

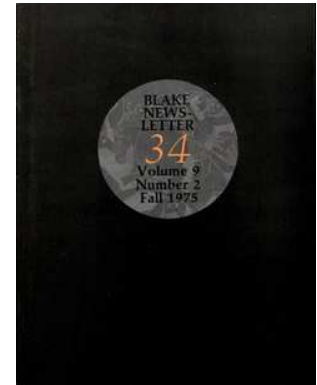
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Tiriël: Two Corrected First Readings

Francis Wood Metcalf

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The following typographical errors or omissions have been corrected. On p. 15, column 2, line 3, "effect" should be "affect." On p. 15, add at end of first paragraph: "'Red*' means red in some copies." On p. 26 the last paragraph should read ". . . *Night Thoughts* 264 . . ." On p. 42, paragraph 3, line 4, "caries" should read "carries." On p. 59, line 15, "between Adam . . ." should read "behind Adam . . ." On p. 126, first column, second paragraph, line 3, "Balthazar's" should read "Belshazzar's." The following words are spelled incorrectly: p. 53, line 6: *Adultery*; p. 57, line 5: lullaby; p. 113, line 14: directly. Plate numbers for copy C of *Milton* should be corrected, on p. 219 to C2, on p. 227 to C8* [a five-pointed star], on p. 236 to C17, and on p. 251 to C32*. In the index, the J 1 border (though still invisible) should be cited under "manacles" and "thorns."

The following errors have been discovered too late for correction in the reprintings. On p. 99 the second "text" should read "next"; the last word on p. 162 should be "dance"; words misspelled are "dispell" on p. 154, line 25; "Daughter" on p. 174, line 19; "wholly" on p. 342, line 22; "Stukeley" on p. 355, line 7. On p. 182 the second row of plate numbers for *Urizen* copy C should read: 24, 25, 26, 28; the concluding sequence for copy A needs this mending: . . . 17 21? 14 . . . (but 19 after 20 won't do) . . . (Perhaps 9 . . . after 16; 23 could go anywhere between 20 and 25.)

On page 206 the revised printings have this added paragraph:

The red scarf, a sort of sun, appears also in C and A. Thiriel has outstretched arms, with palms open, in CAG. There is a separate plate in which only Utha appears. (Reported by W. J. T. Mitchell.)

Finally, the following fresh suggestions for additions to the commentary seem worth giving here. On the *Ahania* frontispiece (p. 211), Geoffrey Keynes notes, in his facsimile edition, that Urizen, after "stretching his awful hand" (2:31), contemplates crushing Ahania. Susan Fox notes that in *Milton* 19 (p. 235) one tip of Los's branching arms reaches Milton's left tarsus, while in 46 (p. 262) the serpen tail does not quite reach it. In *Milton* 21 (p. 237) I now think that the fourth marginal figure from the top represents Catherine Blake, since she is skirted like the bottom figure in 22, where the action is analogous to that in *Jerusalem* 36. Fox also suggests that the lightning in *Milton* 33 (p. 249) represents that of Ololon's descent; this seems probable, though we then need new identifications, perhaps, for the touching figures in the center. Michael Tolley notes that on p. 271 the description of the revised "Fire" figure should include horns growing on his head. They are clearly there, but I had never noticed them.

On page 335, to forestall interpretative speculation, it should be remarked that the fragmenting of the worm shape under "earth-Worm are" (37) was caused by ridges in the copper made by the word "LONDON" in the plate-maker's stamp.

Tiriel: Two Corrected First Readings

By Francis Wood Metcalf

The following corrections of the *Tiriel* transcript will be incorporated in the next revised printing of David Erdman's Doubleday text.

1. "To raise his dark & burning visage thro the cleaving [world ~~del~~] ground."¹

The deleted word is *not* "world," but "earth." The cause for the unanimous misreading by editors is probably the *d*-like form of the last of the deleting loops. However, this loop cannot be a *d* because it is preceded by two vertical strokes where *rd* would be in "world." Nor can these strokes be considered *ld* in "world": ninety-two percent (336 of 363) of the serifs of word-ending *d* curve leftward in the poem as a whole; all of them (34) do so in this section. Either there is a very rare occurrence here of a straight *d* serif, or the deleted word is not "world."

On the positive side, and bearing in mind the narrow range of synonyms for "ground," the deleted word looks more like "earth" than "world" under the deleting loops. Michael Tolley, who very generously agreed to examine the manuscript in the British Museum, reports that the original's initial letter looks like *e* but not *w*. In addition, the vertical strokes are similar to those of the *th* in "Earth" of the preceding line (246), and to those of the many other *th*'s in the surrounding text. Only the right-most portion of the crossing stroke of *t*, crossing *h* as well, is clear of the loops, and it is quite faint. But many similar strokes are equally faint, and two nearby *th*'s have no crossing strokes at all: "the" in 243 and "doth" in 244.

The terminal hump of *h* is not visible, but if it were as short and flat as the one in "earth" of 258, it would be obscured by the last deleting loop. Finally, from a semantic stand-point the deleted word must be "earth." "Earth" and "ground," the replacement, are natural synonyms; "world" and "ground" are not.

2. The sequence of vicissitudes in 385-86 is recorded erroneously in Damon's *Dictionary*: "Such was Tiriel, [hypocrisy, the idiot's wisdom & the wise man's folly, *del*] compell'd . . ." (p. 406). Alone among editors, Bentley notes that "is" in 385 was changed to "was," but gives no evidence of understanding the full sequence of revision in these lines: that when "is" became "was," "Tiriel" was affixed to the line-end, and the next line was cancelled.

Originally, 385 ended with "Such is," the sense continuing in the next line: "Such is / Hypocrisy the idiots wisdom & the wise mans folly." Since 386 ends the page we can speculate that the sense ran on to perhaps an entirely different conclusion on a now-lost recto. But at some point Blake decided against an abstract sermon on hypo-

