

THE

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*ἔνθα βουλαὶ μὲν γερόντων καὶ νέων ἀνδρῶν ἄμιλλαι  
καὶ χοροὶ καὶ Μοῖσα καὶ ἀγλαΐα.*

CONDUCTED

BY THE SENIOR CLASS,

PRINCETON COLLEGE.

PRINCETON, NEW JERSEY.

teristic. Vigor and beauty of imagination and metaphorical expression are here found, not less developed, perhaps, than among the Aryans. Indeed, this characteristic is so striking that one of the most eminent writers on Rhetoric has not thought it unworthy of especial notice. Now, though there may be differences corresponding to the peculiarities of each, and to the different countries they inhabited, yet the same fact is illustrated, that barbarous nations have imagination and some sentiment very highly developed. We find the same fact re-appearing when we notice that poetry is older than prose.

But one point especially to be noticed is, that this superstition, as it really is, affords additional proof of the existence of God. Man, when left to himself, gives utterance to this one great truth. Seeing things above his comprehension he immediately refers them to some higher power. And it is to be carefully noticed that it is only after knowledge given man pride and self-confidence that he presumes to deny the God who made him.

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### MILTON'S SATAN.

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The position held by Satan in *Paradise Lost* is a most prominent one, so much so, indeed, that he has been thought by many to be the hero of that poem, and even such a man as Dryden is found advocating this opinion. Addison's idea, though, seems to us far more in accordance with the true view of the case:—*Paradise Lost* was never meant to have any hero, but, if we *will* have one for it, it is undoubtedly the Messiah himself. But, while we do not

agree with those who would exalt Satan to the first place in the poem, we do yet feel it to be undeniable that he occupies a position second, in *prominence*, to none; Adam's is totally unable to bear comparison with his, in this respect, and, indeed, if we had no one to whom we might look, we would be forced to adopt Dryden's opinion.

Occupying so prominent a place, in a book so widely read and so universally admired, it is not to be wondered at, that the most of our ideas of Satan are drawn from Paradise Lost, and, for this reason, it is much to be lamented that Milton's account does not more closely coincide with the Scriptures. That it is far different, though, admits of no doubt, and our present purpose is to look at one or two points in which this difference is most apparent, leaving to yourselves the task of noticing the lesser, but not less real errors.

In the personal character of Satan, Milton retains somewhat of nobility, even though he is dealing with one so deeply fallen, while for this there is no sort of Scripture warrant. Wherever he is there spoken of it is with characteristics of the utmost depravity without a single redeeming trait, but, in Paradise Lost, while held up to our detestation, he is yet clothed with qualities that command our respect.

And the same, or rather greater inconsistency is found in the deeds accredited to him. For instance, that part on which the whole of the rest lingers, the fall of the angels, is utterly wrong,—erroneous in its conception, erroneous in the whole manner of its treatment. The chapter in Revelations, on which Milton's whole fabric is built, manifestly refers, not to what has been, but to scenes to be yet, in the fullness of time, enacted in Heaven. It is after the twelve hundred and sixty prophetic days have passed, that Michael and his angels are to drive forth the great dragon

from Heaven, and not till then. And the only other two passages that speak of the fall of Spirits (Jude and II. Peter ii.) cannot be made to refer to the Devil and his crew, for they tell of angels condemned, and cast into the blackness of darkness, there to remain chained to all eternity; while it is certain that the followers of that old serpent, the enemy of God and man, are at perfect liberty to go over the world,—yes, and even to Heaven itself. It is to be regretted that a part of the poem so highly wrought and so full of noble thought and still more noble expression, should be vitiated thus, having been founded on an error. But still can we read and admire it for its lofty imagery and fine poetic fancy, and, laying it aside, still can we exclaim with Isaiah of old, “How hast thou fallen, O Lucifer, thou son of the morning!”

And further, there is no passage, in the whole Scriptures, that can lead to the conclusion that Satan ever has been cast into Hell, but, on the contrary, many which seem to show the opposite. That he will, in the end, be thrown into the lake of fire is a certainty, for so we are distinctly taught in more places than one, and those prophetic visions of the seer at Patmos, which we have seen before to have proved a stumbling block in Milton's way, also here led him into devious wanderings. We think we are stating Gospel truth when we affirm that Satan never was in Hell; the Bible speaks of him as in Heaven accusing man, and as on earth tempting man, but never in Hell, nor does it ever insinuate that such could be the case. So we are obliged to look on the fine description of Pandemonium, the magnificent debates held within its precincts as only poetry without even a foundation of truth. But, at the same time, we need not cease admiring them, just as we look upon the allegory of Sin and Death as among the finest passages of the whole work, while yet, as an allegory, it does not pretend to be in accordance with strict fact.

What is our conclusion? That we should cast aside a book, acknowledged to be one of the finest works the world has produced, because being poetry it is too poetical? By no means; but to read,—aye, study it, but, at the same time, to be on our guard not to implicitly trust it;—to attempt to get only poetry from it, and to seek for Scripture truth in naught else than the Bible.

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### THE MISTLETOE.

The sun has risen high in heaven, and pierces wind-swayed trees,  
Beneath whose netted roof there strays sunlight through trembling leaves.  
From brake all clambered o'er by vine comes sound of tusked boar,  
And noise of fluttering wing, and song of bird, and dismal caw.  
And over there a gnarled oak with massive twisted roots,  
Has forced apart the forest growth by boughs that wide outshoot.  
Yet closely look, and you will see the mistletoe clings there,  
A dark green bunch upon yon bough, the Druid's jealous care.  
Now perfumes rise from flower cups, and grateful is the shade,  
While babbling near a slender rill tells that it here has strayed.  
But Winter's hand will touch the scene and trace bare trees with white,  
Congeal the rill in ice, dismiss the flowers and birds from sight.  
The mistletoe in deepest green will then stand forth alone,  
Kissed here and there by flakes of snow; yet gusts of wind will moan  
Among the bare cold boughs which tossed about, like searching hand  
Will seem to seek the scattered leaves, or else with threat, demand.