

l. 133. Read the lines on Shakspeare (1630) to learn the full scope of Milton's admiration for him. Here, where the poetic note is not one of very deep feeling, Milton merely puts into verse the contrast, accepted in his day, of Jonson the elaborate and Shakspeare the spontaneous poet. Besides, the context suggests that the Allegro goes to see *Comedy*; and Milton doubtless was thinking of one of the open-air comedies like *As You Like It* (as in keeping with the daydreams of the Allegro), a play which would be exactly suited for the phrase 'native woodnotes wild.' Milton, so seldom spontaneous himself, felt the *spontaneity* of Shakspeare almost more than all his other qualities. See the lines to Shakspeare, 'Thou, to the shame of slow endeavouring art.'

l. 135. *eating cares* contains the same idea as the Italian word *Penseroso* (not in Milton's sense of 'thoughtful').

l. 136. *Lydian* means sweet and tender music. For contrast, see *Paradise Lost*, i. 550:

'Anon they moved  
In perfect phalanx to the *Dorian* mood  
Of flutes and soft recorders—such as raised  
To highth of noblest temper heroes old  
Arming to battle.'

l. 137. Just like *Penseroso*, he asks for music accompanied by song, and not simple instrumental music.

l. 138. *pierce* was pronounced as *perse*, retaining traces of its French form *percer*.

l. 139. *bout*, twist, coil, 'bought.' The word expresses perhaps the complication of the music, which is in the end resolved or 'untwisted.' There may be a kind of suggestion of the Aristotelian *déœis*, complication, and *λύœis*, *denotment*, of a dramatic action.

l. 141. These words depend on 'drawn out' in the line before, not on 'running' in the line after, and are to be punctuated accordingly.

*cunning*, skill. 'The adjectives describe the appearance, the nouns the reality.' [R. C. B.]

ll. 143-4. The singer and the instrument accompanying him unbind the 'hidden soul of harmony,' which is unknown and a prisoner till they release it by utterance.

ll. 144-150. See the latter part of the Fourth Georgic of Virgil. Orpheus went down into Hades and by his music charmed Pluto, so that he consented to let him take back to life his dead wife Eurydice, provided that he would not turn to look at her as they ascended. He did turn, and—

'Ibi omnis  
Effusus labor:' 'there all his toil was wasted:'  
and Eurydice must go back for ever.