

mine. But I write to you now, only to give you the Character of *Belinda*, as a Woman that has Address enough to demonstrate a Gratitude to her Lover, without giving him Hopes of Success in his Passion. *Belinda* has from a great Wit, govern'd by as great Prudence, and both adorned with Innocence, the Happiness of always being ready to discover her real Thoughts. She has many of us, who are now her Admirers; but her Treatment of us is so just and proportioned to our Merit towards her, and what we are in ourselves, that I protest to you, I have neither Jealousy nor Hatred toward my Rivals. Such is her Goodness, and the Acknowledgement of every Man who admires her, that he thinks he ought to believe she will take him who best deserves her. I will not say that this Peace among us is not owing to Self-Love, which prompts each to think himself the best Deserver: I think there is something uncommon and worthy of Imitation in this Lady's Character. If you will please to print my Letter, you will oblige the little Fraternity of happy Rivals, and in a more particular manner,

S I R,

Your most humble Servant,

T

Will. Cymon.



Nº 363. Saturday, April 26.

— Crudelis ubique

*Luctus, ubique pavor, & plurima Mortis imago. Virg.*

MILTON has shewn a wonderful Art in describing that variety of Passions which arise in our first Parents upon the Breach of the Commandment that had been given them. We see them gradually passing from the Triumph of their Guilt thro' Remorse, Shame, Despair, Contrition, Prayer and Hope, to a perfect and complete Repentance. At the end of the tenth Book they

they are represented as prostrating themselves 'upon the Ground, and watering the Earth with their Tears: To which the Poet joins this beautiful Circumstance, that they offer'd up their penitential Prayers, on the very Place where their Judge appeared to them when he pronounced their Sentence.

— *They forthwith to the place  
Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell  
Before him Reverent, and both confess'd  
Humbly their Faults, and Pardon begg'd, with Tears  
Watering the Ground* —

THERE is a Beauty of the same kind in a Tragedy of *Sophocles*, where *Oedipus*, after having put out his own Eyes, instead of breaking his Neck from the Palace-Battlements (which furnishes so elegant an Entertainment for our *English* Audience) desires that he may be conducted to Mount *Cithæron*, in order to end his Life in that very Place where he was exposed in his Infancy, and where he should then have died, had the Will of his Parents been executed.

AS the Author never fails to give a poetical Turn to his Sentiments, he describes in the Beginning of this Book the Acceptance which these their Prayers met with, in a short Allegory, form'd upon that beautiful Passage in holy Writ: *And another Angel came and stood at the Altar, having a golden Censer; and there was given unto him much Incense, that he should offer it with the Prayers of all Saints upon the golden Altar, which was before the Throne: And the Smoke of the Incense which came with the Prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God.*

— *To Heav'n their Prayers  
Flew up, nor miss'd the Way, by envious Winds  
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they pass'd  
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* —

WE have the same Thought expressed a second time in the Intercession of the Messiah, which is conceived in very emphatical Sentiments and Expressions.

AMONG the poetical Parts of Scripture, which *Milton* has so finely wrought into this Part of his Narration, I must not omit that wherein *Ezekiel* speaking of the Angels who appeared to him in a Vision, adds, that *every one had four Faces*, and that *their whole Bodies, and their Backs, and their Hands, and their Wings, were full of Eyes round about.*

— *The Cohort bright*  
*Of watchful Cherubim, four Faces each*  
*Had, like a double Janus, all their Shape*  
*Spangled with Eyes* —

THE assembling of all the Angels of Heaven to hear the solemn Decree passed upon Man, is represented in very lively Ideas. The Almighty is here describ'd as remembering Mercy in the midst of Judgment, and commanding *Michael* to deliver his Message in the mildest Terms, lest the Spirit of Man, which was already broken with the Sense of his Guilt and Misery, should fail before him.

— — — *Yet lest they faint*  
*At the sad Sentence rigorously urg'd,*  
*For I behold them softned, and with Tears*  
*Bewailing their Excess, all Terror hide.*

THE Conference of *Adam* and *Eve* is full of moving Sentiments. Upon their going abroad after the melancholy Night which they had passed together, they discover the Lion and the Eagle pursuing each of them their Prey towards the Eastern Gates of *Paradise*. There is a double Beauty in this Incident, not only as it presents great and just Omens, which are always agreeable in Poetry, but as it expresses that Enmity which was now produced in the Animal Creation. The Poet to shew the like Changes in Nature, as well as to grace his Fable with a noble Prodigy, represents the Sun in an Eclipse. This particular Incident has likewise a fine Effect upon the Imagination of the Reader, in regard to what follows; for at the same time that the Sun is under an Eclipse, a bright Cloud descends in the Western Quarter of the Heavens, filled with

with an Host of Angels and more luminous than the Sun it self. The whole Theatre of Nature is darkned, that this glorious Machine may appear in all its Lustre and Magnificence.

———— *Why in the East*  
*Darkness ere Day's mid-course, and morning Light*  
*More orient in that Western Cloud that draws*  
*O'er the blue Firmament a radiant White,*  
*And slow descends with something Heav'nly fraught?*  
*He err'd not, for by this the heav'nly Bands*  
*Down from a Sky of Jasper lighted now*  
*In Paradise, and on a Hill made halt;*  
*A glorious Apparition ———*

I need not observe how properly this Author, who always suits his Parts to the Actors whom he introduces, has employed *Michael* in the Expulsion of our first Parents from *Paradise*. The Archangel on this occasion neither appears in his proper Shape, nor in that familiar manner with which *Raphael* the sociable Spirit entertained the Father of Mankind before the Fall. His Person, his Port, and Behaviour, are suitable to a Spirit of the highest Rank, and exquisitely describ'd in the following Passage.

———— *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 flow'd,*  
*Livelier than Melibœan, or the Grain*  
*Of Sarra, worn by Kings and Heroes old,*  
*In time of Truce: Iris had dipt the Wooff:*  
*His starry Helm, unbuckled, shew'd him prime*  
*In Manhood where Youth ended; by his side,*  
*As in a glistring Zodiack, hung the Sword,*  
*Satan's dire dread, and in his Hand the Spear.*  
*Adam bow'd low, he Kingly from his State*  
*Inclined not, but his coming thus declared.*

*Eve's Complaint* upon hearing that she was to be removed from the Garden of *Paradise*, is wonderfully beautiful: The Sentiments are not only proper to the Subject, but have something in them particularly soft and womanish.

Must I then leave thee, Paradise? Thus leave  
 Thee, native Soil, these happy Walks and Shades,  
 Fit haunt of Gods? Where I had hope to spend  
 Quiet, though sad, the respite of that Day  
 That must be mortal to us both. O Flow'rs,  
 That never will in other Climate grow,  
 My early Visitation, and my last  
 At Even, which I bred up with tender Hand  
 From the first opening Bud, and gave you Names;  
 Who now shall rear you to the Sun, or rank  
 Your Tribes, and water from th' ambrosial Fount?  
 Thee, lastly, nuptial Bower, by me adorn'd  
 With what to Sight or Smell was sweet; from thee  
 How shall I part, and whither wander down  
 Into a lower World, to this obscure  
 And wild? how shall we breathe in other Air  
 Less pure, accusom'd to immortal Fruits?

ADAM's Speech abounds with Thoughts which are  
 equally moving, but of a more masculine and elevated  
 Turn. Nothing can be conceived more sublime and poeti-  
 cal than the following Passage in it.

This most afflicts me, that departing hence  
 As from his Face I shall be bid, deprived  
 His blessed Count'nance; here I could frequent,  
 With Worship, place by place where he vouchsafed  
 Presence Divine; and to my Sons relate.  
 On this Mount he appear'd, under this Tree  
 Stood visible among these Pines his Voice  
 I heard, here with him at this Fountain talk'd:  
 So many grateful Altars I would rear  
 Of grassy Turf, and pile up every Stone  
 Of lustre 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 Appearance, or Footsteps trace?  
 For though I fled him angry, yet recall'd  
 To Life prolong'd and promised Race, I now  
 Gladly behold though but his utmost Skirts  
 Of Glory, and far off his Steps adore.

THE

THE Angel afterwards leads *Adam* to the highest Mount of *Paradise*, and lays before him a whole Hemisphere, as a proper Stage for those Visions which were to be represented on it. I have before observed how the Plan of *Milton's* Poem is in many Particulars greater than that of the *Iliad* or *Æneid*. *Virgil's* Hero, in the last of these Poems, is entertained with a Sight of all those who are to descend from him; but though that Episode is justly admired as one of the noblest Designs in the whole *Æneid*, every one must allow that this of *Milton* is of a much higher Nature. *Adam's* Vision is not confined to any particular Tribe of Mankind, but extends to the whole Species.

IN this great Review which *Adam* takes of all his Sons and Daughters, the first Objects he is presented with exhibit to him the Story of *Cain* and *Abel*, which is drawn together with much Closeness and Propriety of Expression. That Curiosity and natural Horror which arises in *Adam* at the Sight of the first dying Man, is touched with great Beauty.

*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,  
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!*

THE second Vision sets before him the Image of Death in a great Variety of Appearances. The Angel, to give him a general Idea of those Effects which his Guilt had brought upon his Posterity, places before him a large Hospital or Lazar-House, fill'd with Persons lying under all kinds of mortal Diseases. How finely has the Poet told us that the sick Persons languished under lingering and incurable Distempers, by an apt and judicious use of such imaginary Beings as those I mentioned in my last *Saturday's* Paper.

*Dire was the tossing, deep the Groans. Despair  
Tended the Sick, busy from Couch to Couch;  
And over them triumphant Death his Dart  
Shook, but delay'd to strike, though oft invoked  
With Vows, as their chief Good and final Hope.*

THE Passion which likewise rises in *Adam* on this Occasion, is very natural.

H 3

Sight

*Sight so deform, what Heart of Rock could long  
Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept,  
Tho' not of Woman born; Compassion quell'd  
His best of Man, and gave him up to Tears.*

THE Discourse between the Angel and Adam, which follows, abounds with noble Morals.

AS there is nothing more delightful in Poetry than a Contrast and Opposition of Incidents, the Author, after this melancholy Prospect of Death and Sickness, raises up a Scene of Mirth, Love, and Jollity. The secret Pleasure that steals into Adam's Heart as he is intent upon this Vision, is imagined with great Delicacy. I must not omit the Description of the loose female Troop, who seduced the Sons of God, as they are called in Scripture.

*For that fair female Troop thou saw'st, that seem'd  
Of Goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,  
Yet empty of all Good, wherein consists  
Woman's domestick Honour and chief Praise;  
Bred only and compleated to the taste  
Of lustful Appetence, to sing, to dance,  
To dress, and trouble the Tongue, and roll the Eye:  
To these that sober Race of Men, whose Lives  
Religious, titled them the Sons of God,  
Shall yield up all their Virtue, all their Fame  
Ignobly, to the Trains and to the Smiles  
Of those fair Atheists———*

THE next Vision is of a quite contrary Nature, and filled with the Horrors of War. Adam at the Sight of it melts into Tears, and breaks out in that passionate Speech.

————— *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  
Make they but of their Brethren, Men of Men?*

MILTON, to keep up an agreeable Variety in his Visions, after having raised in the Mind of his Reader the several Ideas of Terror which are conformable to the Description of War, passes on to those softer Images of Triumphs

umphs and Festivals, in that Vision of Lewdness and Luxury which ushers in the Flood.

AS it is visible that the Poet had his Eye upon *Ovid's* Account of the universal Deluge, the Reader may observe with how much Judgment he has avoided every thing that is redundant or puerile in the *Latin* Poet. We do not here see the Wolfswimming among the Sheep, nor any of those wanton Imaginations, which *Seneca* found fault with, as unbecoming the great Catastrophe of Nature. If our Poet has imitated that Verse in which *Ovid* tells us that there was nothing but Sea, and that this Sea had no Shore to it, he has not set the Thought in such a Light as to incur the Censure which Criticks have passed upon it. The latter part of that Verse in *Ovid* is idle and superfluous, but just and beautiful in *Milton*.

*Famque mare & tellus nullum discrimen habebant,  
Nil nisi pontus erat, deerant quoque littora ponto.* *Ovid.*

————— *Sea cover'd Sea,*  
*Sea without Shore*————— *Milton.*

IN *Milton* the former Part of the Description does not forestall the latter. How much more great and solemn on this Occasion is that which follows in our *English* Poet,

————— *And in their Palaces*  
*Where Lux'ry late reign'd, Sea-Monsters whelp'd*  
*And stabl'd* —————

than that in *Ovid*, where we are told that the Sea-Calves lay in those Places where the Goats were us'd to browse? The Reader may find several other parallel Passages in the *Latin* and *English* Description of the Deluge, wherein our Poet has visibly the Advantage. The Sky's being overcharged with Clouds, the descending of the Rains, the rising of the Seas, and the Appearance of the Rainbow, are such Descriptions as every one must take notice of. The Circumstance relating to *Paradise* is so finely imagined, and suitable to the Opinions of many learned Authors, that I cannot forbear giving it a Place in this Paper.

————— *Then shall this Mount*  
*Of Paradise by might of Waves be mov'd*

*On*

*Out of his Place, push'd by the horned Flood;  
 With all his Verdure spoil'd, and Trees adrift  
 Down the great River to the op'ning Gulf,  
 And there take root; an Island salt and bare,  
 The haunt of Seals and Orcs and Sea-Mews clang.*

THE Transition which the Poet makes from the Vision of the Deluge, to the Concern it occasioned in Adam, is exquisitely graceful, and copied after *Virgil*, though the first Thought it introduces is rather in the Spirit of *Ovid*.

*How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold  
 The End of all thy Offspring, End so sad,  
 Depopulation! thee another Flood,  
 Of Tears and Sorrow a Flood, thee also drown'd,  
 And sunk thee as thy Sons; 'till gently rear'd  
 By th' Angel, on thy Feet thou stoodst at last,  
 Tho' comfortless, as when a Father mourns  
 His Children, all in view destroy'd at once.*

I have been the more particular in my Quotations out of the eleventh Book of *Paradise Lost*, because it is not generally reckoned among the most shining Books of this Poem; for which Reason the Reader might be apt to overlook those many Passages in it which deserve our Admiration. The eleventh and twelfth are indeed built upon that single Circumstance of the Removal of our first Parents from *Paradise*; but tho' this is not in it self so great a Subject as that in most of the foregoing Books, it is extended and diversified with so many surprising Incidents and pleasing Episodes, that these two last Books can by no means be looked upon as unequal Parts of this Divine Poem. I must further add, that had not *Milton* represented our first Parents as driven out of *Paradise*, his Fall of Man would not have been complete, and consequently his Action would have been imperfect. L



*Monday*