

as was Bentley's reading, none of it was superfluous, for he turns it all to account; his felicity in fixing his eye at once on what he needed, in always finding the evidence that he wanted, often where no one else would have thought of looking for it, is almost preternatural. His learning suggested all the phrases that might be admitted in any given passage; but his taste did not always lead him to select the best.—COLZANO, *HARTLEY*, 1833, *Biographia Borvatis*, p. 120.

Speaking of Bentley's readings in the mass, one may say that Horace would probably have liked two or three of them—would have allowed a very few more as not much better or worse than his own—and would have rejected the immense majority with a smile or a shudder.—JENK, *RICHARD CAVENISHORE*, 1882, *Bentley (English Men of Letters)*, p. 128.

In this work the editor puts too strict a limit to the author's poetic fancy, and thus too often reduces the poetry of Horace to the level of precise and logical prose. But even the very errors of so great a critic are often instructive, and the commentary abounds in unquestionably valuable hints on grammar and metre, while in the preface we have a serious attempt to deal with the chronology of the poet's works.—SANDYS, *J. E.*, 1896, *Social England*, ed. *Fressil*, vol. V, p. 65.

REMARKS ON A LATE DISCOURSE OF FREE-THINKING

1713

Whereas the Reverend Dr. Bentley, Master of Trinity College, besides his other labours published from our press, to the great advancement of learning and honour of this University, has lately, under the borrowed name of "Phileleutherus Lipsiensis," done eminent service to the Christian Religion, and the Clergy of England, by refuting the objections and exposing the ignorance of an impious set of writers, that call themselves Free-thinkers—May it please you that the said Dr. Bentley, for his good services already done, have the public thanks of the University; and be desired by Mr. Vice-Chancellor, in the name of the whole body, to finish what remains of so useful a work.—UNIVERSITY GRACE BOOK, 1715, Jan. 4.

Nothing can be more judicious, or effectual than the manner in which the

be left off abruptly, in the middle of a "Third Part," it was not because he was satiated with slaughter, but to substitute a new excitement, no less congenial to his temper—a quarrel with the University about his fees. A grace, voted 1715, tendering him the public thanks of the University, and "praying him in the name of the University to finish what remains of so useful a work," could not induce him to resume his pen. The "Remarks of Phileleutherus Lipsiensis," unfinished though they gave occasion to them, are perhaps the best of all Bentley's performances. They have all the merits of the "Palaeus" dissertation, with the advantage of a far nobler subject. They show how Bentley's exact appreciation of the value of terms could, when he chose to apply it to that purpose, serve him as a key to the philosophical ideas of past times, no less than to those of poetical metaphor. The tone of the pamphlet is most offensive, "not only not insipid, but exceedingly bad-tasted." We can only say the taste is that of his age, while the knowledge is all his own.—PARRISON, *MARK*, 1860-83, *Religious Thought in England's Essays*, ed. *Niddiship*, vol. II, pp. 95, 97.

EDITION OF PARADISE LOST

1713

Our celebrated author, when he composed this poem, being obnoxious to the Government, poor, friendless, and, what is worst of all, blind with a *gutta serena*, could only dictate his verses to be writ by another. Whence it necessarily follows, that any errors in spelling, pointing, nay even in whole words of a like or near sound in pronunciation, are not to be charged upon the poet, but on the amanuensis.—But more calamities, than are yet mentioned, have happened to our poem: for was, to whom Milton committed his copy and the overseeing of the press, did so rily execute that trust, that Paradise, under his ignorance and audaciousness, may be said to be twice lost. A poor bookseller, then living near Aldersgate, purchased our author's copy for ten pounds, and (if a second edition followed) for five pounds more; as appears by the original bond, yet in being. This book-

seiler, and that acquaintance, who seems

to have been the sole corrector of the press, brought forth their first edition, polluted with such monstrous faults as are beyond example in any other printed book.—But these typographical faults, occasioned by the negligence of this acquaintance, (if all may be imputed to that, and not several wilfully made) were not the worst blemishes brought upon our poem. For this supposed friend (called in these notes the editor), knowing Milton's bad circumstances; who (vii. 26) "Was fall'n on evil days and evil tongues, With darkness and with dangers compass'd round

And solitude;" thought he had a fit opportunity to foist into the book several of his own verses, without the blind poet's discovery. This trick has been too frequently played; but especially in works published after an author's death. And poor Milton in that condition, with threescore years' weight upon his shoulders, might be reckoned more than half dead.—BENTLEY, *RICHARD*, 1732, *Edition of Milton*.

Did Milton's prose, O Charles, thy death defend?

A furious foe unconsensably groves a friend.—On Milton's verse does Bentley comment.—Know

A weak officious friend becomes a foe. While he but sought his Author's fame to further.

The murderous critic has avenged thy marble.—POPE, *ALEXANDER*, 1732, *Epigram Occasioned by seeing some sheets of Dr. Bentley's edition of Milton's "Paradise Lost."*

As to Dr. Bentley and Milton, I think the one above and y' other below all criticism.—POPE, *ALEXANDER*, 1732, *Letter to Jacob Tonson, June 7, Pope's Works*, ed. *Charthope*, vol. III, p. 530.

The generality of my scheme does not admit the frequent notice of verbal inaccuracies; which Bentley, perhaps better skilled in grammar than in poetry, has often found, though he sometimes made them, and which he imputed to the objections of a reviser, whom the author's blindness obliged him to employ; if he position rash and groundless, thought it true; and vile and pernicious, if, as is said, he in private allowed it to be false.—JOHNSON, *SAMUEL*, 1773-81, *Milton, Lives of the English Poets*.

The classical learning of Bentley was