

having from their many leisure and abstracted hours (while tending their flocks), a fit opportunity for such a pursuit. Hence, they first composed couplets, next verses, and these they perfected themselves in, and sung, while following their daily occupations. Thence came the Bacchanalian rites, and their sacrifice to their gods of a he goat, which took their rise, we are told, from *Bacchus*, who, one day, while entering his vineyard, discovered an animal of that species in the act of destroying a favorite vine, which in his rage he instantly killed. In these ceremonies, the limbs of that day smeared their faces with the best of wine, and acted and sung various verses expressly composed for the occasion.

These were the first actors and song-smiths, (to use a new-coined expression), and their successors have done honor and credit to the invention,

"Æschylus and Thespis taught the age
What good, what profit, did commend
the stage."

SOMETHING NEW ABOUT "PARADISE LOST," AND ITS AUTHOR.—Milton possessed a fine figure, and, when a young man, was extremely handsome. In one of his wanderings when in Italy, being of a very pensive cast, he sat himself down under a tree, and commenced reading, but soon fell asleep. During his slumbers two females, who were observed at a distance by two of his companions, stopped on coming near to him; and one of them wrote on a slip of paper the following lines, which she laid on his breast, and with her companion immediately disappeared:—

"Occhi, Stelle mortalli,
Ministri de miei mali
Se chinsi m'uccedite,
Apperti che farete?"

which may be translated—"Beautiful eyes, mortal stars, authors of my misfortunes! if you wound me being closed, what would ye do if open?" It is said, that Milton was so sensitive on the subject, that he roamed over half of Europe in search of the fair charmer, but in vain; hence the inducement to write that sublime poem, and from the circumstances that had occurred to him, entitled it "Paradise Lost." If the above be rather fanciful than suggestive, good authority asserts, that the

precious little document is still in existence, but its present whereabouts is a mystery.

THE FIRST BOOK.—PRICE OF EARLY BOOKS, &c.—According to chronologists, the First Book is supposed to have been written in Job's time. A very large estate was given for one book on Cosmography, by King Alfred. Books were sold from \$50 to \$150 each in 1400. The first printed book was the vulgate edition of the Bible, in 1462; the second was Cicero de Officiis, in 1466; Cornelius Nepos, published at Moscow, was the first classical book printed in Russia, April 29, 1762. In the year 1471, when Louis XI. borrowed the works of Rasis, the Arabian physician, from the Faculty of Medicine, in Paris, he not only deposited in pledge, a quantity of plate, but was obliged to give surety of a nobleman for their restoration. When any person made a present of a book to a church, a monastery, the only libraries during several ages, it was deemed a donation of such value, that he offered it at the altar, *pro remedia anime sue*, as a gift to God for the forgiveness of sins.

FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS.

HEAVEN BY LITTLES.

Heaven is not reached by a single bound;
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round.

I count these things to be grandly true!
That a noble deed is a step toward God—
Lifting the soul, from the common sod,
To a purer air and a broader view.

We rise by the things that are under our feet;
By what we have mastered of greed and gain,
By the pride deposed, and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ill that we hourly meet.

CHAPTER III.

DESCRIPTION OF THE EXPERIMENT TO WEIGH THE EARTH.

CAYENDISH, an English physicist, made the first successful attempt to determine the attractive power of large bodies. His first care was, to render the attraction of the earth an inefficient element in