

nearer and truer the communion with God, the less of that spiritual intoxication which Homer's heroes experienced, or that trepidation and awe of which Æneas was the subject\*—though for that very reason and in that very proportion, the awe may be the profounder, and the emotion the more exalted. It is true that Raphael holds long converse with Adam even after his revolt—but Adam was by this time received again into the favour of God, and the old acquaintanceship had not grown old, or been forgotten. We think Professor Seeley's comparison of Milton and Dante's poems respectively to St. Paul's of London, and Westminster Abbey, is strained and artificial, and brings out nothing. Surely there are the dim aisles of Milton's poem as well as of Dante's: this indeed is admitted, although after it had been said: 'The *Paradise Lost*' is, as it were, a Christian temple in England, in a style of architecture neither Christian nor English." "Down this mighty Renaissance temple as we walk, we admire vast spaces, arches wide and graceful, majestic aisles, but . . . it has no monuments, no humanities; it is an empty building." This is to quarrel with a poem on account of what the subject did not admit of. '*Paradise Lost*' has not the humanities of our state now: it depicts a state which has to be imagined. But are there not the humanities of the unlapsd state? are not these gloriously given?—and is not the moment when man was driven from Paradise the one of all others the biggest with interest to our race? Surely all humanities are compressed into that moment. It is a somewhat strange criticism, after all, of Milton's great poem. What led Milton to the choice of his subject it would be interesting to know, but it can hardly now be conjectured. Was it not just the vastness of his mind that found no subject equal to it but the one which he chose? "He required," says Professor Seeley, "an exceedingly large subject:" as Michael Angelo required the roof and walls of the Sistine Chapel for his canvas and creation, the last judgment for his subject. It is well known that Milton long meditated an epic founded on the story of King Arthur—the impersonation of chivalry—of honour—and true Christian knighthood. But the views of that sort of life had changed since the days of Spenser. Milton himself had grown beyond them. Religion was now in the ascendancy; and a religious mind like Milton's thought of the epic of humanity; hence the '*Paradise Lost*.' '*Paradise Regained*' was its obverse. We as little agree with Professor Seeley in his theory of this poem. It is obviously formed from the stand-point from which he regarded the character and person of Christ, and the influences which he conceives contributed in moulding Milton's mind. Milton, at first a poet from the love of poesy itself—an Art-poet as Seeley would express it—grew to feel he had a higher mission to fulfil than simply to sing: he must be a teacher of his fellows: he must impress them with his own high ideas of virtue and religion: he had a high reverence for religion; and both the '*Paradise Lost*' and the '*Para-*'

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\* Seeley says: "Virgil, in his supernatural apparitions, has a formula, 'I stood stupefied and my hairs stood up, and my voice clung to my throat.'" One of the occasions alluded to is the prodigy of the blood of Polydorus sporting from the roots of certain trees that grew upon his grave, on Æneas attempting to wrench them from the soil.