

70 Far within the bosom bright
Of blazing majesty and light,
There with thee, new welcome saint,
Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
No marchioness, but now a queen.

41 L'Allegro

Date. Summer 1631? There is no certain evidence for dating *L'Allegro* or *Il Penseroso*. Bateson 155 would place them in the late summer of 1629, and Fletcher ii 480–3 agrees, but Bateson's argument rests on a questionable interpretation of *Elegia VI* 89–90 (see note to these lines). Tillyard² 1–28 contends that the twin poems grew out of the debate about night and day in M.'s first *Prolusion*, and were written for an academic audience at Cambridge in M.'s last long vacation (1631) E. S. Le Comte, *Yet Once More* (New York 1953) 60–1, and Parker³ 98–103, 769–70, both question *Prolusion I* as a clue to dating, but Parker and D. Bush (Variorum ii 226–7) accept Tillyard's other arguments and his suggested date. The various attempts to locate the poems' scenery in Cambridge, Horton, Stanton St John or near London are all suspect.

Publication. 1645 (33. you]ye 53. horn]horn, 62. dight,]dight. 104. And by the]And he by 108. corn,]corn 122. prize,]prize), 1673 (the text followed here, except in 3, where 1673 misprints a full stop after 'forlorn' (see note), in 18, where it misprints a full stop after 'spring', and in 124, where it misprints a comma after 'commend').

Metre and style. *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso* are metrically almost identical. No precedent has been found in English for such a combination of intricate prelude with couplet continuation. Each poem begins with a prelude of ten lines rhyming *abbaaddeec*, with the number of syllables per line, excluding feminine endings, alternately six and ten. This 6/10 pattern of line-lengths presumably derives from the seven- and eleven-syllable lines of the *canzone*, just as the rhyme scheme reflects the Italian sonnet. From line 11 onwards both poems are in nominal octosyllabic (iambic) couplets, but vividly diversified with frequent trochaic (seven-syllable) lines (32 per cent of the lines in *L'Allegro* and 16 per cent in *Il Penseroso*) occurring indiscriminately among the octosyllables, which are themselves sometimes trochaic (e.g. *L'Allegro* 19–20, 69–70) and have a scattering of extrametrical final syllables (e.g. *L'Allegro* 46, 85–6,

Title. John Florio's *Dictionary* (1598) defines *Allegro* as 'joyfull, merie, jocond, sportfull, pleasant, frolike'.

141–2; *Il Penseroso* 21–2, 48–9). Sprott has noticed that the percentage of catalectic lines in *L'Allegro* 11–100 inclusive is 50, but in 101–152 it is only 15.4, and in *Il Penseroso* 16.9. This change in prosody may, he conjectures, mean that M. wrote the first two-thirds of *L'Allegro* at an earlier period than the rest of the poem and *Il Penseroso*. He may be right, but the accelerated pace of the catalectic lines is more evidently suited to the subject matter of *L'Allegro*'s daylight scenes than to any others in the two poems, and this seems a likelier explanation for the change.

Stylistically, as the footnotes demonstrate, the principal model in *L'Allegro* is Shakespeare (fifteen echoes, five from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, eight of the others from the early plays). Spenser and the Spenserians come next in importance (thirteen instances, five from Sylvester). The long sentences differentiate the couplets from those of Jonson and his 'sons'. *Il Penseroso* has noticeably fewer literary echoes than *L'Allegro*, Shakespeare contributing only five (three from *Romeo and Juliet*, but none from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), and Sylvester three. In both poems there are only two or three echoes of classical poetry, in spite of the parade of mythological figures.

Modern criticism. Sources suggested by earlier critics include the song, perhaps by Strode, in Fletcher's *The Nice Valour* ('Hence all you vain delights . . .'), the two poems prefixed to the third edition of Burton's *Anatomy* (1628) and scraps from the *Anatomy* itself, the anonymous lyric 'The sun when he hath spread his rays' from Tottel's *Miscellany*, and passages from Marston's *Scourge of Villanie* and N. Breton's *Passionate Shepherd*. More recent critics have added little to these. R. B. Waddington, *MQ* 27 (1993) 72–4, suggests Oratio Vecchi's *Mascherata* as a 'conceptual inspiration' for *L'Allegro*. The best essay on the relation of M.'s twin poems to seventeenth-century poetry is still J. B. Leishman, *E&S* n.s.4 (1951) 1–36.

The best account of Renaissance melancholy in relation to M.'s poems remains L. Babb, *SP* 37 (1940) 257–73. Of broader scope are Babb's *The Elizabethan Malady* (East Lansing 1951) and R. Klibansky, E. Panofsky and F. Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy* (London 1964).

The idea that rejection of *L'Allegro* and aspiration to *Il Penseroso* represent a step in M.'s poetic development, earlier put forward by Allen 3–23 and D. C. Dorian, *MP* 31 (1933) 175–82, is supported by E. R. Gregory, *Discourse* 12 (1969) 529–38, L. Brisman, *JEGP* 71 (1972) 226–40, and S. Revard, *PMLA* 101 (1986) 338–50, who compares the contrast between elegiac and epic poet in *Elegia VI*. I. Dempsey in *Papers on Milton*, ed. P. M. Griffith and L. F. Zimmerman (Tulsa 1969) 9–24, also reads *Il Penseroso* as the 'higher' alternative, as do T. J. Embry, *JEGP* 77 (1978) 504–29, and H. J. van Nuis, *MQ* 27 (1993) 119–127, both of whom detect covert sensuality in *L'Allegro*. For K. M. Swaim, *TSLI* 18 (1976) 422–3, the two poems represent respectively time and timelessness. D. Brand, *MQ* 15 (1981) 116–19, suggests that *Il Penseroso* describes the development of a continuous self, while *L'Allegro* shows what mental activity would be like without one. This seems congruent with S. E. Fish's observation, *MS* 7 (1975) 77–100, that the verse of *L'Allegro* operates by differentiation, using loose connectives and non sequiturs, whereas *Il Penseroso*

binds us to consecutive thought. For G. H. Hartman, *PQ* 47 (1958) 55–68, however, the mythological figures situate both poems in a numinous or semi-divine region, and T. M. Greene, *ELR* 14 (1984) 159–74, finds the syntax of both poems hazy, blurring the boundary between external and interiorized reality, a view in line with H. J. Phelen's, *MS* 22 (1986) 3–20, who remarks how much of the experience in both poems is dreamed or imaginary, and with G. B. Christopher's, *MS* 28 (1992) 23–35, who maintains that subjectivity in both poems 'occupies an oneiric space between a magus and his apparitions'.

Critics who read the two poems as complementary rather than opposed include G. A. Stringer, *TSSL* 12 (1970) 221–29; D. M. Miller, *PMLA* 86 (1971) 32–9; N. B. Council, *MS* 9 (1976) 203–19, who argues that they represent the cycle of universal knowledge which is M.'s educational ideal in *Prolusio VII* (an idea anticipated by G. L. Geckle, *TSSL* 9 (1967–8) 455–73); G. H. Cox, *MS* 18 (1983) 45–62, who notes linking references to Hermetic lore; G. W. Zacharias, *MS* 24 (1988) 3–15; and C. Finch and P. Bowen, *MS* 26 (1990) 3–24. A. Patterson, *MQ* 9 (1975) 75–9, takes *Comus* as recombining the antitheses of the two poems.

The question of genre has not much attracted recent critics. A. Fowler's claim in *Renaissance Genres*, ed. B. K. Lewalski (Cambridge, Mass. 1986) that the poems are 'almost unmixed Georgic' contends with A. Patterson's observation in Summers and Peabworth 15 that *L'Allegro* aestheticizes country life, erasing all real signs of agricultural work. Following Patterson, M. Grossman's Marxist reading, *ELH* 59 (1992) 77–105, detects in the poems M.'s anxiety about living by others' labours.

Features of the poems receiving independent critical notice include their Orphic allusions (M. Fixler, *ELR* 1 (1971) 165–77, and M. L. Williamson, *MLQ* 32 (1971) 377–86); their relation to contemporary music theory (S. Corse, *MQ* 14 (1980) 109–13, and M. N. K. Mander in *Di Cesare* 281–91); their affinities with Theophrastan characters (A. Burnett, *NEQ* 27 (1980) 332–4); and the word-play in *L'Allegro* (H. N. Davies, *MQ* 23 (1989) 1–7).

Hence loathed Melancholy
Of Cerberus, and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn

[41. 3. *cave*] Cerberus' cave on the bank of the Styx is mentioned by Virgil, *Aen.* vi 418. The mythological parentage is M.'s invention (cp. *Q Nov* 69n, p. 41 above.) The 'shrieks' of l. 4 are heard by Aeneas as he passes the cave (vi 426–7) and come from the souls of dead children. They connect ll. 3 and 4, and so call for an emendation of the 1673 full stop after 'forlorn'.

'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights
unholy,
5 Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous
wings,
And the night-raven sings;
There under ebon shades, and low-browed
rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
10 In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come thou goddess fair and free,
In heaven yclept Euphrosyne,
And by men, heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely Venus at a birth
15 With two sister Graces more
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore;
Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr with Aurora playing,
20 As he met her once a-Maying,
There on beds of violets blue,

5. *uncouth*] unfrequented, desolate.

7. *night-raven*] The name given, from Anglo-Saxon times on, to a bird heard to croak or cry in the night and supposed of evil omen: probably an owl or night-heron.

9. *ragged*] The word occurs nowhere else in M.'s poetry. Cp. *Isa.* ii 21, 'ragged rocks', and *Titus Andronicus* II iii 230: 'the ragged entrails of the pit'.

10. *Cimmerian*] See *Q Nov* 60n (p. 40).

11. *fair and free*] A common formula, found in Drayton, *Ecolgue* iv 127 and Sylvester (Du Bartas 17).

12. *In heaven*] This device of distinguishing a special, heavenly name is Homeric, notes J. F. Killeen, *NEQ* 28 (1981) 42. *yclept*] A Spenserian form (*FQ* III v 8) not found elsewhere in M.'s poetry. *Euphrosyne*] Mirth, whose sisters were Aglaia (Brightness) and Thalia (Bloom). Servius, in his note to *Aen.* i 720, records the tradition which makes Venus and Bacchus parents of the Graces; they were usually considered to be daughters of Zeus and Hera or Eurynome. K. M. Swaim, *SP* 82 (1985) 460–76, compares M.'s *Mirth* with Spenser's Phaedria in *FQ* II.

16. *ivy-crowned*] See *Elegia VI* 15–16n, p. 117 above.

17. *as some sager sing*] M. seems to have invented this parentage. Aurora appears as companion of Zephyrus in Jonson's *Entertainment at Highgate*, and their song (93–4) has M.'s rhymes, 'a-Maying' and 'playing'.

- And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
Filled her with thee a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
- 25 Haste thee nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
- 30 And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go
On the light fantastic toe,
- 35 And in thy right hand lead with thee,
The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew

22. Echoing *Taming of the Shrew* II i 174: 'morning roses newly wash'd with dew'.

24. J. B. Leishman, *E&S* n.s. 4 (1951) 30, shows that these three adjectives were habitually connected in the early seventeenth century, and follows Todd v 77 in quoting Randolph's *Aristippus* (1630) 'blithe, buxome and deboneer'. *buxom*] yielding, compliant, *debonair*] of gentle disposition.

25–32. J. C. Maxwell, *N&Q* 17 (1970) 249, compares Horace, *Odes* I xxx.

27. *Quips*] smart or witty sayings. *cranks*] jokes which depend upon twisting or changing the form or meaning of a word.

28. *becks*] P. B. Tillyard, *TLS* (25 Jul. 1952) 485, draws attention to Burton's translation (III ii 2 iv) of *nutibus* ('with nods') in a passage from Musaeus as 'With becks and nods and smiles', and deduces that, though *OED* interprets M.'s 'becks' here as 'gestures expressive of salutation or respect', they are in fact upward nods – 'coming-on' gestures, E. B. C. Jones, *TLS* (8 Aug. 1952) 517, agrees.

29. *Hebe's*] Cp. *Vacation Exercise* 38n (p. 80).

31–2. S. R. Watson, *N&Q* 153 (1941) 258, anticipated by Warton (46) compares Fletcher's *Purple Island* iv 13: 'Sportful laughter . . . Defies . . . wrinkled care.' B. Lockerel, *MQ* 17 (1983) 17–19, suggests *derides* puns on Fr. *derider* (smoothe away wrinkles).

33. *trip it*] Echoes *Tempest* IV i 46: 'Each one tripping on his toe.'

34. *fantastic*] According to *OED* M. is here using this word in a new sense: 'making fantastic or extravagantly conceived movements'; cp. Drayton, *Nimphidia* 29, 'light fantastick mayde'.

36. *mountain nymph*] Oread. In associating Liberty with mountainous districts M. may be referring to Greece, Switzerland or Calvin's Geneva, which lies between the Jura and the Alps.

- To live with her, and live with thee,
40 In unreprieved pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
- 45 Then to come in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good morrow,
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine.
While the cock with lively din,
50 Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn door,
Stoutly struts his dames before,
Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumb'ring morn,

42. *dull night*] Probably echoes *Henry V* IV Prologue II: 'Piercing the night's dull ear.'

43. *his*] the lark's, or (thinks E. Riggs, *Explicator* 23 (1965) 44) the night's.

44. *dappled*] Echoes *Much Ado* V iii 25–7: 'the gentle day . . . Dapple the drowsy east with spots of grey'.

45–6. There has been some argument whether it is L'Allegro or the lark that comes to the window and bids good morrow. Adherents of the latter quote Sylvester (Du Bartas 87) 'cheerfull Birds, chirping him sweet *Good-morrow*, / With Natures Musick do beguile his sorrows', and Dekker, *The Wonderful Year* (1603) 'for joy whereof the Larke sung at his window every morning'; but grammar and the habits of larks make decisively for the former, as C. H. Hurley, *ELN* 11 (1974) 275–8, and many previous commentators argue. A few (most recently H. Hoziol, *Anglia* 84 (1966) 75) suggest it is 'dawn' that comes to the window. J. L. Brereton, *MLN* 41 (1926) 533, refers to the custom of bidding good-morrow to the sun, common in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama (see *Cymbeline* III iii 7 and *Volpone* I i 1).

47–8. Sweet-briar and eglantine are names for the same plant (a species of *Rosa rubiginosa*); 'twisted' suggests M. thought eglantine a plant that climbs by its twining stem, like honeysuckle (which, it has been conjectured, he really meant). G. G. Loane, *N&Q* 176 (1939) 225, thinks M. was misled by Spenser, *FQ* III vi 44 where ivy, caprifole (honeysuckle) and eglantine are combined. But C. A. Knapp, *N&Q* 176 (1939) 276, insists that since 'eglantine' derives from Latin *aculentus* ('prickly') M. must have known it was a plant with thorns.

52. Cp. the peacock in Sylvester (Du Bartas 96) 'To woo his Mistress, strowt-ing stately by her.'

- 55 From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill.
Sometime walking not unseen
By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
60 Where the great sun begins his state,
Robed in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight,
While the ploughman near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
65 And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures
70 Whilst the landscape round it measures,
Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,

55. *hoar*] H. H. Hoeltje, *PMLA* 45 (1930) 201–3, points out that in seventeenth-century England hunting was common in the summer and that 'hoar' has no connection with hoar frost here but is used to designate colour, referring to the mist-covered hills of a dewy summer morning.

59. Echoes *M.N.D.* III ii 391: 'the eastern gate, all fiery-red', in Oberon's description of sunrise.

60. *state*] stately progress.

62. *dight*] arrayed.

67. *tells his tale*] The argument about whether this means 'counts the tally of his sheep' or 'tells his story (of love)' goes back to Warton and beyond. The former seems more likely in a catalogue of early-morning phenomena, but J. W. Rankin, *MLN* 27 (1912) 230, argues that in *Nativity Ode* 85–92 the shepherds in the early morning are 'simply chatting'. J. M. Hart, *MLN* 28 (1913) 159–60, replies that the shepherds are abnormal there because biblical. Cp. *III Henry VI* II v 42–3: 'Gives not the hawthorn-bush a sweeter shade / To shepherds looking on their silly sheep.'

71–2. Bateson 159 calls this couplet 'a masterpiece of concentrated observation. The sheep have broken through the temporary fence round the parish's fallow field, no doubt because the common pastures are "russet", the short-rooted grass having been "burned", as farmers say, in the hot dry weather. "Russet" is decidedly not the epithet one would have expected for "lawns" . . . nor is "grey" what one would have expected for "fallow". M. must have had his eye on a real field. Most fallows after the summer ploughing are brown, but this field, perhaps because the subsoil was chalk, was grey.' M. Scher, *ES* 52 (1971) 518–20, notes that ME *gray* can mean 'brownish', and takes this as M.'s sense.

72. *nibbling*] Cp. *Tempest* IV i 62: 'nibbling sheep'.

- Mountains on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest:
75 Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide.
Towers, and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
80 The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
85 Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or if the earlier season lead
90 To the tanned haycock in the mead,
Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
95 To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the chequered shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sunshine holiday,
Till the livelong daylight fail,
100 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,

73–4. The 'barren' mountains are contrasted with the 'labouring' clouds (bringing forth rain), cp. *Passion* 56*n* (p. 125).

75. *pied*] variegated, echoing *Love's Labour's Lost* V ii 882: 'daisies pied'.

78. *tufted*] Sylvester uses the same adjective to describe plane trees (Du Bartas 555) and, notes A. Burnett, *N&Q* 227 (1982) 28–32, Drayton has 'tufted cedars'.

80. *cynosure*] The constellation of the Lesser Bear, containing the Pole Star, hence, as here, an object of special attention.

83–8. The names M. chooses for his rustics are common in Renaissance pastoral.

85. Sylvester also rhymes 'messes' and 'dresses' (Du Bartas 218).

91. *secure*] carefree (the Latin meaning).

94. *rebecks*] fiddles.

96. *chequered shade*] Echoes *Titus Andronicus* II iii 14–15: 'The green leaves . . . make a chequer'd shadow on the ground.' G. Campbell, *N&Q* 28 (1981) 123, thinks both may derive from Virgil, *Ecl.* vii 46 *rara . . . umbra*.

- How Faëry Mab the junkets eat,
 She was pinched, and pulled she said,
 And by the friar's lantern led
 105 Tells how the drudging goblin sweat,
 To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
 When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn,
 That ten day-labourers could not end;
 110 Then lies him down the lubber fiend.
 And stretched out all the chimney's length,
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
 And crop-full out of doors he flings,
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.
 115 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
 By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
 Towered cities please us then,
 And the busy hum of men,

102. *Mab*] The subject of Mercutio's famous speech (*Romeo and Juliet* I iv 54–95); her fondness for 'junkets' (i.e. cream cheeses, or other preparations of cream) may be deduced from Jonson, *Entertainment at Althorp* 47, 53–4 where she runs 'about the creame-bowles sweet' and 'doth nightly rob the dayrie'.

103. It is Mab in Jonson's *Entertainment at Althorp* 58–9 'that pinches country wenches, / If they rub not cleane their benches', and this habit of fairies is noted both by Drayton, *Nymphidia* 65–6, and Browne i 61.

104. Arguments for the 1673 and the 1645 versions of this line (see headnote) are presented by, respectively, A. Burnett, *NE&Q* 29 (1982) 495–8, and J. Creaser, *NE&Q* 31 (1984) 327–30. *friar's*] Unexplained: identified by some commentators as Friar Rush, a German folktale devil. But he did not have a lantern or mislead travellers. Robin Goodfellow misled travellers (see *M.N.D.* III i 11–12, and Nashe's *Terrors of the Night* 'Robbin-good-fellowes, Elfes, Fairies . . . pincht maids in their sleep that swept not their houses cleane, and led poore Travellers out of their way notoriously') but was not a friar. *M.* seems to mean the Will o' the Wisp or Jack o' Lantern. Possibly *She . . . by the friar's lantern led* is metaphoric, equivalent to 'She . . . led astray by superstition' – which would simplify the syntax.

105. *drudging goblin*] Robin Goodfellow is called 'Hobgoblin' in *M.N.D.* II i 40, and in Jonson's *Love Restored* 58–9 he 'riddles for the country maides, and does all their other drudgerie'.

106. *cream-bowl*] Cp. Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy* I ii 11: 'Hobgoblins, and Robin Goodfellows that would . . . grind corn for a mess of milk, cut wood, or do any manner of drudgerie work.'

110. *lubber*] Robin Goodfellow is called 'lob of spirits' in *M.N.D.* II i 16.

111. *chimney*] fireplace.

- Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
 120 In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
 With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
 Rain influence, and judge the prize,
 Of wit, or arms, while both contend
 To win her grace, whom all commend.
 125 There let Hymen oft appear
 In saffron robe, with taper clear,
 And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
 With mask, and antique pageantry,
 Such sights as youthful poets dream
 130 On summer eves by haunted stream.
 Then to the well-trod stage anon,
 If Jonson's learned sock be on,
 Or sweetest Shakespeare fancy's child,
 Warble his native wood-notes wild,
 135 And ever against eating cares,
 Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
 Married to immortal verse
 Such as the meeting soul may pierce

120. *Echoing Troilus and Cressida* III iii 239: 'great Hector in his weeds of peace'.

122. *Rain influence*] In astrology 'influence' was an etherial fluid flowing from the stars. R. W. French, *NE&Q* 17 (1970) 412, compares Spenser, *Epith.* 416: 'happy influence upon us raine'.

127. A. Burnett, *NE&Q* 27 (1980) 332–4, compares *M.N.D.* I i 19 'With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling'.

131. H. Berry, *MP* 89 (1992) 510–14, notes that a John Milton, probably *M.*'s father, became a trustee of the Blackfriars Theatre in 1620, which may help explain *M.*'s interest in drama.

132. *sock*] low-heeled slipper, mark of the comic actor on the Greek and Roman stage. The tragic actor wore buskins.

133. *fancy's child*] Echoes *Love's Labour's Lost* I i 171: 'child of fancy.' F. A. Hughes, *RES* 44 (1993) 220–30, invokes the legend of the infant Pindar being fed honey by bees.

135. *eating cares*] A translation of Horace, *Odes* II xi 18: *curas edaces*.

136. *Lydian airs*] Plato, *Republic* iii 398–9, condemns the effeminate Lydian mode in contrast to the martial Phrygian and solemn Doric. This became a Renaissance commonplace, and C. Grose, *JEGP* 83 (1984) 183–99, like many former critics, thinks *M.*'s 'Lydian' the Platonic. But H. W. Wendell, *Explicator* 24 (1965) 3, takes *M.* to refer to the later ecclesiastical modes in which Lydian was bright and ascending, and J. Hutton, *EM* 2 (1951) 45–6, and G. W. Williams, *Explicator* 34 (1975) 15, both note Cassiodorus approving the Lydian as remedial against 'excessive cares and worries'. M. Berley, *MS* 30 (1993) 149–61, compares *M.*'s other passages on divine music.

- In notes, with many a winding bout
 140 Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
 With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
 The melting voice through mazes running;
 Untwisting all the chains that tie
 The hidden soul of harmony.
 145 That Orpheus' self may heave his head
 From golden slumber on a bed
 Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
 Such strains as would have won the ear
 Of Pluto, to have quite set free
 150 His half-regained Eurydice.
 These delights, if thou canst give,
 Mirth with thee, I mean to live.

42 Il Penseroso

Date. Summer 1632? See headnote to previous poem.

Publication. 1645 (21. offended,]offended. 170. spell]spell.), 1673 (the text followed here, except in 49, where 1673 misprints a semi-colon after 'Leisure', and in 81, 88, 143 and 156, where it misprints full stops after 'mirth', 'unsphere', 'sing' and 'pale').

For modern criticism see headnote to previous poem.

139. *bout*] circuit, orbit. Nan C. Carpenter, *UTQ* 22 (1953) 354–67, suggests that in ll.139–44 M. has in mind the Italian aria as it was developing in the early seventeenth century. She points out that his father associated for some years with a London colony of Italian musicians, headed by Ferrabosco and Coperario.

145–50. Cp. Virgil, *Georg.* iv 453–527, and Ovid, *Met.* x 1–77 and xi 61–6. See C. M. Bowra, *CQ* new ser. 2 (1952) 113–22.

146. Cp. Dekker, *Patient Grissil* IV ii 99: 'Golden slumbers kisse your eyes.'
 151–2. Echoing the conclusion of Marlowe's popular lyric ('Come live with me and be my love'): 'If these delights thy mind may move, / Then live with me, and be my love.'

Title. M.'s *Penseroso* ('pensive') is not the modern spelling, but W. H. David, *N&Q* 7th ser. 8 (1889) 326, justifies it by reference to a French-Italian dictionary published by Chouet at Geneva in 1644.

- Hence vain deluding Joys,
 The brood of Folly without father bred,
 How little you bestead,
 Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys;
 5 Dwell in some idle brain,
 And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
 As thick and numberless
 As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
 Or likest hovering dreams
 10 The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
 But hail thou goddess, sage and holy,
 Hail divinest Melancholy,
 Whose saintly visage is too bright
 To hit the sense of human sight;
 15 And therefore to our weaker view,
 O'erlaid with black staid wisdom's hue.
 Black, but such as in esteem,
 Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
 Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove

¶42. 1–2. Perhaps an echo of Sylvester (Du Bartas² 1084): 'Hence, hence false Pleasures, momentary Joyes; / Mock us no more with your illuding Toyes.'

2. *brood of Folly*] The same phrase occurs in Jonson, *Love Freed from Ignorance* 274. Leo Carey, *N&Q* 241 (1996) 268–9 compares *Romeo and Juliet* I iv 96–100.

3. *bestead*] help.

6–10. Cp. Sylvester's description of the Cave of Sleep (Du Bartas 396) where Morpheus sleeps and 'fantastick', 'gawdy' swarms of dreams hover like 'Th' unnumbered Moats which in the Sun do play'. In Voragine, *Legenda Aurea* 5.189 (Temple Classics), the air is full of wicked spirits 'as the sunbeams be full of small motes'.

10. *pensioners*] members of royal bodyguard. *Morpheus*] son of Sleep and god of dreams.

14. *hit*] suit, fit.

16. *black*] Melancholy is black bile, and the type of melancholy caused by the influence of Saturn (1. 24) was traditionally associated with a black face as Z. S. Fink, *PQ* 19 (1940) 309–13, points out, referring to the same idea in Burton I iii 1 iii and I iii 2 iii.

18. *Memnon's sister*] called Himera by Dictys Cretensis, *Ephemeris Belli Troiani* vi, as E. Venables, *N&Q* 8th ser. 1 (1892) 149–50, notes. M. Day, *MLR* 12 (1917) 496–7, adds that her beauty is commented on by Guido della Colonne, *Historia Destructionis Troiae* viii.

19. *queen*] Cassiopea, wife of Cepheus, king of Ethiopia, and mother of Andromeda, was turned into a constellation for boasting that she was more beautiful than the Nereids. D. T. Starnes (Taylor² 44–5) cites versions of the story in Renaissance dictionaries.