

LYCIDAS

BY

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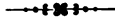


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LYCIDAS.



IN this monody the author bewails a learned friend unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637 ; and, by occasion, foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their height.



PREFACE.



WHY is it thought necessary to edit the English Classics, after the manner of the Ancient, with copious notes? As a rule there are few things told in the notes appended to many editions that the average student could not, with a little diligence, find out for himself; he merely needs to be put in the way of finding them out. To clear the way of obstacles is to forestall the very discipline that develops independent investigation. There is no surer way of making mental parasites than that of having everything served up in delectable notes. A boy with a nut only needs something with which to crack it in order to get at the kernel. With histories, dictionaries, and encyclopædias to be found in every community, the student can do for himself almost everything that is usually done for him in the way of notes.

There is that, on the other hand, which the student cannot do for himself, and which is not taken into account in the usual manner of editing our English masterpieces, namely, the Art. Do you claim this to

be the implied duty of the teacher and no concern of the editor's? Perhaps; but it is astonishing how great is the number of teachers who hold the naturally preconceived opinion that the notes explain all that does not lie on the surface. In such instances what becomes of the significance of, say, *Lycidas*, in its relation to the inner life of the Puritan Age? Does the student get any conception of the workmanship of the creative imagination? Not until he finds his way into the workshop of the artist's soul, and through an interpretation that re-creates a masterpiece can he understand the kind of study or work that exalts.

For all which reasons, instead of notes, find suggestions and suggestive questions. The aim is to arouse the spirit of inquiry, and, in a general way, to direct the student to its gratification. Some of the questions may appear to be obviously simple, but alertness of mind must be cultivated. Some may seem too difficult;

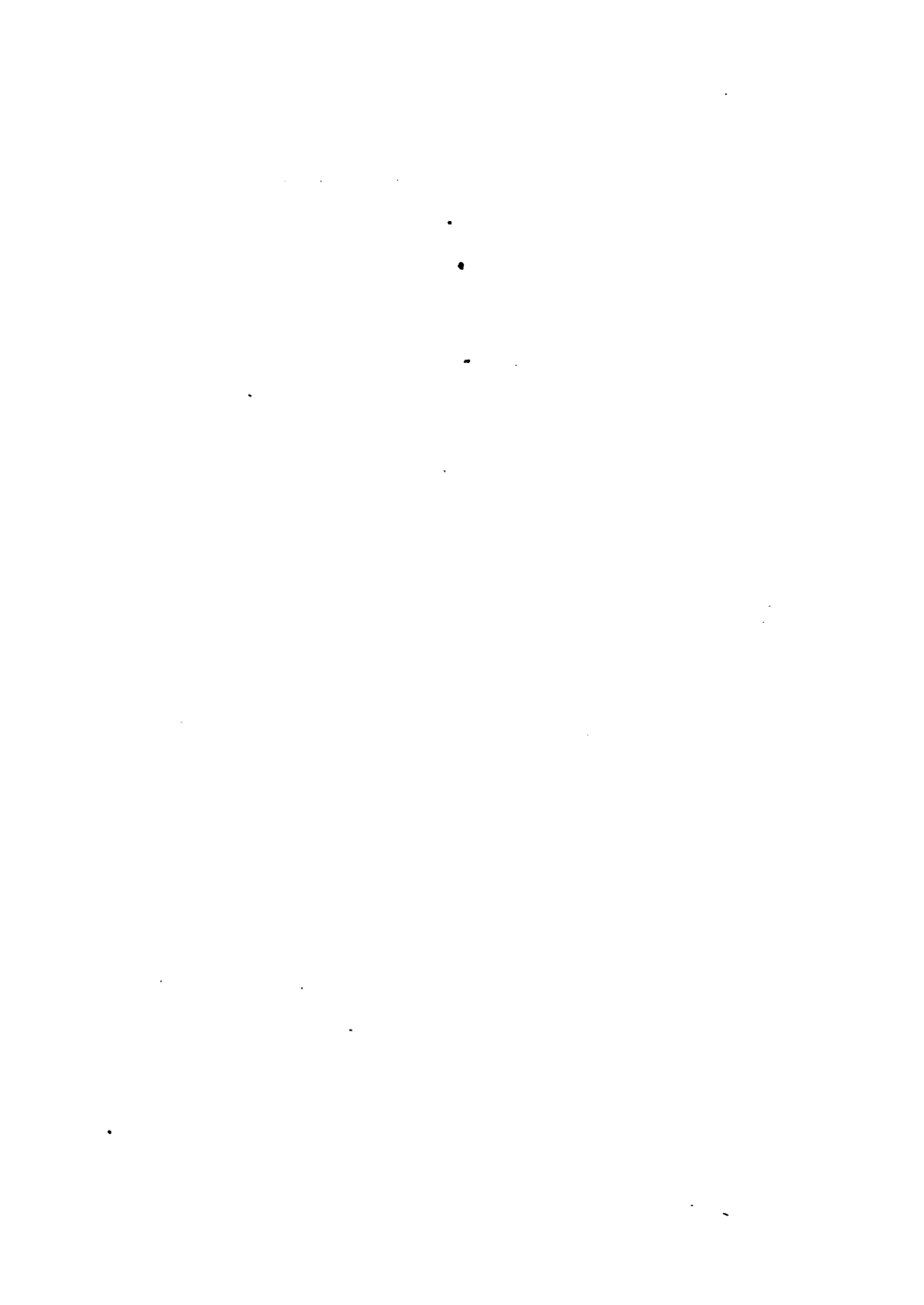
" Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,
Or what's a heaven for? "

With access to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, a Classical Dictionary, Unabridged Dictionaries, text-books on Rhetoric, — all everywhere accessible, — and two or three other books procurable at small cost, the student is equipped, and with ordinary diligence and some activity of thought he can find satisfactory

answers to all the questions. References are made to books, articles, and chapters, and not to pages and paragraphs, in order to compass breadth in search.

It is not contended that these questions exhaust what is to be found in *Lycidas*; they merely suggest some things to look for, in the finding of which other riches will be gathered.

A verse translation of the *Epitaph on Bion* is appended for comparative study.



INTRODUCTORY.



For poetry is the blossom and the fragrancy of all human knowledge, human thoughts, human passions, emotions, language. — COLERIDGE.

“Milton’s life is a drama in three acts.” What are the three periods and how characterized? In which was *Lycidas* composed? Read carefully the other poems of this period.

Milton has been styled “the last of the Elizabethans.” Distinguish in *L’Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* what is prominently Elizabethan. Is it in theme or manner or in both? In what lines does he take his farewell of what may properly be called the Elizabethan element? Did he not write *Comus* after this? In what is it less distinctively Elizabethan than *L’Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*?

Read “Puritan England” in Green’s *Short History of the English People*.

What was the effect of the Bible on literature and on the character of the people? What was the “temper of the Puritan gentleman”? How

was Milton a complete type of Puritanism? Who of the Elizabethans was his master? What of the royal despotism of James and the conduct of Charles? What of the fate of Wentworth, Laud, and Charles?

The conflict between the old Cavalier world, the years of gaiety and festivity of a splendid and pleasure-loving court, and the new Puritan world into which love and pleasure were not to enter, — this conflict which was commencing in the social life of England is also begun in Milton's own breast, and is reflected in *Lycidas*. — PATTISON.

In *Lycidas* (1637) we have reached the high-water mark of English poesy and of Milton's own production. A period of a century and a half was to elapse before poetry in England seemed, in Wordsworth's *Ode on Immortality* (1807), to be rising again towards the level of inspiration which it had once attained in *Lycidas*. And in the development of the Miltonic genius this wonderful dirge marks the culminating point. — PATTISON.

This piece, unmatched in the whole range of English poetry and never again equaled by Milton himself, leaves all criticism behind. Indeed, so high is the poetic note here reached that the common ear fails to catch it. *Lycidas* is the touchstone of taste; the eighteenth-century criticism could not make anything of it. — PATTISON.

Read the articles "Pastoral" and "Renaissance" in *Ency. Brit.*

What is meant by saying that the pastoral is the growth of humanism at the Renaissance? What did Vergil do in the realm of the pastoral? Differentiate the terms *eclogue*, *georgic*, *bucolic*, *idyl*, *pastoral*. Who is "the father of Idyllic Poetry"? Read "Biographical Notice of Theocritus" in *The Idylls of Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus* (Bohn). Who undertook to introduce the Pastoral into English? (Arber's *Eng. Reprints*, No. 30). Was, and is, the pastoral dramatic? How did it, in Italy, grow into the opera? What led Spenser to compose the *Shepherd's Calendar*? Who was his master? After what did Sir Philip Sidney pattern his *Arcadia*? What made it more popular than the *Shepherd's Calendar*? What is the principal pastoral drama in our language? Who wrote the last and most interesting bucolic drama in Great Britain?

Like *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, *Lycidas* is laid out on the lines of the pastoral fiction; like them it offers exquisite touches of idealized rural life. — PATTISON.

What is the difference between a "pastoral fiction" and a genuine pastoral? Is Moschus' *Epitaph on Bion* a pastoral fiction? What relation did Bion sustain to Moschus that the latter

should embalm his memory in immortal verse?
For what five masterpieces of English elegiac
verse has this lament been the model? Who are
the poets and their poet friends?

PREFATORY TO THE TEXT.



In his Idyl VII Theocritus has Simichidas to narrate the celebration of the Thalyssia at the house of Phrasidamus and Antigenes. In relating his journey thither in company with two friends, he tells how they fell in with Lycidas, a goat-herd of known poetic talent, who, being asked to join them in an effort to while away the tedium of the walk by reciting pastorals, sang his love for the boy Ageanax, beginning:

“To Mytilene sails my heart-dear love ;
Safe be the way and fair the voyage prove.”

The song ended, Lycidas presents Simichidas with a crook and turns away in another direction. Read *Epitaph on Bion* in Appendix ; read Shelley’s translations “From Moschus.”

While Milton took Moschus’s poem on Bion for his model, name several reasons for his going to the “Thalyssia” of Theocritus for the title *Lycidas* ?

Read Pattison's *Life of Milton* (*English Men of Letters*); Pattison's "John Milton" in Ward's *English Poets*, v. ii; Masson's "Milton" in *Ency. Brit.*

What was the occasion of his writing *Lycidas*? For what other dearer friend did he pour out his heart in elegy? What does the title of that poem indicate as to friendship? In what is the passion and fervor of it said to differ from that of *Lycidas*? Read *Lycidas* carefully.

Explain the propriety of calling *Lycidas* a monody. Is it at the same time a monologue? Is there anything dramatic in a monologue? In what guise does Milton lament his friend? What two words in the epilogue designate this character? Note if the whole poem is delivered in this character?

See a new book, *Practical Rhetoric*, by Prof. J. D. Quackenbos, written from the æsthetic standpoint; read Part I, "The Æsthetic Basis of Rhetorical Principles." Also another new book, *Interpretation of Literature*, by Professor Crawshaw; read Part I, "What is Literature, etc.?"

We begin the study of the text upon the supposition that the poem is a piece of literary art;

that it is, in other words, an organic whole in which there is not only interdependence of parts, but a harmony among the parts and a completeness of the whole that ministers to the pleasurable sense of the beautiful.

The aim is to get into the brain of the poet, in order to trace the growth of the poem in his soul. To think as he thought and to feel as he felt while creating this matchless lyric is to participate in the exalted pleasure of the artist under inspiration.

But how are we to study this poem? Ruskin, in *Sesame and Lilies*, tells, in these words: "And therefore, first of all, I tell you earnestly and authoritatively (I *know* I am right in this), you must get into the habit of looking intensely at words, and assuring yourself of their meaning, syllable by syllable, nay, letter by letter. For though it is only by reason of the opposition of letters in the function of signs that the study of books is called 'literature,' and that a man versed in it is called, by the consent of nations, a man of letters, instead of a man of books or of words, you may yet connect with that accidental nomenclature this real fact, — that you might read all the books in the British Museum (if you could live long enough) and remain an utterly 'illiterate,' uneducated person; but that if you read ten pages

of a good book, letter by letter, — that is to say, with real accuracy, — you are for evermore in some measure an educated person. The entire difference between education and non-education (as regards the merely intellectual part of it) consists in this accuracy. A well-educated gentleman may not know many languages, may not be able to speak any but his own, may have read very few books. But whatever language he knows he knows precisely ; whatever word he pronounces he pronounces rightly ; above all, he is learned in the *peerage* of words ; knows the words of true descent and ancient blood at a glance from words of modern *canaille* ; remembers all their ancestry, their intermarriages, distant relationships, and the extent to which they were admitted and offices they held among the national *noblesse* of words at any time and in any country."

LYCIDAS.



Yet once more, O ye Laurels, and once more,
Ye Myrtles brown, with Ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forc'd fingers rude

In lines 1-5 is the picture of the poet about to pluck 'laurels,' 'myrtles,' and 'ivy,' for a coronal. What classical associations has the *laurel*, the *myrtle*, and the *ivy*? (See *Cl. Dict.* "Apollo"; "Venus"; "Bacchus." Also Gayley's *The Classic Myths in English Literature*, wherein are to be found excellent reproductions of ancient masterpieces and noted examples of modern painting and sculpture used as illustrations.)

If he would not crown himself, of what is the wreath a symbol? What does he mean thereby to say?

'Quote the lines at the close of *Il Penseroso* expressing the poet's determination to abandon poetry until a ripening time. What had then become his ideal of the true poet?

Does the expression 'Yet once more' mean that *Lycidas* is the second poem written since that decision? What is that other poem, and did an 'occasion' 'compel' him to write it?

Any reason for 'laurels,' 'myrtles,' 'ivy' beginning with capitals? Why call myrtles *brown*? It is an evergreen.

Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year. 5
 Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear
 Compels me to disturb your season due ;

The myrtle and the ivy are both evergreen, yet *brown* stands in contrast with *never sere*. How?

Does 'Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year' imply that the laurel, the myrtle, and the ivy drop their leaves? Does *brown* harmonize with this idea? Does *never sere* harmonize? Why do we not feel the force of this inaccuracy as to facts? Note all along if we are not more interested in the details and variety of emotional effects than in the details of facts. You may *scatter*, but can you 'shatter' leaves before the mellowing year? Explain why 'shatter' is a better word than *scatter*. Study the word 'pluck' in comparison with some of its synonyms in order to ascertain its peculiar fitness for the sentiment of lines 1-5. Is it picturesque? How does 'pluck' harmonize with 'forced fingers rude'? Is 'rude' suggestive of the character assumed by the poet in the poem?

What is the mental picture in 'the mellowing year'? The picture in '*before* the mellowing year'?

What are the facts as to the 'berries' of these plants and vines? Why not say *fruit* instead of 'berries,' and *foliage* instead of 'leaves'? What is the peculiar force of placing a noun between two adjectives, as in 'forced fingers rude'? Keep account of the times this arrangement occurs in *Lycidas*.

What was the picture before the poet's mind's-eye as he penned lines 1-5?

What do lines 6-14 explain in detail? What word in 1-5 furnishes the cue for lines 6-14? What word in 6-14 takes it up? Are the words 'bitter' and 'constraint' connected in thought with any two words in 1-5?

For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
 Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
 Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew 10

The terms, 'pluck berries,' 'shatter leaves,' 'mellowing year' are repeated in 'disturb your season due.' Why? For transition? Do lines 1-5 form an integral part to be articulated to 6-14? What ideas (that is, mental pictures) are condensed and repeated in 'disturb'? Is 'season due' a less general term than 'mellowing year'? What was the sad occasion? Who was Lycidas?

Note the progress in emotion in 'For Lycidas is dead, — dead ere his prime, — young Lycidas.' Analyze the movement in feeling. Is this a key to the emotional element of the poem? 'And hath not left his peer,' in what respects? Does the poem tell? What is the implied answer to 'Who would not sing for Lycidas'? How many besides Milton sang for Lycidas?

Was Lycidas a poet? What expressions recognize the fact? What did he write? In 'build the lofty rhyme,' what is the meaning of 'rhyme'? Do 'build' and 'lofty' indicate the nature of King's verse? What do we know of Edward King from other sources?

To what does 'watery bier' allude? Study the etymology of *bier*. What is the idea presented in 'welter to the parching winds'? Where is the rhyme to correspond with 'wind'? Note the same absence in line 1, and in others throughout the poem. Do the words 'float' and 'welter' suggest inconsistent ideas? What previous word suggests 'tear'? How can a tear be 'melodious'? Seeing that 'melodious tear' does not offend our taste, justify its use on rhetorical grounds.

Analyze the emotion of lines 1-14. What makes the conflict? What reconciles it? Analyze your own emotions

Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
 He must not float upon his watery bier
 Unwept, and welter to the parching wind
 Without the meed of some melodious tear.

in reading these lines. Do you find more pleasure in the music of the verse, or more in the play of the visualizing power of the mind's-eye? Are not the Ear and the Eye preëminently the two sense-organs of Art?

Study the rhythm of single lines, as, 'I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude.' Note how effortless it is to pronounce this series of words. In the pronunciation of 'I', note that the vocal organs are in the proper position for the easiest transition to the next syllable or word, 'come.' 'Come' leaves the organs in the most natural position to pronounce 'to,' and 'to' prepares for the easy pronunciation of 'pluck,' and 'pluck' for 'your,' and so on. This nice adaptation is an appeal to the ear—the ear of the imagination; it is the music of verse, when vocalized. Music, the accompaniment of pictures!

The next step, perhaps, is to give attention to the vowel and the consonantal elements of the verse. For an example, 'Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year,' with the vowels left out, would present some such a frame as this, 'Sh-t-t-r y-r l-v-s b-f-r th m-ll-ng y-r.' Then study the vowel elements alone. There is often lurking in the mere consonantal or vowel elements as arranged by Milton indescribable effects. His imagination was so vivid and his ear so attuned, that his onomatopoeic effects are felt all the more pleasantly for being sometimes a little recondite.

What is a good topical title for lines 1-14? A good subtitle for lines 1-5, and for lines 6-14?

Begin then, Sisters of the Sacred Well, 15
 That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring,
 Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
 Hence with denial vain and coy excuse :
 So may some gentle Muse

Picture the singer in these lines as first reluctant, then as constrained, and next as decided. With this picture before the mind, explain how lines 15-22 constitute the next logical step in the evolution of the poem. What is the need for an invocation? What is the force of 'then'? Why begin the invocation with 'Begin'? Why address the whole sisterhood of Muses? Does the naming of the Muses 'Sisters' have any connection in thought with 'seat of Jove'? What was the 'seat of Jove'? Is there any special significance in saying 'sacred well'? Quote the familiar lines beginning 'A little learning is a dangerous,' etc. (See *Cl. Dict.* "Musæ.")

Imagine the picture before Milton's mind while writing the first three lines of the invocation. How can 'sweep the string' mean to make music? Think of the word 'sweep' by itself, and then of 'string.' What common words! Yet note the alchemical power of the rhetorician in 'sweep the string.' Force of 'the' in 'sweep the string'?

What is the picture correspondent to 'Hence with denial vain and coy excuse'? Meaning of 'hence'? Are lines 19-22 addressed to the Muses? What kind of relation syntactical and logical do they sustain to line 18? Do they not form a soliloquizing strain within the monody? Is it a sort of prayer? Is it an appropriate part, though parenthetical, of the invocation? In what sense is 'Muse' used? Force of 'gentle'? Do the words 'lucky' and 'urn' have any suggestion the one of the other? Why does not 'destin'd

With lucky words favor my destin'd urn, 20
 And, as he passes, turn
 And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud !

For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill,
 Fed the' same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill ;
 Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd. 25
 Under the opening eyelids of the Morn,

urn' suggest cremation to the modern reader? Is there not a literal incongruity between 'destin'd urn' and 'sable shroud'? What is the picture in 'as he passes, turn'?

Should we interpret 'and' in line 22 by *to*, and read :

'And as he passes, turn
To bid fair peace' etc.,

or read thus :

'And (may he), as he passes, turn
 And bid fair peace,' etc.?

This *aside* strain begins with 'So may,' etc. What is the antecedent correlative idea that is left unexpressed? What punctuation mark should come after 'sable shroud'?

To determine if lines 23-36 should be included under the same topic as lines 19-22, note carefully the contents of 23-36. Is there in them anything that can remotely belong to the invocation?

Does 'for' connect 23-36 immediately with the preceding? Study the uses of 'for' as a conjunction to decide if 15-22 should form a distinct paragraph? What topical name should the paragraph have? What subheads? Are lines 1-22 given in the guise of a shepherd or in the poet's own person? Does not the pastoral strain *begin* with line 23? With what line does it end? If lines 186-193 be called the epilogue, how should we name lines 1-22?

We drove a-field, and both together heard
 What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
 Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
 Oft till the star that rose at ev'ning bright 30
 Towards Heav'ns descent had slop'd his wester-
 ing wheel,
 Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
 Temper'd to th' oaten flute,
 Rough Satyrs danc'd and Fauns with clov'n heel
 From the glad sound would not be absent long, 35
 And old Damœtas lov'd to hear our song.

Does 'we' in 'For we were nurs'd' etc., arise out of the idea in the implied antecedent clause of 'So may some' etc.? Who are 'we'? What character does the poet assume for them both? Are lines 23-36 allegorical? What do they tell? Meaning of 'nurs'd'? How does he describe morning, noon, and night? Picture 'Under the opening eyelids of the Morn.' How soon did they drive their flocks a-field? Force of *a* in 'a-field'? What is the 'gray-fly'? Has she a 'horn'? Is the 'horn' itself 'sultry'? Explain, rhetorically, the use of these words. What connective is understood before 'batt'ning'? How do the dews of night *batten* the flocks? What 'star'? Does this star *rise* in the evening? Why did he say that the star *rose* at evening? What mythological allusion in 'Heav'ns descent' and 'westering wheel'? Significance of 'sloped' in the allusion? What are 'rural ditties'? Etymology of 'ditty'? Whose 'ditties'? What is meant by 'were not mute'? What is an 'oaten flute'? Force of 'temper'd'? To whom does 'Satyrs' and 'Fauns' refer? Any suggestion of Greek and Latin pastoral poetry in these two names? Who was 'old

But O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
 Now thou art gone, and never must return!
 Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
 With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown 40
 And all their echoes mourn.
 The willows and the hazel copses green
 Shall now no more be seen
 Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.

Damocetas'? Why 'old'? Note the growth of definiteness from 'were not mute' to 'glad sound.' Did Milton write anything before leaving Cambridge? What two sorts of reminiscences make up lines 23-36? How would you entitle this paragraph?

What one word, an adjective, is the key to the emotion in these lines and prepares for the transition? Rhetorically, how does the theme of 23-46 stand related to 37-49? Is 'But' the appropriate connective? Why? What is the key-word, an adjective, of the transition? Why should lines 37 and 38 be an exclamation? Force of 'Now'? Significance of 'must'? What is the figure of speech that takes the form of an address as in 'Thee, Shepherd,' etc.? What is the imagined situation and position of Lycidas during this address? Does the preceding paragraph as a whole, appropriately call for this figure? What does it indicate as to the emotion of the singer? Where resides the force in saying inanimate nature mourns Lycidas? Is it in contrast with anything in the preceding topic? Force of 'desert' in 'desert caves'? Do 'desert caves' and 'echoes' suggest each other? When did the 'caves' become 'desert' and 'o'ergrown'? For what were caves used? What is the story of Echo? How do the voiceless 'willows and hazel copses green' mourn Lycidas? What

As killing as the canker to the rose, 45
 Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
 Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear
 When first the white thorn blows :
 Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherds' ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorse-
 less deep 50
 Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas ?

need of 'green' following 'hazel copses'? Imagine the situation in which Milton could feel that the woods and caves mourned Lycidas.

Study the three similes in which the 'loss of Lycidas to shepherds' ear' is expressed. Is King's age kept in mind? The 'rose' is mentioned first and 'flowers' third; does the word 'flowers' exclude 'rose'? Do the earlier flowers of spring wear a gayer 'wardrobe'? Does the mention of the early flowers symbolize a climax in sentiment? What is the 'white thorn'? In what particular is the death of Lycidas a loss 'to shepherds' ear'? How is the harmony of thought in the paragraph shown in the expressions 'desert caves,' 'echoes,' and 'to shepherds' ear'? Trace the course of emotion in the preceding and in this paragraph. Imagine the mind-state at the close of the paragraph. Formulate a title for the paragraph with proper subdivisions.

In the preceding division, is there an element of despair? How much of hope? Recovering from such a mental strain, what would, naturally, be the first inquiry? Who, or what, wrought the desolation? In addressing the Nymphs, what is the supposed situation? (See line 151.) Why do the Nymphs come first in the train? Why say to the Nymphs '*your* lov'd Lycidas'? Why are the Druids styled '*your*

For neither were ye playing on the steep
 Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
 Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
 Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream. 55
 Ay me! I fondly dream!
 Had ye been there—for what could that have
 done?

What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
 The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
 Whom universal Nature did lament, 60
 When by the rout that made the hideous roar
 His gory visage down the stream was sent,
 Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

old bards'? Were they poets? For what were the Druids 'famous'? What 'steep'? Is 'shaggy top' a description of Mona? Why 'shaggy'? What are some of the traditions that justify the Deva's being called the 'wizard stream'? What is meant by the 'Deva spreads,' etc.? What suggested these localities to the poet? Describe the mind-play that is suddenly interrupted by 'Ay me!' Meaning of 'fondly'? Complete the expression 'Had ye been there —,' so that the force of 'for' as a connective may be seen. If any, what punctuation mark after 'dream'? What is the abrupt passing from one construction to another in the same sentence called in rhetoric? What is the feeling indicated by this break? The story of Orpheus? ("Orpheus and Eurydice" in Gayley's *Cl. Myths*.) His mother? Why 'enchanting'? What is meant by 'universal Nature'? How did 'universal Nature' lament Orpheus? What was the 'rout'? What, the 'hideous roar'? Find a description of the Bacchanalian orgies? What besides his

Alas! what boots it with uncessant care
 To tend the homely slighted shepherds' trade, 65
 And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
 Were it not better done, as others use,
 To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
 Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
 Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise 70

'gory visage' is said to have washed ashore at Lesbos? (*Cl. Dict.* "Lesbos.") Name the Greek poets whose home was Lesbos? Any connection in thought between Orpheus and the literature of Lesbos? Is the Hebrus 'swift'? If not, what makes 'swift' an appropriate word at this place? Describe the current of emotion in the paragraph. Realize vividly the state of mind in lines 50-55. Why could not the Nymphs have saved Lycidas, had they been there? What philosophical doctrine is indicated in the latter portion of the paragraph? Describe the feeling that is favorable to this line of thought. What title and subtitles would you give to this paragraph?

How does the emotion indicated in 'Alas!' line 64, differ from that expressed by 'Ay me!' line 56? Study the prefix *un* in 'uncessant.' Why *incessant* now? Does the word 'tend' have, specially, an idyllic significance? In what sense is 'trade' used? Is 'homely' an apt word? Meaning of 'slighted'? Significance of 'meditate'? What does 'the thankless Muse' indicate as to the success of poetry in England at Milton's time? Was the social condition of England favorable to poetry? Any significance in the names 'Amaryllis' and 'Neæra'? Lines 67-69 suggest what system of philosophy? Meaning of 'as others use'? Describe the play of fancy suggested by 'tangles of Neæra's hair'? What is the course of thought that results

(That last infirmity of noble mind)
 To scorn delights, and live laborious days ;
 But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
 And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
 Comes the blind fury with the abhorred shears, 75
 And slits the thin-spun life. But not the praise,
 Phœbus repli'd, and touch'd my trembling ears ;

in the homily on 'Fame'? Is 'clear' more expressive in the connection than 'pure'? Why? Object of 'doth raise'? Describe the imagined scene from which the figure in 'the spur that . . . doth raise' is derived. Etymology of 'fame'? In what sense is fame 'that last infirmity of noble mind'? Why is line 71 in parentheses? Has 'To scorn delights' any connection in thought with lines 67-69? Has 'live laborious days' any connection by suggestion with lines 64-66? Why are these ideas repeated in the reverse order of that in which they were originally suggested? Force of 'But' in 'But the fair,' etc.? Etymology of 'guerdon'? How are the two ideas of 'fame' and 'hope' related? What is the fact from which the figure 'to burst out into sudden blaze' is derived? Who are the Furies? Their offices? Name the Fates and their duties. Was there a 'blind Fury'? Explain how 'the blind Fury' expresses Milton's thought and feeling at this point better than 'the blind Fate.' Is there a peculiar fitness in using 'slit' with 'thin-spun'? In the phrase 'But not the praise,' what is understood? What will not happen to the 'praise'? What is the idea in 'touch'd my trembling ears'? What false idea of fame and its rewards does Phœbus correct? Is 'praise' a portion of fame's reward? Why is Phœbus appropriately the correcter of the false notion? What aspect of Lycidas' death suggested 'Phœbus'? Is the idea

Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
 Nor in the glistering foil
 Set off to th' world, nor in broad Rumor lies, 80
 But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
 And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
 As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
 Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed.

O fountain Arehuse, and thou honor'd flood, 85
 Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal
 reeds,
 That strain I heard was of a higher mood;

of 'Phœbus' in the connection in keeping with the philosophical sentiment of the paragraph? Describe the classical imagery under which the sentiments are expressed. What element of fame is emphasized in saying it is 'no plant that grows on mortal soil'? What is the picture to the mind in 'fame is not set off, in glistering foil, to the world'? To what is fame likened? What is a 'foil'? Does the 'foil' 'glisten'? How? What does 'broad Rumor' mean? Etymology of 'Rumor'? With what does the expression 'lives and spreads' stand in contrast, in the preceding lines? 'Aloft' is the antithesis of what? 'By those pure eyes' means what, and is in contrast with what? Is 'all-judging Jove' a pagan divinity? Significance of 'all-judging'? Who is Phœbus, then? What is true fame? What is the doctrine of life set forth in lines 64-76? With what system in contrast in lines 76-84? What is the theme of these lines? Subtitles?

Show that this moralizing paragraph is a logical step in the evolution of the poem. What is the perplexity in mind that Phœbus' lofty strain solves?

But now my oat proceeds,
 And listens to the herald of the sea
 That came in Neptune's plea. 90
 He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
 What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle
 swain?

And question'd every gust of rugged wings
 That blows from off each beaked promontory;
 They knew not of his story, 95
 And sage Hippotades their answer brings:

How does the poet return from his digression in this paragraph? What 'strain was of a higher mood'? 'Of a higher mood' than what other strain? What is the mood of 'that strain'? Is it the contrast that recalls him to his proper theme? Story of Arethuse? (Gayley's *Cl. Myths*, p. 142, "Arethusa and Alpheus.") Read Shelley's *Arethusa*. Why is the Mincius an 'honored flood'? In what sense 'crowned with vocal reeds'? Does 'vocal reeds' suggest pastoral poetry? What two sources for pastoral poetry do the names Arethuse and Mincius suggest? Meaning of 'But now my oat proceeds'? Proceeds with what? At what line does the digression first faintly begin? What was asked of the Nymphs? Does 'And listens to the Herald of the sea' resume the same thought? Who is 'the Herald of the sea'? (See "Triton," *Cl. Dict.*) Meaning of 'coming in Neptune's plea'? Coming to what place? What does he ask the 'waves' and 'winds'? Is it in the form of a direct question? What tense would 'hath doomed' be in for indirect discourse? Imagine 'gust of rugged wings' from 'beaked promontory.' Are 'wings' and 'beaked' connected in thought?

Who is Hippotades? (Gayley's *Cl. Myths*, p. 526.)

That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd,
 The air was calm, and on the level brine
 Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.
 It was that fatal and perfidious bark 100
 Built in th' eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
 That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
 His mantle hairy and his bonnet sedge

Propriety of his answering for the winds? Why called 'sage'? Tell the story of the winds confined in their dungeon cave. Difference between 'gust' and 'blast'? For what does 'level brine' stand? Does 'level brine' connect itself in thought with 'the air was calm'? Who were Panope and her sisters? Why 'sleek'? How does 'bark' mean *boat*? Why 'perfidious'? Superstitions about eclipses? Meaning of 'rigged with curses dark'? Why was Lycidas' head 'sacred'? Is this decision as to the cause of Lycidas' death a logical outcome of the previous speculations and inquiries thereon? Trace the flow of feeling and thought that leads to this conclusion. Topical name for this paragraph?

What is 'Camus'? *Who* is 'Camus'? 'Next' after whom? Why called 'sire'? What is the propriety of mentioning 'fountain Arethuse' first, and then 'Camus' as 'sire'? What means 'footing slow'? What makes his 'hairy mantle'? His 'bonnet sedge'? Why use the word 'bonnet'? Is Christ College feminine? Is the river Cam masculine? Does the gender of the personification here used come from the institution represented in the allegory or from the object that is used representatively? What is the idea in 'inwrought with figures dim'? What figure on

Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge 105
 Like to that sanguine flower inscrib'd with woe.
 Ah! who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?
 Last came, and last did go,
 The pilot of the Galilean lake;
 Two massy keys he bore of metals twain 110
 (The golden opes, the iron shuts amain);
 He shook his miter'd locks, and stern bespake:
 How well could I have spar'd for thee, young
 Swain,
 Anon of such as for their bellies' sake
 Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold? 115

the edge? Story of Hyacinthus? (Gayley's *Cl. Myths*, p. 120, *Cl. Dict.*) What is the 'sanguine flower,' and how 'inscribed with woe'? See Shelley's translations "From Moschus." Is this dress of Camus entirely appropriate? In what sense was Lycidas Camus' 'pledge'? Who was the 'Pilot of Galilean Lake'? Why come 'last'? What does he represent? Why? Whence comes the notion that St. Peter had two keys, the one 'gold,' the other 'iron'? What is the idea in 'the golden one opes'? In 'the iron shuts amain'? Opens what? Shuts what? Force of 'amain'? Imagine the picture in line 112. Meaning of 'mitered'? How, then, can 'locks' be 'mitered'? Study the word 'bespake.'

What significance has this speech with reference to the condition of the church? (See Green's *History*. Read Ruskin in *Sesame and Lilies* on this passage.) What phases of character attributed to the clergy are indicated in the words 'creep,' 'intrude,' and 'climb.' Do these words describe actions which are the effects of motives set

Of other care they little reck'ning make
 Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
 And shove away the worthy bidden guest;
 Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know
 how to hold

A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the
 least

120

That to the faithful herdsman's art belongs!
 What recks it them? What need they? they
 are sped;

And when they list their lean and flashy songs
 Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
 The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed, 125
 But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they
 draw,

Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;
 Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw

forth in 'for their bellies' sake'? Etymology of 'Enow'?
 What was the 'shearers' feast'? Meaning of to 'scramble'?
 Who is 'the worthy bidden guest'? What is meant by
 'Blind mouths'? Whose 'mouths'? How can 'mouths'
 be blind? Study the force of this figure. How little do
 they know of the herdsman's art? Do 'sheep-hook' and
 'herdman' connect themselves in thought? Meaning of
 'recks'? Of 'sped'? Of 'list'? What are 'lean and
 flashy songs'? Is line 124 onomatopoeic? What feeling
 is suggested by 'grate'? By 'scrannel'? Why 'wretched
 straw'? Meaning of 'straw'? Who are the 'hungry
 sheep'? What is it to draw 'rank mist'? Signification of
 'Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread'? What is the

Daily devours apace, and nothing said;
 But that two-handed engine at the door 130
 Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.

Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past
 That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
 And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
 Their bells, and flowrets of a thousand hues. 135
 Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use

'grim wolf'? How with 'privy paw'? What does 'devours' mean in the connection? Why was 'nothing said'? What was the 'two-handed engine'? Whom did it 'smite'? What part did Milton take in the strife? In this paragraph what two mourners came? In what character did the first come and his speech? In what character did the second come and his speech? In what lines was the last prophetic? Title and subtitles of this paragraph?

What is the peculiar significance of 'Return'? What connection has 'Alpheus' with 'Arethuse'? Was the pastoral muse present before this? What lines suggest *her* presence? Was *he* with her? What drove him (or her?) away? What was the 'dread voice'? How did it shrink 'thy streams'? Who is understood to be the 'Sicilian Muse'? How do lines 134-5 stand related to lines 136-151? Does 'vales' present a more indefinite picture than the word 'valleys'?

'Hither' means where to? What connection of thought calls for the diminutive 'flowrets'? Picture the general impression of 'Their bells, and flowrets of a thousand hues'? Note the description of 'valleys.' What is the 'swart star'? Its effects? How must the valley appear if this star 'sparely looks' upon it? Does the word 'low'

Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing
brooks,

On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the 'green turf suck the honey'd
showers,

140

And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd woodbine,

145

express it fully? What makes the 'fresh lap'? What word personifies valleys? What word indicates the sex of the personification? Force of 'use'? How is 'mild whis- pers' connected in thought with 'shades,' 'wanton winds,' and 'gushing brooks'? Describe 'wanton winds.' Why 'throw hither *all*'? What are 'enamelled eyes'? Study the vividness of this expression. What suggests the word 'enamel'? Note the picture of 'green turf' as a foil to 'enamelled eyes'? How do 'eyes' 'suck' the 'showers'? In what sense are 'showers' 'honeyed'? What is meant by 'purple the ground'? Why with 'vernal flowers'? Are lines 136-141 a specification of lines 134-5? Of what lines are 142-151 a further specification?

Study this piece of flower painting in detail. (Read Rus- kin's criticism of this passage in *Modern Painters*, part III, sec. ii, ch. iii.) Note the epithet that describes the several flowers in order to appreciate the color of the piece. Why does not the bringing together of flowers that bloom at dif- ferent seasons of the year offend our taste? What are the

With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
 And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
 Bid Amaranthus all his beauty shed,
 And daffodillies fill their cups with tears, 150
 To strew the laureat hearse where Lycid lies,
 For, so to interpose a little ease,
 Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise,
 Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
 Wash far away, where ere thy bones are hurl'd, 155
 Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
 Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,
 Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world,

flowers that 'sad embroidery wears'? Why should 'Amaranthus shed his beauty'? Etymology of 'daffodillies'? Why 'laureat'? Meaning of 'hearse'? Force of 'for'? Of 'so'? What has been the 'false surmise'? What is, perhaps, the truth as expressed in lines 154-162? How must 'shores' be construed in connection with 'wash'? 'Stormy Hebrides'? What suggestion in 'whelming tide'? Meaning of 'monstrous world'? What are 'moist vows'? Relate the 'fable of Bellerus old.' What is the 'guarded mount'? The tradition of the 'vision'? What of 'Naman-cos' and 'Bayona'? Meaning of 'hold'? What 'angel'? Why 'look homeward'? Force of the allusion? Why address the 'dolphins'? How does the story of Arion furnish the suggestion for this line? (*Cl. Dict.*, "Arion.") Name this paragraph.

What suggests the strain of joy in 165-185? What expression similar to 'wat'ry floor' already used? What is the 'day-star'? Meaning of 'drooping head'? Force of 'tricks'? What is 'new-spangled ore'? Picture 'Flames

Or whether thou to our moist vows denied
 Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old, 160
 Where the great vision of the guarded mount
 Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold;
 Look homeward, angel, now, and melt with ruth;
 And, O ye Dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no
 more, 165
 For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
 Sunk though he be beneath the wat'ry floor;
 So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,

in the forehead of the morning sky.' What suggests 'Him that walk'd the waves'? What 'other groves and other streams'? What is the picture in Milton's mind while writing 'With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves'? What 'nuptial song'? What 'saints entertain him'? What are the 'sweet societies'? In what lines does Milton employ Bible imagery? Lines 165-181 express the consolation for Lycidas' death, with the command to 'weep no more.' Lycidas becomes the Genius of what 'shore'? Is this Christian imagery? Title of this paragraph?

In what character has this song been sung? Significance of singing to 'oaks and rills'? Note the picture of 'morn' with 'sandals gray.' What is meant by 'tender stops'? Of what is 'quills' a synonym? Meaning of 'various quills'? What is 'eager thought' descriptive of? Why 'warbling his *Doric* lay'? Was this a day's work? What is the picture in 'twitching his mantle'? Why 'blue'? What significance, in regard to Milton, does 'to fresh woods and pastures new' have? How is this last paragraph related to the poem proper? How name it?

And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
 And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled
 ore 170
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
 Through the dear might of Him that walk'd
 the waves,
 Where other groves and other streams along,
 With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves, 175
 And hears the unexpressive nuptial song

If to our English race an inadequate sense for perfection of work is a real danger, if the discipline of respect for a high and flawless excellence is peculiarly needed by us, Milton is, of all our gifted men, the best lesson, the most salutary influence. In the sure and flawless perfection of his rhythm and diction he is as admirable as Virgil or Dante, and in this respect he is unique amongst us. No one else in English literature and art possesses the like distinction.
 — MATTHEW ARNOLD.

These are merely questions here and there for the student. So far from undertaking to suggest an exhaustive study, the intention has been to suggest the inexhaustibility of a work of art. If these questions suggest a thousand others that might be asked, the purpose of this work is accomplished.

It is evident that with almost every line questions of punctuation, spelling, rhyme, meter, rhythm arise. Coleridge says: "In the truly great poets . . . there is a reason assignable, not only for every word, but for the position of every word." Suppose you undertake to assign a reason for every word and its position in *Lycidas*!

In the blest kingdoms meek of Joy and Love.
 There entertain him all the saints above
 In solemn troops and sweet societies,
 That sing, and singing in their glory move, 180
 And wipe the tears forever from his eyes.
 Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
 Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
 In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
 To all that wander in that perilous flood. 185

After studying a true poem, which is an organic whole, as the anatomist does the human body, to find the function and interdependence of its parts, it is then eminently profitable to put it off at a distance from you, so as to look at it as an individual whole. You then get general characteristics, and can account for them.

Glance at *Lycidas* as consisting of three parts: Prologue, Song, Epilogue.

In the Prologue we have the poet himself announcing the theme of his song; in the Song, in the guise of a shepherd, he is a mourner beside the bier of Lycidas; in the Epilogue we have his leave-taking.

In spite of the inaccuracies as to details of facts, and the mixture of imagery taken from Classic, Celtic, and Christian sources, there is such an abounding sense of pleasure and satisfaction that the emotion overbears all other considerations. Poetry is the language of the feelings, and a true poem is addressed primarily to the feelings. The aim is not to instruct so much as to move. Consider the quality of the emotion as expressed in the Prologue and Epilogue; then determine if it is of a kind with that of the Song.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to th' oaks
and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay;
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills, 190
And now was dropt into the western bay;
At last he rose and twitch'd his mantle blue;
To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new.

Does Milton make more of King as a poet than is deserved?
Does the Song show deep personal sorrow? What does
the outburst against the corrupt Clergy indicate?

What abandons us to the poem's current of emotion?
Evidently the faultless rhythm. Note the kinds and grades
of emotion through which we are borne along to a complete
consolation for Lycidas' death.

APPENDIX.



THE EPITAPH OF BION, A LOVING HERDSMAN.

YE mountain valleys, pitifully groan !
Rivers and Dorian springs, for Bion weep !
Ye plants, drop tears ! ye groves, lamenting moan !
Exhale your life, wan flowers ; your blushes deep
In grief, anemonies and roses, steep !
In softest murmurs, Hyacinth, prolong
The sad, sad woe thy lettered petals keep ;
Our minstrel sings no more his friends among —
Sicilian Muses ! now begin the doleful song.

Ye nightingales, that 'mid thick leaves let loose 10
The gushing gurgle of your sorrow, tell
The fountains of Sicilian Arethuse
That Bion is no more ; with Bion fell
The song, the music of the Dorian shell.
Ye swans of Strymon, now your banks along
Your plaintive throats with melting dirges swell
For him who sang, like you, the mournful song ;
Discourse of Bion's death the Thracian nymphs among ;

The Dorian Orpheus, tell them all, is dead.
His herds the song and darling herdsman miss, 20
And oaks, beneath whose shade he propt his head ;

Oblivion's ditty now he sings for Dis ;
 The melancholy mountain silent is ;
 His pining cows no longer wish to feed,
 But mourn for him ; Apollo wept, I wis,
 For thee, sweet Bion, and in mourning weed
 The brotherhood of Fauns, and all the Satyr breed.

The tears by Naiads shed are brimful bourns ;
 Afflicted Pan thy stifled music rues ;
 Lorn Echo, 'mid her rocks thy silence mourns, 30
 Nor with her mimic tones thy voice renews ;
 The flowers their bloom, the trees their fruitage lose ;
 No more their milk the drooping ewes supply ;
 The bees to press their honey now refuse ;
 What need to gather it and lay it by
 When thy own honey-lip, my Bion, thine is dry ?

Sicilian Muses, lead the doleful chaunt !
 Not so much near the shore the dolphin moans ;
 Nor so much wails within her rocky haunt
 The nightingale ; nor on their mountain thrones 40
 The swallows utter such lugubrious tones ;
 Nor so much Cëyx wailed for Halcyon,
 Whose song the blue wave, where he perished, owns ;
 Nor in the valley, neighbor to the sun,
 The funeral birds so wail their Memnon's tomb upon —

And these moan, wail, and weep their Bion dead.
 The nightingales and swallows whom he taught,
 For him their elegiac sadness shed ;
 And all the birds contagious sorrow caught ;
 The sylvan realm was all with grief distraught. 50

Who, bold of heart, will play on Bion's reed,
 Fresh from his lip, yet with his breathing fraught?
 For still among the reeds does Echo feed
 On Bion's minstrelsy. Pan only may succeed

To Bion's pipe ; to him I make the gift ;
 But lest he second seem, e'en Pan may fear
 The pipe of Bion to his mouth to lift.
 For thee sweet Galatea drops the tear,
 And thy dear song regrets, which sitting near
 She fondly listed ; ever did she flee 60
 The Cyclops and his song ; but far more dear
 Thy song and sight than her own native sea ;
 On the deserted sands, the nymph, without her fee,

Now sits and weeps, or, weeping, tends thy herd.
 Away with Bion all the muse-gifts flew, —
 The chirping kisses breathed at every word ;
 Around thy tomb the Loves their playmate rue ;
 Thee Cypris loved more than the kiss she drew
 And breathed upon her dying paramour.
 Most musical of rivers ! now renew 70
 Thy plaintive murmurs ; Meles, now deplore
 Another son of song, as thou didst wail of yore

That sweet, sweet mouth of dear Calliope ;
 The threne, 't is said, thy waves for Homer spun
 With saddest music filled with reflux sea ;
 Now, melting, wail and weep another son ;
 Both loved of fountains — that of Helicon
 Gave Melesigenes his pleasant draught ;
 To this sweet Arethuse did Bion run,

And from her urn the glowing rapture quaft ; 80
 Blest was the bard who sang how Helen bloomed and
 laught :

On Thetis' mighty son his descant ran,
 And Menelaus ; but our Bion chose
 Not arms and tears to sing, but Love and Pan ;
 While browsed his herd, his gushing music rose ;
 He milked his kine, did pipes of reeds compose,
 Taught how to kiss, and fondled in his breast
 Young Love and Cypris pleased. For Bion flows
 In every glorious land a grief confest :
 Ascra for her own bard, wise Hesiod, less exprest : 90

Bœotian Hylæ mourned for Pindar less ;
 Teos regretted less her minstrel hoar,
 And Mytelene her sweet poetess ;
 Nor for Alcæus Lesbos suffered more ;
 Nor lovely Paros did so much deplore
 Her own Archilochus. Breathing her fire
 Into her sons of song, from shore to shore,
 For thee the Pastoral Muse attunes her lyre
 To woeful utterance of passionate desire.

Sicelidas, the famous Samian star, 100
 And he with smiling eye and radiant face,
 Cydonian Lycidas, renowned afar,
 Lament thee ; where quick Hales runs his race,
 Philetus wails ; Theocritus, the grace
 Of Syracuse, thee mourns ; nor these among
 Am I remiss Ausonian wreaths to place
 Around thy tomb : to me doth it belong
 To chaunt for thee from whom I learnt the Dorian song.

Me with thy minstrel skill as proper heir
 Others thou didst endow with thine estate. 110
 Alas ! alas ! when in a garden fair
 Mallows, crisp dill, or parsley yields to fate,
 These with another year regerminate ;
 But when of mortal life the bloom and crown,
 The wise, the good, the valiant, and the great
 Succumb to death, in hollow earth shut down
 We sleep — forever sleep — forever lie unknown.

Thus art thou pent, while frogs may croak at will ;
 I envy not their croak. Thee poison slew —
 How kept it in thy mouth its nature ill ? 120
 If thou didst speak, what cruel wretch could brew
 The draught ? He did, of course, thy song eschew.
 But justice all o'ertakes. My tears fast flow
 For thee, my friend ! Could I, like Orpheus true,
 Odysseus, or Alcides, pass below
 To gloomy Tartarus, how quickly would I go

To see, and, haply, hear thee sing for Dis !
 But in the Nymph's ear warble evermore,
 My dearest friend ! thy sweetest harmonies :
 For whilom, on her own Etnæan shore, 130
 She sang wild snatches of the Dorian lore.
 Nor will thy singing unrewarded be ;
 Thee to thy mountain haunts she will restore,
 As she gave Orpheus his Eurydice.
 Could I charm Dis with songs, I, too, would sing for
 thee.

Transl. of REV. J. BANKS.



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