THE SPECTATOR


The poet evokes Submission, in sight of all her Afflictions and Ill Usages, becomes a Hand of Sense and Mercy, a kind Husband, and Emilia a happy Wife.

You guard the Angels to whose Care Heaven has entrusted the dearest heads, guide her still forward in the Paths of Virtue, defend her from the Insolence and Wrought of this underprived World; at length when we must no more converse with such Purity on Earth, lead her gently home innocent and unpreparatory to a better Place, where by an easy Transition from what she now is, she may shine forth an Angel of Light.

No. 304.

[ADAMS]

Saturday, February 26.

Violent will not be wise:
Judicious argument can convert scorners.-Hor.

I HAVE seen in the Works of a Modern Philosopher, a Man of the Spock in the Sop. My last Paper of the Faults and Blessings in Milton's Paradise Lost, may be considered as a Piece of the same Nature. To pursue the Allusion. As it is observed, that among the bright Parts of the luminous Body above-menstrated, there are some which glow more intensely, and dart a stronger Light than others; so, notwithstanding I have already shown Milton's Poem to be very beautiful in general, I shall now proceed to take notice of such Beauties as appear to me more exquisite than the rest. Milton has proposed the Subject of his Poem in the following Verses:

Of Man's best Disobedience, and the fruit
Of our forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Grew Death into the World and all our woe.
With loss of Eden, all our greater woe,
Lost are we, and reigns the blasted tree.
Sing heavily hence.

These Lines are perhaps as plain, simple and unadorned as any of the whole Poem, in which Particular the Author has conformed himself to the Example of Homer, and the Preceptor of Horace.

His Invocation to a Work which aims in a great Measure upon the Creation of the World, is very No. 303, properly made to the Muse who inspired Homer in Iliad, those Books from whose Author the Author drew his Subject. Feb. 9th, and to the Holy Spirit who is therein represented as operating in a particular Manse in the first Production of Nature. This whole Epicureism rises very happily into noble Language and Sentiment, as I think the Transition to the Table is exquisitely beautiful and natural.

The Morn-may Ascension, in which the Angels are hurried after their dreadful Overthrow and Fall from Heaven, before they could recover either the Use of Thought or Speech, is a noble Circumstance, and very finely imagined. The Division of Hell into seven Parts and into seven Circles in the same manner, with that particular Circumstance of the Exclusion of Hope from those Infernal Regions, are Instances of the same great and fruitful Involution.

The Thoughts in the first Speech and Description of Satan, who is one of the principal Actors in this Poem, are wonderfully proper to give us a full Idea of him, his Pride, I envy, and Revenge, Obstinate, Dissect and Impetuous, are all of them very subtly interwoven. In short, his first Speech is a Complication of all those Passions which display themselves separately in several other of his Speeches in the Poem.

The whole Part of this great Enemy of Mankind is filled with such incidents as are very apt to raise and terrify the Reader's Imagination. Of this Nature, in the Book nine, before us, in his being the first that awakes out of the general Torpor, with his Poesy on the burning Lake, his rising from it, and the Description of his Shield and Spear.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest sons,
With head up lift above the wave, and sees
That sparkling shield, his other part but seen
Ponte on the Point, extended long and deep,
And which he could bear firmly in his hand.
But doubtful might be nigh off the pool
His weighty Tablet; as each sight the happened
Evil's back and stop their pointed Spears, and new'd

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Amidst those Innumerous which his Engaged Spirit No. 203. utters in other Places of the Poem, the Author has taken care to introduce none that is not big with Abundancy, and incapable of shocking a Religious Reader: His Words, as the Poet himself describes them, bearing only a Scarcity of Words, not Substance. He isHews with great Art described as owning his Adversary to be Almighty. Whatever perverse Interpretation he puts on the Justice, Mercy, and other Attributes of the Supreme Being, he frequently confesses his Omission, that being the Perfection he was forced to allow him, and the only Consideration which could support his Poet under the Shame of his Defeat. Nor must I here omit that Beautiful Circumstance of his bursting out in Verses, upon his Survey of those Innumerable Spirits whom he had involved in the same Guilt and Ruin with Himself.

The Catalogue of Evil Spirits has Abundance of Learning in it, and a very agreeable Turn of Poetry, which rises in a great measure from its describing the Place where they were worshipped, by those beautifull Marks of Rivers so frequent among the Antient Poet. The Author had doubtless in this Place Horus's Catalogue of Ships, and Virgin's List of Warriors in his View. The Characters of Moloch and Beliel prepare the Reader's Mind for their respective Speeches and Behaviour in the second and sixth Book. The Account of Thaumas is finely Romantic, and suitable in what we read about the Antients of the Worship which was paid to that Idol. The Passage in the Catalogue, explaining the manner how Spirits transport themselves by Contraction, or Enlargement of their Dimensions, is introduced with great Judgment, to make way for several surprising Accidents in the sequel of the Poem. There follows one
one, at the very end of the First Book, which is what the French Critics call Marvelous, but at the same time producible by reason of the Passages last mentioned. As soon as the Infernal Palace is finished, we are told the Multitude and Crowd of Spirits immediately abounds in itself. Compass, that there might be Room for such a numberless Assembly in this Consummating Hall. But it is the Poet's Reflection upon this Thought, which I must admire, and which is indeed very noble in its kind. For he tells us, that notwithstanding the vainglorious, among the fallen Spirits, exalted their Forms, those of the First Bank and Dignity still preserved their natural Dimensions.

Thus the Spirits in smallest Forms Exult of their being unseemly, and were at least Through their Number, and under the Hall Of that Infernal Court, but for within, And in the midst of it, as they are, the Great Scratchsmith Lares and Capirotism, In these stones and Stones, and Stones, In stones, stones, and Stones, A universal Drygall God on Golden State, Frequent and full——

The Character of Masculum and the Description of the Pandemonium, are full of Beautees.

There are several other Strokes in the First Book wonderfully poetical, and Instances of the Sublime Genius so peculiar to the Author. Such is the Description of Avast's Statue, and the Infernal Standard, which he underlies; as also of that ghastly Light, which the Fiends appear to one another in their Place of Torments.

The Beat of Execution, void of all Light, Save what the glimmering of these lost Flames Seal with a pale and drear

The Shot of the whole Host of fallen Angels when drawn up in Battal Array:

The Universal Host are sent A Shot that they Hails to Comets, and beyond Exalted the Reign of Chaos and old Night

The Review, which the Leader makes of his Infernal Army:

He then the armed fire, There his experienced eye, and soon recover The whole Nation view their order due, Their Visions and future as of Gods, Their number two he won. And now his Heart Divides with pangs and hardening in his strength

The Flood of Light, which appeared upon the drawing of their Swords.

He spake and set his Words not few Millions of flaming Swords, drawn from the Heavens Of mighty Cherubim, the sudden Blaze For round illumined He——

The sudden Production of the Pandemonium;

Arose out of the Earth a frightful Shape fierce as an Exhibition, with the Sound Of loud Scourges and Violent sufferance.

The artificial Illuminations made in it

From the arched Reef Produced by some Myths, many a Ray Of Stunts Lamps and blazing Coasts, let With Vividness and Astolat, sudden Light As from a Sky——

There are also several noble Similes and Allusions in the First Book of Patericaus, And here I must observe, that when Milton alludes either to Things or Persons, he never quite his Simile if it rises to some very great bulk, which is often foreign to the Occasion that gave Birth to it. The Resssemblance does not, perhaps, last above a Line or two, but the Poet runs on with the Haste, till he has raised out of it some glorious Image or Sentiment, proper to Influence the Mind of the Reader, and to give it that sublime Kind of Entertainment, which is suitable to the Nature of an Heroical Poem. Those, who are acquainted with Homer's and Virgil's Way of Writing, cannot but be pleased with this kind of Scenari in Milton's Similitudes. I am the more particular on this Head, because ignorant Readers, who have formed their Taste upon the quaint Similes, and little Turnes of Wit, which are so much in Vogue.
among modern Poets, cannot refill these Beauties which are of a much higher Nature, and are therefore apt to cause Milton's Comparisons, in which they do not see any surprising Points of Likeness. Moreover, Persuad was a Man of this kind. For, be that very Reason has endeavoured to turn into Folio several of his Satires, the which he calls Comparisons of longue operis, Long-wafted Comparisons. I shall insinuate this Paper in the First Book of Milton with the Answer which Monsieur Havell makes to Persuad on this Occasion. Comparisons says he, 'in Odes and Epic Poems are not introduced only to illustrate and embellish the Discourse, but to amuse and relax the Mind of the Reader, by frequently disengaging him from too painful an Attention to the principal Subject, and by leading him into other agreeable Images, Homer' says he, 'in this Particular, whose Comparisons abound with such Images of Nature as are proper to relieve and diversifie his Subjects. He, continually instructs the Reader, and makes him take notice, even in Objects which are every Day before our Eyes, of such Circumstances as we should not otherwise have observed.' To this he adds, a Maxim universally acknowledged, 'That it is not necessary in Poetry for the Points of the Comparison to correspond with one another exactly, but that a general Resemblance is sufficient, and that too much Novelty in this Particular savours of the Rhetorician and Epigrammatist.'

In short, if we look into the Conduct of Homer, Virgil and Milton as the great Fable is the Soul of each Poem, so to give their Works an agreeable Variety, their Episodes are so many short Fables, and their Similes so many short Episodes; to which you may add, if you please, that their Metaphors are so many short Similes. If the Reader considers the Comparisons in the First Book of Milton the Sun in an Eclipse; of the sleeping Leviathan of the Best swarming about their Hires, of the fairy Dames, in the View wherein I have here placed them, he will easily discover the great Beauties that are in each of those Passages. L

Mander

THE SPECTATOR

No. 304. Monday, February 15. 1712.

Mr. Spectator.

I have for some Years indulged a Passion for a young Lady of Age and Qualities suitable to my own, but very much superior in Fortune. It is the Fashion with Parents (how justly I leave you to judge) to make all Regards give Way to the Article of Wealth. From this Consideration it is that I have conceived the ancient Love I have for her, but I am beholding to the Person of my Love for many Advantages which I reap from it towards the better Conduct of my Life. A certain Conspicuous to all the World, a strong Desire to oblige where'er it lay in my Power, and a circumspect Behaviour in all my Words and Actions, have rendered me more particularly acceptable to all my Friends and Acquaintances. Love has had the same good Effect upon