And pulpit, drum ecclesiastic,³
 Was beat with fist instead of a stick;
 Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling,
 And out he rode a-coloneling.⁴
 15 A wightⁿ he was whose very sight would *creature*
 Entitle him Mirror of Knighthood;
 That never bent his stubborn knee
 To anything but chivalry,
 Nor put up blow but that which laid
 20 Right worshipful on shoulder blade;⁵
 Chief of domestic knights and errant,
 Either for chartel or for warrant;
 Great on the bench, great in the saddle,⁶
 That could as well bind o'er as swaddle.⁷
 25 Mighty he was at both of these,
 And styled of war as well as peace.
 (So some rats of amphibious nature
 Are either for the land or water.)
 But here our authors make a doubt
 30 Whether he were more wise or stout.
 Some hold the one and some the other;
 But howsoe'er they make a pother,
 The difference was so small his brain
 Outweighed his rage but half a grain;
 35 Which made some take him for a tool
 That knaves do work with, called a fool,
 And offer to lay wagers that,
 As Montaigne, playing with his cat,
 Complains she thought him but an ass,⁸
 40 Much more she would Sir Hudibras
 (For that's the name our valiant knight

1. The civil wars between Royalists and Parliamentarians (1642-49).

2. A mob of Puritans or Roundheads, so called because they wore their hair short instead of in flowing curls and thus exposed their ears, which to many satirists suggested the long ears of the ass. "Gospel-trumpeter": a Presbyterian minister vehemently preaching rebellion.

3. The Presbyterian clergy were said to have preached the country into the civil wars. Hence, in pounding their pulpits with their fists, they are said to beat their ecclesiastical drums.

4. Here pronounced *co-lo-nel-ing*.

5. When a man is knighted he kneels and is tapped on the shoulder by his overlord's sword.

6. "Chartel": a written challenge to combat, such as a knight-errant sends. But Hudibras, as justice of the peace ("domestic knight"), could also issue a "warrant" (a writ authorizing an arrest, a seizure, or a search). Hence he is satirically called "great on the [justice's] bench" as well as in the saddle. "Errant" was spelled and pronounced *arrant*.

7. Both justice of the peace and soldier, he is equally able to "bind over" a malefactor to be tried at the next sessions or, in his role of colonel, to beat ("swaddle") him.

8. In his "Apology for Raymond Sebond," Michel de Montaigne (1533—1592), French skeptic and essayist, wondered whether he played with his cat or his cat played with him.

To all his challenges did write).
 But they're mistaken very much,
 'Tis plain enough he was no such.
 45 We grant, although he had much wit,
 He was very shy of using it;
 As being loath to wear it out,
 And therefore bore it not about,
 Unless on holidays, or so,
 50 As men their best apparel do.
 Beside, 'tis known he could speak Greek
 As naturally as pigs squeak;
 That Latin was no more difficile
 Than to a blackbird 'tis to whistle.
 55 Being rich in both, he never scanted
 His bounty unto such as wanted,
 But much of either would afford
 To many that had not one word.
 For Hebrew roots, although they're found
 60 To flourish most in barren ground,⁹
 He had such plenty as sufficed
 To make some think him circumcised;
 And truly so perhaps he was,
 'Tis many a pious Christian's case.
 65 He was in logic a great critic,
 Profoundly skilled in analytic.
 He could distinguish and divide
 A hair 'twixt south and southwest side;
 On either which he would dispute,
 70 Confute, change hands, and still confute.
 He'd undertake to prove, by force
 Of argument, a man's no horse;
 He'd prove a buzzard is no fowl,
 And that a lord may be an owl,
 75 A calf an alderman, a goose a justice,
 And rooks committee-men and trustees.¹
 He'd run in debt by disputation,
 And pay with ratiocination.
 All this by syllogism true,
 so In mood and figure,² he would do.
 For rhetoric, he could not ope
 His mouth but out there flew a trope⁰ *figure of speech*
 And when he happened to break off
 In the middle of his speech, or cough,³
 85 He had hard words ready to show why,
 And tell what rules he did it by.
 Else, when with greatest art he spoke,
 You'd think he talked like other folk;

9. Hebrew, the language of Adam, was thought of as the primitive language, the one that people in a state of nature would naturally speak.

1. Committees were set up in the counties by Parliament and given authority to imprison Royalists and to sequester their estates. "Rooks": a kind of

blackbird; here, cheats (slang).

2. The "figure" of a syllogism is "the proper disposition of the middle term with the parts of the question." "Mood": the form of an argument.

3. Some pulpit orators regarded hemming and coughing as ornaments of speech.

For all a rhetorician's rules
 90 Teach nothing but to name his tools.
 His ordinary rate of speech
 In loftiness of sound was rich,
 A Babylonish dialect,⁴
 Which learned pedants much affect.
 95 It was a parti-colored dress
 Of patched and piebald languages;
 'Twas English cut on Greek and Latin,
 Like fustian heretofore on satin.⁵
 It had an odd promiscuous tone,
 100 As if he had talked three parts in one;
 Which made some think, when he did gabble,
 They had heard three laborers of Babel,
 Or Cerberus himself pronounce
 A leash of languages at once.⁶
 105 This he as volubly would vent
 As if his stock would ne'er be spent;
 And truly, to support that charge,
 He had supplies as vast and large.
 For he could coin or counterfeit
 no New words with little or no wit;⁷
 Words so debased and hard no stone
 Was hard enough to touch them on.⁸
 And when with hasty noise he spoke 'em,
 The ignorant for current took 'em;
 115 That had the orator, who once
 Did fill his mouth with pebble-stones
 When he harangued,⁹ but known his phrase,
 He would have used no other ways.
 In mathematics he was greater
 120 Than Tycho Brahe, or Erra Pater:¹
 For he, by geometric scale,
 Could take the size of pots of ale;
 Resolve by sines and tangents straight,
 If bread or butter wanted weight;
 125 And wisely tell what hour o' the day
 The clock does strike, by algebra.
 Beside, he was a shrewd philosopher,
 And had read every text and gloss over;
 Whate'er the crabbed'st author hath,
 BO He understood by implicit faith;
 Whatever skeptic could inquire for,
 For every *why* he had a *wherefore*;

4. Pedants affected the use of foreign words. "Babylonish" alludes to the confusion of languages with which God afflicts the builders of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11.4-9).

5. Clothes made of coarse cloth ("fustian") were slashed to display the richer satin lining. "Fustian" also means pompous, banal speech.

6. The sporting term "leash" denotes a group of three dogs, hawks, deer, etc., hence, three in general. Cerberus was the three-headed dog that guarded the entrance to Hades.

7. The Presbyterians and other sects invented a special religious vocabulary, much ridiculed by Anglicans: *out-goings*, *workings-out*, *gospel-walking-times*, etc.

8. Touchstones were used to test gold and silver for purity.

9. Demosthenes cured a stutter by speaking with pebbles in his mouth.

1. Butlers contemptuous name for the popular astrologer William Lilly (1602-1681). Brahe (1546-1601), a Danish astronomer.

Knew more than forty of them do,
 As far as words and terms could go.
 135 All which he understood by rote
 And, as occasion served, would quote,
 No matter whether right or wrong;
 They might be either said or sung.
 His notions fitted things so well
 140 That which was which he could not tell,
 But oftentimes mistook the one
 For the other, as great clerks² have done.² *scholars*
 He could reduce all things to acts,
 And knew their natures by abstracts;
 145 Where entity and quiddity,
 The ghosts of defunct bodies,³ fly;
 Where truth in person does appear,
 Like words congealed in northern air.⁴
 He knew what's what, and that's as high
 150 As metaphysic wit can fly.
 In school-divinity⁰ as able *scholastic theology*
 As he that hight Irrefragable;
 Profound in all the nominal
 And real ways beyond them all;⁵
 155 And with as delicate a hand
 Could twist as tough a rope of sand;
 And weave fine cobwebs, fit for skull
 That's empty when the moon is full,⁶
 Such as take lodgings in a head
 160 That's to be let unfurnished
 He could raise scruples dark and nice,⁷
 And after solve 'em in a trice;
 As if divinity had caughted
 The itch on purpose to be scratched,
 165 Or, like a mountebank,⁸ did wound
 And stab herself with doubts profound,
 Only to show with how small pain
 The sores of faith are cured again;
 Although by woeful proof we find
 170 They always leave a scar behind.
 He knew the seat of paradise,⁹
 Could tell in what degree it lies;
 And, as he was disposed, could prove it

2. Elsewhere Butler wrote, "Notions are but pictures of things in the imagination of man, and if they agree with their originals in nature, they are true, and if not, false."

3. In the hairsplitting logic of medieval Scholastic philosophy, a distinction was drawn between the "entity," or *being*, and the "quiddity," or *essence*, of bodies. Butler calls entity and quiddity "ghosts" because they were held to be independent realities and so to survive the bodies in which they lodge.

4. The notion, as old as the Greek wit Lucian, that in arctic regions words freeze as they are uttered and become audible only when they thaw.

5. These lines refer to the debate, continuous throughout the Middle Ages, about whether the

objects of our concepts exist in nature or are mere intellectual abstractions. The "nominalists" denied their objective reality, the "realists" affirmed it. Alexander of Hales (d. 1245) was called "Irrefragable," i.e., unanswerable, because his system seemed incontrovertible.

6. The frenzies of the insane were supposed to wax and wane with the moon (hence "lunatic").

7. Obscure ("dark") and subtle ("nice") intellectual perplexities ("scruples").

8. A seller of quack medicines.

9. The problem of the precise location of the Garden of Eden and the similar problems listed in the ensuing dozen lines had all been the subject of controversy among theologians.

Below the moon, or else above it;
 175 What Adam dreamt of when his bride
 Came from her closet in his side;
 Whether the devil tempted her
 By a High Dutch interpreter;
 If either of them had a navel;
 180 Who first made music malleable;¹
 Whether the serpent at the fall
 Had cloven feet or none at all:
 All this without a gloss or comment
 He could unriddle in a moment,
 185 In proper terms, such as men smatter
 When they throw out and miss the matter.
 For his religion, it was fit
 To match his learning and his wit:
 'Twas Presbyterian true blue,²
 190 For he was of that stubborn crew
 Of errant saints³ whom all men grant
 To be the true church militant,
 Such as do build their faith upon
 The holy text of pike and gun;
 195 Decide all controversies by
 Infallible artillery,
 And prove their doctrine orthodox
 By apostolic blows and knocks;
 Call fire, and sword, and desolation
 200 A godly, thorough reformation,
 Which always must be carried on
 And still be doing, never done;
 As if religion were intended
 For nothing else but to be mended.
 205 A sect whose chief devotion lies
 In odd, perverse antipathies;⁴
 In falling out with that or this,
 And finding somewhat still amiss;
 More peevish, cross, and splenetic
 210 Than dog distract or monkey sick;
 That with more care keep holiday
 The wrong, than others the right way;
 Compound for^o sins they are inclined to *excuse*
 By damning those they have no mind to;
 215 Still so perverse and opposite
 As if they worshiped God for spite.
 The selfsame thing they will abhor
 One way and long another for.

1. Capable of being fashioned into form. Pythagoras is said to have organized sounds into the musical scale.

2. Supporters of Scotland's (Presbyterian) National Covenant adopted blue as their color, in contrast to the Royalist red. Blue is the color of constancy; hence, "true blue," staunch, unwavering.

3. A pun: *arrant*, meaning "unmitigated," and

errant, meaning "wandering," were both pronounced *arrant*. The Puritans frequently called themselves "saints."

4. The hostility of the sects to everything Anglican or Roman Catholic laid them open to the charge of opposing innocent practices out of mere perverse antipathy. Some extreme Presbyterians fasted at Christmas, instead of following the old custom of feasting and rejoicing (cf. lines 211—12).

- Free-will they one way disavow,⁵
 20 Another, nothing else allow:
 All piety consists therein
 In them, in other men all sin.
 Rather than fail, they will defy
 That which they love most tenderly;
 25 Quarrel with minced pies and disparage
 Their best and dearest friend, plum-porridge;
 Fat pig and goose itself oppose,
 And blaspheme custard through the nose.⁶

1663

5. By the doctrine of predestination.

6. A reference to the nasal whine of the pious sectarians.

JOHN WILMOT, SECOND EARL OF ROCHESTER 1647-1680

John Wilmot, second earl of Rochester, was the precocious son of one of Charles II's most loyal followers in exile. He won the king's favor at the Restoration and, in 1664, after education at Oxford and on the Continent, took a place at court, at the age of seventeen. There he soon distinguished himself as "the man who has the most wit and the least honor in England." For one escapade, the abduction of Elizabeth Malet, an heiress, he was imprisoned in the Tower of London. But he regained his position by courageous service in the naval war against the Dutch, and in 1667 he married Malet. The rest of his career was no less stormy. His satiric wit, directed not only at ordinary mortals but at Dryden and Charles II himself, embroiled him in constant quarrels and exiles; his practical jokes, his affairs, and his dissipation were legendary. He circulated his works, always intellectually daring and often obscene, to a limited court readership in manuscripts executed by professional scribes—a common way of handling writing deemed too ideologically or morally scandalous for print. An early printed collection of his poems did appear in 1680, though the title page read "Antwerp," probably to hide its London origin. The air of scandal and disguise surrounding his writing only intensified his notoriety as the exemplar of the dissolute, libertine ways of court culture. He told his biographer, Gilbert Burnet, that "for five years together he was continually drunk." Just before his death, however, he was converted to Christian repentance, and for posterity, Rochester became a favorite moral topic: the libertine who had seen the error of his ways.

Wit, in the Restoration, meant not only a clever turn of phrase but mental capacity and intellectual power. Rochester was famous for both kinds of wit. His fierce intelligence, impatient of sham and convention, helped design a way of life based on style, cleverness, and self-interest—a way of life observable in Restoration plays (Dorimant, in Etherege's *The Man of Mode*, strongly resembles Rochester). Stylistically, Rochester infuses forms such as the heroic couplet with a volatility that contrasts with the pointed and balanced manner of its other masters. From the very first line of "A Satire against Reason and Mankind"—"Were I (who to my cost already am)—he plunges the reader into a couplet mode energized by speculation, self-interruption, and enjambment; and he frequently employs extravagant effects (such as the alliterations "love's lesser lightning" and "balmy brinks of bliss" in "The Imperfect Enjoyment") to flaunt his delight in dramatizing situations, sensations, and himself. "The Disabled

Debauchee," composed in "heroic stanzas" like those of Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*, subverts the very notion of heroism by turning conventions upside down. Philosophically, Rochester is daring and destabilizing. In "A Satire," he rejects high-flown, theoretical reason and consigns its "misguided follower" to an abyss of doubt. The poem's speaker himself happily embraces the "right reason" of instinct, celebrating the life of a "natural man." The poem thus accords with Hobbes's doctrine that all laws, even our notions of good and evil, are artificial social checks on natural human desires. Yet it remains unclear, in Rochester's world of intellectual risk and conflict, whether he thinks humanity's paradoxical predicament can ever finally be escaped. Often called a skeptic himself, he seems to hint that the doubt raised by reason's collapse may surge to engulf him too.

The Disabled Debauchee

As some brave admiral, in former war
 Deprived of force, but pressed with courage still,
 Two rival fleets appearing from afar,
 Crawls to the top of an adjacent hill;

5 From whence, with thoughts full of concern, he views
 The wise and daring conduct of the fight,
 And each bold action to his mind renews
 His present glory and his past delight;

10 From his fierce eyes flashes of fire he throws,
 As from black clouds when lightning breaks away;
 Transported, thinks himself amidst his foes,
 And absent, yet enjoys the bloody day;

So, when my days of impotence approach,
 And I'm by pox^o and wine's unlucky chance *syphilis*
 15 Forced from the pleasing billows of debauch
 On the dull shore of lazy temperance,

My pains at least some respite shall afford
 While I behold the battles you maintain
 When fleets of glasses sail about the board,^o *table*
 20 From whose broadsides¹ volleys of wit shall rain.

Nor shall the sight of honorable scars,
 Which my too forward valor did procure,
 Frighten new-listed^o soldiers from the wars: *newly enlisted*
 Past joys have more than paid what I endure.

25 Should any youth (worth being drunk) prove nice,^o *coy, fastidious*
 And from his fair inviter meanly shrink,
 Twill please the ghost of my departed vice
 If, at my counsel, he repent and drink.

1. The sides of the table; artillery on a ship; sheets on which satirical verses were printed.

Or should some cold-complexioned sot forbid,
 30 With his dull morals, our bold night-alarms,
 I'll fire his blood by telling what I did
 When I was strong and able to bear arms.

I'll tell of whores attacked, their lords at home;
 Bawds' quarters beaten up, and fortress won;
 .35 Windows demolished, watches⁰ overcome; *watchmen*
 And handsome ills by my contrivance done.

Nor shall our love-fits, Chloris, be forgot,
 When each the well-looking linkboy² strove t' enjoy,
 And the best kiss was the deciding lot
 40 Whether the boy used you, or I the boy.

With tales like these I will such thoughts inspire
 As to important mischief shall incline:
 I'll make him long some ancient church to fire,
 And fear no lewdness he's called to by wine.

45 Thus, statesmanlike, I'll saucily impose,
 And safe from action, valiantly advise;
 Sheltered in impotence, urge you to blows,
 And being good for nothing else, be wise.

1680

The Imperfect Enjoyment¹

Naked she lay, clasped in my longing arms,
 I filled with love, and she all over charms;
 Both equally inspired with eager fire,
 Melting through kindness, flaming in desire.
 5 With arms, legs, lips close clinging to embrace,
 She clips⁰ me to her breast, and sucks me to her face. *hugs*
 Her nimble tongue, Love's lesser lightning, played
 Within my mouth, and to my thoughts conveyed
 Swift orders that I should prepare to throw
 10 The all-dissolving thunderbolt below.
 My fluttering soul, sprung² with the pointed kiss,
 Hangs hovering o'er her balmy brinks of bliss.
 But whilst her busy hand would guide that part
 Which should convey my soul up to her heart,
 15 In liquid raptures I dissolve all o'er,
 Melt into sperm, and spend at every pore.
 A touch from any part of her had done't:
 Her hand, her foot, her very look's a cunt.

2. Good-looking boy employed to light the way with a link or torch.

1. The genre of poems about the downfall of male "pride"—not only a swelled head but an erection—

derives from Ovid's *Amores* 3.7. For a woman's treatment of this situation, see Aphra Behn's "The Disappointment" (p. 2180).

2. Startled from cover, like a game bird.

Smiling, she chides in a kind murmuring noise,
 20 And from her body wipes the clammy joys,
 When, with a thousand kisses wandering o'er
 My panting bosom, "Is there then no more?"
 She cries. "All this to love and rapture's due;
 Must we not pay a debt to pleasure too?"
 25 But I, the most forlorn, lost man alive,
 To show my wished obedience vainly strive:
 I sigh, alas! and kiss, but cannot swive.⁰ *screw*
 Eager desires confound my first intent,
 Succeeding shame does more success prevent,
 30 And rage at last confirms me impotent.
 Ev'n her fair hand, which might bid heat return
 To frozen age, and make cold hermits burn,
 Applied to my dead cinder, warms no more
 Than fire to ashes could past flames restore.
 35 Trembling, confused, despairing, limber, dry,
 A wishing, weak, unmoving lump I lie.
 This dart of love, whose piercing point, oft tried,
 With virgin blood ten thousand maids have dyed;
 Which nature still directed with such art
 40 That it through every cunt reached every heart—
 Stiffly resolved, 'twould carelessly invade
 Woman or man, nor aught⁰ its fury stayed: 1* *anything*
 Where'er it pierced, a cunt it found or made— J
 Now languid lies in this unhappy hour,
 45 Shrunk up and sapless like a withered flower.
 Thou treacherous, base deserter of my flame,
 False to my passion, fatal to my fame,
 Through what mistaken magic dost thou prove
 So true to lewdness, so untrue to love?
 50 What oyster-cinder-beggar-common whore
 Didst thou e'er fail in all thy life before?
 When vice, disease, and scandal lead the way,
 With what officious haste dost thou obey!
 Like a rude, roaring hector⁰ in the streets *bully*
 55 Who scuffles, cuffs, and justles all he meets,
 But if his King or country claim his aid,
 The rakehell villain shrinks and hides his head;
 Ev'n so thy brutal valor is displayed,
 Breaks every stew,³ does each small whore invade,
 60 But when great Love the onset does command,
 Base recreant to thy prince, thou dar'st not stand.
 Worst part of me, and henceforth hated most,
 Through all the town a common fucking post,
 On whom each whore relieves her tingling cunt
 65 As hogs on gates do rub themselves and grunt,
 Mayst thou to ravenous chancres be a prey,
 Or in consuming weepings waste away;
 May strangury and stone⁴ thy days attend;

3. Breaks into every brothel.

4. "Strangury" and "stone" cause slow and painful

urination. "Chancres" and "weepings" are signs of venereal disease.

May'st thou ne'er piss, who didst refuse to spend
 70 When all my joys did on false thee depend.
 And may ten thousand abler pricks agree
 To do the wronged Corinna right for thee.

1680

Upon Nothing

Nothing, thou elder brother even to shade,
 Thou hadst a being ere the world was made
 And (well fixed) art alone of ending not afraid.

Ere time and place were, time and place were not,
 5 When primitive Nothing Something straight begot,
 Then all proceeded from the great united *What*.

Something, the general attribute of all,
 Severed from thee, its sole original,
 Into thy boundless self must undistinguished fall.

10 Yet Something did thy mighty power command
 And from thy fruitful emptiness's hand
 Snatched men, beasts, birds, fire, water, air, and land.

Matter, the wick'dst offspring of thy race,
 By form assisted, flew from thy embrace,
 15 And rebel light obscured thy reverend dusky face.

With form and matter, time and place did join,
 Body thy foe, with these did leagues combine¹
 To spoil thy peaceful realm and ruin all thy line.

But turncoat time assists the foe in vain
 20 And bribed by thee destroys their short-lived reign
 And to thy hungry womb drives back thy slaves again.

Though mysteries are barred from laic eyes²
 And the divine alone with warrant pries
 Into thy bosom where thy truth in private lies,

25 Yet this of thee the wise may truly say:
 Thou from the virtuous, nothing tak'st away,³
 And to be part of thee, the wicked wisely pray.

Great negative, how vainly would the wise
 Enquire, define, distinguish, teach, devise,
 30 Didst thou not stand to point⁰ their blind philosophies.

expose

1. Form, matter, time, and place combined in leagues against Nothing.

2. I.e., the eyes of the laity, who are uninitiated in

Nothing's mysteries.

3. You, Nothing, do not take anything away from the virtuous.

Is or Is Not, the two great ends of fate,
 And true or false, the subject of debate
 That perfect or destroy the vast designs of state,

When they have racked the politician's breast,
 35 Within thy bosom most securely rest
 And when reduced to thee are least unsafe and best.

But Nothing, why does Something still permit
 That sacred monarchs should at council sit
 With persons highly thought, at best, for nothing fit;

40 Whilst weighty Something modestly abstains
 From princes' coffers⁴ and from statesmen's brains
 And Nothing there like stately Something reigns?

Nothing, who dwellest with fools in grave disguise,
 For whom they reverend shapes and forms devise,
 45 Lawn-sleeves and furs and gowns,⁵ when they like thee look wise;

French truth, Dutch prowess, British policy,
 Hibernian⁰ learning, Scotch civility, *Irish*
 Spaniards' dispatch, Danes' wit⁶ are mainly seen in thee;

The great man's gratitude to his best friend,
 50 Kings' promises, whores' vows, towards thee they bend,
 Flow swiftly into thee and in thee ever end.

1679

A Satire against Reason and Mankind "He had a strange vivacity of thought, and vigor of expression," said Bishop Gilbert Burnet of his friend and contemporary, Rochester: "his wit had a subtlety and sublimity both, that were scarce imitable." Rochester displays these characteristics nowhere more vividly than in his most famous poem, "A Satire against Reason and Mankind." Many of the thoughts in the poem were familiar by Rochester's time. The idea that animals are better equipped to lead successful lives than human beings, for instance, had been a commonplace among moralists for centuries: Michel de Montaigne (1533—1592) makes much of it in his best-known, most comprehensively skeptical essay, "An Apology for Raymond Sebond." Other elements of the skeptical tradition, particularly a comic appreciation of the weakness of reason, receive ample play in the "Satire." The poem in general loosely follows *Satire VIII* by the highly influential French neoclassical poet and critic, Nicolas Boileau (1636—1711). But everywhere Rochester's energetic intellectual distinctiveness bursts through. Perhaps most unnervingly, he both claims to restrict his thinking to immediate, instinctual reason and gestures toward the "limits of the boundless universe" and "mysterious truths, which no man can conceive." Framed as it is by paradoxes and mysteries, his commonsensical instinct has seemed

4. Charles I's coffers were notably empty, and he was forced to declare bankruptcy in 1672.

5. "Furs and gowns" were worn by judges. "Lawn": a fine linen or cotton fabric, worn by bishops.

6. All proverbial deficiencies of the various nationalities mentioned, many of them exposed during the Anglo-Dutch war (1672-74).

less stable to many readers than Rochester himself would have us believe. Still, these and other extravagant conflicts surely suit Rochester's fundamental aim: to throw as dramatic a light as he can on himself and his thinking.

A Satire against Reason and Mankind

Were I (who to my cost already am
 One of those strange prodigious creatures, man)
 A spirit free to choose, for my own share,]
 What case of flesh and blood I pleased to wear, >
 5 I'd be a dog, a monkey, or a bear; J
 Or anything but that vain animal
 Who is so proud of being rational.
 The senses are too gross, and he'll contrive
 A sixth¹ to contradict the other five:
 10 And before certain instinct will prefer
 Reason, which fifty times for one does err.
 Reason, an ignis fatuus² of the mind,
 Which leaving light of nature, sense, behind,
 Pathless and dangerous wandering ways it takes,
 15 Through Error's fenny bogs and thorny brakes:⁰ *thickets*
 Whilst the misguided follower climbs with pain
 Mountains of whimsies heaped in his own brain;
 Stumbling from thought to thought, falls headlong down
 Into doubt's boundless sea, where like⁰ to drown, *likely*
 20 Books bear him up awhile, and make him try
 To swim with bladders³ of philosophy;
 In hopes still to o'ertake th'escaping light, I
 The vapor dances in his dazzled sight, f
 Till spent, it leaves him to eternal night. J
 25 Then old age and experience, hand in hand,
 Lead him to death, and make him understand,
 After a search so painful and so long,
 That all his life he has been in the wrong.
 Huddled in dirt the reasoning engine⁰ lies, *brain*
 30 Who was so proud, so witty and so wise.
 Pride drew him in (as cheats their bubbles⁰ catch) *du-pes*
 And made him venture to be made a wretch.
 His wisdom did his happiness destroy,
 Aiming to know that world he should enjoy;
 35 And wit was his vain frivolous pretence
 Of pleasing others at his own expense:
 For wits are treated just like common whores,
 First they're enjoyed and then kicked out of doors.
 The pleasure past, a threatening doubt remains,
 40 That frights th'enjoyer with succeeding pains:⁴
 Women and men of wit are dangerous tools,

1. Here, reason.

2. Foolish fire (Latin). Sometimes called the will-o'-the-wisp, a light appearing in marshy lands that proverbially misleads travelers.

3. Inflated animal bladders used for buoyancy in the water.

4. The doubt that wits leave behind resembles venereal disease left by "common whores."

And ever fatal to admiring fools.
 Pleasure allures, and when the fops escape,
 'Tis not that they're beloved, but fortunate; f
 45 And therefore what they fear, at heart they hate.⁵ J
 But now methinks some formal band and beard⁶
 Takes me to task. Come on, Sir, I'm prepared:
 "Then by your favor any thing that's writ
 Against this gibing,⁰ jingling knack called wit, *jeering*
 50 Likes⁰ me abundantly, but you take care *pleases*
 Upon this point not to be too severe.
 Perhaps my Muse were fitter for this part, "I
 For I profess I can be very smart f-
 On wit, which I abhor with all my heart. J
 55 I long to lash it in some sharp essay,
 But your grand indiscretion bids me stay, f
 And turns my tide of ink another way. J
 What rage ferments in your degenerate mind,
 To make you rail at reason and mankind?
 60 Blest glorious man! to whom alone kind heaven
 An everlasting soul has freely given;
 Whom his creator took such care to make,
 That from himself he did the image take,
 And this fair frame⁰ in shining reason dressed, *physical body*
 65 To dignify his nature above beast.
 Reason, by whose aspiring influence
 We take a flight beyond material sense;
 Dive into mysteries, then soaring pierce
 The flaming limits of the universe;
 70 Search heaven and hell, find out what's acted there,
 And give the world true grounds of hope and fear."⁷
 Hold, mighty man, I cry, all this we know,
 From the pathetic pen of Ingelo,
 From Patrick's *Pilgrim*, Sibbs'⁸ soliloquies;
 75 And 'tis this very reason I despise.
 This supernatural gift, that makes a mite
 Think he's the image of the infinite,
 Comparing his short life, void of all rest,
 To the eternal and the ever blest;
 80 This busy puzzling stirrer-up of doubt,
 That frames deep mysteries, then finds them out;
 Filling with frantic crowds of thinking fools
 Those reverend Bedlams,⁰ colleges and schools; *madhouses*
 85 The limits of the boundless universe;
 So charming ointments make an old witch fly,
 And bear a crippled carcass through the sky.
 'Tis this exalted power whose business lies

5. Though allured by *Hits*, fops also fear and hate them.

6. Clergyman, wearing a clerical collar.

7. Teach the world about salvation and damnation.

8. Richard Sibbes, Puritan preacher who pub-

lished volumes of sermons, though none called "soliloquies." Nathaniel Ingelo (d. 1683), author of the long religious allegory *Bentivolio and Urania* (1660). Simon Patrick (1626-1707), author of the devotional work *The Parable of the Pilgrim* (1665).

In nonsense and impossibilities.
 90 This made a whimsical philosopher
 Before the spacious world his tub prefer.⁹
 And we have modern cloistered coxcombs, who
 Retire to think, 'cause they have naught to do:
 But thoughts are given for action's government,
 95 Where action ceases, thought's impertinent.
 Our sphere of action is life's happiness,
 And he who thinks beyond, thinks like an ass.
 Thus, whilst against false reasoning I inveigh,
 I own" right reason, which I would obey: *avow*

100 That reason which distinguishes by sense,
 And gives us rules of good and ill from thence;
 That bounds desires with a reforming will,
 To keep them more in vigor, not to kill.
 Your reason hinders, mine helps to enjoy,
 105 Renewing appetites yours would destroy.
 My reason is my friend, yours is a cheat,
 Hunger calls out, my reason bids me eat;
 Perversely, yours your appetites does mock:
 They ask for food, that answers, "what's a clock?"

no This plain distinction, Sir, your doubt secures,⁰ *resolves*
 'Tis not true reason I despise, but yours.
 Thus I think reason righted, but for man,
 I'll ne'er recant, defend him if you can.
 For all his pride and his philosophy,
 115 'Tis evident beasts are, in their degree, f
 As wise at least, and better far than he. J
 Those creatures are the wisest who attain
 By surest means, the ends at which they aim.
 If therefore Jowler' finds and kills his hares
 120 Better than Meres² supplies committee chairs,
 Though one's a statesman, th'other but a hound,
 Jowler in justice would be wiser found.
 You see how far man's wisdom here extends;
 Look next if human nature makes amends;
 125 Whose principles most generous are and just,
 And to whose morals you would sooner trust.
 Be judge yourself, I'll bring it to the test,
 Which is the basest creature, man or beast.
 Birds feed on birds, beasts on each other prey,
 130 But savage man alone does man betray;
 Pressed by necessity they kill for food,
 Man undoes man to do himself no good.
 With teeth and claws by nature armed, they hunt
 Nature's allowance to supply their want.
 135 But man with smiles, embraces, friendship, praise,
 Inhumanly his fellow's life betrays;
 With voluntary⁰ pains works his distress, *deliberate*

9. Diogenes the Cynic (5th century B.C.E.), who lived in a tub to exemplify the virtues of asceticism.

1. A common name for hunting dogs.

2. Sir Thomas Meres (1635—1715), a busy parliamentarian of the day.

Not through necessity, but wantonness.
 For hunger or for love they fight and tear,
 Whilst wretched man is still⁰ in arms for fear; *always*
 For fear he arms, and is of arms afraid,
 By fear to fear successively betrayed.
 Base fear! The source whence his best passion came,
 His boasted honor, and his dear bought fame;
 That lust of power to which he's such a slave,
 And for the which alone he dares be brave,
 To which his various projects are designed,
 Which makes him generous, affable, and kind;
 For which he takes such pains to be thought wise
 And screws his actions in a forced disguise;
 Leading a tedious life in misery
 Under laborious mean hypocrisy.
 Look to the bottom of his vast design,
 Wherein man's wisdom, power, and glory join;
 The good he acts, the ill he does endure,
 'Tis all from fear to make himself secure.
 Merely for safety after fame we thirst,
 For all men would be cowards if they durst.
 And honesty's against all common sense;
 Men must be knaves, 'tis in their own defense.
 Mankind's dishonest, if you think it fair
 Amongst known cheats to play upon the square,⁰ *honestly*
 You'll be undone—
 Nor can weak truth your reputation save;
 The knaves will all agree to call you knave.
 Wronged shall he live, insulted o'er, oppressed,
 Who dares be less a villain than the rest.
 Thus Sir, you see what human nature craves:
 Most men are cowards, all men should be knaves.
 The difference lies, as far as I can see,
 Not in the thing itself, but the degree,
 And all the subject matter of debate
 Is only who's a knave of the first rate.

Addition³

All this with indignation have I hurled
 At the pretending⁰ part of the proud world, *affected*
 Who swollen with selfish vanity, devise
 False freedoms, holy cheats, and formal lies, >
 Over their fellow slaves to tyrannize. J
 But if in court so just a man there be
 180 (In court a just man yet unknown to me),
 Who does his needful flattery direct,
 Not to oppress and ruin, but protect
 (Since flattery, which way so ever laid,
 Is still a tax on that unhappy trade);⁴

3. The second part was also circulated as a separate poem.

4. Even good men must pay the tax of flattery if they "trade" at the royal court at Whitehall.

If so upright a statesman you can find,
 Whose passions bend to his unbiased mind;
 Who does his arts and policies apply
 To raise his country, not his family,
 Nor while his pride owned avarice withstands,
 Receives close bribes from friends' corrupted hands⁵—

Is there a churchman who on God relies,
 Whose life his faith and doctrine justifies?
 Not one blown up with vain prelati⁶ pride,
 Who for reproof of sins does man deride;
 Whose envious heart makes preaching a pretense, 1
 With his obstreperous saucy eloquence, >
 To chide at kings, and rail at men of sense; J
 Who from his pulpit vents more peevish lies,
 More bitter railings, scandals, calumnies,
 Than at a gossiping are thrown about
 When the good wives get drunk and then fall out;
 None of that sensual tribe, whose talents lie
 In avarice, pride, sloth and gluttony,
 Who hunt good livings,⁷ but abhor good lives,
 Whose lust exalted to that height arrives,
 They act adultery with their own wives;⁸
 And ere a score of years completed be, 1
 Can from the lofty pulpit proudly see f
 Half a large parish their own progeny. J
 Nor doating⁹ bishop who would be adored
 For domineering at the council board,⁹
 A greater fop in business at fourscore,
 Fonder of serious toys," affected more
 Than the gay glittering fool at twenty proves,
 With all his noise, his tawdry clothes and loves;

*senile**trifles*

But a meek humble man of honest sense,
 Who, preaching peace, does practice continence;
 Whose pious life's a proof he does believe
 Mysterious truths, which no man can conceive;
 If upon earth there dwell such God-like men,
 I'll here recant my paradox¹ to them;
 Adore those shrines of virtue, homage pay,
 And with the rabble world, their laws obey.

If such there be, yet grant me this at least,
 Man differs more from man, than man from beast.

1679

5. Nor while he proudly rejects open greed, still arranges that his friends collect secret bribes for him.

6. Of prelates, high church officials.

7. Ecclesiastical appointments.

8. Married women of their parishes. Rochester

also suggests that these clergymen act out their adulterous lusts with their own spouses.

9. In the Privy Council, a meeting of advisers to the monarch.

1. That beasts are superior to humans.

APHRA BEHN

1640?—1689

"A woman wit has often graced the stage," Dryden wrote in 1681. Soon after actresses first appeared in English public theaters, there was an even more striking debut by a woman writer who boldly signed her plays and talked back to her critics. In a dozen years, Aphra Behn turned out at least that many plays, discovering fresh dramatic possibilities in casts that included women with warm bodies and clever heads. She also drew attention as a warm and witty poet of love. When writing for the stage became less profitable, she turned to the emerging field of prose fiction, composing a pioneering epistolary novel, *Love Letters between a Nobleman and His Sister*, and diverse short tales—not to mention a raft of translations from the French, pindarics to her beloved Stuart rulers, compilations, prologues, complimentary verses, all the piecework and puffery that were the stock in trade of the Restoration town wit. She worked in haste and with flair for nearly two decades and more than held her own as a professional writer. In the end, no author of her time—except Dryden himself—proved more versatile, more alive to new currents of thought, or more inventive in recasting fashionable forms.

Much of Behn's life remains a mystery. Although her books have been accompanied—and often all but buried—by volumes of rumor, hard facts are elusive. She was almost certainly from East Kent; she may well have been named Johnson. But she herself seems to have left no record of her date and place of birth, her family name and upbringing, or the identity of the shadowy Mr. Behn whom she reportedly married. Her many references to nuns and convents, as well as praise for prominent Catholic lords (*Oroonoko* is dedicated to one), have prompted speculation that she may have been raised as a Catholic and educated in a convent abroad. Without doubt, she drew on a range of worldly experience that would be closed to women in the more genteel ages to come. The circumstantial detail of *Oroonoko* supports her claim that she was in the new sugar colony of Surinam early in 1664. Perhaps she exaggerated her social position to enhance her tale, but many particulars—from dialect words and the location of plantations to methods of selling and torturing slaves—can be authenticated. During the trade war that broke out in 1665—which left her "vast and charming world" a Dutch prize—Behn traveled to the Low Countries on a spying mission for King Charles II. The king could be lax about payment, however, and Behn had to petition desperately to escape debtor's prison. In 1670 she brought out her first plays, "forced to write for bread," she confessed, "and not ashamed to own it."

In London, Behn flourished in the cosmopolitan world of the playhouse and the court. Dryden and other wits encouraged her; she mixed with actresses and managers and playwrights and exchanged verses with a lively literary set that she called her "cabal." Surviving letters record a passionate, troubled attachment to a lawyer named John Hoyle, a bisexual with libertine views. She kept up with the most advanced thinking and joined public debates with pointed satire against the Whigs. But the festivity of the Restoration world was fading out in bitter party acrimony. In 1682 Behn was placed under arrest for "abusive reflections" on the king's illegitimate son, the Whig duke of Monmouth (Dryden's Absalom). Her Boyalist opinions and the immodesty of her public role made her a target; gleeful lampoons declared that she was aging and ill and once again poor. She responded by bringing out her works at a still faster rate, composing *Oroonoko*, her dedication claims, "in a few hours . . . for I never rested my pen a moment for thought." In some last works she recorded her hope that her writings would live: "I value fame as much as if I had been born a hero." When she died she was buried in Westminster Abbey.

"All women together ought to let flowers fall upon the grave of Aphra Behn," Virginia Woolf wrote, "for it was she who earned them the right to speak their minds." Behn herself spoke her mind. She scorned hypocrisy and calculation in her society

and commented freely on religion, science, and philosophy. Moreover, she spoke as a woman. Denied the classical education of most male authors, she dismissed "musty rules" and lessons and relished the immediate human appeal of popular forms. Her first play, *The Forced Marriage*, exposes the bondage of matches arranged for money and status, and many later works invoke the powerful natural force of love, whose energy breaks through conventions. In a range of genres, from simple pastoral songs to complex plots of intrigue, she candidly explores the sexual feelings of women, their schooling in disguise, their need to "love upon the honest square" (for this her work was later denounced as coarse and impure). *Oroonoko* represents another departure for Behn and prose fiction. It achieves something new both in its narrative form and in extending some of her favorite themes to an original subject: the destiny of a black male hero on a world historical stage.

Oroonoko cannot be classified as fact or fiction, realism or romance. In the still unshaped field of prose narrative—where a "history" could mean any story, true or false—Behn combined the attractions of three older forms. First, she presents the work as a memoir, a personal account of what she has heard and seen. According to a friend, Behn had told this tale over and over; perhaps that explains the conversational ease with which she turns back and forth, interpreting faraway scenes for her readers at home. Second, *Oroonoko* is a travel narrative in three parts. It turns west to a new world often extolled as a paradise, then east to Africa and the amorous intrigues of a corrupt old-world court (popular reading fare), then finally west again with its hero across the infamous "Middle Passage"—over which millions of slaves would be transported during the next century—to the conflicts of a raw colonial world. Exotic scenes fascinate Behn, but she wants even more to talk to people and learn about their ways of life. As in imaginary voyages, from Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* to *Gulliver's Travels* and *Rasselas*, encounters with foreign cultures sharply challenge Europeans to reexamine themselves. Behn's primitive Indians and noble Africans live by a code of virtue, by principles of fidelity and honor, that "civilized" Christians often ignore or betray. Oroonoko embodies this code. Above all, the book is his biography. Courageous, high-minded, and great hearted, he rivals the heroes of classical epics and Plutarch's *Lives* and is equally worthy of fame. Nor does he lack gentler virtues. Like the heroes of seventeenth-century heroic dramas and romances, he shines in the company of women and proves his nobility by his passionate and constant love for Imoinda, his ideal counterpart. Yet finally a contradiction dooms Oroonoko: he is at once prince and chattel, a "royal slave."

Behn handles her forms dynamically, drawing out their inner discords and tensions. In the biography, Oroonoko's deepest values are turned against him. His trust in friendship and scrupulous truth to his word expose him to the treachery of Europeans who calculate human worth on a yardstick of profit. A hero cannot survive in such a world. His self-respect demands action, even when he can find no clear path through the tangle of assurances and lies. Moreover, the colony too seems tangled in contradictions. Behn's travel narrative reveals a broken paradise where, in the absence of secure authority, the settlers descend into a series of unstable alliances, improvised power relations, and escalating suspicions. Here every term—friend and foe, tenderness and brutality, savagery and civilization—can suddenly turn into its opposite. And the author also seems caught between worlds. The cultivated Englishwoman who narrates and acts in this memoir thinks highly of her hero's code of honor and shares his contempt for the riffraff who plague him. Yet her own role is ambiguous: she lacks the power to save Oroonoko and might even be viewed as implicated in his downfall. Only as a writer can she take control, preserving the hero in her work.

The story of Oroonoko did not end with Behn. Compassion for the royal slave and outrage at his fate were enlisted in the long battle against the slave trade. Beprinted, translated, serialized, dramatized, and much imitated, *Oroonoko* helped teach a mass audience to feel for all victims of the brutal commerce in human beings. A hundred years later, the popular writer Hannah More testified to the widening influence of

the story: "No individual griefs my bosom melt, / For millions feel what Oroonoko felt." Women especially identified with the experience of personal injustice and everyday indignity—the pain of being treated as something less than fully human. Perhaps it is appropriate that the writer who made the suffering of the royal slave famous had known the pride and lowliness of being "a female pen."

The Disappointment¹

One day the amorous Lysander,
 By an impatient passion swayed,
 Surprised fair Cloris, that loved maid,
 Who could defend herself no longer.
 5 All things did with his love conspire;
 The gilded planet of the day,^o *the sun*
 In his gay chariot drawn by fire,
 Was now descending to the sea,
 And left no light to guide the world
 10 But what from Cloris' brighter eyes was hurled.

In a lone thicket made for love,
 Silent as yielding maid's consent,
 She with a charming languishment,
 Permits his force, yet gently strove;
 15 Her hands his bosom softly meet,
 But not to put him back designed,
 Rather to draw 'em on inclined:
 Whilst he lay trembling at her feet,
 Resistance 'tis in vain to show:
 20 She wants^o the power to say—*Ah! what d'ye do?* *lack*

Her bright eyes sweet and yet severe,
 Where love and shame confusedly strive,
 Fresh vigor to Lysander give;
 And breathing faintly in his ear,
 25 She cried—*Cease, cease—your vain desire,*
Or I'll call out—what would you do?
My dearer honor even to you
I cannot, must not give—Retire,
Or take this life, whose chiefest part
 30 *I gave you with the conquest of my heart.*

But he as much unused to fear,
 As he was capable of love,
 The blessed minutes to improve
 Kisses her mouth, her neck, her hair;
 35 Each touch her new desire alarms;
 His burning, trembling hand he pressed

1. This variation on the "imperfect enjoyment" genre compares with Rochester's (p. 2169); it first appeared in a collection of his poems. But Behn gives the theme of impotence her own twist. Freely translating a French poem, Cantezac's "The Lost

Chance Recovered," she cuts the conclusion, in which the French lover regained his potency, and she highlights the woman's feelings as well as the man's.

Upon her swelling snowy breast,
 While she lay panting in his arms.
 All her unguarded beauties lie
 40 The spoils and trophies of the enemy.

And now without respect or fear
 He seeks the object of his vows
 (His love no modesty allows)
 By swift degrees advancing—where
 45 His daring hand that altar seized,
 Where gods of love do sacrifice:
 That awful throne, that paradise
 Where rage is calmed, and anger pleased;
 That fountain where delight still flows,
 50 And gives the universal world repose.

Her balmy lips encountering his,
 Their bodies, as their souls, are joined;
 Where both in transports unconfined
 Extend themselves upon the moss.
 55 Cloris half dead and breathless lay;
 Her soft eyes cast a humid light
 Such as divides the day and night;
 Or falling stars, whose fires decay:
 And now no signs of life she shows,
 60 But what in short-breathed sighs returns and goes.

He saw how at her length she lay;
 He saw her rising bosom bare;
 Her loose thin robes, through which appear
 A shape designed for love and play;
 65 Abandoned by her pride and shame
 She does her softest joys dispense,
 Offering her virgin innocence
 A victim to love's sacred flame;
 While the o'er-ravished shepherd lies
 70 Unable to perform the sacrifice.

Ready to taste a thousand joys,
 The too transported hapless swain
 Found the vast pleasure turned to pain;
 Pleasure which too much love destroys:
 75 The willing garments by he laid,²
 And heaven all opened to his view.
 Mad to possess, himself he threw
 On the defenseless lovely maid.
 But oh what envying god conspires
 so To snatch his power, yet leave him the desire!

Nature's support (without whose aid
 She can no human being give)
 Itself now wants the art³ to live;

2. He took off her compliant clothes.

3. Lacks the capacity.

Faintness its slackened nerves invade:
 85 In vain th' enraged youth essayed
 To call its fleeting vigor back;
 No motion 'twill from motion take;
 Excess of love his love betrayed:
 In vain he toils, in vain commands:
 90 The insensible⁴ fell weeping in his hand.

In this so amorous cruel strife,
 Where love and fate were too severe,
 The poor Lysander in despair
 Renounced his reason with his life:
 95 Now all the brisk and active fire
 That should the nobler part inflame
 Served to increase his rage and shame,
 And left no spark for new desire:
 Not all her naked charms could move
 100 Or calm that rage that had debauched his love.

Cloris returning from the trance
 Which love and soft desire had bred,
 Her timorous hand she gently laid
 (Or guided by design or chance)
 105 Upon that fabulous Priapus,⁵
 That potent god, as poets feign:
 But never did young shepherdess,
 Gathering the fern upon the plain,
 More nimbly draw her fingers back,
 no Finding beneath the verdant leaves a snake,

Than Cloris her fair hand withdrew,
 Finding that god of her desires
 Disarmed of all his awful fires,
 And cold as flowers bathed in the morning dew.
 115 Who can the nymph's confusion guess?
 The blood forsook the hinder place,
 And strewed with blushes all her face,
 Which both disdain and shame expressed:
 And from Lysander's arms she fled,
 120 Leaving him fainting on the gloomy bed.

Like lightning through the grove she hies,
 Or Daphne from the Delphic god;⁶
 No print upon the grassy road
 She leaves, to instruct pursuing eyes.
 125 The wind that wantoned in her hair
 And with her ruffled garments played,
 Discovered in the flying maid
 All that the gods e'er made, if fair.

4. Devoid of feeling and too small to be noticed.

5. Phallus. The ancient god Priapus is always pictured with an outstanding erection.

6. Apollo, from whom the Greek nymph Daphne fled until she turned into a laurel tree,

So Venus, when her love⁷ was slain,
 130 With fear and haste flew o'er the fatal plain.

The nymph's resentments none but I
 Can well imagine or condole:
 But none can guess Lysander's soul,
 But those who swayed his destiny.
 135 His silent griefs swell up to storms,
 And not one god his fury spares;
 He cursed his birth, his fate, his stars;
 But more the shepherdess's charms,
 Whose soft bewitching influence
 140 Had damned him to the hell of impotence.⁸

1680

Oroonoko, or The Royal Slave¹

I do not pretend, in giving you the history of this royal slave, to entertain my reader with the adventures of a feigned hero, whose life and fortunes fancy may manage at the poet's pleasure; nor in relating the truth, design to adorn it with any accidents but such as arrived in earnest to him. And it shall come simply into the world, recommended by its own proper merits and natural intrigues, there being enough of reality to support it, and to render it diverting, without the addition of invention.

I was myself an eyewitness to a great part of what you will find here set down, and what I could not be witness of, I received from the mouth of the chief actor in this history, the hero himself, who gave us the whole transactions of his youth; and though I shall omit for brevity's sake a thousand little accidents of his life, which, however pleasant to us, where history was scarce and adventures very rare, yet might prove tedious and heavy to my reader, in a world where he finds diversions for every minute, new and strange. But we who were perfectly charmed with the character of this great man were curious to gather every circumstance of his life.

The scene of the last part of his adventures lies in a colony in America called Surinam,² in the West Indies.

But before I give you the story of this gallant slave, 'tis fit I tell you the manner of bringing them to these new colonies, for those they make use of there are not natives of the place; for those we live with in perfect amity, without daring to command 'em, but on the contrary caress 'em with all the brotherly and friendly affection in the world, trading with 'em for their fish, venison, buffaloes, skins, and little rarities; as marmosets, a sort of monkey as big as a rat or weasel but of a marvelous and delicate shape, and has face and hands like a human creature, and *consheries*,³ a little beast in the form and

7. Adonis, who was killed by a boar.

8. Blaming the woman for an imperfect enjoyment is typical of the genre.

1. The text, prepared by Joanna Lipking, is based on the 1688 edition, the sole edition published during Behn's lifetime. The critical edition of G. C. Duchovny (diss., Indiana, 1971), which collates

the four 17th-century editions, has been consulted.

2. A British sugar colony on the South American coast east of Venezuela; later Dutch Guiana, now the Republic of Suriname.

3. A name appearing in local descriptions, but the animal is not clearly identified; probably the lion-

fashion of a lion, as big as a kitten, but so exactly made in all parts like that noble beast, that it is it in miniature. Then for little parakeetoes, great parrots, macaws, and a thousand other birds and beasts of wonderful and surprising forms, shapes, and colors. For skins of prodigious snakes, of which there are some threescore yards in length, as is the skin of one that may be seen at his Majesty's antiquaries'; where are also some rare flies⁴ of amazing forms and colors, presented to 'em by myself, some as big as my fist, some less, and all of various excellencies, such as art cannot imitate. Then we trade for feathers, which they order into all shapes, make themselves little short habits of 'em, and glorious wreaths for their heads, necks, arms and legs, whose tinctures are unconceivable. I had a set of these presented to me, and I gave 'em to the King's theater, and it was the dress of the Indian Queen,⁵ infinitely admired by persons of quality, and were unimitable. Besides these, a thousand little knacks and rarities in nature, and some of art, as their baskets, weapons, aprons, et cetera. We dealt with 'em with beads of all colors, knives, axes, pins and needles, which they used only as tools to drill holes with in their ears, noses, and lips, where they hang a great many little things, as long beads, bits of tin, brass, or silver beat thin, and any shining trinket. The beads they weave into aprons about a quarter of an ell long, and of the same breadth,⁶ working them very prettily in flowers of several colors of beads; which apron they wear just before 'em, as Adam and Eve did the fig leaves, the men wearing a long stripe of linen which they deal with us for. They thread these beads also on long cotton threads and make girdles to tie their aprons to, which come twenty times or more about the waist, and then cross, like a shoulder belt, both ways, and round their necks, arms, and legs. This adornment, with their long black hair, and the face painted in little specks or flowers here and there, makes 'em a wonderful figure to behold.

Some of the beauties which indeed are finely shaped, as almost all are, and who have pretty features, are very charming and novel; for they have all that is called beauty, except the color, which is a reddish yellow; or after a new oiling, which they often use to themselves, they are of the color of a new brick, but smooth, soft, and sleek. They are extreme⁷ modest and bashful, very shy and nice of being touched. And though they are all thus naked, if one lives forever among 'em there is not to be seen an indecent action or glance; and being continually used to see one another so unadorned, so like our first parents before the Fall, it seems as if they had no wishes; there being nothing to heighten curiosity, but all you can see you see at once, and every moment see, and where there is no novelty there can be no curiosity. Not but I have seen a handsome young Indian dying for love of a very beautiful young Indian maid; but all his courtship was to fold his arms, pursue her with his eyes, and sighs were all his language; while she, as if no such lover were present, or rather, as if she desired none such, carefully guarded her eyes from beholding him, and never approached him but she looked down with all the blushing modesty I have seen in the most severe and cautious of our world. And these people represented to me an absolute idea of the first state of innocence, before man knew how to sin. And 'tis most evident and plain that simple Nature is the

headed marmoset or perhaps the *cujara* (Portuguese), a rodent known as the rice rat. "Buffaloes": wild oxen of various species.

4. Butterflies. "Antiquaries": probably the natural history museum of the Royal Society.

5. The title character in the 1664 heroic play by

Sir Robert Howard and John Dryden, which was noted for its lavish production. There are contemporary records of "speckled plumes" and feather headdresses.

6. About a foot square.

7. Extremely.

most harmless, inoffensive, and virtuous mistress. 'Tis she alone, if she were permitted, that better instructs the world than all the inventions of man. Religion would here but destroy that tranquillity they possess by ignorance, and laws would but teach 'em to know offense, of which now they have no notion. They once made mourning and fasting for the death of the English governor, who had given his hand to come on such a day to 'em and neither came nor sent, believing when once a man's word was passed, nothing but death could or should prevent his keeping it. And when they saw he was not dead, they asked him what name they had for a man who promised a thing he did not do. The governor told them, such a man was a liar, which was a word of infamy to a gentleman. Then one of 'em replied, "Governor, you are a liar, and guilty of that infamy." They have a native justice which knows no fraud, and they understand no vice or cunning, but when they are taught by the white men. They have plurality of wives, which, when they grow old, they serve those that succeed 'em, who are young, but with a servitude easy and respected; and unless they take slaves in war, they have no other attendants.

Those on that continent where I was had no king, but the oldest war captain was obeyed with great resignation. A war captain is a man who has led them on to battle with conduct⁸ and success, of whom I shall have occasion to speak more hereafter, and of some other of their customs and manners, as they fall in my way.

With these people, as I said, we live in perfect tranquillity and good understanding, as it behoves us to do, they knowing all the places where to seek the best food of the country and the means of getting it, and for very small and unvaluable trifles, supply us with what 'tis impossible for us to get; for they do not only in the wood and over the savannas, in hunting, supply the parts of hounds, by swiftly scouring through those almost impassable places, and by the mere activity of their feet run down the nimblest deer and other eatable beasts; but in the water one would think they were gods of the rivers, or fellow citizens of the deep, so rare an art they have in swimming, diving, and almost living in water, by which they command the less swift inhabitants of the floods. And then for shooting, what they cannot take, or reach with their hands, they do with arrows, and have so admirable an aim that they will split almost a hair; and at any distance that an arrow can reach, they will shoot down oranges and other fruit, and only touch the stalk with the dart's point, that they may not hurt the fruit. So that they being, on all occasions, very useful to us, we find it absolutely necessary to caress 'em as friends, and not to treat 'em as slaves; nor dare we do other, their numbers so far surpassing ours in that continent.

Those then whom we make use of to work in our plantations of sugar are Negroes, black slaves altogether, which are transported thither in this manner. Those who want slaves make a bargain with a master or captain of a ship and contract to pay him so much apiece, a matter of twenty pound a head for as many as he agrees for, and to pay for 'em when they shall be delivered on such a plantation. So that when there arrives a ship laden with slaves, they who have so contracted go aboard and receive their number by lot; and perhaps in one lot that may be for ten, there may happen to be three or four men, the rest women and children. Or be there more or less of either sex, you are obliged to be contented with your lot.

Coramantien,⁹ a country of blacks so called, was one of those places in

8. Capacity to lead.

9. Not a country but a British-held fort and slave

which they found the most advantageous trading for these slaves, and thither most of our great traders in that merchandise trafficked; for that nation is very warlike and brave, and having a continual campaign, being always in hostility with one neighboring prince or other, they had the fortune to take a great many captives; for all they took in battle were sold as slaves, at least those common men who could not ransom themselves. Of these slaves so taken, the general only has all the profit; and of these generals, our captains and masters of ships buy all their freights.

The King of Coramantien was himself a man of a hundred and odd years old, and had no son, though he had many beautiful black wives; for most certainly there are beauties that can charm of that color. In his younger years he had had many gallant men to his sons, thirteen of which died in battle, conquering when they fell; and he had only left him for his successor one grandchild, son to one of these dead victors, who, as soon as he could bear a bow in his hand and a quiver at his back, was sent into the field, to be trained up by one of the oldest generals to war; where, from his natural inclination to arms and the occasions given him, with the good conduct of the old general, he became, at the age of seventeen, one of the most expert captains and bravest soldiers that ever saw the field of Mars. So that he was adored as the wonder of all that world, and the darling of the soldiers. Besides, he was adorned with a native beauty so transcending all those of his gloomy race that he struck an awe and reverence even in those that knew not his quality; as he did in me, who beheld him with surprise and wonder, when afterwards he arrived in our world.

He had scarce arrived at his seventeenth year, when fighting by his side, the general was killed with an arrow in his eye, which the Prince Oroonoko (for so was this gallant Moor' called) very narrowly avoided; nor had he, if the general, who saw the arrow shot, and perceiving it aimed at the Prince, had not bowed his head between, on purpose to receive it in his own body rather than it should touch that of the Prince, and so saved him.

'Twas then, afflicted as Oroonoko was, that he was proclaimed general in the old man's place; and then it was, at the finishing of that war, which had continued for two years, that the Prince came to court, where he had hardly been a month together from the time of his fifth year to that of seventeen; and 'twas amazing to imagine where it was he learned so much humanity; or to give his accomplishments a juster name, where 'twas he got that real greatness of soul, those refined notions of true honor, that absolute generosity, and that softness that was capable of the highest passions of love and gallantry, whose objects were almost continually fighting men, or those mangled or dead; who heard no sounds but those of war and groans. Some part of it we may attribute to the care of a Frenchman of wit and learning, who, finding it turn to very good account to be a sort of royal tutor to this young black, and perceiving him very ready, apt, and quick of apprehension, took a great pleasure to teach him morals, language, and science, and was for it extremely beloved and valued by him. Another reason was, he loved, when he came from war, to see all the English gentlemen that traded thither, and did not only learn their language but that of the Spaniards also, with whom he traded afterwards for slaves.

market on the Gold Coast of Africa, in modern-day Ghana. As the slave trade expanded, the slaves and workers shipped out from the region (who came to be called Cormantines) impressed many European

observers by their beauty and bearing, their fierceness in war, and their extreme dignity under captivity or torture.

1. Loosely used for any dark-skinned person.

I have often seen and conversed with this great man, and been a witness to many of his mighty actions, and do assure my reader the most illustrious courts could not have produced a braver man, both for greatness of courage and mind, a judgment more solid, a wit more quick, and a conversation more sweet and diverting. He knew almost as much as if he had read much. He had heard of and admired the Romans; he had heard of the late civil wars in England, and the deplorable death of our great monarch,² and would discourse of it with all the sense and abhorrence of the injustice imaginable. He had an extreme good and graceful mien, and all the civility of a well-bred great man. He had nothing of barbarity in his nature, but in all points addressed himself as if his education had been in some European court.

This great and just character of Oroonoko gave me an extreme curiosity to see him, especially when I knew he spoke French and English, and that I could talk with him. But though I had heard so much of him, I was as greatly surprised when I saw him as if I had heard nothing of him, so beyond all report I found him. He came into the room and addressed himself to me, and some other women, with the best grace in the world. He was pretty tall, but of a shape the most exact that can be fancied. The most famous statuary³ could not form the figure of a man more admirably turned from head to foot. His face was not of that brown, rusty black which most of that nation are, but a perfect ebony or polished jet. His eyes were the most awful that could be seen, and very piercing, the white of 'em being like snow, as were his teeth. His nose was rising and Roman, instead of African and flat; his mouth the finest shaped that could be seen, far from those great turned lips which are so natural to the rest of the Negroes. The whole proportion and air of his face was so noble and exactly formed that, bating⁴ his color, there could be nothing in nature more beautiful, agreeable, and handsome. There was no one grace wanting that bears the standard of true beauty. His hair came down to his shoulders by the aids of art; which was by pulling it out with a quill and keeping it combed, of which he took particular care. Nor did the perfections of his mind come short of those of his person, for his discourse was admirable upon almost any subject; and whoever had heard him speak would have been convinced of their errors, that all fine wit is confined to the white men, especially to those of Christendom, and would have confessed that Oroonoko was as capable even of reigning well, and of governing as wisely, had as great a soul, as politic⁵ maxims, and was as sensible of power, as any prince civilized in the most refined schools of humanity and learning, or the most illustrious courts.

This prince, such as I have described him, whose soul and body were so admirably adorned, was (while yet he was in the court of his grandfather), as I said, as capable of love as 'twas possible for a brave and gallant man to be; and in saying that, I have named the highest degree of love, for sure, great souls are most capable of that passion.

I have already said, the old general was killed by the shot of an arrow, by the side of this prince, in battle, and that Oroonoko was made general. This

2. Charles I, beheaded in 1649 during the civil wars between Royalists and Parliamentarians. In 1688 this remark and others would have signaled Behn's ardent support of James II, the last of the Stuart kings, who would be forced into exile within the year.

3. Sculptor.

4. Except for. The singling out of Africans with

European looks or moral values is by no means unique to Behn; for example, Edward Long's 1774 *History of Jamaica* reports of the Cormantines that "their features are very different from the rest of the African Negroes, being smaller, and more of the European turn."

5. Shrewd, sagacious.

old dead hero had one only daughter left of his race, a beauty that, to describe her truly, one need say only she was female to the noble male, the beautiful black Venus to our young Mars, as charming in her person as he, and of delicate virtues. I have seen an hundred white men sighing after her, and making a thousand vows at her feet, all vain and unsuccessful. And she was, indeed, too great for any but a prince of her own nation to adore.

Oroonoko coming from the wars (which were now ended), after he had made his court to his grandfather, he thought in honor he ought to make a visit to Imoinda, the daughter of his foster-father, the dead general; and to make some excuses to her, because his preservation was the occasion of her father's death; and to present her with those slaves that had been taken in this last battle, as the trophies of her father's victories. When he came, attended by all the young soldiers of any merit, he was infinitely surprised at the beauty of this fair queen of night, whose face and person was so exceeding all he had ever beheld; that lovely modesty with which she received him; that softness in her look, and sighs, upon the melancholy occasion of this honor that was done by so great a man as Oroonoko, and a prince of whom she had heard such admirable things: the awfulness⁶ wherewith she received him, and the sweetness of her words and behavior while he stayed, gained a perfect conquest over his fierce heart, and made him feel the victor could be subdued. So that having made his first compliments, and presented her a hundred and fifty slaves in fetters, he told her with his eyes that he was not insensible of her charms; while Imoinda, who wished for nothing more than so glorious a conquest, was pleased to believe she understood that silent language of newborn love, and from that moment put on all her additions to beauty.

The Prince returned to court with quite another humor than before; and though he did not speak much of the fair Imoinda, he had the pleasure to hear all his followers speak of nothing but the charms of that maid, insomuch that, even in the presence of the old king, they were extolling her and heightening, if possible, the beauties they had found in her. So that nothing else was talked of, no other sound was heard in every corner where there were whisperers, but "Imoinda! Imoinda!"

'Twill be imagined Oroonoko stayed not long before he made his second visit, nor, considering his quality, not much longer before he told her he adored her. I have often heard him say that he admired by what strange inspiration he came to talk things so soft and so passionate, who never knew love, nor was used to the conversation⁷ of women; but (to use his own words) he said, most happily some new and till then unknown power instructed his heart and tongue in the language of love, and at the same time, in favor of him, inspired Imoinda with a sense of his passion. She was touched with what he said, and returned it all in such answers as went to his very heart, with a pleasure unknown before. Nor did he use those obligations⁸ ill that love had done him, but turned all his happy moments to the best advantage; and as he knew no vice, his flame aimed at nothing but honor, if such a distinction may be made in love; and especially in that country, where men take to themselves as many as they can maintain, and where the only crime and sin with woman is to turn her off, to abandon her to want, shame, and misery. Such ill morals are only practiced in Christian countries, where they prefer the bare name of religion, and, without virtue or morality, think that's sufficient. But Oroonoko was none

6. Reverence.

7. Company. "Admired": marveled.

8. Benefits.

of those professors, but as he had right notions of honor, so he made her such propositions as were not only and barely such; but contrary to the custom of his country, he made her vows she should be the only woman he would possess while he lived; that no age or wrinkles should incline him to change, for her soul would be always fine and always young, and he should have an eternal idea in his mind of the charms she now bore, and should look into his heart for that idea when he could find it no longer in her face.

After a thousand assurances of his lasting flame, and her eternal empire over him, she condescended to receive him for her husband, or rather, received him as the greatest honor the gods could do her.

There is a certain ceremony in these cases to be observed, which I forgot to ask him how performed; but 'twas concluded on both sides that, in obedience to him, the grandfather was to be first made acquainted with the design, for they pay a most absolute resignation to the monarch, especially when he is a parent also.

On the other side, the old king, who had many wives and many concubines, wanted not court flatterers to insinuate in his heart a thousand tender thoughts for this young beauty, and who represented her to his fancy as the most charming he had ever possessed in all the long race of his numerous years. At this character his old heart, like an extinguished brand, most apt to take fire, felt new sparks of love and began to kindle; and now grown to his second childhood, longed with impatience to behold this gay thing, with whom, alas! he could but innocently play. But how he should be confirmed she was this wonder, before he used his power to call her to court (where maidens never came, unless for the King's private use), he was next to consider; and while he was so doing, he had intelligence brought him that Imoinda was most certainly mistress to the Prince Oroonoko. This gave him some chagrin; however, it gave him also an opportunity, one day when the Prince was a-hunting, to wait on a man of quality, as his slave and attendant, who should go and make a present to Imoinda as from the Prince; he should then, unknown, see this fair maid, and have an opportunity to hear what message she would return the Prince for his present, and from thence gather the state of her heart and degree of her inclination. This was put in execution, and the old monarch saw, and burned. He found her all he had heard, and would not delay his happiness, but found he should have some obstacle to overcome her heart; for she expressed her sense of the present the Prince had sent her in terms so sweet, so soft and pretty, with an air of love and joy that could not be dissembled, insomuch that 'twas past doubt whether she loved Oroonoko entirely. This gave the old king some affliction, but he salved it with this, that the obedience the people pay their king was not at all inferior to what they paid their gods; and what love would not oblige Imoinda to do, duty would compel her to.

He was therefore no sooner got to his apartment but he sent the royal veil to Imoinda, that is, the ceremony of invitation: he sends the lady he has a mind to honor with his bed a veil, with which she is covered, and secured for the King's use; and 'tis death to disobey, besides held a most impious disobedience.

'Tis not to be imagined the surprise and grief that seized this lovely maid at this news and sight. However, as delays in these cases are dangerous and pleading worse than treason, trembling, and almost fainting, she was obliged to suffer herself to be covered and led away.

They brought her thus to court; and the King, who had caused a very rich

bath to be prepared, was led into it, where he sat under a canopy, in state, to receive this longed-for virgin; whom he having commanded should be brought to him, they (after disrobing her) led her to the bath, and making fast the doors, left her to descend. The King, without more courtship, bade her throw off her mantle and come to his arms. But Imoinda, all in tears, threw herself on the marble, on the brink of the bath, and besought him to hear her. She told him, as she was a maid, how proud of the divine glory she should have been, of having it in her power to oblige her king; but as by the laws he could not, and from his royal goodness would not, take from any man his wedded wife, so she believed she should be the occasion of making him commit a great sin, if she did not reveal her state and condition, and tell him she was another's, and could not be so happy to be his.

The King, enraged at this delay, hastily demanded the name of the bold man that had married a woman of her degree without his consent. Imoinda, seeing his eyes fierce and his hands tremble (whether with age or anger, I know not, but she fancied the last), almost repented she had said so much, for now she feared the storm would fall on the Prince. She therefore said a thousand things to appease the raging of his flame, and to prepare him to hear who it was with calmness; but before she spoke, he imagined who she meant, but would not seem to do so, but commanded her to lay aside her mantle and suffer herself to receive his caresses; or by his gods, he swore that happy man whom she was going to name should die, though it were even Oroonoko himself. "Therefore," said he, "deny this marriage, and swear thyself a maid." "That," replied Imoinda, "by all our powers I do, for I am not yet known to my husband." "'Tis enough," said the King; "'tis enough to satisfy both my conscience and my heart." And rising from his seat, he went and led her into the bath, it being in vain for her to resist.

In this time the Prince, who was returned from hunting, went to visit his Imoinda, but found her gone; and not only so, but heard she had received the royal veil. This raised him to a storm, and in his madness they had much ado to save him from laying violent hands on himself. Force first prevailed, and then reason. They urged all to him that might oppose his rage, but nothing weighed so greatly with him as the King's old age, incapable of injuring him with Imoinda. He would give way to that hope, because it pleased him most, and flattered best his heart. Yet this served not altogether to make him cease his different passions, which sometimes raged within him, and sometimes softened into showers. 'Twas not enough to appease him, to tell him his grandfather was old and could not that way injure him, while he retained that awful duty which the young men are used there to pay to their grave relations. He could not be convinced he had no cause to sigh and mourn for the loss of a mistress he could not with all his strength and courage retrieve. And he would often cry, "O my friends! Were she in walled cities or confined from me in fortifications of the greatest strength, did enchantments or monsters detain her from me, I would venture through any hazard to free her. But here, in the arms of a feeble old man, my youth, my violent love, my trade in arms, and all my vast desire of glory avail me nothing. Imoinda is as irrecoverably lost to me as if she were snatched by the cold arms of Death. Oh! she is never to be retrieved. If I would wait tedious years, till fate should bow the old king to his grave, even that would not leave me Imoinda free; but still that custom that makes it so vile a crime for a son to marry his father's wives or mistresses would hinder my happiness, unless I would either ignobly set an ill precedent

to my successors, or abandon my country and fly with her to some unknown world, who never heard our story."

But it was objected to him that his case was not the same; for Imoinda being his lawful wife, by solemn contract, 'twas he was the injured man and might if he so pleased take Imoinda back, the breach of the law being on his grandfather's side; and that if he could circumvent him and redeem her from the Otan, which is the palace of the King's women, a sort of seraglio, it was both just and lawful for him so to do.

This reasoning had some force upon him, and he should have been entirely comforted, but for the thought that she was possessed by his grandfather. However, he loved so well that he was resolved' to believe what most favored his hope, and to endeavor to learn from Imoinda's own mouth what only she could satisfy him in, whether she was robbed of that blessing which was only due to his faith and love. But as it was very hard to get a sight of the women (for no men ever entered into the Otan but when the King went to entertain himself with some one of his wives or mistresses, and 'twas death at any other time for any other to go in), so he knew not how to contrive to get a sight of her.

While Oroonoko felt all the agonies of love, and suffered under a torment the most painful in the world, the old king was not exempted from his share of affliction. He was troubled for having been forced by an irresistible passion to rob his son⁹ of a treasure he knew could not but be extremely dear to him, since she was the most beautiful that ever had been seen, and had besides all the sweetness and innocence of youth and modesty, with a charm of wit surpassing all. He found that, however she was forced to expose her lovely person to his withered arms, she could only sigh and weep there, and think of Oroonoko; and oftentimes could not forbear speaking of him, though her life were, by custom, forfeited by owning her passion. But she spoke not of a lover only, but of a prince dear to him to whom she spoke, and of the praises of a man who, till now, filled the old man's soul with joy at every recital of his bravery, or even his name. And 'twas this dotage on our young hero that gave Imoinda a thousand privileges to speak of him without offending, and this condescension in the old king that made her take the satisfaction of speaking of him so very often.

Besides, he many times inquired how the Prince bore himself; and those of whom he asked, being entirely slaves to the merits and virtues of the Prince, still answered what they thought conduced best to his service; which was to make the old king fancy that the Prince had no more interest in Imoinda, and had resigned her willingly to the pleasure of the King; that he diverted himself with his mathematicians, his fortifications, his officers, and his hunting.

This pleased the old lover, who failed not to report these things again to Imoinda, that she might, by the example of her young lover, withdraw her heart, and rest better contented in his arms. But however she was forced to receive this unwelcome news, in all appearance with unconcern and content, her heart was bursting within, and she was only happy when she could get alone, to vent her griefs and moans with sighs and tears.

What reports of the Prince's conduct were made to the King, he thought good to justify as far as possibly he could by his actions, and when he appeared in the presence of the King, he showed a face not at all betraying his heart.

9. I.e., grandson.

So that in a little time, the old man being entirely convinced that he was no longer a lover of Imoinda, he carried him with him in his train to the Otan, often to banquet with his mistress. But as soon as he entered, one day, into the apartment of Imoinda with the King, at the first glance from her eyes, notwithstanding all his determined resolution, he was ready to sink in the place where he stood, and had certainly done so but for the support of Aboan, a young man who was next to him; which, with his change of countenance, had betrayed him, had the King chanced to look that way. And I have observed, 'tis a very great error, in those who laugh when one says a Negro can change color, for I have seen 'em as frequently blush, and look pale, and that as visibly as ever I saw in the most beautiful white. And 'tis certain that both these changes were evident, this day, in both these lovers. And Imoinda, who saw with some joy the change in the Prince's face, and found it in her own, strove to divert the King from beholding either by a forced caress, with which she met him, which was a new wound in the heart of the poor dying Prince. But as soon as the King was busied in looking on some fine thing of Imoinda's making, she had time to tell the Prince with her angry but love-darting eyes that she resented his coldness, and bemoaned her own miserable captivity. Nor were his eyes silent, but answered hers again, as much as eyes could do, instructed by the most tender and most passionate heart that ever loved. And they spoke so well and so effectually, as Imoinda no longer doubted but she was the only delight and the darling of that soul she found pleading in 'em its right of love, which none was more willing to resign than she. And 'twas this powerful language alone that in an instant conveyed all the thoughts of their souls to each other, that¹ they both found there wanted but opportunity to make them both entirely happy. But when he saw another door opened by Onahal, a former old wife of the King's who now had charge of Imoinda, and saw the prospect of a bed of state made ready with sweets and flowers for the dalliance of the King, who immediately led the trembling victim from his sight into that prepared repose, what rage, what wild frenzies seized his heart! which forcing to keep within bounds, and to suffer without noise, it became the more insupportable, and rent his soul with ten thousand pains. He was forced to retire to vent his groans, where he fell down on a carpet and lay struggling a long time, and only breathing now and then, "—O Imoinda!"

When Onahal had finished her necessary affair within, shutting the door, she came forth to wait till the King called; and hearing someone sighing in the other room, she passed on, and found the Prince in that deplorable condition, which she thought needed her aid. She gave him cordials, but all in vain, till finding the nature of his disease by his sighs and naming Imoinda. She told him, he had not so much cause as he imagined to afflict himself, for if he knew the King so well as she did, he would not lose a moment in jealousy, and that she was confident that Imoinda bore, at this minute, part in his affliction. Aboan was of the same opinion, and both together persuaded him to reassume his courage; and all sitting down on the carpet, the Prince said so many obliging things to Onahal that he half persuaded her to be of his party. And she promised him she would thus far comply with his just desires, that she would let Imoinda know how faithful he was, what he suffered, and what he said.

This discourse lasted till the King called, which gave Oroonoko a certain

1. So that.

satisfaction, and with the hope Onahal had made him conceive, he assumed a look as gay as 'twas possible a man in his circumstances could do; and presently after, he was called in with the rest who waited without. The King commanded music to be brought, and several of his young wives and mistresses came all together by his command to dance before him; where Imoinda performed her part with an air and grace so passing all the rest as her beauty was above 'em, and received the present ordained as a prize. The Prince was every moment more charmed with the new beauties and graces he beheld in this fair one. And while he gazed, and she danced, Onahal was retired to a window with Aboan.

This Onahal, as I said, was one of the cast mistresses of the old king; and 'twas these (now past their beauty) that were made guardians or governants² to the new and the young ones, and whose business it was to teach them all those wanton arts of love with which they prevailed and charmed heretofore in their turn; and who now treated the triumphing happy ones with all the severity, as to liberty and freedom, that was possible, in revenge of those honors they rob them of; envying them those satisfactions, those gallantries and presents, that were once made to themselves, while youth and beauty lasted, and which they now saw pass regardless by, and paid only to the bloomings. And certainly nothing is more afflicting to a decayed beauty than to behold in itself declining charms that were once adored, and to find those caresses paid to new beauties to which once she laid a claim; to hear 'em whisper as she passes by, "That once was a delicate woman." These abandoned ladies therefore endeavor to revenge all the despites' and decays of time on these flourishing happy ones. And 'twas this severity that gave Oroonoko a thousand fears he should never prevail with Onahal to see Imoinda. But, as I said, she was now retired to a window with Aboan.

This young man was not only one of the best quality,⁴ but a man extremely well made and beautiful; and coming often to attend the King to the Otan, he had subdued the heart of the antiquated Onahal, which had not forgot how pleasant it was to be in love. And though she had some decays in her face, she had none in her sense and wit; she was there agreeable still, even to Aboan's youth, so that he took pleasure in entertaining her with discourses of love. He knew also that to make his court to these she-favorites was the way to be great, these being the persons that do all affairs and business at court. He had also observed that she had given him glances more tender and inviting than she had done to others of his quality. And now, when he saw that her favor could so absolutely oblige the Prince, he failed not to sigh in her ear and to look with eyes all soft upon her, and give her hope that she had made some impressions on his heart. He found her pleased at this, and making a thousand advances to him; but the ceremony ending and the King departing broke up the company for that day, and his conversation.

Aboan failed not that night to tell the Prince of his success, and how advantageous the service of Onahal might be to his amour with Imoinda. The Prince was overjoyed with this good news and besought him, if it were possible, to caress her so as to engage her entirely, which he could not fail to do, if he complied with her desires. "For then," said the Prince, "her life lying at your mercy, she must grant you the request you make in my behalf." Aboan under-

2. Female teachers or chaperones. "Cast": i.e., cast-off.

3. Insults,
4. Rank.

stood him, and assured him he would make love so effectually that he would defy the most expert mistress of the art to find out whether he dissembled it or had it really. And 'twas with impatience they waited the next opportunity of going to the Otan.

The wars came on, the time of taking the field approached, and 'twas impossible for the Prince to delay his going at the head of his army to encounter the enemy. So that every day seemed a tedious year till he saw his Imoinda, for he bejieved he could not live if he were forced away without being so happy. Twas with impatience, therefore, that he expected the next visit the King would make, and according to his wish, it was not long.

The parley of the eyes of these two lovers had not passed so secretly but an old jealous lover could spy it; or rather, he wanted not flatterers who told him they observed it. So that the Prince was hastened to the camp, and this was the last visit he found he should make to the Otan; he therefore urged Aboan to make the best of this last effort, and to explain himself so to Onahal that she, deferring her enjoyment of her young lover no longer, might make way for the Prince to speak to Imoinda.

The whole affair being agreed on between the Prince and Aboan, they attended the King, as the custom was, to the Otan, where, while the whole company was taken up in beholding the dancing and antic postures the women-royal made to divert the King, Onahal singled out Aboan, whom she found most pliable to her wish. When she had him where she believed she could not be heard, she sighed to him, and softly cried, "Ah, Aboan! When will you be sensible of my passion? I confess it with my mouth, because I would not give my eyes the lie; and you have but too much already perceived they have confessed my flame. Nor would I have you believe that because I am the abandoned mistress of a king, I esteem myself altogether divested of charms. No, Aboan; I have still a rest⁵ of beauty enough engaging, and have learned to please too well not to be desirable. I can have lovers still, but will have none but Aboan." "Madam," replied the half-feigning youth, "you have already, by my eyes, found you can still conquer, and I believe 'tis in pity of me you condescend to this kind confession. But, Madam, words are used to be so small a part of our country courtship, that 'tis rare one can get so happy an opportunity as to tell one's heart, and those few minutes we have are forced to be snatched for more certain proofs of love than speaking and sighing; and such I languish for."

He spoke this with such a tone that she hoped it true, and could not forbear believing it; and being wholly transported with joy, for having subdued the finest of all the King's subjects to her desires, she took from her ears two large pearls and commanded him to wear 'em in his. He would have refused 'em, crying, "Madam, these are not the proofs of your love that I expect; 'tis opportunity, 'tis a lone hour only, that can make me happy." But forcing the pearls into his hand, she whispered softly to him, "Oh! Do not fear a woman's invention, when love sets her a-thinking." And pressing his hand, she cried, "This night you shall be happy. Come to the gate of the orange groves behind the Otan, and I will be ready, about midnight, to receive you." Twas thus agreed, and she left him, that no notice might be taken of their speaking together.

The ladies were still dancing, and the King, laid on a carpet, with a great deal of pleasure was beholding them, especially Imoinda, who that day

5. Remnant.

appeared more lovely than ever, being enlivened with the good tidings Onahal had brought her of the constant passion the Prince had for her. The Prince was laid on another carpet at the other end of the room, with his eyes fixed on the object of his soul; and as she turned or moved, so did they, and she alone gave his eyes and soul their motions. Nor did Imoinda employ her eyes to any other use than in beholding with infinite pleasure the joy she produced in those of the Prince. But while she was more regarding him than the steps she took, she chanced to fall, and so near him as that, leaping with extreme force from the carpet, he caught her in his arms as she fell; and 'twas visible to the whole presence⁶ the joy wherewith he received her. He clasped her close to his bosom, and quite forgot that reverence that was due to the mistress of a king, and that punishment that is the reward of a boldness of this nature; and had not the presence of mind of Imoinda (fonder of his safety than her own) befriended him, in making her spring from his arms and fall into her dance again, he had at that instant met his death; for the old king, jealous to the last degree, rose up in rage, broke all the diversion, and led Imoinda to her apartment, and sent out word to the Prince to go immediately to the camp, and that if he were found another night in court he should suffer the death ordained for disobedient offenders.

You may imagine how welcome this news was to Oroonoko, whose unseasonable transport and caress of Imoinda was blamed by all men that loved him; and now he perceived his fault, yet cried that for such another moment, he would be content to die.

All the Otan was in disorder about this accident; and Onahal was particularly concerned, because on the Prince's stay depended her happiness, for she could no longer expect that of Aboan. So that ere they departed, they contrived it so that the Prince and he should come both that night to the grove of the Otan, which was all of oranges and citrons, and that there they should wait her orders.

They parted thus, with grief enough, till night, leaving the King in possession of the lovely maid. But nothing could appease the jealousy of the old lover. He would not be imposed on, but would have it that Imoinda made a false step on purpose to fall into Oroonoko's bosom, and that all things looked like a design on both sides; and 'twas in vain she protested her innocence. He was old and obstinate, and left her more than half assured that his fear was true.

The King going to his apartment sent to know where the Prince was, and if he intended to obey his command. The messenger returned and told him, he found the Prince pensive and altogether unpreparing for the campaign, that he lay negligently on the ground, and answered very little. This confirmed the jealousy of the King, and he commanded that they should very narrowly and privately watch his motions, and that he should not stir from his apartment but one spy or other should be employed to watch him. So that the hour approaching wherein he was to go to the citron grove, and taking only Aboan along with him, he leaves his apartment, and was watched to the very gate of the Otan, where he was seen to enter, and where they left him, to carry back the tidings to the King.

Oroonoko and Aboan were no sooner entered but Onahal led the Prince to the apartment of Imoinda, who, not knowing anything of her happiness, was laid in bed. But Onahal only left him in her chamber, to make the best of his

6. Company.

opportunity, and took her dear Aboan to her own, where he showed the height of complaisance for his prince, when, to give him an opportunity, he suffered himself to be caressed in bed by Onahal.

The Prince softly wakened Imoinda, who was not a little surprised with joy to find him there; and yet she trembled with a thousand fears. I believe he omitted saying nothing to this young maid that might persuade her to suffer him to seize his own, and take the rights of love; and I believe she was not long resisting those arms where she so longed to be; and having opportunity, night and silence, youth, love and desire, he soon prevailed, and ravished in a moment what his old grandfather had been endeavoring for so many months.

'Tis not to be imagined the satisfaction of these two young lovers; nor the vows she made him that she remained a spotless maid till that night, and that what she did with his grandfather had robbed him of no part of her virgin honor, the gods in mercy and justice having reserved that for her plighted lord, to whom of right it belonged. And 'tis impossible to express the transports he suffered, while he listened to a discourse so charming from her loved lips, and clasped that body in his arms for whom he had so long languished; and nothing now afflicted him but his sudden departure from her; for he told her the necessity and his commands, but should depart satisfied in this, that since the old king had hitherto not been able to deprive him of those enjoyments which only belonged to him, he believed for the future he would be less able to injure him; so that abating the scandal of the veil, which was no otherwise so than that she was wife to another, he believed her safe, even in the arms of the King, and innocent; yet would he have ventured at the conquest of the world, and have given it all, to have had her avoided that honor of receiving the royal veil. 'Twas thus, between a thousand caresses, that both bemoaned the hard fate of youth and beauty, so liable to that cruel promotion. 'Twas a glory that could well have been spared here, though desired and aimed at by all the young females of that kingdom.

But while they were thus fondly employed, forgetting how time ran on, and that the dawn must conduct him far away from his only happiness, they heard a great noise in the Otan, and unusual voices of men; at which the Prince, starting from the arms of the frightened Imoinda, ran to a little battle-ax he used to wear by his side, and having not so much leisure as to put on his habit, he opposed himself against some who were already opening the door; which they did with so much violence that Oroonoko was not able to defend it, but was forced to cry out with a commanding voice, "Whoever ye are that have the boldness to attempt to approach this apartment thus rudely, know that I, the Prince Oroonoko, will revenge it with the certain death of him that first enters. Therefore stand back, and know, this place is sacred to love and me this night; tomorrow 'tis the King's."

This he spoke with a voice so resolved and assured that they soon retired from the door, but cried, " 'Tis by the King's command we are come; and being satisfied by thy voice, O Prince, as much as if we had entered, we can report to the King the truth of all his fears, and leave thee to provide for thy own safety, as thou art advised by thy friends."

At these words they departed, and left the Prince to take a short and sad leave of his Imoinda, who, trusting in the strength of her charms, believed she should appease the fury of a jealous king by saying she was surprised, and that it was by force of arms he got into her apartment. All her concern now was for his life, and therefore she hastened him to the camp, and with much ado

prevailed on him to go. Nor was it she alone that prevailed; Aboan and Onahal both pleaded, and both assured him of a lie that should be well enough contrived to secure Imoinda. So that at last, with a heart sad as death, dying eyes, and sighing soul, Oroonoko departed and took his way to the camp.

It was not long after the King in person came to the Otan, where, beholding Imoinda with rage in his eyes, he upbraided her wickedness and perfidy, and threatening her royal lover, she fell on her face at his feet, bedewing the floor with her tears and imploring his pardon for a fault which she had not with her will committed, as Onahal, who was also prostrate with her, could testify; that unknown to her, he had broke into her apartment, and ravished her. She spoke this much against her conscience, but to save her own life 'twas absolutely necessary she should feign this falsity. She knew it could not injure the Prince, he being fled to an army that would stand by him against any injuries that should assault him. However, this last thought of Imoinda's being ravished changed the measures of his revenge; and whereas before he designed to be himself her executioner, he now resolved she should not die. But as it is the greatest crime in nature amongst 'em to touch a woman after having been possessed by a son, a father, or a brother, so now he looked on Imoinda as a polluted thing, wholly unfit for his embrace; nor would he resign her to his grandson, because she had received the royal veil. He therefore removes her from the Otan, with Onahal; whom he put into safe hands, with order they should be both sold off as slaves to another country, either Christian or heathen; 'twas no matter where.

This cruel sentence, worse than death, they implored might be reversed; but their prayers were vain, and it was put in execution accordingly, and that with so much secrecy that none, either without or within the Otan, knew anything of their absence or their destiny.

The old king, nevertheless, executed this with a great deal of reluctancy; but he believed he had made a very great conquest over himself, when he had once resolved, and had performed what he resolved. He believed now that his love had been unjust, and that he could not expect the gods, or Captain of the Clouds (as they call the unknown power), should suffer a better consequence from so ill a cause. He now begins to hold Oroonoko excused, and to say he had reason for what he did. And now everybody could assure the King how passionately Imoinda was beloved by the Prince; even those confessed it now, who said the contrary before his flame was abated. So that the King being old, and not able to defend himself in war, and having no sons of all his race remaining alive but only this, to maintain him on his throne; and looking on this as a man disobliged, first by the rape of his mistress, or rather wife; and now by depriving of him wholly of her, he feared, might make him desperate and do some cruel thing, either to himself or his old grandfather, the offender: he began to repent him extremely of the contempt he had, in his rage, put on Imoinda. Besides, he considered he ought in honor to have killed her for this offense, if it had been one. He ought to have had so much value and consideration for a maid of her quality as to have nobly put her to death, and not to have sold her like a common slave, the greatest revenge and the most disgraceful of any; and to which they a thousand times prefer death, and implore it, as Imoinda did, but could not obtain that honor. Seeing therefore it was certain that Oroonoko would highly resent this affront, he thought good to make some excuse for his rashness to him; and to that end he sent a messenger to the camp, with orders to treat with him about the matter, to gain his pardon, and

to endeavor to mitigate his grief; but that by no means he should tell him she was sold, but secretly put to death, for he knew he should never obtain his pardon for the other.

When the messenger came, he found the Prince upon the point of engaging with the enemy; but as soon as he heard of the arrival of the messenger, he commanded him to his tent, where he embraced him and received him with joy; which was soon abated by the downcast looks of the messenger, who was instantly demanded the cause by Oroonoko, who, impatient of delay, asked a thousand questions in a breath, and all concerning Imoinda. But there needed little return, for he could almost answer himself of all he demanded, from his sighs and eyes. At last, the messenger casting himself at the Prince's feet, and kissing them with all the submission of a man that had something to implore which he dreaded to utter, he besought him to hear with calmness what he had to deliver to him, and to call up all his noble and heroic courage to encounter with his words, and defend himself against the ungrateful⁷ things he must relate. Oroonoko replied, with a deep sigh and a languishing voice, "I am armed against their worst efforts—; for I know they will tell me, Imoinda is no more—and after that, you may spare the rest." Then, commanding him to rise, he laid himself on a carpet, under a rich pavilion, and remained a good while silent, and was hardly heard to sigh. When he was come a little to himself, the messenger asked him leave to deliver that part of his embassy which the Prince had not yet divined. And the Prince cried, "I permit thee—." Then he told him the affliction the old king was in, for the rashness he had committed in his cruelty to Imoinda; and how he deigned to ask pardon for his offense, and to implore the Prince would not suffer that loss to touch his heart too sensibly, which now all the gods could not restore him, but might recompense him in glory, which he begged he would pursue; and that Death, that common revenger of all injuries, would soon even the account between him and a feeble old man.

Oroonoko bade him return his duty to his lord and master, and to assure him, there was no account of revenge to be adjusted between them; if there were, 'twas he was the aggressor, and that Death would be just and, maugre⁸ his age, would see him righted; and he was contented to leave his share of glory to youths more fortunate and worthy of that favor from the gods. That henceforth he would never lift a weapon or draw a bow, but abandon the small remains of his life to sighs and tears, and the continual thoughts of what his lord and grandfather had thought good to send out of the world, with all that youth, that innocence, and beauty.

After having spoken this, whatever his greatest officers and men of the best rank could do, they could not raise him from the carpet, or persuade him to action and resolutions of life; but commanding all to retire, he shut himself into his pavilion all that day, while the enemy was ready to engage; and wondering at the delay, the whole body of the chief of the army then addressed themselves to him, and to whom they had much ado to get admittance. They fell on their faces at the foot of his carpet, where they lay and besought him with earnest prayers and tears to lead 'em forth to battle, and not let the enemy take advantages of them; and implored him to have regard to his glory, and to the world, that depended on his courage and conduct. But he made no other

7. Offensive.

8. In spite of. Oroonoko is saying that he will die before the king does.

reply to all their supplications but this, that he had now no more business for glory; and for the world, it was a trifle not worth his care. "Go," continued he, sighing, "and divide it amongst you; and reap with joy what you so vainly prize, and leave me to my more welcome destiny."

They then demanded what they should do, and whom he would constitute in his room, that the confusion of ambitious youth and power might not ruin their order and make them a prey to the enemy. He replied, he would not give himself the trouble—; but wished 'em to choose the bravest man amongst 'em, let his quality or birth be what it would. "For, O my friends!" said he, "it is not titles make men brave or good, or birth that bestows courage and generosity, or makes the owner happy. Believe this, when you behold Oroonoko, the most wretched and abandoned by fortune of all the creation of the gods." So turning himself about, he would make no more reply to all they could urge or implore.

The army, beholding their officers return unsuccessful, with sad faces and ominous looks that presaged no good luck, suffered a thousand fears to take possession of their hearts, and the enemy to come even upon 'em, before they would provide for their safety by any defense; and though they were assured by some, who had a mind to animate 'em, that they should be immediately headed by the Prince, and that in the meantime Aboan had orders to command as general, yet they were so dismayed for want of that great example of bravery that they could make but a very feeble resistance; and at last downright fled before the enemy, who pursued 'em to the very tents, killing 'em. Nor could all Aboan's courage, which that day gained him immortal glory, shame 'em into a manly defense of themselves. The guards that were left behind about the Prince's tent, seeing the soldiers flee before the enemy and scatter themselves all over the plain, in great disorder, made such outcries as roused the Prince from his amorous slumber, in which he had remained buried for two days without permitting any sustenance to approach him. But in spite of all his resolutions, he had not the constancy of grief to that degree, as to make him insensible of the danger of his army; and in that instant he leaped from his couch and cried, "—Come, if we must die, let us meet Death the noblest way; and 'twill be more like Oroonoko to encounter him at an army's head, opposing the torrent of a conquering foe, than lazily on a couch to wait his lingering pleasure, and die every moment by a thousand wrecking⁹ thoughts; or be tamely taken by an enemy, and led a whining, lovesick slave to adorn the triumphs of Jamoan, that young victor, who already is entered beyond the limits I had prescribed him."

While he was speaking, he suffered his people to dress him for the field, and sallying out of his pavilion, with more life and vigor in his countenance than ever he showed, he appeared like some divine power descended to save his country from destruction; and his people had purposely put on him all things that might make him shine with most splendor, to strike a reverend awe into the beholders. He flew into the thickest of those that were pursuing his men, and being animated with despair, he fought as if he came on purpose to die, and did such things as will not be believed that human strength could perform, and such as soon inspired all the rest with new courage and new order. And now it was that they began to fight indeed, and so as if they would not be outdone even by their adored hero; who, turning the tide of the victory, changing absolutely the fate of the day, gained an entire conquest; and Oroon-

9. Racking.

oko having the good fortune to single out Jamoan, he took him prisoner with his own hand, having wounded him almost to death.

This Jamoan afterwards became very dear to him, being a man very gallant and of excellent graces and fine parts; so that he never put him amongst the rank of captives, as they used to do, without distinction, for the common sale or market; but kept him in his own court, where he retained nothing of the prisoner but the name, and returned no more into his own country, so great an affection he took for Oroonoko; and by a thousand tales and adventures of love and gallantry flattered¹ his disease of melancholy and languishment, which I have often heard him say had certainly killed him, but for the conversation of this prince and Aboan, and the French governor he had from his childhood, of whom I have spoken before, and who was a man of admirable wit, great ingenuity and learning, all which he had infused into his young pupil. This Frenchman was banished out of his own country for some heretical notions he held, and though he was a man of very little religion, he had admirable morals and a brave soul.

After the total defeat of Jamoan's army, which all fled, or were left dead upon the place, they spent some time in the camp, Oroonoko choosing rather to remain a while there in his tents than enter into a palace or live in a court where he had so lately suffered so great a loss. The officers, therefore, who saw and knew his cause of discontent, invented all sorts of diversions and sports to entertain their prince; so that what with those amusements abroad and others at home, that is, within their tents, with the persuasions, arguments, and care of his friends and servants that he more peculiarly prized, he wore off in time a great part of that chagrin and torture of despair which the first efforts of Imoinda's death had given him. Insomuch as having received a thousand kind embassies from the King, and invitations to return to court, he obeyed, though with no little reluctancy; and when he did so, there was a visible change in him, and for a long time he was much more melancholy than before. But time lessens all extremes, and reduces 'em to mediums and unconcern; but no motives or beauties, though all endeavored it, could engage him in any sort of amour, though he had all the invitations to it, both from his own youth and others' ambitions and designs.

Oroonoko was no sooner returned from this last conquest, and received at court with all the joy and magnificence that could be expressed to a young victor, who was not only returned triumphant but beloved like a deity, when there arrived in the port an English ship.

This person² had often before been in these countries and was very well known to Oroonoko, with whom he had trafficked for slaves, and had used to do the same with his predecessors.

This commander was a man of a finer sort of address and conversation, better bred and more engaging than most of that sort of men are, so that he seemed rather never to have been bred out of a court than almost all his life at sea. This captain therefore was always better received at court than most of the traders to those countries were; and especially by Oroonoko, who was more civilized, according to the European mode, than any other had been, and took more delight in the white nations, and above all men of parts and wit. To this captain he sold abundance of his slaves, and for the favor and esteem he had for him, made him many presents, and obliged him to stay at

1. Soothed.

2. The ship's captain.

court as long as possibly he could. Which the captain seemed to take as a very great honor done him, entertaining the Prince every day with globes and maps, and mathematical discourses and instruments; eating, drinking, hunting, and living with him with so much familiarity that it was not to be doubted but he had gained very greatly upon the heart of this gallant young man. And the captain, in return of all these mighty favors, besought the Prince to honor his vessel with his presence, some day or other, to dinner, before he should set sail; which he condescended to accept, and appointed his day. The captain, on his part, failed not to have all things in a readiness, in the most magnificent order he could possibly. And the day being come, the captain in his boat, richly adorned with carpets and velvet cushions, rowed to the shore to receive the Prince, with another longboat where was placed all his music and trumpets, with which Oroonoko was extremely delighted; who met him on the shore attended by his French governor, Jamoan, Aboan, and about a hundred of the noblest of the youths of the court. And after they had first carried the Prince on board, the boats fetched the rest off; where they found a very splendid treat, with all sorts of fine wines, and were as well entertained as 'twas possible in such a place to be.

The Prince, having drunk hard of punch and several sorts of wine, as did all the rest (for great care was taken they should want nothing of that part of the entertainment), was very merry, and in great admiration of the ship, for he had never been in one before; so that he was curious of beholding every place where he decently might descend. The rest, no less curious, who were not quite overcome with drinking, rambled at their pleasure fore and aft, as their fancies guided 'em. So that the captain, who had well laid his design before, gave the word, and seized on all his guests; they clapping great irons suddenly on the Prince, when he was leaped down in the hold to view that part of the vessel, and locking him fast down, secured him. The same treachery was used to all the rest; and all in one instant, in several places of the ship, were lashed fast in irons, and betrayed to slavery. That great design over, they set all hands to work to hoise³ sail; and with as treacherous and fair a wind, they made from the shore with this innocent and glorious prize, who thought of nothing less than such an entertainment.

Some have commended this act as brave in the captain; but I will spare my sense of it, and leave it to my reader to judge as he pleases.

It may be easily guessed in what manner the Prince resented this indignity, who may be best resembled to a lion taken in a toil; so he raged, so he struggled for liberty, but all in vain; and they had so wisely managed his fetters that he could not use a hand in his defense, to quit himself of a life that would by no means endure slavery, nor could he move from the place where he was tied to any solid part of the ship, against which he might have beat his head, and have finished his disgrace that way. So that being deprived of all other means, he resolved to perish for want of food. And pleased at last with that thought, and toiled and tired by rage and indignation, he laid himself down, and sullenly resolved upon dying, and refused all things that were brought him.

This did not a little vex the captain, and the more so because he found almost all of 'em of the same humor; so that the loss of so many brave slaves, so tall and goodly to behold, would have been very considerable. He therefore ordered one to go from him (for he would not be seen himself) to Oroonoko,

3. Hoist.

and to assure him he was afflicted for having rashly done so unhospitable a deed, and which could not be now remedied, since they were far from shore; but since he resented it in so high a nature, he assured him he would revoke his resolution, and set both him and his friends ashore on the next land they should touch at; and of this the messenger gave him his oath, provided he would resolve to live. And Oroonoko, whose honor was such as he never had violated a word in his life himself, much less a solemn asseveration, believed in an instant what this man said, but replied, he expected for a confirmation of this to have his shameful fetters dismissed. This demand was carried to the captain, who returned him answer that the offense had been so great which he had put upon the Prince that he durst not trust him with liberty while he remained in the ship, for fear lest by a valor natural to him, and a revenge that would animate that valor, he might commit some outrage fatal to himself and the King his master, to whom his vessel did belong. To this Oroonoko replied, he would engage his honor to behave himself in all friendly order and manner, and obey the command of the captain, as he was lord of the King's vessel and general of those men under his command.

This was delivered to the still doubting captain, who could not resolve to trust a heathen, he said, upon his parole,⁴ a man that had no sense or notion of the God that he worshipped. Oroonoko then replied, he was very sorry to hear that the captain pretended to the knowledge and worship of any gods who had taught him no better principles than not to credit as he would be credited; but they told him the difference of their faith occasioned that distrust. For the captain had protested to him upon the word of a Christian, and sworn in the name of a great god, which if he should violate, he would expect eternal torment in the world to come. "Is that all the obligation he has to be just to his oath?" replied Oroonoko. "Let him know I swear by my honor; which to violate, would not only render me contemptible and despised by all brave and honest men, and so give myself perpetual pain, but it would be eternally offending and diseasing all mankind, harming, betraying, circumventing and outraging all men; but punishments hereafter are suffered by one's self, and the world takes no cognizances whether this god have revenged 'em or not, 'tis done so secretly and deferred so long. While the man of no honor suffers every moment the scorn and contempt of the honest world, and dies every day ignominiously in his fame, which is more valuable than life. I speak not this to move belief, but to show you how you mistake, when you imagine that he who will violate his honor will keep his word with his gods." So turning from him with a disdainful smile, he refused to answer him, when he urged him to know what answer he should carry back to his captain; so that he departed without saying any more.

The captain pondering and consulting what to do, it was concluded that nothing but Oroonoko's liberty would encourage any of the rest to eat, except the Frenchman, whom the captain could not pretend to keep prisoner, but only told him he was secured because he might act something in favor of the Prince, but that he should be freed as soon as they came to land. So that they concluded it wholly necessary to free the Prince from his irons, that he might show himself to the rest; that they might have an eye upon him, and that they could not fear a single man.

This being resolved, to make the obligation the greater, the captain himself

4. Word of honor.

went to Oroonoko; where after many compliments, and assurances of what he had already promised, he receiving from the Prince his parole and his hand for his good behavior, dismissed his irons and brought him to his own cabin; where after having treated and reposed him a while, for he had neither eat⁵ nor slept in four days before, he besought him to visit those obstinate people in chains, who refused all manner of sustenance, and entreated him to oblige 'em to eat, and assure 'em of their liberty the first opportunity.

Oroonoko, who was too generous not to give credit to his words, showed himself to his people, who were transported with excess of joy at the sight of their darling prince, falling at his feet and kissing and embracing 'em, believing, as some divine oracle, all he assured 'em. Rut he besought 'em to bear their chains with that bravery that became those whom he had seen act so nobly in arms; and that they could not give him greater proofs of their love and friendship, since 'twas all the security the captain (his friend) could have, against the revenge, he said, they might possibly justly take for the injuries sustained by him. And they all with one accord assured him, they could not suffer enough, when it was for his repose and safety.

After this they no longer refused to eat, but took what was brought 'em, and were pleased with their captivity, since by it they hoped to redeem the Prince, who, all the rest of the voyage, was treated with all the respect due to his birth, though nothing could divert his melancholy; and he would often sigh for Imoinda, and think this a punishment due to his misfortune, in having left that noble maid behind him that fatal night, in the Otan, when he fled to the camp.

Possessed with a thousand thoughts of past joys with this fair young person, and a thousand griefs for her eternal loss, he endured a tedious voyage, and at last arrived at the mouth of the river of Surinam, a colony belonging to the King of England, and where they were to deliver some part of their slaves. There the merchants and gentlemen of the country going on board to demand those lots of slaves they had already agreed on, and, amongst those, the overseers of those plantations where I then chanced to be, the captain, who had given the word, ordered his men to bring up those noble slaves in fetters whom I have spoken of; and having put 'em some in one and some in other lots, with women and children (which they call pickaninnies), they sold 'em off as slaves to several merchants and gentlemen; not putting any two in one lot, because they would separate 'em far from each other, not daring to trust 'em together, lest rage and courage should put 'em upon contriving some great action, to the ruin of the colony.

Oroonoko was first seized on, and sold to our overseer, who had the first lot, with seventeen more of all sorts and sizes, but not one of quality with him. When he saw this, he found what they meant, for, as I said, he understood English pretty well; and being wholly unarmed and defenseless, so as it was in vain to make any resistance, he only beheld the captain with a look all fierce and disdainful, upbraiding him with eyes that forced blushes on his guilty cheeks; he only cried, in passing over the side of the ship, "Farewell, sir. 'Tis worth my suffering, to gain so true a knowledge both of you and of your gods by whom you swear." And desiring those that held him to forbear their pains, and telling 'em he would make no resistance, he cried, "Come, my fellow slaves; let us descend, and see if we can meet with more honor and honesty

5. The past form of *eat*.

in the next world we shall touch upon." So he nimbly leaped into the boat, and showing no more concern, suffered himself to be rowed up the river with his seventeen companions.

The gentleman that bought him was a young Cornish gentleman whose name was Trefry, a ~~man of~~ great wit and fine learning, and was carried into those parts by the Lord _____, Governor,⁶ to manage all his affairs. He reflecting on the last words of Oroonoko to the captain, and beholding the richness of his vest,⁷ no sooner came into the boat but he fixed his eyes on him; and finding something so extraordinary in his face, his shape and mien, a greatness of look and haughtiness in his air, and finding he spoke English, had a great mind to be inquiring into his quality and fortune; which, though Oroonoko endeavored to hide, by only confessing he was above the rank of common slaves, Trefry soon found he was yet something greater than he confessed, and from that moment began to conceive so vast an esteem for him that he ever after loved him as his dearest brother, and showed him all the civilities due to so great a man.

Trefry was a very good mathematician and a linguist, could speak French and Spanish; and in the three days they remained in the boat (for so long were they going from the ship to the plantation) he entertained Oroonoko so agreeably with his art and discourse, that he was no less pleased with Trefry than he was with the Prince; and he thought himself at least fortunate in this, that since he was a slave, as long as he would suffer himself to remain so, he had a man of so excellent wit and parts for a master. So that before they had finished their voyage up the river, he made no scruple of declaring to Trefry all his fortunes, and most part of what I have here related, and put himself wholly into the hands of his new friend, whom he found resenting all the injuries were done him, and was charmed with all the greatness of his actions; which were recited with that modesty and delicate sense as wholly vanquished him, and subdued him to his interest. And he promised him on his word and honor, he would find the means to reconduct him to his own country again, assuring him, he had a perfect abhorrence of so dishonorable an action, and that he would sooner have died than have been the author of such a perfidy. He found the Prince was very much concerned to know what became of his friends, and how they took their slavery; and Trefry promised to take care about the inquiring after their condition, and that he should have an account of 'em.

Though, as Oroonoko afterwards said, he had little reason to credit the words of a *backearary*,⁸ yet he knew not why, but he saw a kind of sincerity and awful truth in the face of Trefry; he saw an honesty in his eyes, and he found him wise and witty enough to understand honor; for it was one of his maxims, a man of wit could not be a knave or villain.

In their passage up the river they put in at several houses for refreshment, and ever when they landed, numbers of people would flock to behold this man; not but their eyes were daily entertained with the sight of slaves, but the fame of Oroonoko was gone before him, and all people were in admiration of his beauty. Besides, he had a rich habit on, in which he was taken, so different from the rest, and which the captain could not strip him of, because he was forced to surprise his person in the minute he sold him. When he found his

6. Lord Willoughby of Parham, coproprietor of Surinam by royal grant. John Trefry was his plantation overseer.

7. An outer garment or robe.

8. White person or master; a variant of *backra*, from an Ibo word transported with the slaves to Surinam and the Caribbean.

habit made him liable, as he thought, to be gazed at the more, he begged Trefry to give him something more befitting a slave, which he did, and took off his robes. Nevertheless, he shone through all; and his osenbrigs (a sort of brown holland⁹ suit he had on) could not conceal the graces of his looks and mien, and he had no less admirers than when he had his dazzling habit on. The royal youth appeared in spite of the slave, and people could not help treating him after a different manner, without designing it. As soon as they approached him, they venerated and esteemed him; his eyes insensibly commanded respect, and his behavior insinuated it into every soul. So that there was nothing talked of but this young and gallant slave, even by those who yet knew not that he was a prince.

I ought to tell you that the Christians never buy any slaves but they give 'em some name of their own, their native ones being likely very barbarous and hard to pronounce; so that Mr. Trefry gave Oroonoko that of Caesar, which name will live in that country as long as that (scarce more) glorious one of the great Roman; for 'tis most evident, he wanted¹ no part of the personal courage of that Caesar, and acted things as memorable, had they been done in some part of the world replenished with people and historians that might have given him his due. But his misfortune was to fall in an obscure world, that afforded only a female pen to celebrate his fame; though I doubt not but it had lived from others' endeavors, if the Dutch, who immediately after his time took that country,² had not killed, banished, and dispersed all those that were capable of giving the world this great man's life, much better than I have done. And Mr. Trefry, who designed it, died before he began it, and bemoaned himself for not having undertook it in time.

For the future, therefore, I must call Oroonoko Caesar, since by that name only he was known in our western world, and by that name he was received on shore at Parham House, where he was destined a slave. But if the King himself (God bless him) had come ashore, there could not have been greater expectations by all the whole plantation, and those neighboring ones, than was on ours at that time; and he was received more like a governor than a slave. Notwithstanding, as the custom was, they assigned him his portion of land, his house, and his business, up in the plantation. But as it was more for form than any design to put him to his task, he endured no more of the slave but the name, and remained some days in the house, receiving all visits that were made him, without stirring towards that part of the plantation where the Negroes were.

At last he would needs go view his land, his house, and the business assigned him. But he no sooner came to the houses of the slaves, which are like a little town by itself, the Negroes all having left work, but they all came forth to behold him, and found he was that prince who had, at several times, sold most of 'em to these parts; and from a veneration they pay to great men, especially if they know 'em, and from the surprise and awe they had at the sight of him, they all cast themselves at his feet, crying out in their language, "Live, O King! Long live, O King!" and kissing his feet, paid him even divine homage.

Several English gentlemen were with him; and what Mr. Trefry had told 'em was here confirmed, of which he himself before had no other witness than

9. Coarse cotton or linen, sometimes called osnaburg, after a German cloth-manufacturing town.
1. Lacked.

2. In 1667 the Dutch attacked and conquered Surinam, and England ceded it by treaty in exchange for New York.

Caesar himself. But he was infinitely glad to find his grandeur confirmed by the adoration of all the slaves.

Caesar, troubled with their over-joy and over-ceremony, besought 'em to rise and to receive him as their fellow slave, assuring them he was no better. At which they set up with one accord a most terrible and hideous mourning and condoling, which he and the English had much ado to appease; but at last they prevailed with 'em, and they prepared all their barbarous music, and everyone killed and dressed something of his own stock (for every family has their land apart, on which, at their leisure times, they breed all eatable things), and clubbing it together,' made a most magnificent supper, inviting their *Grandee Captain*, their prince, to honor it with his presence; which he did, and several English with him; where they all waited on him, some playing, others dancing before him all the time, according to the manners of their several nations, and with unwearied industry endeavoring to please and delight him.

While they sat at meat Mr. Trefry told Caesar that most of these young slaves were undone in love with a fine she-slave, whom they had had about six months on their land. The Prince, who never heard the name of love without a sigh, nor any mention of it without the curiosity of examining further into that tale, which of all discourses was most agreeable to him, asked how they came to be so unhappy as to be all undone for one fair slave. Trefry, who was naturally amorous and loved to talk of love as well as anybody, proceeded to tell him, they had the most charming black that ever was beheld on their plantation, about fifteen or sixteen years old, as he guessed; that for his part, he had done nothing but sigh for her ever since she came, and that all the white beauties he had seen never charmed him so absolutely as this fine creature had done; and that no man, of any nation, ever beheld her that did not fall in love with her; and that she had all the slaves perpetually at her feet, and the whole country resounded with the fame of Clemene, "for so," said he, "we have christened her. But she denies us all with such a noble disdain, that 'tis a miracle to see that she, who can give such eternal desires, should herself be all ice and all unconcern. She is adorned with the most graceful modesty that ever beautified youth; the softest sigher—that, if she were capable of love, one would swear she languished for some absent happy man; and so retired, as if she feared a rape even from the god of day,⁴ or that the breezes would steal kisses from her delicate mouth. Her task of work some sighing lover every day makes it his petition to perform for her, which she accepts blushing and with reluctance, for fear he will ask her a look for a recompense, which he dares not presume to hope, so great an awe she strikes into the hearts of her admirers." "I do not wonder," replied the Prince, "that Clemene should refuse slaves, being as you say so beautiful, but wonder how she escapes those who can entertain her as you can do; or why, being your slave, you do not oblige her to yield." "I confess," said Trefry, "when I have, against her will, entertained her with love so long as to be transported with my passion, even above decency, I have been ready to make use of those advantages of strength and force nature has given me. But oh! she disarms me with that modesty and weeping, so tender and so moving that I retire, and thank my stars she overcame me." The company laughed at his civility to a slave, and Caesar only applauded the nobleness of his passion and nature, since that slave might be

3. Contributing jointly.

4. The sun.

noble or, what was better, have true notions of honor and virtue in her. Thus passed they this night, after having received from the slaves all imaginable respect and obedience.

The next day Trefry asked Caesar to walk, when the heat was allayed, and designedly carried him by the cottage of the fair slave, and told him she whom he spoke of last night lived there retired. "But," says he, "I would not wish you to approach, for I am sure you will be in love as soon as you behold her." Caesar assured him he was proof against all the charms of that sex, and that if he imagined his heart could be so perfidious to love again, after Imoinda, he believed he should tear it from his bosom. They had no sooner spoke, but a little shock dog' that Clemene had presented her, which she took great delight in, ran out; and she, not knowing anybody was there, ran to get it in again, and bolted out on those who were just speaking of her. When seeing them, she would have run in again, but Trefry caught her by the hand and cried, "Clemene, however you fly a lover, you ought to pay some respect to this stranger" (pointing to Caesar). But she, as if she had resolved never to raise her eyes to the face of a man again, bent 'em the more to the earth when he spoke, and gave the Prince the leisure to look the more at her. There needed no long gazing or consideration to examine who this fair creature was; he soon saw Imoinda all over her; in a minute he saw her face, her shape, her air, her modesty, and all that called forth his soul with joy at his eyes, and left his body destitute of almost life; it stood without motion, and for a minute knew not that it had a being; and I believe he had never come to himself, so oppressed he was with over-joy, if he had not met with this allay, that he perceived Imoinda fall dead in the hands of Trefry. This awakened him, and he ran to her aid and caught her in his arms, where by degrees she came to herself; and 'tis needless to tell with what transports, what ecstasies of joy, they both a while beheld each other, without speaking; then snatched each other to their arms; then gaze again, as if they still doubted whether they possessed the blessing they grasped; but when they recovered their speech, 'tis not to be imagined what tender things they expressed to each other, wondering what strange fate had brought 'em again together. They soon informed each other of their fortunes, and equally bewailed their fate; but at the same time they mutually protested that even fetters and slavery were soft and easy, and would be supported with joy and pleasure, while they could be so happy to possess each other and to be able to make good their vows. Caesar swore he disdained the empire of the world while he could behold his Imoinda; and she despised grandeur and pomp, those vanities of her sex, when she could gaze on Oroonoko. He adored the very cottage where she resided, and said that little inch of the world would give him more happiness than all the universe could do; and she vowed it was a palace, while adorned with the presence of Oroonoko.

Trefry was infinitely pleased with this novel,⁶ and found this Clemene was the fair mistress of whom Caesar had before spoke; and was not a little satisfied that heaven was so kind to the Prince as to sweeten his misfortunes by so lucky an accident; and leaving the lovers to themselves, was impatient to come down to Parham House (which was on the same plantation) to give me an account of what had happened. I was as impatient to make these lovers a visit,

5. A long-haired dog or poodle, especially associated with women of fashion.

6. I.e., novel event or piece of news,

having already made a friendship with Caesar, and from his own mouth learned what I have related; which was confirmed by his Frenchman, who was set on shore to seek his fortunes, and of whom they could not make a slave, because a Christian, and he came daily to Parham Hill to see and pay his respects to his pupil prince. So that concerning and interesting myself in all that related to Caesar, whom I had assured of liberty as soon as the Governor arrived, I hasted presently to the place where the lovers were, and was infinitely glad to find this beautiful young slave (who had already gained all our esteems, for her modesty and her extraordinary prettiness) to be the same I had heard Caesar speak so much of. One may imagine then we paid her a treble respect; and though, from her being carved in fine flowers and birds all over her body, we took her to be of quality before, yet when we knew Clemene was Imoinda, we could not enough admire her.

I had forgot to tell you that those who are nobly born of that country are so delicately cut and rased⁷ all over the forepart of the trunk of their bodies, that it looks as if it were japanned, the works being raised like high point round the edges of the flowers. Some are only carved with a little flower or bird at the sides of the temples, as was Caesar; and those who are so carved over the body resemble our ancient Picts,⁸ that are figured in the chronicles, but these carvings are more delicate.

From that happy day Caesar took Clemene for his wife, to the general joy of all people; and there was as much magnificence as the country would afford at the celebration of this wedding: and in a very short time after she conceived with child, which made Caesar even adore her, knowing he was the last of his great race. This new accident made him more impatient of liberty, and he was every day treating with Trefry for his and Clemene's liberty, and offered either gold or a vast quantity of slaves, which should be paid before they let him go, provided he could have any security that he should go when his ransom was paid. They fed him from day to day with promises, and delayed him till the Lord Governor should come; so that he began to suspect them of falsehood, and that they would delay him till the time of his wife's delivery and make a slave of that too, for all the breed is theirs to whom the parents belong. This thought made him very uneasy, and his sullenness gave them some jealousies⁹ of him; so that I was obliged, by some persons who feared a mutiny (which is very fatal sometimes in those colonies, that abound so with slaves that they exceed the whites in vast numbers), to discourse with Caesar, and to give him all the satisfaction I possibly could; they knew he and Clemene were scarce an hour in a day from my lodgings, that they eat with me, and that I obliged 'em in all things I was capable of. I entertained him with the lives of the Romans, and great men, which charmed him to my company, and her with teaching her all the pretty works¹ that I was mistress of, and telling her stories of nuns, and endeavoring to bring her to the knowledge of the true God. But of all discourses Caesar liked that the worst, and would never be reconciled to our notions of the Trinity, of which he ever made a jest; it was a riddle, he said, would turn his brain to conceive, and one could not make him understand what faith was. However, these conversations failed not altogether so well to divert him that he liked the company of us women much above the men, for

7. Incised. The carving is likened to figured lacquerwork in the Japanese style and to elaborate "high point" lace.

8. A North British people appearing in histories of

England and Scotland.

9. Suspicions.

1. Decorative needlework or other handiwork.

he could not drink, and he is but an ill companion in that country that cannot. So that obliging him to love us very well, we had all the liberty of speech with him, especially myself, whom he called his Great Mistress; and indeed my word would go a great way with him. For these reasons, I had opportunity to take notice to him that he was not well pleased of late as he used to be, was more retired and thoughtful; and told him I took it ill he should suspect we would break our words with him, and not permit both him and Clemene to return to his own kingdom, which was not so long a way but when he was once on his voyage he would quickly arrive there. He made me some answers that showed a doubt in him, which made me ask him what advantage it would be to doubt. It would but give us a fear of him, and possibly compel us to treat him so as I should be very loath to behold; that is, it might occasion his confinement. Perhaps this was not so luckily spoke of me, for I perceived he resented that word, which I strove to soften again in vain. However, he assured me that whatsoever resolutions he should take, he would act nothing upon the white people; and as for myself and those upon that plantation where he was, he would sooner forfeit his eternal liberty, and life itself, than lift his hand against his greatest enemy on that place. He besought me to suffer no fears upon his account, for he could do nothing that honor should not dictate; but he accused himself for having suffered slavery so long; yet he charged that weakness on Love alone, who was capable of making him neglect even glory itself, and for which now he reproaches himself every moment of the day. Much more to this effect he spoke, with an air impatient enough to make me know he would not be long in bondage; and though he suffered only the name of a slave, and had nothing of the toil and labor of one, yet that was sufficient to render him uneasy; and he had been too long idle, who used to be always in action and in arms. He had a spirit all rough and fierce, and that could not be tamed to lazy rest; and though all endeavors were used to exercise himself in such actions and sports as this world afforded, as running, wrestling, pitching the bar, hunting and fishing, chasing and killing tigers of a monstrous size, which this continent affords in abundance, and wonderful snakes, such as Alexander is reported to have encountered at the river of Amazons,² and which Caesar took great delight to overcome, yet these were not actions great enough for his large soul, which was still panting after more renowned action.

Before I parted that day with him, I got, with much ado, a promise from him to rest yet a little longer with patience, and wait the coming of the Lord Governor, who was every day expected on our shore; he assured me he would, and this promise he desired me to know was given perfectly in complaisance to me, in whom he had an entire confidence.

After this, I neither thought it convenient to trust him much out of our view, nor did the country, who feared him; but with one accord it was advised to treat him fairly, and oblige him to remain within such a compass, and that he should be permitted as seldom as could be to go up to the plantations of the Negroes or, if he did, to be accompanied by some that should be rather in appearance attendants than spies. This care was for some time taken, and Caesar looked upon it as a mark of extraordinary respect, and was glad his discontent had obliged 'em to be more observant to him. He received new

2. Alexander the Great is supposed to have encountered both snakes and Amazons in a campaign against India. "Pitching the bar": game in

which players compete in throwing a heavy bar or rod. "Tigers": wild cats, including the South American jaguar and cougar.

assurance from the overseer, which was confirmed to him by the opinion of all the gentlemen of the country, who made their court to him. During this time that we had his company more frequently than hitherto we had had, it may not be unpleasant to relate to you the diversions we entertained him with, or rather he us.

My stay was to be short in that country, because my father died at sea, and never arrived to possess the honor was designed him (which was lieutenant general of six and thirty islands, besides the continent³ of Surinam) nor the advantages he hoped to reap by them; so that though we were obliged to continue on our voyage, we did not intend to stay upon the place. Though, in a word, I must say thus much of it, that certainly had his late Majesty, of sacred memory, but seen and known what a vast and charming world he had been master of in that continent, he would never have parted so easily with it to the Dutch. Tis a continent whose vast extent was never yet known, and may contain more noble earth than all the universe besides, for, they say, it reaches from east to west, one way as far as China and another to Peru. It affords all things both for beauty and use; 'tis there eternal spring, always the very months of April, May, and June; the shades are perpetual, the trees bearing at once all degrees of leaves and fruit, from blooming buds to ripe autumn: groves of oranges, lemons, citrons, figs, nutmegs, and noble aromatics, continually bearing their fragrances. The trees appearing all like nosegays adorned with flowers of different kinds; some are all white, some purple, some scarlet, some blue, some yellow; bearing, at the same time, ripe fruit and blooming young, or producing every day new. The very wood of all these trees has an intrinsic value above common timber, for they are, when cut, of different colors, glorious to behold, and bear a price considerable, to inlay withal. Besides this they yield rich balm and gums, so that we make our candles of such an aromatic substance as does not only give a sufficient light, but, as they burn, they cast their perfumes all about. Cedar is the common firing, and all the houses are built with it. The very meat we eat, when set on the table, if it be native, I mean of the country, perfumes the whole room; especially a little beast called an armadilly, a thing which I can liken to nothing so well as a rhinoceros; 'tis all in white armor, so jointed that it moves as well in it as if it had nothing on; this beast is about the bigness of a pig of six weeks old. But it were endless to give an account of all the diverse wonderful and strange things that country affords, and which we took a very great delight to go in search of, though those adventures are oftentimes fatal and at least dangerous. But while we had Caesar in our company on these designs we feared no harm, nor suffered any.

As soon as I came into the country, the best house in it was presented me, called St. John's Hill. It stood on a vast rock of white marble, at the foot of which the river ran a vast depth down, and not to be descended on that side; the little waves still dashing and washing the foot of this rock made the softest murmurs and purlings in the world; and the opposite bank was adorned with such vast quantities of different flowers eternally blowing,⁴ and every day and hour new, fenced behind em with lofty trees of a thousand rare forms and colors, that the prospect was the most ravishing that fancy can create. On the

3. "Land not disjoined by the sea from other lands" (Johnson's *Dictionary*).

4. Blooming.

edge of this white rock, towards the river, was a walk or grove of orange and lemon trees, about half the length of the Mall⁵ here, whose flowery and fruit-bearing branches met at the top and hindered the sun, whose rays are very fierce there, from entering a beam into the grove; and the cool air that came from the river made it not only fit to entertain people in, at all the hottest hours of the day, but refreshed the sweet blossoms and made it always sweet and charming; and sure the whole globe of the world cannot show so delightful a place as this grove was. Not all the gardens of boasted Italy can produce a shade to outvie this, which nature had joined with art to render so exceeding fine; and 'tis a marvel to see how such vast trees, as big as English oaks, could take footing on so solid a rock and in so little earth as covered that rock; but all things by nature there are rare, delightful, and wonderful. But to our sports.

Sometimes we would go surprising,⁶ and in search of young tigers in their dens, watching when the old ones went forth to forage for prey; and oftentimes we have been in great danger and have fled apace for our lives when surprised by the dams. But once, above all other times, we went on this design, and Caesar was with us, who had no sooner stolen a young tiger from her nest but, going off, we encountered the dam, bearing a buttock of a cow which he" had torn off with his mighty paw, and going with it towards his den. We had only four women, Caesar, and an English gentleman, brother to Harry Martin, the great Oliverian;⁸ we found there was no escaping this enraged and ravenous beast. However, we women fled as fast as we could from it; but our heels had not saved our lives if Caesar had not laid down his cub, when he found the tiger quit her prey to make the more speed towards him, and taking Mr. Martin's sword, desired him to stand aside, or follow the ladies. He obeyed him, and Caesar met this monstrous beast of might, size, and vast limbs, who came with open jaws upon him; and fixing his awful stern eyes full upon those of the beast, and putting himself into a very steady and good aiming posture of defense, ran his sword quite through his breast down to his very heart, home to the hilt of the sword. The dying beast stretched forth her paw, and going to grasp his thigh, surprised with death in that very moment, did him no other harm than fixing her long nails in his flesh very deep, feebly wounded him, but could not grasp the flesh to tear off any. When he had done this, he halloed to us to return, which, after some assurance of his victory, we did, and found him lugging out the sword from the bosom of the tiger, who was laid in her blood on the ground; he took up the cub, and with an unconcern that had nothing of the joy or gladness of a victory, he came and laid the whelp at my feet. We all extremely wondered at his daring, and at the bigness of the beast, which was about the height of a heifer but of mighty, great, and strong limbs.

Another time, being in the woods, he killed a tiger which had long infested that part, and borne away abundance of sheep and oxen, and other things that were for the support of those to whom they belonged; abundance of people assailed this beast, some affirming they had shot her with several bullets quite through the body at several times, and some swearing they shot her through

5. Fashionable walk in St. James's Park in London.

6. A military term for making sudden raids.

7. The jarring mixture of pronouns in the two accounts of the tigers (wild cats) may suggest a

reluctance to use a feminine pronoun in moments of extreme violence. The first account was left uncorrected in all four 17th-century editions.

8. Supporter of Oliver Cromwell.

the very heart, and they believed she was a devil rather than a mortal thing. Caesar had often said he had a mind to encounter this monster, and spoke with several gentlemen who had attempted her, one crying, "I shot her with so many poisoned arrows," another with his gun in this part of her, and another in that; so that he, remarking all these places where she was shot, fancied still he should overcome her by giving her another sort of a wound than any had yet done; and one day said (at the table), "What trophies and garlands, ladies, will you make me, if I bring you home the heart of this ravenous beast that eats up all your lambs and pigs?" We all promised he should be rewarded at all our hands. So taking a bow, which he choosed out of a great many, he went up in the wood, with two gentlemen, where he imagined this devourer to be; they had not passed very far in it but they heard her voice, growling and grumbling, as if she were pleased with something she was doing. When they came in view, they found her muzzling in the belly of a new ravished sheep, which she had torn open; and seeing herself approached, she took fast hold of her prey with her forepaws and set a very fierce raging look on Caesar, without offering to approach him, for fear at the same time of losing what she had in possession. So that Caesar remained a good while, only taking aim, and getting an opportunity to shoot her where he designed; 'twas some time before he could accomplish it, and to wound her and not kill her would but have enraged her more, and endangered him. He had a quiver of arrows at his side, so that if one failed he could be supplied; at last, retiring a little, he gave her opportunity to eat, for he found she was ravenous, and fell to as soon as she saw him retire, being more eager of her prey than of doing new mischiefs. When he going softly to one side of her, and hiding his person behind certain herbage that grew high and thick, he took so good aim that, as he intended, he shot her just into the eye, and the arrow was sent with so good a will and so sure a hand that it stuck in her brain, and made her caper and become mad for a moment or two; but being seconded by another arrow, he fell dead upon the prey. Caesar cut him open with a knife, to see where those wounds were that had been reported to him, and why he did not die of 'em. But I shall now relate a thing that possibly will find no credit among men, because 'tis a notion commonly received with us, that nothing can receive a wound in the heart and live; but when the heart of this courageous animal was taken out, there were seven bullets of lead in it, and the wounds seamed up with great scars, and she lived with the bullets a great while, for it was long since they were shot. This heart the conqueror brought up to us, and 'twas a very great curiosity, which all the country came to see, and which gave Caesar occasion of many fine discourses, of accidents in war and strange escapes.

At other times he would go a-fishing; and discoursing on that diversion, he found we had in that country a very strange fish, called a numb eel⁹ (an eel of which I have eaten), that while it is alive, it has a quality so cold, that those who are angling, though with a line of never so great a length with a rod at the end of it, it shall, in the same minute the bait is touched by this eel, seize him or her that holds the rod with benumbedness, that shall deprive 'em of sense for a while; and some have fallen into the water, and others dropped as dead on the banks of the rivers where they stood, as soon as this fish touches the bait. Caesar used to laugh at this, and believed it impossible a man could

9. Electric eel.

lose his force at the touch of a fish, and could not understand that philosophy,¹ that a cold quality should be of that nature. However, he had a great curiosity to try whether it would have the same effect on him it had on others, and often tried, but in vain. At last the sought for fish came to the bait, as he stood angling on the bank; and instead of throwing away the rod or giving it a sudden twitch out of the water, whereby he might have caught both the eel and have dismissed the rod, before it could have too much power over him, for experiment sake he grasped it but the harder, and fainting fell into the river; and being still possessed of the rod, the tide carried him, senseless as he was, a great way, till an Indian boat took him up, and perceived when they touched him a numbness seize them, and by that knew the rod was in his hand; which with a paddle (that is, a short oar) they struck away, and snatched it into the boat, eel and all. If Caesar were almost dead with the effect of this fish, he was more so with that of the water, where he had remained the space of going a league, and they found they had much ado to bring him back to life. But at last they did, and brought him home, where he was in a few hours well recovered and refreshed, and not a little ashamed to find he should be overcome by an eel, and that all the people who heard his defiance would laugh at him. But we cheered him up; and he being convinced, we had the eel at supper, which was a quarter of an ell about and most delicate meat, and was of the more value, since it cost so dear as almost the life of so gallant a man.

About this time we were in many mortal fears about some disputes the English had with the Indians, so that we could scarce trust ourselves, without great numbers, to go to any Indian towns or place where they abode, for fear they should fall upon us, as they did immediately after my coming away; and that it was in the possession of the Dutch, who used 'em not so civilly as the English, so that they cut in pieces all they could take, getting into houses and hanging up the mother and all her children about her, and cut a footman I left behind me all in joints, and nailed him to trees.

This feud began while I was there, so that I lost half the satisfaction I proposed, in not seeing and visiting the Indian towns. But one day, bemoaning of our misfortunes upon this account, Caesar told us we need not fear, for if we had a mind to go, he would undertake to be our guard. Some would, but most would not venture; about eighteen of us resolved and took barge, and after eight days arrived near an Indian town. But approaching it, the hearts of some of our company failed, and they would not venture on shore; so we polled who would and who would not. For my part, I said if Caesar would, I would go; he resolved; so did my brother and my woman, a maid of good courage. Now none of us speaking the language of the people, and imagining we should have a half diversion in gazing only and not knowing what they said, we took a fisherman that lived at the mouth of the river, who had been a long inhabitant there, and obliged him to go with us. But because he was known to the Indians, as trading among 'em, and being by long living there become a perfect Indian in color, we, who resolved to surprise 'em by making 'em see something they never had seen (that is, white people), resolved only myself, my brother and woman should go; so Caesar, the fisherman, and the rest, hiding behind some thick reeds and flowers that grew on the banks, let us pass on towards the town, which was on the bank of the river all along. A little distant from the houses, or huts, we saw some dancing, others busied in fetching and carrying

1. "Hypothesis or system upon which natural effects are explained" (Johnson's *Dictionary*).

of water from the river. They had no sooner spied us but they set up a loud cry, that frightened us at first; we thought it had been for those that should kill us, but it seems it was of wonder and amazement. They were all naked, and we were dressed so as is most commode for the hot countries, very glittering and rich, so that we appeared extremely fine; my own hair was cut short, and I had a taffety cap with black feathers on my head; my brother was in a stuff-suit, with silver loops and buttons and abundance of green ribbon. This was all infinitely surprising to them, and because we saw them stand still till we approached 'em, we took heart and advanced, came up to 'em, and offered 'em our hands; which they took, and looked on us round about, calling still for more company; who came swarming out, all wondering and crying out "Tepeeme," taking their hair up in their hands and spreading it wide to those they called out to, as if they would say (as indeed it signified) "Numberless wonders," or not to be recounted, no more than to number the hair of their heads. By degrees they grew more bold, and from gazing upon us round, they touched us, laying their hands upon all the features of our faces, feeling our breasts and arms, taking up one petticoat, then wondering to see another; admiring our shoes and stockings, but more our garters, which we gave em, and they tied about their legs, being laced with silver lace at the ends, for they much esteem any shining things. In fine, we suffered 'em to survey us as they pleased, and we thought they would never have done admiring us. When Caesar and the rest saw we were received with such wonder, they came up to us; and finding the Indian trader whom they knew (for 'tis by these fishermen, called Indian traders, we hold a commerce with em, for they love not to go far from home, and we never go to them), when they saw him therefore they set up a new joy, and cried, in their language, "Oh! here's our *tiguamy*, and we shall now know whether those things can speak." So advancing to him, some of 'em gave him their hands and cried, "*Amora tiguamy*," which is as much as, "How do you?" or "Welcome, friend," and all with one din began to gabble to him, and asked if we had sense and wit; if we could talk of affairs of life and war, as they could do; if we could hunt, swim, and do a thousand things they use. He answered em, we could. Then they invited us into their houses, and dressed venison and buffalo for us; and going out, gathered a leaf of a tree called a *sarumho* leaf, of six yards long, and spread it on the ground for a tablecloth; and cutting another in pieces instead of plates, setting us on little bow Indian stools, which they cut out of one entire piece of wood and paint in a sort of japan work. They serve everyone their mess³ on these pieces of leaves, and it was very good, but too high seasoned with pepper. When we had eat, my brother and I took out our flutes and played to 'em, which gave 'em new wonder; and I soon perceived, by an admiration that is natural to these people, and by the extreme ignorance and simplicity of 'em, it were not difficult to establish any unknown or extravagant religion among them, and to impose any notions or fictions upon 'em. For seeing a kinsman of mine set some paper afire with a burning glass, a trick they had never before seen, they were like to have adored him for a god, and begged he would give them the characters or figures of his name, that they might oppose it against winds and storms; which he did, and they held it up in those seasons, and fancied it had a charm to conquer them, and kept it like a holy relic. They are very superstitious, and called him the great *Peerie*, that is, prophet. They showed us their

2. Woven fabric, worsted. "Commode": suitable.

3. Meal.

Indian *Peeie*, a youth of about sixteen years old, as handsome as nature could make a man. They consecrate a beautiful youth from his infancy, and all arts are used to complete him in the finest manner, both in beauty and shape. He is bred to all the little arts and cunning they are capable of, to all the legerdemain tricks and sleight of hand, whereby he imposes upon the rabble, and is both a doctor in physic⁴ and divinity; and by these tricks makes the sick believe he sometimes eases their pains, by drawing from the afflicted part little serpents, or odd flies, or worms, or any strange thing; and though they have besides undoubted good remedies for almost all their diseases, they cure the patient more by fancy than by medicines, and make themselves feared, loved, and revered. This young *Peeie* had a very young wife, who seeing my brother kiss her, came running and kissed me; after this they kissed one another, and made it a very great jest, it being so novel; and new admiration and laughing went round the multitude, that they never will forget that ceremony, never before used or known. Caesar had a mind to see and talk with their war captains, and we were conducted to one of their houses, where we beheld several of the great captains, who had been at council. But so frightful a vision it was to see 'em no fancy can create; no such dreams can represent so dreadful a spectacle. For my part I took 'em for hobgoblins or fiends rather than men; but however their shapes appeared, their souls were very humane and noble; but some wanted their noses, some their lips, some both noses and lips, some their ears, and others cut through each cheek with long slashes, through which their teeth appeared; they had other several formidable wounds and scars, or rather dismemberings. They had *comitias* or little aprons before 'em, and girdles of cotton, with their knives naked, stuck in it; a bow at their backs and a quiver of arrows on their thighs; and most had feathers on their heads of diverse colors. They cried "*Amora tiguamy*" to us at our entrance, and were pleased we said as much to 'em; they seated us, and gave us drink of the best sort, and wondered, as much as the others had done before, to see us. Caesar was marveling as much at their faces, wondering how they should all be so wounded in war; he was impatient to know how they all came by those frightful marks of rage or malice, rather than wounds got in noble battle. They told us, by our interpreter, that when any war was waging, two men chosen out by some old captain whose fighting was past, and who could only teach the theory of war, these two men were to stand in competition for the generalship, or great war captain; and being brought before the old judges, now past labor, they are asked what they dare do to show they are worthy to lead an army. When he who is first asked, making no reply, cuts off his nose, and throws it contemptibly⁵ on the ground; and the other does something to himself that he thinks surpasses him, and perhaps deprives himself of lips and an eye; so they slash on till one gives out, and many have died in this debate. And 'tis by a passive valor they show and prove their activity, a sort of courage too brutal to be applauded by our black hero; nevertheless he expressed his esteem of 'em.

In this voyage Caesar begot so good an understanding between the Indians and the English that there were no more fears or heart-burnings during our stay, but we had a perfect, open, and free trade with 'em. Many things remarkable and worthy reciting we met with in this short voyage, because Caesar made it his business to search out and provide for our entertainment, espe-

4. Medicine.

5. With contempt.

cially to please his dearly adored Imoinda, who was a sharer in all our adventures; we being resolved to make her chains as easy as we could, and to compliment the Prince in that manner that most obliged him.

As we were coming up again, we met with some Indians of strange aspects; that is, of a larger size and other sort of features than those of our country. Our Indian slaves that rowed us asked 'em some questions, but they could not understand us; but showed us a long cotton string with several knots on it, and told us, they had been coming from the mountains so many moons as there were knots. They were habited in skins of a strange beast, and brought along with 'em bags of gold dust, which, as well as they could give us to understand, came streaming in little small channels down the high mountains when the rains fell; and offered to be the convoy to any body or persons that would go to the mountains. We carried these men up to Parham, where they were kept till the Lord Governor came. And because all the country was mad to be going on this golden adventure, the Governor by his letters commanded (for they sent some of the gold to him) that a guard should be set at the mouth of the river of Amazons⁶ (a river so called, almost as broad as the river of Thames) and prohibited all people from going up that river, it conducting to those mountains of gold. But we going off for England before the project was further prosecuted, and the Governor being drowned in a hurricane, either the design died, or the Dutch have the advantage of it. And 'tis to be bemoaned what his Majesty lost by losing that part of America.

Though this digression is a little from my story, however since it contains some proofs of the curiosity and daring of this great man, I was content to omit nothing of his character.

It was thus for some time we diverted him; but now Imoinda began to show she was with child, and did nothing but sigh and weep for the captivity of her lord, herself, and the infant yet unborn, and believed if it were so hard to gain the liberty of two, 'twould be more difficult to get that for three. Her griefs were so many darts in the great heart of Caesar; and taking his opportunity one Sunday when all the whites were overtaken in drink, as there were abundance of several trades and slaves for four years⁷ that inhabited among the Negro houses, and Sunday was their day of debauch (otherwise they were a sort of spies upon Caesar), he went pretending out of goodness to 'em to feast amongst 'em; and sent all his music, and ordered a great treat for the whole gang, about three hundred Negroes; and about a hundred and fifty were able to bear arms, such as they had, which were sufficient to do execution⁸ with spirits accordingly. For the English had none but rusty swords that no strength could draw from a scabbard, except the people of particular quality, who took care to oil 'em and keep em in good order. The guns also, unless here and there one, or those newly carried from England, would do no good or harm; for 'tis the nature of that country to rust and eat up iron, or any metals but gold and silver. And they are very unexpert at the bow, which the Negroes and Indians are perfect masters of.

Caesar, having singled out these men from the women and children, made an harangue to em of the miseries and ignominies of slavery, counting up all their toils and sufferings, under such loads, burdens, and drudgeries as were

6. The mouth of the Amazon, in Brazil, is far distant from Surinam.

7. Whites who, for crimes or debt, were inden-

tured for a fixed period. "Trades": tradesman.

8. Harm, slaughter.

fitter for beasts than men, senseless brutes than human souls. He told 'em, it was not for days, months, or years, but for eternity; there was no end to be of their misfortunes. They suffered not like men, who might find a glory and fortitude in oppression, but like dogs that loved the whip and bell,⁹ and fawned the more they were beaten. That they had lost the divine quality of men and were become insensible asses, fit only to bear; nay, worse: an ass, or dog, or horse, having done his duty, could lie down in retreat and rise to work again, and while he did his duty endured no stripes; but men, villainous, senseless men such as they, toiled on all the tedious week till Black Friday;¹ and then, whether they worked or not, whether they were faulty or meriting, they promiscuously, the innocent with the guilty, suffered the infamous whip, the sordid stripes, from their fellow slaves, till their blood trickled from all parts of their body, blood whose every drop ought to be revenged with a life of some of those tyrants that impose it. "And why," said he, "my dear friends and fellow sufferers, should we be slaves to an unknown people? Have they vanquished us nobly in fight? Have they won us in honorable battle? And are we by the chance of war become their slaves? This would not anger a noble heart, this would not animate a soldier's soul; no, but we are bought and sold like apes or monkeys, to be the sport of women, fools, and cowards, and the support of rogues, runagades,² that have abandoned their own countries for rapine, murders, thefts, and villainies. Do you not hear every day how they upbraid each other with infamy of life, below the wildest savages; and shall we render obedience to such a degenerate race, who have no one human virtue left to distinguish 'em from the vilest creatures? Will you, I say, suffer the lash from such hands?" They all replied, with one accord, "No, no, no; Caesar has spoke like a great captain, like a great king."

After this he would have proceeded, but was interrupted by a tall Negro of some more quality than the rest; his name was Tuscan; who bowing at the feet of Caesar, cried, "My lord, we have listened with joy and attention to what you have said, and, were we only men, would follow so great a leader through the world. But oh! consider, we are husbands and parents too, and have things more dear to us than life, our wives and children, unfit for travel in these unpassable woods, mountains, and bogs; we have not only difficult lands to overcome, but rivers to wade, and monsters to encounter, ravenous beasts of prey—" To this, Caesar replied that honor was the first principle in nature that was to be obeyed; but as no man would pretend to that, without all the acts of virtue, compassion, charity, love, justice, and reason, he found it not inconsistent with that to take an equal care of their wives and children as they would of themselves; and that he did not design, when he led them to freedom and glorious liberty, that they should leave that better part of themselves to perish by the hand of the tyrant's whip. But if there were a woman among them so degenerate from love and virtue to choose slavery before the pursuit of her husband, and with the hazard of her life to share with him in his fortunes, that such a one ought to be abandoned, and left as a prey to the common enemy.

To which they all agreed—and bowed. After this, he spoke of the impassable woods and rivers, and convinced 'em, the more danger, the more glory. Fie

9. Proverbial for something that distracts from comfort or pleasure, from the protective charm on chariots of triumphing generals in ancient Rome.

1. Here a day of customary beating; more widely,

a Friday bringing some notable disaster, from students' slang for examination day.

2. Renegades or fugitives.

told them that he had heard of one Hannibal, a great captain, had cut his way through mountains of solid rocks;³ and should a few shrubs oppose them, which they could fire before 'em? No, 'twas a trifling excuse to men resolved to die or overcome. As for bogs, they are with a little labor filled and hardened; and the rivers could be no obstacle, since they swam by nature, at least by custom, from their first hour of their birth. That when the children were weary they must carry them by turns, and the woods and their own industry would afford them food. To this they all assented with joy.

Tuscan then demanded what he would do. He said, they would travel towards the sea, plant a new colony, and defend it by their valor; and when they could find a ship, either driven by stress of weather or guided by Providence that way, they would seize it and make it a prize, till it had transported them to their own countries; at least, they should be made free in his kingdom, and be esteemed as his fellow sufferers, and men that had the courage and the bravery to attempt, at least, for liberty; and if they died in the attempt it would be more brave than to live in perpetual slavery.

They bowed and kissed his feet at this resolution, and with one accord vowed to follow him to death. And that night was appointed to begin their march; they made it known to their wives, and directed them to tie their hamaca⁴ about their shoulder and under their arm like a scarf, and to lead their children that could go, and carry those that could not. The wives, who pay an entire obedience to their husbands, obeyed, and stayed for 'em where they were appointed. The men stayed but to furnish themselves with what defensive arms they could get; and all met at the rendezvous, where Caesar made a new encouraging speech to 'em, and led 'em out.

But as they could not march far that night, on Monday early, when the overseers went to call 'em all together to go to work, they were extremely surprised to find not one upon the place, but all fled with what baggage they had. You may imagine this news was not only suddenly spread all over the plantation, but soon reached the neighboring ones; and we had by noon about six hundred men they call the militia of the county, that came to assist us in the pursuit of the fugitives. But never did one see so comical an army march forth to war. The men of any fashion would not concern themselves, though it were almost the common cause; for such revoltings are very ill examples, and have very fatal consequences oftentimes in many colonies. But they had a respect for Caesar, and all hands were against the Parhamites, as they called those of Parham plantation, because they did not, in the first place, love the Lord Governor, and secondly they would have it that Caesar was ill used, and baffled with;⁵ and 'tis not impossible but some of the best in the country was of his counsel in this flight, and depriving us of all the slaves; so that they of the better sort would not meddle in the matter. The deputy governor,⁶ of whom I have had no great occasion to speak, and who was the most fawning fair-tongued fellow in the world and one that pretended the most friendship to Caesar, was now the only violent man against him; and though he had nothing, and so need fear nothing, yet talked and looked bigger than any man. He was a fellow whose character is not fit to be mentioned with the worst of the slaves. This fellow would lead his army forth to meet Caesar, or rather to pursue him;

3. The Carthaginian general and his troops literally hacked their way down the Alps into Italy to attack Rome.

4. Hammock.

5. Cheated.

6. William Byam. There are recorded complaints against him for high-handedness and from him about insubordination by settlers and slaves.

most of their arms were of those sort of cruel whips they call cat with nine tails; some had rusty useless guns for show, others old basket hilts⁷ whose blades had never seen the light in this age, and others had long staffs and clubs. Mr. Trefry went along, rather to be a mediator than a conqueror in such a battle; for he foresaw and knew, if by fighting they put the Negroes into despair, they were a sort of sullen fellows that would drown or kill themselves before they would yield; and he advised that fair means was best. But Byam was one that abounded in his own wit and would take his own measures.

It was not hard to find these fugitives; for as they fled they were forced to fire and cut the woods before 'em, so that night or day they pursued 'em by the light they made and by the path they had cleared. But as soon as Caesar found he was pursued, he put himself in a posture of defense, placing all the women and children in the rear, and himself with Tuscan by his side, or next to him, all promising to die or conquer. Encouraged thus, they never stood to parley, but fell on pell-mell upon the English, and killed some and wounded a good many, they having recourse to their whips as the best of their weapons. And as they observed no order, they perplexed the enemy so sorely with lashing 'em in the eyes; and the women and children seeing their husbands so treated, being of fearful cowardly dispositions, and hearing the English cry out, "Yield and live, yield and be pardoned," they all run in amongst their husbands and fathers, and hung about 'em, crying out, "Yield, yield; and leave Caesar to their revenge"; that by degrees the slaves abandoned Caesar, and left him only Tuscan and his heroic Imoinda; who, grown big as she was, did nevertheless press near her lord, having a bow and a quiver full of poisoned arrows, which she managed with such dexterity that she wounded several, and shot the governor⁸ into the shoulder; of which wound he had like to have died, but that an Indian woman, his mistress, sucked the wound and cleansed it from the venom. But however, he stirred not from the place till he had parleyed with Caesar, who he found was resolved to die fighting, and would not be taken; no more would Tuscan, or Imoinda. But he, more thirsting after revenge of another sort than that of depriving him of life, now made use of all his art of talking and dissembling, and besought Caesar to yield himself upon terms which he himself should propose, and should be sacredly assented to and kept by him. He told him, it was not that he any longer feared him, or could believe the force of two men, and a young heroine, could overcome all them, with all the slaves now on their side also; but it was the vast esteem he had for his person, the desire he had to serve so gallant a man, and to hinder himself from the reproach hereafter of having been the occasion of the death of a prince whose valor and magnanimity deserved the empire of the world. He protested to him, he looked upon this action as gallant and brave, however tending to the prejudice of his lord and master, who would by it have lost so considerable a number of slaves; that this flight of his should be looked on as a heat of youth, and rashness of a too forward courage, and an unconsidered impatience of liberty, and no more; and that he labored in vain to accomplish that which they would effectually perform as soon as any ship arrived that would touch on his coast. "So that if you will be pleased," continued he, "to surrender yourself, all imaginable respect shall be paid you; and yourself, your wife, and child, if it be here born, shall depart free out of our land."

7. Swords with protective hilt guards.

8. I.e., Byam, the deputy governor.

But Caesar would hear of no composition;⁹ though Byam urged, if he pursued and went on in his design, he would inevitably perish, either by great snakes, wild beasts, or hunger; and he ought to have regard to his wife, whose condition required ease, and not the fatigues of tedious travel, where she could not be secured from being devoured. But Caesar told him, there was no faith in the white men or the gods they adored, who instructed 'em in principles so false that honest men could not live amongst 'em; though no people professed so much, none performed so little; that he knew what he had to do when he dealt with men of honor, but with them a man ought to be eternally on his guard, and never to eat and drink with Christians without his weapon of defense in his hand; and for his own security, never to credit one word they spoke. As for the rashness and inconsiderateness of his action, he would confess the governor is in the right; and that he was ashamed of what he had done, in endeavoring to make those free who were by nature slaves, poor wretched rogues, fit to be used as Christians' tools; dogs, treacherous and cowardly, fit for such masters; and they wanted only but to be whipped into the knowledge of the Christian gods to be the vilest of all creeping things, to learn to worship such deities as had not power to make 'em just, brave, or honest. In fine, after a thousand things of this nature, not fit here to be recited, he told Byam he had rather die than live upon the same earth with such dogs. But Trefry and Byam pleaded and protested together so much that Trefry, believing the governor to mean what he said, and speaking very cordially himself, generously put himself into Caesar's hands, and took him aside and persuaded him, even with tears, to live, by surrendering himself, and to name his conditions. Caesar was overcome by his wit and reasons, and in consideration of Imoinda; and demanding what he desired, and that it should be ratified by their hands in writing, because he had perceived that was the common way of contract between man and man, amongst the whites. All this was performed, and Tuscan's pardon was put in, and they surrender to the governor, who walked peaceably down into the plantation with 'em, after giving order to bury their dead. Caesar was very much toiled with the bustle of the day, for he had fought like a fury; and what mischief was done he and Tuscan performed alone, and gave their enemies a fatal proof that they durst do anything and feared no mortal force.

But they were no sooner arrived at the place where all the slaves receive their punishments of whipping, but they laid hands on Caesar and Tuscan, faint with heat and toil; and surprising them, bound them to two several stakes, and whipped them in a most deplorable and inhuman manner, rending the very flesh from their bones; especially Caesar, who was not perceived to make any moan or to alter his face, only to roll his eyes on the faithless governor, and those he believed guilty, with fierceness and indignation; and to complete his rage, he saw every one of those slaves, who but a few days before adored him as something more than mortal, now had a whip to give him some lashes, while he strove not to break his fetters; though if he had, it were impossible. But he pronounced a woe and revenge from his eyes, that darted fire that 'twas at once both awful and terrible to behold.

When they thought they were sufficiently revenged on him, they untied him, almost fainting with loss of blood from a thousand wounds all over his body, from which they had rent his clothes, and led him bleeding and naked as he was, and loaded him all over with irons; and then rubbed his wounds, to

9. Settlement.

complete their cruelty, with Indian pepper, which had like to have made him raving mad; and in this condition made him so fast to the ground that he could not stir, if his pains and wounds would have given him leave. They spared Imoinda, and did not let her see this barbarity committed towards her lord, but carried her down to Parham and shut her up; which was not in kindness to her, but for fear she should die with the sight, or miscarry, and then they should lose a young slave and perhaps the mother.

You must know, that when the news was brought on Monday morning that Caesar had betaken himself to the woods and carried with him all the Negroes, we were possessed with extreme fear, which no persuasions could dissipate, that he would secure himself till night, and then that he would come down and cut all our throats. This apprehension made all the females of us fly down the river, to be secured; and while we were away they acted this cruelty. For I suppose I had authority and interest enough there, had I suspected any such thing, to have prevented it; but we had not gone many leagues but the news overtook us that Caesar was taken and whipped like a common slave. We met on the river with Colonel Martin, a man of great gallantry, wit, and goodness, and whom I have celebrated in a character of my new comedy¹ by his own name, in memory of so brave a man. He was wise and eloquent and, from the fineness of his parts, bore a great sway over the hearts of all the colony. He was a friend to Caesar, and resented this false dealing with him very much. We carried him back to Parham, thinking to have made an accommodation; when we came, the first news we heard was that the governor was dead of a wound Imoinda had given him; but it was not so well. But it seems he would have the pleasure of beholding the revenge he took on Caesar, and before the cruel ceremony was finished, he dropped down; and then they perceived the wound he had on his shoulder was by a venomed arrow, which, as I said, his Indian mistress healed by sucking the wound.

We were no sooner arrived but we went up to the plantation to see Caesar, whom we found in a very miserable and unexpressible condition; and I have a thousand times admired how he lived, in so much tormenting pain. We said all things to him that trouble, pity, and good nature could suggest, protesting our innocency of the fact and our abhorrence of such cruelties; making a thousand professions of services to him and begging as many pardons for the offenders, till we said so much that he believed we had no hand in his ill treatment; but told us he could never pardon Byam; as for Trefry, he confessed he saw his grief and sorrow for his suffering, which he could not hinder, but was like to have been beaten down by the very slaves for speaking in his defense. But for Byam, who was their leader, their head—and should, by his justice and honor, have been an example to 'em—for him, he wished to live, to take a dire revenge of him, and said, "It had been well for him if he had sacrificed me, instead of giving me the contemptible² whip." He refused to talk much, but begging us to give him our hands, he took 'em, and protested never to lift up his to do us any harm. He had a great respect for Colonel Martin, and always took his counsel like that of a parent, and assured him he would obey him in anything but his revenge on Byam. "Therefore," said he, "for his own safety, let him speedily dispatch me; for if I could dispatch myself I would not, till that justice were done to my injured person,³ and the contempt

1. *The Younger Brother, or The Amorous Jilt*, not produced until 1696 despite this piece of promotion.

2. Showing contempt,

3. Body or character,

of a soldier. No, I would not kill myself, even after a whipping, but will be content to live with that infamy, and be pointed at by every grinning slave, till I have completed my revenge; and then you shall see that Oroonoko scorns to live with the indignity that was put on Caesar." All we could do could get no more words from him; and we took care to have him put immediately into a healing bath to rid him of his pepper, and ordered a chirurgeon⁴ to anoint him with healing balm, which he suffered; and in some time he began to be able to walk and eat. We failed not to visit him every day, and to that end had him brought to an apartment at Parham.

The governor was no sooner recovered, and had heard of the menaces of Caesar, but he called his council; who (not to disgrace them, or burlesque the government there) consisted of such notorious villains as Newgate⁵ never transported; and possibly originally were such who understood neither the laws of God or man, and had no sort of principles to make 'em worthy the name of men; but at the very council table would contradict and fight with one another, and swear so bloodily that 'twas terrible to hear and see 'em. (Some of 'em were afterwards hanged when the Dutch took possession of the place, others sent off in chains.) But calling these special rulers of the nation together, and requiring their counsel in this weighty affair, they all concluded that (Damn em) it might be their own cases; and that Caesar ought to be made an example to all the Negroes, to fright 'em from daring to threaten their betters, their lords and masters; and at this rate no man was safe from his own slaves; and concluded, *nemine contradicente*,⁶ that Caesar should be hanged.

Trefry then thought it time to use his authority, and told Byam his command did not extend to his lord's plantation, and that Parham was as much exempt from the law as Whitehall;⁷ and that they ought no more to touch the servants of the Lord (who there represented the King's person) than they could those about the King himself; and that Parham was a sanctuary; and though his lord were absent in person, his power was still in being there, which he had entrusted with him as far as the dominions of his particular plantations reached, and all that belonged to it; the rest of the country, as Byam was lieutenant to his lord, he might exercise his tyranny upon. Trefry had others as powerful, or more, that interested themselves in Caesar's life, and absolutely said he should be defended. So turning the governor and his wise council out of doors (for they sat at Parham House), they set a guard upon our landing place, and would admit none but those we called friends to us and Caesar.

The governor having remained wounded at Parham till his recovery was completed, Caesar did not know but he was still there; and indeed, for the most part his time was spent there, for he was one that loved to live at other people's expense; and if he were a day absent, he was ten present there, and used to play and walk and hunt and fish with Caesar. So that Caesar did not at all doubt, if he once recovered strength, but he should find an opportunity of being revenged on him. Though after such a revenge, he could not hope to live, for if he escaped the fury of the English mobile,⁸ who perhaps would have been glad of the occasion to have killed him, he was resolved not to survive his whipping; yet he had, some tender hours, a repenting softness, which he called his fits of coward, wherein he struggled with Love for the victory of his heart, which took part with his charming Imoinda there; but for the most part

4. Surgeon.

5. The major London prison, from which criminals were transported to the colonies.

6. No one disagreeing (Latin).

7. The king's palace in London. Trefry stands as Lord Willoughby's deputy on his private land, Byam in the colony at large.

8. Common people or mob.

his time was passed in melancholy thought and black designs. He considered, if he should do this deed and die, either in the attempt or after it, he left his lovely Imoinda a prey, or at best a slave, to the enraged multitude; his great heart could not endure that thought. "Perhaps," said he, "she may be first ravished by every brute, exposed first to their nasty lusts and then a shameful death." No; he could not live a moment under that apprehension, too insupportable to be borne. These were his thoughts and his silent arguments with his heart, as he told us afterwards; so that now resolving not only to kill Byam but all those he thought had enraged him, pleasing his great heart with the fancied slaughter he should make over the whole face of the plantation, he first resolved on a deed, that (however horrid it at first appeared to us all), when we had heard his reasons, we thought it brave and just. Being able to walk and, as he believed, fit for the execution of his great design, he begged Trefry to trust him into the air, believing a walk would do him good, which was granted him; and taking Imoinda with him, as he used to do in his more happy and calmer days, he led her up into a wood, where, after (with a thousand sighs, and long gazing silently on her face, while tears gushed, in spite of him, from his eyes) he told her his design first of killing her, and then his enemies, and next himself, and the impossibility of escaping, and therefore he told her the necessity of dying, he found the heroic wife faster pleading for death than he was to propose it, when she found his fixed resolution, and on her knees besought him not to leave her a prey to his enemies. He (grieved to death) yet pleased at her noble resolution, took her up, and embracing her with all the passion and languishment of a dying lover, drew his knife to kill this treasure of his soul, this pleasure of his eyes; while tears trickled down his cheeks, hers were smiling with joy she should die by so noble a hand, and be sent in her own country (for that's their notion of the next world) by him she so tenderly loved and so truly adored in this; for wives have a respect for their husbands equal to what any other people pay a deity, and when a man finds any occasion to quit his wife, if he love her, she dies by his hand; if not, he sells her, or suffers some other to kill her. It being thus, you may believe the deed was soon resolved on; and 'tis not to be doubted but the parting, the eternal leave-taking of two such lovers, so greatly born, so sensible,⁹ so beautiful, so young, and so fond, must be very moving, as the relation of it was to me afterwards.

All that love could say in such cases being ended, and all the intermitting irresolutions being adjusted, the lovely, young, and adored victim lays herself down before the sacrificer; while he, with a hand resolved and a heart brealdng within, gave the fatal stroke; first cutting her throat, and then severing her yet smiling face from that delicate body, pregnant as it was with fruits of tenderest love. As soon as he had done, he laid the body decently on leaves and flowers, of which he made a bed, and concealed it under the same coverlid of nature; only her face he left yet bare to look on. But when he found she was dead and past all retrieve, never more to bless him with her eyes and soft language, his grief swelled up to rage; he tore, he raved, he roared, like some monster of the wood, calling on the loved name of Imoinda. A thousand times he turned the fatal knife that did the deed toward his own heart, with a resolution to go immediately after her; but dire revenge, which now was a thousand times more fierce in his soul than before, prevents him; and he would cry out, "No; since I have sacrificed Imoinda to my revenge, shall I lose that glory which I have

9. Sensitive.

purchased so dear as at the price of the fairest, dearest, softest creature that ever nature made? No, no!" Then, at her name, grief would get the ascendant of rage, and he would lie down by her side and water her face with showers of tears, which never were wont to fall from those eyes. And however bent he was on his intended slaughter, he had not power to stir from the sight of this dear object, now more beloved and more adored than ever.

He remained in this deploring condition for two days, and never rose from the ground where he had made his sad sacrifice. At last, rousing from her side, and accusing himself with living too long now Imoinda was dead, and that the deaths of those barbarous enemies were deferred too long, he resolved now to finish the great work; but offering to rise, he found his strength so decayed that he reeled to and fro, like boughs assailed by contrary winds; so that he was forced to lie down again, and try to summon all his courage to his aid. He found his brains turned round, and his eyes were dizzy, and objects appeared not the same to him they were wont to do; his breath was short, and all his limbs surprised with a faintness he had never felt before. He had not eat in two days, which was one occasion of this feebleness, but excess of grief was the greatest; yet still he hoped he should recover vigor to act his design, and lay expecting it yet six days longer, still mourning over the dead idol of his heart, and striving every day to rise, but could not.

In all this time you may believe we were in no little affliction for Caesar and his wife; some were of opinion he was escaped never to return; others thought some accident had happened to him. But however, we failed not to send out an hundred people several ways to search for him; a party of about forty went that way he took, among whom was Tuscan, who was perfectly reconciled to Byam. They had not gone very far into the wood but they smelt an unusual smell, as of a dead body; for stinks must be very noisome that can be distinguished among such a quantity of natural sweets as every inch of that land produces. So that they concluded they should find him dead, or somebody that was so. They passed on towards it, as loathsome as it was, and made such a rustling among the leaves that lie thick on the ground, by continual falling, that Caesar heard he was approached; and though he had during the space of these eight days endeavored to rise, but found he wanted strength, yet looking up and seeing his pursuers, he rose and reeled to a neighboring tree, against which he fixed his back; and being within a dozen yards of those that advanced and saw him, he called out to them and bid them approach no nearer, if they would be safe. So that they stood still, and hardly believing their eyes, that would persuade them that it was Caesar that spoke to 'em, so much was he altered, they asked him what he had done with his wife, for they smelt a stink that almost struck them dead. He, pointing to the dead body, sighing, cried, "Behold her there." They put off the flowers that covered her with their sticks, and found she was killed, and cried out, "Oh, monster! that hast murdered thy wife." Then asking him why he did so cruel a deed, he replied, he had no leisure to answer impertinent questions. "You may go back," continued he, "and tell the faithless governor he may thank fortune that I am breathing my last, and that my arm is too feeble to obey my heart in what it had designed him." But his tongue faltering, and trembling, he could scarce end what he was saying. The English, taking advantage by his weakness, cried, "Let us take him alive by all means." He heard 'em; and as if he had revived from a fainting, or a dream, he cried out, "No, gentlemen, you are deceived; you will find no more Caesars to be whipped, no more find a faith in me. Feeble as you think me, I have strength yet left to secure me from a second indignity." They swore

all anew, and he only shook his head and beheld them with scorn. Then they cried out, "Who will venture on this single man? Will nobody?" They stood all silent while Caesar replied, "Fatal will be the attempt to the first adventurer, let him assure himself," and at that word, held up his knife in a menacing posture. "Look ye, ye faithless crew," said he, "'tis not life I seek, nor am I afraid of dying," and at that word cut a piece of flesh from his own throat, and threw it at 'em; "yet still I would live if I could, till I had perfected my revenge. But oh! it cannot be; I feel life gliding from my eyes and heart, and if I make not haste, I shall yet fall a victim to the shameful whip." At that, he ripped up his own belly, and took his bowels and pulled 'em out, with what strength he could; while some, on their knees imploring, besought him to hold his hand. But when they saw him tottering, they cried out, "Will none venture on him?" A bold English cried, "Yes, if he were the devil" (taking courage when he saw him almost dead); and swearing a horrid oath for his farewell to the world, he rushed on him; Caesar, with his armed hand, met him so fairly as stuck him to the heart, and he fell dead at his feet. Tuscan, seeing that, cried out, "I love thee, O Caesar, and therefore will not let thee die, if possible." And running to him, took him in his arms; but at the same time warding a blow that Caesar made at his bosom, he received it quite through his arm; and Caesar having not the strength to pluck the knife forth, though he attempted it, Tuscan neither pulled it out himself nor suffered it to be pulled out, but came down with it sticking in his arm; and the reason he gave for it was, because the air should not get into the wound. They put their hands across, and carried Caesar between six of 'em, fainted as he was, and they thought dead, or just dying; and they brought him to Parham, and laid him on a couch, and had the surgeon immediately to him, who dressed his wounds and sewed up his belly, and used means to bring him to life, which they effected. We ran all to see him, and if before we thought him so beautiful a sight, he was now so altered that his face was like a death's head blacked over, nothing but teeth and eye-holes. For some days we suffered nobody to speak to him, but caused cordials to be poured down his throat, which sustained his life; and in six or seven days he recovered his senses. For you must know that wounds are almost to a miracle cured in the Indies, unless wounds in the legs, which rarely ever cure.

When he was well enough to speak, we talked to him, and asked him some questions about his wife, and the reasons why he killed her; and he then told us what I have related of that resolution, and of his parting; and he besought us we would let him die, and was extremely afflicted to think it was possible he might live; he assured us if we did not dispatch him, he would prove very fatal to a great many. We said all we could to make him live, and gave him new assurances; but he begged we would not think so poorly of him, or of his love to Imoinda, to imagine we could flatter him to life again; but the surgeon assured him he could not live, and therefore he need not fear. We were all (but Caesar) afflicted at this news; and the sight was gashly;¹ his discourse was sad, and the earthly smell about him so strong that I was persuaded to leave the place for some time (being myself but sickly, and very apt to fall into fits of dangerous illness upon any extraordinary melancholy). The servants and Trefry and the surgeons promised all to take what possible care they could of the life of Caesar, and I, taking boat, went with other company to Colonel Martin's, about three days' journey down the river; but I was no sooner gone, but the governor taking Trefry about some pretended earnest business a day's

1. Ghastly.

journey up the river, having communicated his design to one Banister, a wild Irishman and one of the council, a fellow of absolute barbarity, and fit to execute any villainy, but was rich: he came up to Parham, and forcibly took Caesar, and had him carried to the same post where he was whipped; and causing him to be tied to it, and a great fire made before him, he told him he should die like a dog, as he was. Caesar replied, this was the first piece of bravery that ever Banister did, and he never spoke sense till he pronounced that word; and if he would keep it, he would declare, in the other world, that he was the only man of all the whites that ever he heard speak truth. And turning to the men that bound him, he said, "My friends, am I to die, or to be whipped?" And they cried, "Whipped! No, you shall not escape so well." And then he replied, smiling, "A blessing on thee," and assured them they need not tie him, for he would stand fixed like a rock, and endure death so as should encourage them to die. "But if you whip me," said he, "be sure you tie me fast."

He had learned to take tobacco; and when he was assured he should die, he desired they would give him a pipe in his mouth, ready lighted, which they did; and the executioner came, and first cut off his members,² and threw them into the fire; after that, with an ill-favored knife, they cut his ears, and his nose, and burned them; he still smoked on, as if nothing had touched him. Then they hacked off one of his arms, and still he bore up, and held his pipe; but at the cutting off the other arm, his head sunk, and his pipe dropped, and he gave up the ghost, without a groan or a reproach. My mother and sister were by him all the while, but not suffered to save him, so rude and wild were the rabble, and so inhuman were the justices, who stood by to see the execution, who after paid dearly enough for their insolence. They cut Caesar in quarters, and sent them to several of the chief plantations. One quarter was sent to Colonel Martin, who refused it, and swore he had rather see the quarters of Banister and the governor himself than those of Caesar on his plantations, and that he could govern his Negroes without terrifying and grieving them with frightful spectacles of a mangled king.

Thus died this great man, worthy of a better fate, and a more sublime wit than mine to write his praise; yet, I hope, the reputation of my pen is considerable enough to make his glorious name to survive to all ages, with that of the brave, the beautiful, and the constant Imoinda.

1688

2. Genitals.

WILLIAM CONGREVE

1670-1729

Both of William Congreve's parents came from well-to-do and prominent county families. His father, a younger son, obtained a commission as lieutenant in the army and moved to Ireland in 1674. There the future playwright was educated at Kilkenny School and Trinity College, Dublin; at both places he was a younger contemporary of Swift. In 1691 he took rooms in the Middle Temple and began to study law, but