

LITERARY...

The Way Of Trial Is The Way Of Light

By 'OMHPOS

The Royal Bard with phrases erudite,
Suspended narrative, and idiom bright,
Archaic words, and clauses periodic,
High sounding names, and order strict prosodic;
Allusion, myth, and legendary note,
Told how our mighty God the Archfiend smote;
Before the time when Adam first drew air
Within the land of Paradise so fair.
So told he of the rise and fall of man,
How Lucifer upon the earth began
To sell his wares to unsuspecting Eve;
And Adam too did eat, that he might cleave
Unto the mate for whom each sighing breath
He drew, and prove his love by choosing Death.

But Milton did not always write in phrase
So elegantly fashioned as the ways
In which his works he wrote in latter years,
When he had lived his life of sweat and tears.
Ah no! He wrote his early verse in rhyme,
In keeping with his age, and with the time.
When having reached his one-and-twentieth year
His first great ode in public did appear,
It was at once proclaimed that he would be
A poet great, in theme and majesty.
As for his Theme, at once 'tis clear to view,
One overriding purpose did pursue
From small beginning at a tender age,
Increasing strength, as Milton page by page
Unfolded slow the will of God Supreme,
That he with poem should attempt redeem
Of mankind from the Ruination spread
"By our first Parents"; so he sought ahead,
Behind, to right, to left, above, below,
That by some chance he might "regain to know"
The will of "God aright" and tell it so.

The Muse that early prompted Milton's mind
With ceaseless pursuit sought, that it might find
His poet soul swift growing to that end,
Calliope to aid within him blend
The love of God, and sweep of epic verse,
That they together might the way traverse
Throughout the reaches of the Universe,
And with each ruling Angel there converse,
To know the will of God, the All Supreme;
That He our sinning souls might thus redeem,
And Milton's poem epic then relate
The glorious theme of God with such great weight
"That we on earth with undisturbing voice
May rightly answer that melodious noise;
As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
Jarr'd against nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair musick that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
In perfect Diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.
O may we soon again renew that Song,
And keep in tune with Heav'n, 'till God ere long
To His celestial concert us unite
To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light."

Each poem that he wrote one story gave,
But each revealed a man more wise, more grave.
His theme o'er times he told as years flew past
But each time told it better than the last.
L'Allegro and Il Penseroso told
The pleasure found in life, by knight of old
New blown with rhyme and love of God, impressed
Within a young and pleasure-loving breast.
Whilst At A Solemn Musick shot the gun
Which echoed first when he was twenty-one.
And Comus, which his first age brought to close,
Was not at all what for himself he chose,
But in his own inimitable ways
He turned it to his use in Virtue's praise:
Then Lycidas; when Edward King was drown'd,
A newer more religious Milton found
A deeper and more stately type of verse,
In which his theme once more he did rehearse,
That it might be from him a payment small,
In case the Lord should suddenly recall
His own appointed servant thro' the gloom,
And seal his theme forever; in a tomb.

What said he of the power of good verse
Compared with melody of music sweet?
What said he then of prose, and the curse
Of jumbled lines of doggerel, too replete
With mediocre thought? Did he condone
The practice of the time to write an Ode
On Love, or like a Royalist to make sweet moan
Unto a mistress' eyebrow, or the mode
In which her tresses curled upon her head?
From College, written in the Latin tongue
To music-loving father, Milton said
That music with apt words was seldom sung:

But with his stately verse he did profess
So to create a storied symphony,
"I would quite out-tune the works of Orpheus
And bring from Hades fair Eurydice.
Within a letter when he sought to tell
Of mediocre verse by others writ;
By implication, said the fires of Hell
Were none too warm for doggerel such as it,
Because it dulled the ear, and senses fine,
With tones that did not harmonize at all;
And often too, the metre of the line
The reader caused to stumble or to fall.
He thought that songs of Nature and of Love
For one so well endowed by God above
Had more important things to say or dare.
O'er Shakespear's honored bones did Milton cry
(Though at the early age of twenty-two)
"That Kings for such a Tomb would wish to die",
Or even Milton; yes, or I, or you,
In speaking of the Christ, His birth, and death,
And of the trials which on earth He found,
John Milton uttered with tempestuous breath,
"To this Horizon is my Phoebus bound."
Such was his aim throughout his life, that he
Should by Calliope he raised on high:
So high indeed, that to attain the fee,
No earth-born creature else could deign to try.

In carefree college days Young Milton thought,
With patient toil and studious reading grave
But not thro' hardship (ease should be his lot)
To teach his fellow man himself to save
Through perseverance, and through struggle grim
Because the way of God was one of work:
And if mankind was e'er to get to Him
He must no toil, nor sweat, nor duty shirk.
But God for each man plans in His own way,
And made His servant work at drudging task,
(Besides the taking of his sight away)
Till Milton from the depths was forced to ask,
"Doth God exact day labour, light denied?"
And struggle with his problem thro' the night
Till his own heart unto himself replied;
The way of Trial is the way of Light.
Thus God by showing Milton trial and pain
Prepared him for his task; for otherwise,
However hard he tried, he'd not attain
Conviction heartfelt that his word was wise.

So Milton, proved and fortified in pain
By physical and mental hardship great,
Began to realize the time was ripe
When that he should his debt to God repay,
And with his epic poem tell the world
The only true and honest way to live.
He would have penned a drama for the stage
If Puritans had not the playhouse bann'd.
Iambic verse he chose without a rhyme
For that it was the simpler way to tell
The deeds of one and all; and time was short,
The poet, too, was blind. Dispense, said he,
With rhyme and silly fluff, which useless is
When poetry has subject matter great
And metre'd cadence true as music note.
The bard's majestic epic theme complete,
He still had time for other verses great:
In Paradise Regained his native tongue
Was glorified in words he gave to Christ,
"Or if I would delight my private hours
With music or with poem, where so soon
As in our native language can I find
That solace?" So sang Milton of his home.
More, told the bard about his inner heart,
For Lucifer and Christ, each Milton's self
In argument both pro and con revealed
A cry for "Freedom" at whatever cost,
And yet, a cry for "Right" at "Freedom's" loss.

Thomas Wallace
SONS & DAUGHTERS

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NOTICE

ALL SOCIETIES WISHING
TO SUBMIT A ONE-ACT PLAY
IN THE CONNOLLY SHIELD
COMPETITION SHOULD IMMEDIATELY APPOINT A DRAMATICS MANAGER AND THIS PERSON MUST COMMUNICATE THE ENTRY OF HIS SOCIETY TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE GLEE AND DRAMATIC SOCIETY ON OR BEFORE WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10TH.

News From Other U's

The much discussed topic of athletic scholarships has again raised its controversial head. Of all universities interviewed, Bishops was the only one definitely opposed to such. The students of St. Francis Xavier generally approved, but felt that they could be abused as is so often the case in American Universities. Mount Allison students are convinced that intellectual as well as athletic ability should be considered in the awarding of Athletic scholarships. Minority of undergraduates, there, feel athletic standards would be raised, and good publicity would result.

Student members of the L.P.P. Club at University of Manitoba feel that university students are biding in "ivy covered towers". "There is not enough co-operation between the University and the world outside," said one member of the Club.

The Sheaf, official newspaper of the University of Saskatchewan has announced that since the present beauty contest in Vancouver, the question circulating on the Campus was, "Was this a scheme to benefit the memorial fund of the U.B.C. or merely a publicity gag staged by the Vancouver Daily Province?"

It seems as though the long arm of the Musician's Union is reaching farther and farther into collegiate circles. Don Warner and his Dal Band have recently tangled with the local appendage of Petrillo's ever swelling body. McGill also has had its difficulties with the union by their use of non-union men. It has recently become necessary for the Students' Council of McGill to cease hiring non-union men.

Co-Eds. What They Are and Why.

Lipstick, powder and rouge? Yes. Skirts and sweaters? Yes. Loafers, moccasins and bare legs? Yes. Brains, intelligence and common sense? Pardon me, I have a lecture in thirty seconds. VARSITY.

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