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PARADISE LOST.

A POEM

IN TWELVE BOOKS.

BY JOHN MILTON.
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PUBLISHED BY CLARK, AUSTIN & CO.
205 BROADWAY.
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^{sent}
William L. Phillips
Oct 22, 1937

THE
LIFE OF JOHN MILTON.

From a family and town of his name in Oxfordshire, our author derived his descent; but he was born at London, in the year 1608. His father, John Milton, by profession a scrivener, lived in a reputable manner on a competent estate, entirely his own acquisition, having been early disinherited by his parents in renouncing the communion of the church of Rome, to which they were zealously devoted.

Our author was the favourite of his father's hopes, who, to cultivate the great genius which early displayed itself, was at the expense of a domestic tutor; whose care and capacity his pupil hath gratefully celebrated in an excellent Latin elegy. At his initiation he is said to have applied himself to letters with such indefatigable industry, that he rarely was prevailed upon to quit his studies before midnight, which not only made him frequently subject to severe pains in his head, but likewise occasioned that weakness in his eyes, which terminated in a total privation of sight. From a domestic education he was removed to St. Paul's School, to complete his acquaintance with the classics, under the care of Dr. Gill; and after a short stay there, was transplanted to Christ College in Cambridge, where he distir

guished himself in all kinds of academical exercises. Of this society he continued a member till he commenced Master of Arts: and then, leaving the university he returned to his father, who had quitted the town and lived at Horton in Buckinghamshire, where he pursued his studies with unparalleled assiduity and success.

After some years spent in this studious retirement, his mother died, and then he prevailed with his father to gratify an inclination he had long entertained of seeing foreign countries. Sir Henry Wotton, at that time provost of Eton College, gave him a letter of advice for the direction of his travels. Having employed his curiosity about two years in France and Italy, on the news of a civil war breaking out in England, he returned, without taking a survey of Greece and Sicily, as at his setting out the scheme was projected. At Paris the Lord Viscount Scudamore, ambassador from King Charles I. at the court of France, introduced him to the acquaintance of Grotius, who at that time was honoured with the same character there by Christiana, Queen of Sweden. In Rome, Genoa, Florence, and other cities of Italy, he contracted a familiarity with those who were of highest reputation for wit and learning, several of whom gave him very obliging testimonies of their friendship and esteem.

Returning from his travels, he found England on the point of being involved in blood and confusion. He retired to lodgings provided for him in the city; which being commodious for the reception of his sister's sons, and some other young gentlemen, he undertook their education.

In this philosophical course he continued, without a wife, till the year 1643 when he married Mary.

the daughter of Richard Powel, of Forrest-hill in Oxfordshire, a gentleman of estate and reputation in that county, and of principles so very opposite to his son-in-law, that the marriage is more to be wondered at, than the separation which ensued, in little more than a month after she had cohabited with him in London. Her desertion provoked him both to write several treatises concerning the doctrine and discipline of divorce, and also to pay his addresses to a young lady of great wit and beauty; but before he had engaged her affections to conclude the marriage treaty, in a visit to one of his relations, he found his wife prostrate before him, imploring forgiveness and reconciliation. It is not to be doubted but an interview of that nature, so little expected, must wonderfully affect him; and, perhaps, the impressions it made on his imagination, contributed, much to the painting of that pathetic scene in *Paradise Lost*,* in which Eve addresseth herself to Adam for pardon and peace. At the intercession of his friends, who were present, after a short reluctance, he generously sacrificed all his resentment to her tears

———“Soon his heart relented
Towards her, his life so late and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress.”

And after this re-union, so far was he from retaining any unkind memory of the provocations which he had received from her ill conduct, that when the king's cause was entirely suppressed, and her father who had been active in his loyalty, was exposed to sequestrations, Milton received both him and his family to protection, and free entertainment, in his own house, till their affairs were accommodated by his interest in the victorious faction.

* Book X.

A commission to constitute him Adjutant General to Sir William Waller, was promised, but soon superseded, by Waller's being laid aside, when his masters thought it proper to new-model their army. However, the keenness of his pen had so effectually recommended him to Cromwell's esteem, that when he took the reins of government into his own hands, he advanced him to be Latin Secretary, both to himself and the Parliament; the former of these preferments he enjoyed both under the usurper and his son, the other until King Charles II. was restored. For some time he had an apartment for his family at Whitehall; but his health requiring a freer accession of air, he was obliged to remove thence to lodgings which opened into St. James' Park. Not long after his settlement there his wife died in child-bed, and much about the time of her death, a gutta serena, which had for several years been gradually increasing, totally extinguished his sight. In this melancholy condition, he was easily prevailed with to think of taking another wife, who was Catharine, the daughter of Captain Woodcock, of Hackney; and she too, in less than a year after their marriage, died in the same unfortunate manner as the former had done; and in his twenty-third sonnet he does honour to her memory.

Being a second time a widower, he employed his friend Dr. Paget to make choice of a third consort, on whose recommendation he married Elizabeth, the daughter of Mr. Minshul, a Cheshire gentleman, by whom he had no issue. Three daughters, by his first wife, were then living; the two elder of whom are said to have been very serviceable to him in his studies: for having been instructed to pronounce not only the modern, but also the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, they read in their respective ori-

ginals, whatever authors he wanted to consult, though they understood none but their mother-tongue.

We come now to take a survey of him in that point of view, in which he will be looked upon by all succeeding ages with equal delight and admiration. An interval of about twenty years had elapsed since he wrote the *Mask of Comus*, *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and *Lycidas*, all in such an exquisite strain, that, though he had left no other monuments of his genius behind him, his name had been immortal; but neither the infirmities of age and constitution, nor the vicissitudes of fortune, could depress the vigour of his mind, or divert it from executing a design he had long conceived of writing a heroic poem.* The fall of man was a subject that he had some years before fixed on for a tragedy, which he intended to form by the models of antiquity; and some, not without probability, say, the play opened with that speech in the fourth book of *Paradise Lost*, line 32, which is addressed by Satan to the sun. Were it material, I believe I could produce other passages, which more plainly appear to have been originally intended for the scene: but whatever truth there may be in this report, it is certain that he did not begin to mould his subject, in the form which it bears now, before he had concluded his controversy with *Salmasius* and *More*, when he had wholly lost the use of his eyes, and was forced to employ, in the office of an amanuensis, any friend who accidentally paid him a visit. Yet, under all these discouragements and various interruptions, in the year 1669 he published his *Paradise Lost*, the noblest poem (next to those of *Homer* and *Virgil*) that ever the wit of man produced in any age or nation. Need I mention any other evidence of its inestimable worth, than that the finest geniuses who have succeeded him have

* *Paradise Lost* Book IX, line 26.

ever esteemed it a merit to relish and illustrate its beauties?

And now perhaps it may pass for a fiction, what with great veracity I affirm to be fact, that Milton, after having with much difficulty prevailed to have this divine poem licensed for the press, could sell the copy for no more than fifteen pounds; the payment of which valuable consideration, depended upon the sale of three numerous impressions. So unreasonably may personal prejudice affect the most excellent performances!

About two years after, he published *Paradise Regained*; but *Oh! what a falling off was there!*—of which I will say no more, than that there is scarcely a more remarkable instance of the frailty of human reason, than our author gave in preferring this poem to *Paradise Lost*.

And thus having attended him to the sixty-ninth year of his age, as closely as such imperfect lights as men of letters and retirement usually leave to guide our inquiry, would allow, it now only remains to be recorded, that in the year 1674, the gout put a period to his life, at Bunhill, near London; from whence his body was conveyed to St. Giles' Church, by Cripplegate, where it lies interred in the chancel; and a neat monument has lately been erected to perpetuate his memory.

In his youth he is said to have been extremely handsome. The colour of his hair was a light brown, the symmetry of his features exact, enlivened with an agreeable air, and a beautiful mixture of fair and ruddy. His stature (as we find it measured by himself) did not exceed the middle size, his person neither too lean nor corpulent; his limbs well propor-

tioned, nervous, and active, serviceable in all respects to his exercising the sword, in which he much delighted; and wanted neither skill nor courage to resent an affront from men of the most athletic constitutions. In his diet he was abstemious; not delicate in the choice of his dishes; and strong liquors of all kinds were his aversion. His deportment was erect, open, affable; his conversation easy, cheerful, instructive. His wit on all occasions of command, facetious, grave, or satirical, as the subject required. His judgment, when disengaged from religion and political speculations was just and penetrating, his apprehension quick, his memory tenacious of what he read, his reading only not so extensive as his genius, for that was universal. And having treasured up such an immense store of science, perhaps the faculties of his soul grew more vigorous after he was deprived of sight; and his imagination (naturally sublime and enlarged by reading romances, of which he was much enamoured in his youth) when it was wholly abstracted from material objects, was more at liberty to make such amazing excursions into the ideal world, when, in composing his divine work, he was tempted to range

“Beyond the visible diurnal sphere.”

With so many accomplishments, not to have had some faults and misfortunes to be laid in the balance with the fame and felicity of writing *Paradise Lost*, would have been too great a portion for humanity.

ELIJAH FENTON

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ON

PARADISE LOST.

WHEN I beheld the Poet blind, yet bold,
In slender book his vast design unfold;
Messiah crown'd, God's reconcil'd decree,
Rebelling angels, the forbidden tree,
Heaven, hell, earth, chaos, all! the argument
Held me a while misdoubting his intent,
That he would ruin (for I saw him strong)
The sacred truths to fable, and old song;
So Samson grop'd the temple's post in spite,
The world o'erwhelming, to revenge his sight.

Yet, as I read, soon growing less severe,
I lik'd his project, the success did fear;
Through that wide field how he his way should find,
O'er which lame faith leads understanding blind
Lest he perplex'd the things he would explain,
And what was easy he should render vain.

Or, if a work so infinite he spann'd,
Jealous I was that some less skilful hand
(Such as disquiet always what is well,
And by ill imitating would excel)
Might hence presume the whole creation's day
To change in scenes, and show it in a play.

Pardon me, mighty Poet, nor despise,
My causeless, yet not impious surmise.
But I am now convinc'd, and none will dare
Within thy labours to pretend a share.
Thou hast not miss'd one thought that could be fit,
And all that was improper dost omit;
So that no room is here for writers left,
But to detect their ignorance, or theft.

That majesty which through thy work doth reign,
 Draws the devout, deterring the profane:
 And things divine thou treat'st of in such state,
 As them preserves, and thee, inviolate.
 At once delight and horror on us seize,
 Thou sing'st with so much gravity and ease;
 And above human flight dost soar aloft,
 With plume so strong, so equal and so soft;
 The bird nam'd from that Paradise you sing
 So never flags, but always keeps on wing.

Where couldst thou words of such a compass find?
 Whence furnish such a vast expanse of mind?
 Just heaven thee, like Tiresias, to requite,
 Rewards with prophecy thy loss of sight.

Well might'st thou scorn thy readers to allure
 With tinkling rhyme, of thy own sense secure;
 While the Town-bays writes all the while and spells,
 And, like a pack-horse, tires without his bells:
 Their fancies like our bushy points appear,
 The poets tag them, we for fashion wear.
 I, too, transported by the mode, commend,
 And while I mean to praise thee must offend.
 Thy verse created like thy theme sublime,
 In number, weight, and measure, needs not rhyme.

ANDREW MARVELL.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

This first book proposes first, in brief, the whole subject, man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed. Then touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of angels, was, by the command of God, driven out of heaven with all his crew into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastes into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his angels now fallen into hell, described here, not in the centre (for heaven and earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed) but in a place of utter darkness filliest called Chaos: Here Satan, with his angels, lying on the burning lake, thunder-struck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him; they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded; they rise; their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders named according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan, and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hope yet of regaining heaven; but tells them lastly of a new world, and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in heaven; (for that angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient fathers.) To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the deep: the infernal peers there sit in council.

OF man's first disobedience, and the fruit
 Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
 Brought death into the world, and all our wo,
 With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
 Restore us, and regain the blissful seat, 5
 Sing heavenly Muse! that on the secret top
 Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
 That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
 In the beginning how the heavens and earth
 Rose out of Chaos. Or if Sion hill 10
 Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd
 Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
 Invoke thy aid to my advent'rous song,
 That with no middle flight intends to soar
 Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues 15
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

And chiefly thou, O spirit that dost prefer
 Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
 Instruct me, for thou know'st: thou from the first
 Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread, 20
 Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
 And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark,
 Illumine! what is low, raise and support!
 That to the height of this great argument
 I may assert eternal Providence, 25
 And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first, (for heaven hides nothing from thy view,
 Nor the deep tract of hell,) say first what cause
 Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state
 Favour'd of Heaven so highly, to fall off 30
 From their Creator, and transgress his will,
 For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
 Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
 Th' infernal serpent, he it was, whose guile,
 Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd 35
 The mother of mankind, what time his pride
 Had cast him out from heaven, with all his host
 Of rebel angels; by whose aid aspiring
 To set himself in glory 'bove his peers,
 He trusted to have equall'd the Most High, 40
 If he opposed: and with ambitious aim
 Against the throne and monarchy of God
 Rais'd impious war in heaven, and battle proud,

With vain attempt. Him the Almighty power
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky, 45
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down
 To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
 In adamantyne chains and penal fire,
 Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
 Nine times the space that measures day and night
 To mortal men, he with his horrid crew 50
 Lay vanquish'd rolling in the fiery gulf,
 Confounded though immortal! But his doom
 Reserv'd him to more wrath: for now the thought
 Both of lost happiness, and lasting pain, 55
 Torments him. Round he throws his baleful eyes,
 That witness'd huge affliction and dismay,
 Mix'd with obdurate pride, and steadfast hate,
 At once, as far as angels' ken, he views
 The dismal situation waste and wild: 60
 A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
 As one great furnace, flam'd: yet from those flames
 No light, but rather darkness visible,
 Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
 Regions of sorrow! doleful shades! where peace 65
 And rest can never dwell! hope never comes,
 That comes to all: but torture without end
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd!
 Such place eternal justice had prepar'd 70
 For those rebellious; here their prison ordain'd,
 In utter darkness; and their portion set
 As far removed from God, and light of heaven,
 As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole.
 O how unlike the place from which they fell! 75
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
 He soon discerns: and wett'ring by his side
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,
 Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd 80
 Beelzebub: To whom the arch-enemy,
 (And thence in heaven called Satan,) with bold words,
 Breaking the horrid silence thus began:

"If thou beest he—But O how fall'n! how chang'd
 From him, who in the happy realms of light 85
 Cloth'd with transcendant brightness, didst outshine
 Myriads though bright! If he, whom mutual league,

United thoughts and counsels, equal hope,
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
 Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd 90
 In equal ruin! Into what pit thou seest,
 From what height fallen; so much the stronger prov'd
 He with his thunder! and till then who knew
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
 Nor what the potent Victor in his rage 95
 Can else inflict, do I repent or change
 (Though chang'd in outward lustre) that fix'd mind,
 And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
 That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend:
 And to the fierce contention brought along 100
 Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
 That durst dislike his reign: and me preferring
 His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd,
 In dubious battle on the plains of heaven,
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
 All is not lost; the unconquerable will, 105
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,
 And courage never to submit or yield;
 (And what is else not to be overcome?)
 That glory never shall his wrath or might 110
 Extort from me, to bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
 Who from the terror of his arm so late
 Doubted his empire. That were low indeed!
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath 115
 This downfall! since (by fate) the strength of gods,
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail;
 Since through experience of this great event,
 (In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,)
 We may, with more successful hope, resolve 120
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,
 Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
 Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy
 Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of heaven."

So spake the apostate angel, though in pain; 125
 Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair:
 And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer:

"O Prince! O chief of many throned powers,
 That led th' embattled seraphim to was
 Under thy conduct! and in dreadful deeds 130

Fearless, endanger'd heaven's perpetual King
 And put to proof his high supremacy :
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate,
 Too well I see and rue the dire event,
 That with sad overthrow and foul defeat, 135
 Hath lost us heaven : and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as gods, and heavenly essences,
 Can perish : for the mind and spirit remains
 Invincible, and vigor soon returns, 140
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state,
 Here swallow'd up in endless misery !
 But what if he our conqueror (whom I now
 Of force believe Almighty, since no less
 Than such could have o'erpower'd such force as ours)
 Have left us this our spirit and strength entire, 146
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains ;
 That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
 Or do him mightier service, as his thralls
 By right of war, whate'er his business be, 150
 Here in the heart of hell to work in fire,
 Or do his errands in the gloomy deep ?
 What can it then avail, though yet we feel
 Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being,
 To undergo eternal punishment ?" 155
 Whereto with speedy words th' arch-fiend replied :

" Fallen Cherub ! to be weak is miserable,
 Doing or suffering : but of this be sure,
 'To do ought good never will be our task ;
 But ever to do ill our sole delight : 160
 As being the contrary to his high will
 Whom we resist. If then his providence
 Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
 Our labour must be to pervert that end,
 And out of good still to find means of evil : 165
 Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
 Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
 His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
 But see ! the angry Victor hath recall'd
 His ministers of vengeance and pursuit, 170
 Back to the gates of heaven : the sulph'rous hail
 Shot after us in storm, o'er-blown, hath laid
 The fiery surge, that from the precipice
 Of heaven receiv'd us falling : and the thunder,

Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage, 175
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
 To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
 Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,
 Or satiate fury, yield it from our foe.
 Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild, 180
 The seat of desolation, void of light,
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
 Casts pale and dreadful? thither let us tend
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
 There rest, if any rest can harbour there: 185
 And re-assembling our afflicted powers,
 Consult how we may henceforth most offend
 Our enemy; our own loss how repair;
 How overcome this dire calamity;
 What reinforcement we may gain from hope; 190
 If not, what resolution from despair."

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate,
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blaz'd; his other parts besides
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large, 195
 Lay floating many a rood: in bulk as huge,
 As whom the fables name, of monstrous size,
 Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
 Briareus, or Typhon, whom the den
 By ancient Tarsus held; or that sea-beast 200
 Leviathan, which God of all his works
 Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream:
 (Him, haply slumb'ring on the Norway foam,
 The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff,
 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell, 205
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night
 Invests the sea, and wished morn delays.)
 So stretch'd out huge in length the arch-fiend lay,
 Chain'd on the burning lake: nor ever thence 210
 Had risen, or heav'd his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven,
 Left him at large to his own dark designs:
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought 215
 Evil to others; and enrag'd might see,
 How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy shown

On man by him seduc'd; but on himself
 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance pour'd. 220
 Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
 Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and roll'd
 In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight 225
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
 That felt unusual weight: till on dry land
 He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire:
 And such appear'd in hue, as when the force 230
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pclorus, or the shatter'd side
 Of thund'ring Ætna, whose combustible
 And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
 Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds, 235
 And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
 With stench and smoke; such resting found the sole
 Of unblest'd feet! Him follow'd his next mate,
 Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood,
 As gods, and by their own recover'd strength; 240
 Not by the suff'rance of supernal power.

"Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,"
 Said then the lost archangel, "this the seat,
 That we must change for heaven? this mournful gloom
 For that celestial light? be it so! since he 245
 Who now is sovereign can dispose, and bid
 What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
 Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
 Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
 Where joy for ever dwells! hail, horrors! hail, 250
 Infernal world! and thou profoundest hell
 Receive thy new possessor! One, who brings
 A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 Can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.) 255
 What matter where, if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less than he
 Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
 We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
 Here for his envy; will not drive us hence: 260
 Here we may reign secure; and in my choice
 To reign is worth ambition, though in hell;

Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven !
 But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
 Th' associates and copartners of our loss, 265
 Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
 And call them not to share with us their part
 In this unhappy mansion : or once more
 With rallied arms to try, what may be yet
 Regain'd in heaven, or what more lost in hell?" 270

So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub
 Thus answer'd : " Leader of those armies bright,
 Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd !
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft 275
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
 Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume
 New courage, and revive, though now they lie
 Grov'ling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280
 (As we erewhile,) astounded and amaz'd ;
 No wonder, fallen such a pernicious height !"

He scarce had ceas'd, when the superior fiend
 Was moving toward the shore ; his pond'rous shield,
 Etherial temper, massy, large, and round, 285
 Behind him cast ; the broad circumference
 Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
 Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
 At ev'ning from the top of Fesole,
 Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, 290
 Rivers, or mountains, on her spotty globe.
 His spear, (to equal which the tallest pine
 Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
 Of some great admiral, were but a wand,)
 He walk'd with, to support uneasy steps 295
 Over the burning marle (not like those steps
 On heaven's azure !) and the torrid clime
 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
 Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach
 Of that inflamed sea he stood and call'd 300
 His legions, angel-forms, who lay entranc'd,
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strew the brooks
 In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades,
 High over-arch'd imbower ; or scattered sedge
 Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd 305

Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
 Busiris, and his Memphian chivalry,
 While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd
 The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
 From the safe shore their floating carcasses, 310
 And broken chariot-wheels: so thick bestrown,
 Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
 Under amazement of their hideous change.
 He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
 Of hell resounded: "Princes, Potentates, 315
 Warriors, the flower of heaven! once yours, now lost,
 If such astonishment as this can seize
 Eternal spirits: or have ye chosen this place
 After the toil of battle to repose
 Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find 320
 To slumber here, as in the vales of heaven?
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
 T'adore the Conqueror? who now beholds
 Cherub and seraph rolling in the flood,
 With scatter'd arms and ensigns; till anon 325
 His swift pursuers from heaven-gates discern
 Th' advantage, and descending tread us down
 Thus drooping; or with linked thunderbolts
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
 Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!" 330

They heard, and were abash'd and up they sprung
 Upon the wing; as when men wont to watch
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
 Nor did they not perceive the evil plight 335
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
 Yet to their general's voice they soon obey'd,
 Innumerable! As when the potent rod
 Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
 Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud 340
 Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
 That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
 Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
 So numberless were those bad angels, seen
 Hov'ring on wing under the cope of hell, 345
 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires
 Till, as a signal given, th' uplifted spear
 Of their great sultan waving to direct

Their course, in even balance down they light
 On the firm brimstore, and fill all the plain : 350
 A multitude, like which the populous north
 Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
 Rhine or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
 Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
 Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands. 355
 Forthwith from every squadron, and each band,
 The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
 Their great commander ; godlike shapes and forms
 Excelling human, princely dignities,
 And powers ! that erst in heaven sat on thrones ;
 Though of their names in heavenly records now 361
 Be no memorial ; blotted out and raz'd,
 By their rebellion, from the books of life.
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve 364
 Got them new names ; till wand'ring o'er the earth,
 Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
 By falsities and lies the greatest part
 Of mankind they corrupted, to forsake
 God their Creator, and th' invisible
 Glory of him that made them, to transform 370
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
 With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
 And devils to adore for deities :
 Then were they known to men by various names.
 And various idols through the heathen world. 375

Say, Muse, their names then known ; who first,
 who last,

Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery couch,
 At their great emperor's call as next in worth
 Came singly where he stood, on the bare strand,
 While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof ? 380
 The chief were those who, from the pit of hell
 Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
 Their seats long after next the seat of God,
 Their altars by his altar, gods ador'd
 Among the nations round, and durst abide 385
 Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
 Between the cherubim ; yea, often plac'd
 Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
 Abominations ! and with cursed things
 His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd, 390
 And with their darkness durst affront his light.

First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
 Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears ;
 Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
 Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd thro' fire
 To nis grim idol. Him the Ammonite 396
 Worshipp'd in Rabba, and her watery plain
 In Argob, and in Basan, to the stream
 Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
 Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart 400
 Of Solomon he led by fraud, to build
 His temple right against the temple of God,
 On the opprobrious hill ; and made his grove
 The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
 And black Gehenna called, the type of hell. 405
 Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,
 From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
 Of southmost Abarim ; in Hesebon
 And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
 The flowery dale of Sibma, clad with vines ; 410
 And Eleale to th' Asphaltic pool :
 Peor his other name, when he entic'd
 Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them wo.
 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd 415
 Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
 Of Moloch homicide ; lust hard by hate ;
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to hell
 With these came they, who from the bord'ring flood
 Of old Euphrates, to the brook that parts 420
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
 Of Baalim, and Ashtaroth ; those male,
 These feminine : (For spirits when they please
 Can either sex assume, or both ; so soft
 And uncompounded is their essence pure ; 425
 Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
 Like cumbrous flesh ; but in what shape they choose,
 Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure
 Can execute their airy purposes, 430
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.)
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook
 Their living strength, and unfrequented left
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
 To bestial gods ; for which their heads as low 435
 Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear

Of despicable foes. With these in troop
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phenicians call'd
 Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns
 For whose bright image nightly by the moon, 440
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
 in Sion also not unsung, where stood
 Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built
 By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
 Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell 445
 To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
 The Syrian damsels, to lament his fate
 In am'rous ditties all a summer's day;
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock 450
 Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat;
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
 Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led, 455
 His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one
 Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
 Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopp'd off
 In his own temple, on the grunsel edge, 460
 Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshippers;
 Dagon his name; sea monster! upward man
 And downward fish: yet had his temple high
 Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
 Of Palestine, in Gath, and Ascalon, 465
 And Accaron, and Gaza's frontier bounds.
 Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful seat
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
 Of Abbana, and Pharphar, lucid streams!
 He also against the house of God was bold: 470
 A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king,
 Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
 God's altar to disparage, and displace,
 For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
 His odious off'rings, and adore the gods 475
 Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
 A crew who under names of old renown,
 Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd
 Fanatic Egypt, and her priests, to seek 480
 Their wand'ring gods disguis'd in brutish forms,

Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
The infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel, and in Dan,
Lik'ning his Maker to the grazed ox,
Jehovah! who in one night when he pass'd
From Egypt marching, equall'd with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd
Fell not from heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself: to him no temple stood,
Or altar smok'd; yet who more oft than he
In temples, and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigus.
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage: and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Beliel, flown with insolence and wine
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Expos'd a matron, to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime, in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
'Th' Ionian gods, of Javan's issue held
Gods, yet confess'd later than heaven and earth,
Their boasted parents. Titan, (heaven's first born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright seiz'd
By younger Saturn: he from mightier Jove,
(His own and Rhea's son.) like measure found
So Jove usurping reign'd; these first in Crete
And Ida known; thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,
Their highest heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking, but with looks
Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chæ

Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost 525
 In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast
 Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride
 Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
 Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
 Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears. 530
 Then straight commands that at the warlike sound
 Of trumpets loud, and clarions, be uprear'd
 His mighty standard: that proud honour claim'd
 Azazel as his right, a cherub tall;
 Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd 535
 Th' imperial ensign; which, full high advanc'd,
 Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
 With gems and golden lustre rich emblaz'd,
 Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
 Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds: 540
 At which the universal host up sent
 A shout that tore hell's concave; and beyond
 Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
 All in a moment through the gloom were seen
 Ten thousand banners rise into the air, 545
 With orient colours waving: with them rose
 A forest huge of spears; and thronging helm
 Appear'd, and serried shields in thick array,
 Of depth immeasurable: anon they move
 In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood 550
 Of flutes, and soft recorders; such as rais'd
 To height of noblest temper heroes old
 Arming to battle; and instead of rage,
 Deliberate valour breath'd, firm, and unmov'd
 With dread of death to flight, or foul retreat; 555
 Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage,
 With solemn touches, troubled thoughts, and chase
 Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain,
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they
 Breathing united force, with fixed thought 560
 Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil: and now
 Advanc'd in view, they stand, a horrid front
 Of dreadful length, and dazzling arms, in guise
 Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield, 565
 Awaiting what command their mighty chief
 Had to impose: he through the armed files
 Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse
 The whole battalion views, their order due,

Their visages and stature as of gods; 570
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart
 Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
 Glories: for never since created man
 Met such embodied force, as nam'd with these
 Could merit more than that small infantry 575
 Warr'd on by cranes; though all the giant brood
 Of Phiegra with th' heroic race were join'd,
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each sid
 Mix'd with auxiliar gods: and what rescunds
 In fable or romance of Uther's son, 580
 Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
 And all who since baptiz'd or infidel,
 Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalbar,
 Damasco, or Morocco, or Trebisond;
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore, 585
 When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
 By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
 Their dread commander: he, above the rest
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent, 590
 Stood like a tower: his form had not yet lost
 All her original brightness, nor appear'd
 Less than archangel ruin'd, and th' excess
 Of glory obscur'd: as when the sun new risen
 Looks through the horizontal misty air, 595
 Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
 In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
 On half the nations, and with fear of change
 Perplexes monarchs; darken'd so, yet shone
 Above them all th' archangel: but his face 600
 Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
 Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
 Signs of remorse and passion, to behold 605
 The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
 (Far other once beheld in bliss!) condemn'd
 For ever now to have their lot in pain;
 Millions of spirits, for his fault amerc'd
 Of heaven, and from eternal splendours flung 610
 For his revolt; yet faithful how they stood,
 Their glory wither'd: as when heaven's fire
 Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
 With singed top their stately growth, though bare,

Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd 615
 To speak, whereat their doubled ranks they bend
 From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
 With all his peers: attention held them mute:
 Thrice he assay'd, and thrice in spite of scorn,
 Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth; at last 620
 Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

“O myriads of immortal spirits! O powers
 Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife
 Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
 As this place testifies, and this dire change, 625
 Hateful to utter: but what power of mind,
 Forseeing, or presaging, from the depth
 Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,
 How such united force of gods, how such
 As stood like these, could ever know repulse? 630
 For who can yet believe, though after loss,
 That ail these puissant legions, whose exile
 Hath emptied heaven, shall fail to reascend
 Self-raisd, and repossess their native seat?
 For me be witness all the host of heaven, 635
 If counsels different, or danger shunn'd
 By me, have lost our hopes: but he who reigns
 Monarch in heaven, till then as one secure
 Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
 Consent, or custom, and his regal state 640
 Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
 So as not either to provoke, or dread
 New war, provok'd. Our better part remains 645
 To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
 What force effected not; that he no less
 At length from us may find, who overcomes
 By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
 Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife 650
 There went a fame in heaven, that he, ere long,
 Intended to create; and therein plant
 A generation, whom his choice regard
 Should favour equal to the sons of heaven:
 Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps 655
 Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:
 For this infernal pit shall never hold
 Celestial spirits in bondage, nor th' abyss

Long under darkness cover.—But these thoughts
 Full counsel must mature : Peace is despair'd, 660
 For who can think submission? War then, war
 Open or understood, must be resolv'd."

He spake : and to confirm his words out flew
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
 Of mighty cherubim : the sudden blaze 665
 Far round illumin'd hell ; highly they rag'd
 Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
 Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top 670
 Belch'd fire and rolling smoke ; the rest entire
 Shone with a glassy scurf ; (undoubted sign
 That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
 The work of sulphur,) thither wing'd with speed
 A numerous brigade hasten'd : as when bands 675
 Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe arm'd,
 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
 Or cast a rampart : Mammon led them on,
 Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
 From heaven : for even in heaven his looks and
 thoughts 680

Were always downward bent ; admiring more
 The riches of heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
 Than ought divine or holy else, enjoy'd
 In vision beatific : by him first
 Men also, and by his suggestion taught, 685
 Ransack'd the centre, and with impious hands
 Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
 For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
 Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
 And digg'd out ribs of gold. (Let none admire 690
 That riches grow in hell ; that soil may best
 Deserve the precious bane.) And here let those
 Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
 Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame, 695
 And strength, and art, are easily outdone
 By spirits reprobate, and in an hour,
 What in an age they with incessant toil,
 And hands innumerable, scarce perform.
 Nigh on the plain in many cells prepar'd, 700

That underneath had veins of liquid fire
 Sluic'd from the lake, a second multitude
 With wondrous art founded the massy ore
 Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross.
 A third as soon had form'd within the ground 705
 A various mould; and from the boiling cells
 By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook:
 As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
 Anon out of the earth a fabric huge 710
 Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
 Of dulcet symphonies, and voices sweet,
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round
 Were set, and Doric pillars, overlaid
 With golden architrave: nor did there want 715
 Cornice, or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
 Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
 Equall'd in all their glories, to inshrine
 Belus, or Serapis, their gods; or seat 720
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
 In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
 Stood fix'd her stately height: and straight the doors
 Op'ning their brazen folds, discover wide
 Within her ample spaces o'er the smooth 725
 And level pavement: from the arched roof,
 Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
 Of starry lamps, and blazing cressets, fed
 With Naphtha and Asphaltus, yielded light,
 As from a sky. The hasty multitude 730
 Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise,
 And some the architect: his hand was known
 In heaven by many a tow'ring structure high,
 Where sceptred angels held their residence,
 And sat as princes; whom the supreme King 735
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
 Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright:
 Nor was his name unheard, or unador'd,
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
 Men call'd him Mulciber: and how he fell 740
 From heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements; from morn
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
 A summer's day; and with the setting sun
 Dropp'd from the zenith like a falling star, 745

On Lemnos th' Ægean isle: thus they relate,
 Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
 Fell long before; nor ought avail'd him now
 T' have built in heaven high towers; nor did he scape
 By all his engines, but was headlong sent 750
 With his industrious crew to build in hell.

Meanwhile the winged herald's by command
 Of sov'reign power, with awful ceremony
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
 A solemn council forthwith to be held 755
 At Pandemonium, the high capital
 Of Satan and his peers: their summons call'd,
 From every band and squared regiment,
 By place or choice the worthiest, they anon
 With hundreds, and with thousands, trooping came
 Attended: all access was throng'd, the gates 761
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
 (Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
 Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldan's chair
 Defied the best of Panim chivalry 765
 To mortal combat, or career with lance)
 Thick swarm'd, both on the ground, and in the air,
 Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
 In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
 Pour forth their populous youth about the hive 770
 In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
 ('The suburb of their straw-built citadel,)
 New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer
 Their state affairs: so thick the airy crowd 775
 Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till the signal given:
 Behold a wonder! they but now who seem'd
 In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
 Throng numberless, like that pygmean race 780
 Beyond the Indian mount; or fairy elves;
 Whose midnight revels, by a forest side,
 Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
 Or dreams he sees; while over head the moon
 Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth 785
 Wheels her pale course; they on their mirth and dance
 Intent, with jocund music charm his ear:
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
 Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms

Reduc'd their shapes immense ; and were at large
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions like themselves,
The great Saraphic lords, and cherubim,
In close recess and secret conclave sat ;
A thousand demi-gods on golden seats.
Frequent and full ! After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

END OF BOOK FIRST.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle is to be hazarded for the recovery of heaven: some advise it, others dissuade. A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan, to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal, or not much inferior to themselves, about this time to be created: their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search: Satan, their chief, undertakes alone the voyage; is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways, and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to hell gates, finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them, by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between hell and heaven: with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind;
Or where the gorgeous east with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd 5
To that bad eminence: and from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high; insatiate to pursue
Vain war with heaven; and by success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus display'd 10

" Powers, and dominions, deities of heaven !
 (For since no deep within her gulf can hold
 Immortal vigour, though oppress'd and fallen,
 I give not heaven for lost : from this descent
 Celestial virtues rising, will appear 15
 More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
 And trust themselves to fear no second fate.)
 Me, though just right and the fix'd laws of heaven
 Did first create your leader ; next free choice ;
 With what besides, in council or in fight 20
 Hath been achiev'd of merit : yet this loss
 Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
 Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne,
 Yielded with full consent. The happier state
 In heaven, which follows dignity, might draw 25
 Envy from each inferior : but who here
 Will envy whom the highest place exposes
 Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim,
 Your bulwark ; and condemns to greatest share
 Of endless pain ? Where there is then no good 30
 For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
 From faction : for none sure will claim in hell
 Precedence ; none, whose portion is so small
 Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
 Will covet more ! with this advantage then 35
 To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
 More than can be in heaven, we now return
 To claim our just inheritance of old,
 Surer to prosper than prosperity
 Could have assur'd us ; and by what best way, 40
 Whether of open war, or covert guile,
 We now debate : who can advise may speak."

He ceas'd ; and next him Moloch, sceptred king,
 Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
 That fought in heaven, now fiercer by despair : 45
 His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
 Equal in strength, and rather than be less,
 Cared not to be at all ; with that care lost
 Went all his fear : of God, or hell, or worse, 49
 He reck'd not ; and these words thereafter spake .

" My sentence is for open war ; of wiles,
 More unexpert, I boast not : them let those
 Contrive who need ; or when they need, not now

For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
 Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait 55
 The signal to ascend, sit ling'ring here
 Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
 Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
 The prison of his tyranny who reigns
 By our delay? No! let us rather choose, 60
 Arm'd with hell-flames and fury, all at once
 O'er heaven's high towers to force resistless way
 Turning our tortures into horrid arms
 Against the Torturer: when to meet the noise
 Of his Almighty engine he shall hear 65
 Infernal thunder; and, for lightning, see
 Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
 Among his angels: and his throne itself
 Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
 His own invented torments.—But, perhaps, 70
 The way seems difficult and steep, to scale
 With upright wing against a higher foe.—
 Let such bethink them, (if the sleepy drench
 Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,)
 That in our proper motion we ascend 75
 Up to our native seat: descent and fall
 To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
 When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
 Insulting, and pursu'd us through the deer,
 With what compulsion, and laborious fight 80
 We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then;
 Th' event is fear'd; should we again provoke
 Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
 To our destruction: (if there be in hell
 Fear to be worse destroy'd,) What can be worse 85
 Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemn'd
 In this abhorred deep to utter woe!
 Where part of unextinguishable fire
 Must exercise us, without hope of end,
 The vassals of his anger, when the scourge 90
 Inexorably, and the torturing hour,
 Calls us to penance? more destroy'd than thus,
 We should be quite abolish'd, and expire.
 What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
 His utmost ire? which to the height enrag'd, 95
 Will either quite consume us, and reduce
 To nothing this essential; happier far,
 Than miserable to have eternal being;

Or if our substance be indeed divine,
 And cannot cease to be, we are at worst 100
 On this side nothing : and by proof we feel
 Our power sufficient to disturb his heaven,
 And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
 Though inaccessible, his fatal throne :
 Which, if not victory, is yet revenge." 105

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd
 Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
 To less than gods. On th' other side uprose
 Belial, in act more graceful and humane :
 A fairer person lost not heaven ; he seem'd 110
 For dignity compos'd, and high exploit :
 But all was false and hollow : though his tongue
 Dropp'd manna, and could make the worse appear
 The better reason, to perplex and dash
 Maturest counsels ; for his thoughts were low : 115
 To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
 Timorous and slothful : yet he pleas'd the ear
 And with persuasive accents thus began :

"I should be much for open war, O peers,
 As no behind in hate, if what was urg'd 120
 Main reason to persuade immediate war,
 Did not assuade me most ; and seem to cast
 Ominous conjecture on the whole success ;
 When he who most excels in fact of arms,
 In what he counsels, and in what excels, 125
 Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair,
 And utter dissolution, as the scopè
 Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
 First, what revenge ? The towers of heaven are fill'd
 With armed watch, that render all access 130
 Impregnable : oft on the bordering deep
 Encamp their legions ; or with obscure wing,
 Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
 Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
 By force, and at our heels all hell should rise 135
 With blackest insurrection, to confound
 Heaven's purest light ; yet our great enemy,
 All incorruptible, would on his throne
 Sit unpolluted ; and th' ethereal mould
 Incapable of stain, would soon expel 140
 Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,

Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope
 Is flat despair : we must exasperate
 Th' Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
 And that must end us ; that must be our cure 145
 To be no more.—Sad cure ! for who would lose,
 Though full of pain, this intellectual being ;
 Those thoughts, that wander through eternity
 To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
 In the wide womb of uncreated night, 150
 Devoid of sense and motion ? And who knows,
 (Let this be good,) whether our angry foe
 Can give it, or will ever ? how he can,
 Is doubtful ; that he never will, is sure.
 Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire, 155
 Belike through impotence, or unaware,
 To give his enemies their wish, and end
 Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
 To punish endless ?—Wherefore cease we then ?
 Say they who counsel war ; we are decreed, 160
 Reserv'd, and destin'd to eternal wo :
 Whatever doing, what can we suffer more ;
 What can we suffer worse ?—Is this then worst,
 Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms ? 164
 What ! when we fled amain, pursu'd, and struck
 With heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
 The deep to shelter us ? This hell then seem'd
 A refuge from those wounds. Or, when we lay
 Chain'd on the burning lake ? 'T'hat sure was worse.
 What if the breath that kindled those grim fires, 170
 Awak'd, should blow them into sevenfold rage,
 And plunge us in the flames ? Or, from above,
 Should intermitted vengeance arm again
 His red right hand to plague us ? What if all
 Her stores were open'd, and this firmament 175
 Of hell should spout her cataracts of fire ?
 Impendent horrors ! threat'ning hideous fall
 One day upon our heads : while we perhaps
 Designing or exhorting glorious war,
 Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurl'd 180
 Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
 Of racking whirlwinds : or for ever sunk
 Under yon boiling ocean, wrapp'd in chains ;
 There to converse with everlasting groans,
 Unrespited, unpitied, unrepriev'd, 185
 Ages of hopeless end ? This would be worse.

War, therefore, open or concea'd, alike
 My voice dissuades : for what can force or guile
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
 Views all things at one view? He from heaven's
 height 190

All these our motions vain sees and derides :
 Not more almighty to resist our might,
 Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
 Shall we then live thus vile, the race of heaven
 Thus trampled, thus expell'd, to suffer here 195
 Chains and these torments? Better these than worse,
 By my advice ; since fate inevitable
 Subdues us, and omnipotent decree ;
 The victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
 Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust 200
 That so ordains : this was at first resolv'd
 If we were wise, against so great a foe
 Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
 I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
 And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink, and fear
 What yet they know must follow, to endure 206
 Exile or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
 The sentence of their conqueror : This is now
 Our doom ! which if we can sustain and bear,
 Our supreme foe, in time, may much remit 210
 His anger : and, perhaps, thus far remov'd,
 Not mind us, not offending, satisfied
 With what is punished : whence these raging fires
 Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
 Our purer essence then will overcome 215
 Their noxious vapour ; or inur'd, not feel ;
 Or chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
 In temper, and in nature, will receive
 Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain,
 This horror will grow mild, this darkness, light : 220
 Besides what hope the never-ending flight
 Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
 Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
 For happy, though but ill ; for ill, not worst ;
 If we procure not to ourselves more wo." 225

Thus Belial with words cloth'd in reason's garb
 Counsell'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
 Not peace : and after him thus Mammon spake.

" Either to disenthronè the King of heaven
 We war, if war be best, or to regain 230
 Our own right, lost : Him to unthrone we then
 May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
 To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife :
 The former vain to hope, argues as vain
 The latter : for what place can be for us 235
 Within heaven's bound, unless heaven's Lord supreme
 We overpower ? Suppose he should relent
 And publish grace to all, on promise made
 Of new subjection ; with what eyes could we
 Stand in his presence humble, and receive 240
 Strict laws imposed to celebrate his throne
 With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
 Forc'd hallelujahs ? while he lordly sits
 Our envied Sovereign, and his altar breathes
 Ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers, 245
 Our servile offerings ! This must be our task
 In heaven, this our delight ; how wearisome
 Eternity so spent, in worship paid
 To whom we hate ! Let us not then pursue
 By force impossible, by leave obtain'd 250
 Unacceptable, though in heaven, our state
 Of splendid vassalage : but rather seek
 Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
 Live to ourselves ; though in this vast recess,
 Free, and to none accountable ; preferring 255
 Hard liberty before the easy yoke
 Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
 Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
 Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse
 We can create ; and in what place so'er 260
 Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain,
 Through labour and endurance. This deep world
 Of darkness do we dread ? How oft amidst
 Thick clouds and dark, doth heaven's all-ruling Sire
 Choose to reside, his glory unobscur'd 265
 And with the majesty of darkness round
 Covers his throne ; from whence deep thunders roar
 Mustering their rage, and heaven resembles hell ?
 As he our darkness, cannot we his light
 Imitate when we please ? This desert soil 270
 Wants not her hidden lustre, gems, and gold :
 Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
 Magnificence ; and what can heaven show more ?

Our torments also may, in length of time,
 Become our elements; these piercing fires 275
 As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd
 Into their temper; which must needs remove
 The sensible of pain. All things invite
 To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
 Of order, how in safety best we may 280
 Compose our present evils, with regard
 Of what we are, and were; dismissing quite
 All thought of war.—Ye have what I advise.”

He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
 Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain 285
 The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
 Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
 Sea-faring men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance,
 Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay
 After the tempest: such applause was heard 290
 As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd,
 Advising peace. For, such another field
 They dreaded worse than hell: so much the fear
 Of thunder, and the sword of Michael,
 Wrought still within them; and no less desire 295
 To found this nether empire, which might rise,
 By policy, and long process of time,
 In emulation opposite to heaven.
 Which when Beelzebub perceiv'd (than whom,
 Satan except, none higher sat) with grave 300
 Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
 A pillar of state: deep on his front engraven,
 Deliberation sat, and public care;
 And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
 Majestic though in ruin! sage he stood, 305
 With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
 The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
 Drew audience, and attention still as night,
 Or summer's noon-tide air; while thus he spake:

“Thrones and imperial powers, offspring of heaven,
 Ethereal virtues! or these titles now 311
 Must we renounce, and, changing style, be call'd
 Princes of hell? For, so the popular vote
 Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
 A growing empire: doubtless! while we dream, 315
 And know that the King of heaven hath doom'd

This place our dungeon ; not our safe retreat
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
 From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league
 Banded against his throne : but to remain 320
 In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd,
 Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd
 His captive multitude : for he, be sure,
 In height, or depth, still first and last will reign
 Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part 325
 By our revolt ; but over hell extend
 His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
 Us here, as with his golden those in heaven.
 What sit we then projecting peace and war ?
 War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss 330
 Irreparable ; terms of peace yet none
 Vouchsaf'd, or sought : for what peace will be given
 To us enslav'd, but custody severe,
 And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
 Inflicted ? and what peace can we return ? 335
 But, to our power, hostility and hate,
 Untam'd reluctance, and revenge ; though slow,
 Yet ever plotting how the Conqueror least
 May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
 In doing what we most in suffering feel ? 340
 Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
 With dangerous expedition, to invade
 Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
 Or ambush from the deep : what if we find
 Some easier enterprize ? There is a place, 345
 (If ancient and prophetic fame in heaven
 Err not,) another world, the happy seat
 Of some new race call'd Man ; about this time
 To be created like to us, though less
 In power and excellence, but favour'd more 350
 Of him who rules above : so was his will
 Pronounc'd among the gods, and by an oath,
 That shook heaven's whole circumference, confirm'd.
 Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
 What creatures there inhabit, of what mould, 355
 Or substance, how endued, and what their power,
 And where their weakness, how attempted best
 By force, or subtilty. Though heaven be shut,
 And heaven's high arbitrator sit secure
 In his own strength, this place may lie expos'd 360
 The utmost border of his kingdom, left

To their defence who hold it : here perhaps
 Some advantageous act may be achiev'd
 By sudden onset, either with hell fire
 To waste his whole creation ; or possess 365
 All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
 The puny habitants ; or, if not drive,
 Seduce them to our party, that their God
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
 Abolish his own works. This would surpass 370
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
 In our confusion, and our joy upraise
 In his disturbance ; when his darling sons,
 Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
 Their frail original, and faded bliss : 375
 Faded so soon ! Advise if this be worth
 Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
 Hatching vain empires." Thus Beelzebub
 Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd
 By Satan, and in part propos'd. for whence, 380
 But from the author of all ill, could spring
 So deep a malice to confound the race
 Of mankind in one root, and earth with he.
 To mingle and involve, done all to spite
 The great Creator ? But their spite still serves 385
 His glory to augment. The bold design
 Pleas'd highly those infernal states, and joy
 Sparkled in all their eyes ; with full assent
 They vote : whereat his speech he thus renews

" Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate, 390
 Synod of gods ! and, like to what ye are,
 Great things resolv'd ; which from the lowest deep
 Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
 Nearer our ancient seat ; perhaps in view 394
 Of those bright confines, whence with neighbouring
 And opportune excursion, we may chance [arms,
 Re-enter heaven : or else, in some mild zone
 Dwell not unvisited of heaven's fair light,
 Secure, and at the bright'ning orient beam
 Purge off this gloom : the soft delicious air, 400
 To heal the scar of these corrosive fires, [send
 Shall breathe her balm.—But first whom shall we
 In search of this new world ? whom shall we find
 Sufficient ? Who shall tempt with wandering feet
 The dark, unbottom'd, infinite abyss, 415

And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncouth way; or spread his airy flight,
 Upborne with indefatigable wings,
 Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
 The happy isle? What strength, what art can then
 Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe 411
 Through the strict sentries, and stations thick
 Of angels watching round? Here he had need
 All circumspection; and we now no less
 Choice in our suffrage; for, on whom we send, 415
 'The weight of all, and our last hope, relies.'

This said, he sat; and expectation held
 His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
 To second or oppose, or undertake
 The perilous attempt: but all sat mute, 420
 Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
 In other's countenance read his own dismay,
 Astonish'd! None, among the choice and prime
 Of those heaven-warring champions, could be found
 So hardy, as to proffer, or accept 425
 Alone the dreadful voyage: till at last
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
 Above his fellows, with monarchal pride
 (Conscious of highest worth) unmov'd thus spake:

O progeny of heaven, empyreal thrones! 430
 With reason hath deep silence, and demur,
 Seiz'd us, though undismay'd: long is the way
 And hard, that out of hell leads up to light:
 Our prison strong; this huge convex of fire,
 Outrageous to devour, immures us round 435
 Ninefold: and gates of burning adamant
 Barr'd over us, prohibit all egress.
 These pass'd (if any pass) the void profound
 Of unessential night receives him next
 Wide gaping! and with utter loss of being 440
 Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.
 If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
 Or unknown region, what remains him less
 Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
 But I should ill become this throne, O peers! 445
 And this imperial sovereignty, adorn'd
 With splendour, arm'd with power, if ought propos'd
 And judg'd of public moment, in the shape

Of difficulty, or danger, could deter
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume 450
 These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
 Refusing to accept as great a share
 Of hazard, as of honour due alike
 To him who reigns, and so much to him due
 Of hazard more, as he above the rest 455
 High honour'd sits? Go, therefore, mighty powers,
 Terror of heaven, though fallen! intend at home,
 (While here shall be our home,) what best may ease
 The present misery, and render hell
 More tolerable; if there be cure, or charm, 460
 To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
 Of this ill mansion. Intermit no watch
 Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad,
 Through all the coasts of dark destruction, seek
 Deliverance for us all: this enterprise 465
 None shall partake with me." Thus saying, rose
 The monarch, and prevented all reply:
 Prudent, lest, from his resolution rais'd,
 Others among the chiefs might offer now
 (Certain to be refused) what erst they fear'd; 470
 And so refus'd, might in opinion stand
 His rivals; winning cheap the high repute,
 Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
 Dreaded not more th' adventure, than his voice
 Forbidding; and at once with him they rose: 475
 Their rising all at once was as the sound
 Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
 With awful reverence prone; and as a god
 Extol him equal to the highest in heaven;
 Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd,
 That for the general safety he despis'd 481
 His own, (for neither do the spirits damn'd
 Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
 Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites;
 Or close ambition varnish'd o'er with zeal.) 485
 Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
 Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief:
 As when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds
 Ascending, while the north-wind sleeps, o'er-spread
 Heaven's cheerful face, the lowering element 490
 Scowls o'er the darken'd landscape snow, or shower
 If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
 Extends his evening beam, the fields revive,

The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings. 495
 O shame to men! Devil with devil damn'd
 Firm concord holds, men only disagree
 Of creatures rational, though under hope
 Of heavenly grace: and, God proclaiming peace,
 Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife 500
 Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
 Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
 As if (which might induce us to accord)
 Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
 That day and night, for his destruction wait. 505

The Stygian council thus dissolv'd; and forth
 In order came the grand infernal peers:
 'Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
 Alone th' antagonist of heaven, nor less
 Than hell's dread emperour, with pomp supreme, 510
 And godlike imitated state. Him round
 A globe of fiery seraphim inclos'd,
 With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.
 Then, of their session ended, they bid cry
 With trumpets' regal sound the great result: 515
 Towards the four winds four speedy cherubim
 Put to their mouths the sounding alchymy,
 By heralds' voice explain'd: the hollow abyss
 Heard far and wide, and all the host of hell 519
 With deaf'ning shout return'd them loud acclaim.

Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat
 rais'd

By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers
 Disband, and wand'ring, each his several way
 Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
 Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find 525
 Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
 The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
 Part on the plain, or in the air sublime
 Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
 As at th' Olympian games, or Pythian fields: 530
 Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
 With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.
 As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
 Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush
 To battle in the clouds; before each van 535

Prick forth the airy knights, and couch their spears
 Till thickest legions close ; with feats of arms
 From either end of heaven the welkin burns.
 Others, with vast TYPHCEAN rage, more fell !
 Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air 540
 In whirlwind : hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
 As when Alcides from ÆCHALIA crown'd
 With conquest, felt th' ENVENOM'D robe, and tore
 Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines ;
 And LICHAS from the top of ÆTA threw 545
 Into th' EUBOIC SEA. Others, more mild,
 Retreated in a silent valley, sing
 With notes angelical to many a harp
 Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall
 By doom of battle : and complain that fate 550
 Free virtue should enthrall to force or chance.
 Their song was partial ; but the harmony
 (What could it less when spirits immortal sing !)
 Suspended hell, and took with ravishment
 The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet,
 (For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense,) 555
 Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
 In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high,
 Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate ;
 Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute ; 560
 And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.
 Of good and evil much they argued then,
 Of happiness, and final misery,
 Passion, and apathy, and glory, and shame.
 Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy ; 565
 Yet with a pleasing sorcery, could charm
 Pain for a while, or anguish ; and excite
 Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdurate breast
 With stubborn patience, as with triple steel.
 Another part, in squadrons and gross bands, 570
 On bold adventure to discover wide
 That dismal world (if any clime perhaps
 Might yield them easier habitation) bend
 Four ways their flying march, along the banks
 Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge 575
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams.
 Abhorred STYX, the flood of deadly hate ;
 Sad Acheron, of sorrow ; black and deep
 Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
 Heard on the rueful stream : fierce Phlegethon 580

Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
 Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
 Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
 Her wat'ry labyrinth? whereof who drinks,
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets; 585
 Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
 Beyond this flood a frozen continent
 Lies dark and wild; beat with perpetual storms
 Of whirlwind, and dire hail; which on firm land
 Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems 590
 Of ancient pile: all else, deep snow and ice:
 A gulf profound! as that Serbonian bog
 Betwixt Damiatra, and mount Casius old,
 Where armies whole have sunk? the parching air
 Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire. 595
 Thither, by harpy-footed furies hal'd,
 At certain revolutions, all the damn'd
 Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce;
 From beds of raging fire to starve in ice 600
 Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
 Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
 Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire.
 They ferry over this Lethean sound
 Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment, 605
 And wish, and struggle as they pass to reach
 The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
 In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
 All in one moment, and so near the brink:
 But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt 610
 Medusa, with Gorgonian terror, guards
 The ford, and of itself the water flies
 All taste of living wight; as once it fled
 The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on,
 In confus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands, 615
 With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,
 View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
 No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
 They pass'd, and many a region dolorous;
 O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp; 620
 Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of
 death;
 A universe of death! which God by curse
 Created evil; for evil only good,
 Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds

Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things, 625
 Abominable, unutterable; and worse
 Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
 Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.

Meanwhile the adversary of God and man,
 Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of highest design, 630
 Puts on swift wings, and towards the gates of hell
 Explores his solitary flight: sometimes
 He scours the right-hand coast, sometimes the left:
 Now shaves with level wing the deep; then soars
 Up to the fiery concave tow'ring high. 635
 As when far off at sea a fleet descri'd,
 Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
 Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
 Of Ternate, and Tidore, whence merchants bring
 Their spicy drugs: they on the trading flood 640
 Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
 Ply, stemming nightly toward the Pole: so seem'd
 Far off the flying fiend. At last appear
 Hell bounds, high-reaching to the horrid roof;
 And thrice threefold the gates: three folds were
 brass, 645

Three iron, three of adamant, line rock;
 Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,
 Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat
 On either side a formidable shape;
 The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair: 650
 But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
 Voluminous and vast! a serpent arm'd
 With mortal sting; about her middle round
 A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd
 With wide Cerberian mouths full loud, and rung 655
 A hideous peal: yet, when they list, would creep,
 If ought disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
 And kennel there; yet there still bark'd, and howl'd
 Within, unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
 Vex'd Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts 660
 Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore;
 Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when call'd
 In secret, riding through the air she comes,
 Lur'd with the smell of infant-blood, to dance
 With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon 665
 Eclipses at their charms. The other shape
 (If shape it might be call'd, that shape had none

Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
 Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
 For each seem'd either :) black it stood as night, 670
 Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
 And shook a dreadful dart: what seem'd his head,
 The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
 Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
 The monster moving, onward came as fast 675
 With horrid strides: hell trembled as he strode.
 Th' undaunted fiend what this might be admir'd;
 Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,
 Created thing nought valued he, nor shunn'd;
 And with disdainful look thus first began: 680

“Whence, and what art thou! execrable shape!
 That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance
 Thy miscreated front athwart my way
 To yonder gates? through them I mean to pass,
 That be assur'd, without leave or ask of thee. 685
 Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
 Hell-born! not to contend with spirits of heaven.”

To whom the goblin full of wrath reply'd:
 “Art thou that traitor-angel, art thou he,
 Who first broke peace in heaven, and faith, till then
 Unbroken; and in proud rebellious arms 691
 Drew after him the third part of heaven's sons,
 Conjured against the Highest; for which both thou
 And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
 To waste eternal days in wo and pain? 695
 And reckon'st thou thyself with spirits of heaven,
 Hell-doom'd! and breath'st defiance here and scorn,
 Where I reign king, and to enrage thee more,
 Thy king, and lord? Back to thy punishment,
 False fugitive! and to thy speed add wings; 700
 Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
 Thy ling'ring; or with one stroke of this dart
 Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.”

So spake the grisly terror, and in shape
 (So speaking, and so threat'ning) grew tenfold 705
 More dreadful and deform. On th' other side,
 Incens'd with indignation, Satan stood
 Unterrify'd; and like a comet burn'd,
 That fires the length of Ophiucus huge

In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair 710
 Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
 Levell'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
 No second stroke intend: and such a frown
 Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds
 With heaven's artill'ry fraught, come rattling on 715
 Over the Caspian; then stand front to front,
 Hov'ring a space, till winds the signal blow
 To join their dark encounter in mid-air:
 So frown'd the mighty combatants, that hell
 Grew darker at their frown: so match'd they stood:
 For never but once more was either like 721
 To meet so great a foe. And now great deeds
 Had been achiev'd, whereof all hell had rung,
 Had not the snaky sorceress that sat
 Fast by hell-gate, and kept the fatal key, 725
 Risen, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

“O father! what intends thy hand,” she cry'd,
 “Against thy only son? What fury, O sor-,
 Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
 Against thy father's head? and knowest for whom;
 For him who sits above, and laughs the while 731
 At thee, ordain'd his drudge, to execute
 Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
 His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both!”

She spake, and at her words the hellish pest 735
 Forbore: then these to her Satan return'd:

“So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
 Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
 Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
 What it intends; till first I know of thee, 740
 What thing thou art, thus double-form'd; and why
 In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
 Me father, and that phantom call'st my son:
 I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
 Sight more detestable than him and thee.” 745

T' whom thus the portress of hell-gate reply'd;
 “Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
 Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
 In heaven! when at th' assembly, and in sight
 Of all the seraphim, with thee combin'd

In bold conspiracy against heaven's King,
 All on a sudden miserable pain
 Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swam
 In darkness; while thy head flames thick and fast
 Threw forth; till on the left side op'ning wide, 755
 Likest to thee in shape, and count'nance bright,
 Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess arm'd,
 Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seiz'd
 All th' host of heaven; back they recoil'd, afraid
 At first, and call'd me Sin; and for a sign 760
 Portentous held me: but familiar grown,
 I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
 The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
 (Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing)
 Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou look'st 765
 With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
 A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,
 And fields were fought in heaven; wherein remain'd
 (For what could else?) to our almighty foe
 Clear victory; to our part loss, and rout, 770
 Through all the empyrean: down they fell,
 Driven headlong from the pitch of heaven, down
 Into this deep; and in the general fall
 I also: at which time this powerful key
 Into my hand was given, with charge to keep 775
 These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
 Without my opening. Pensive here I sat
 Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb
 Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,
 Prodigious motion felt, and rueful throes! 780
 At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
 Thine own begotten, breaking violent way
 Tore through my entrails; that with fear and pain
 Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
 Transform'd. But he, my inbred enemy 785
 Forth-issu'd, brandishing his fatal dart
 Made to destroy: I fled, and cry'd out, *Death!*
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
 From all her caves, and back resounded, *Death!*
 I fled, but he pursu'd (though more, it seems, 790
 Inflam'd with lust than rage) and, swifter far
 Me overtook, his mother, all dismay'd:
 And in embraces forcible, and foul,
 Engendering with me, of that rape begot
 These yelling monsters; that with ceaseless cry 795

Surround me, as thou saw'st; hourly conceiv'd,
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
 To me! For, when they list, into the womb
 That bred them they return; and howl, and gnaw
 My bowels, their repast: then bursting forth, 800
 Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
 That rest or intermission none I find.
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits
 Grim Death, my son and foe: who sets them on,
 And me his parent would full soon devour 803
 For want of other prey, but that he knows
 His end with mine involv'd: and knows that I
 Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane
 Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounc'd.
 But thou, O father! I forewarn thee, shun 810
 His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
 To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
 Though temper'd heavenly; for that mortal dint,
 Save he who reigns above, none can resist!"

She finish'd, and the subtle fiend his lore 815
 Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth:

"Dear daughter! since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
 And my fair son here show'st me (the dear pledge
 Of dalliance had with thee in heaven, and joys
 Then sweet, now sad to mention, thro' dire change
 Befallen us, unforeseen, unthought of!) know 821
 I come no enemy, but to set free
 From out this dark and dismal house of pain,
 Both him and thee, and all the heavenly host
 Of spirits that (in our just pretences arm'd,) 825
 Fell with us from on high: from them I go
 This uncouth errand sole; and one for all
 Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
 Th' unsounded deep, and through the void immense
 To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold 830
 Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere-now
 Created, vast and round; a place of bliss
 In the purlieus of heaven, and therein plac'd
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply
 Perhaps our vacant room; though more remov'd,
 Lest heaven surcharg'd with potent multitude 836
 Might hap to move new broils Be this, or ought
 Than this more secret, now design'd, I haste

To know ; and this once known, shall soon return,
 And bring ye to the place where thou, and Death,
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen 841
 Wing silently the buxom air, embalm'd
 With odours : there ye shall be fed, and fill'd
 Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey."

He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death
 Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear 846
 His famine should be fill'd ; and bless'd his maw
 Destin'd to that good hour : no less rejoic'd
 His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire :

" The key of this infernal pit by due, 850
 And by command of heaven's all-powerful King,
 I keep ; by him forbidden to unlock
 These adamantine gates ; against all force
 Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
 Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might. 855
 But what I owe to his commands above
 Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
 Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
 To sit in hateful office here confin'd,
 Inhabitant of heaven, and heavenly-born, 860
 Here in perpetual agony and pain,
 With terrors, and with clamours compass'd round,
 Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed ?
 Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
 My being gav'st me ; whom should I obey 865
 But thee ? whom follow ? thou wilt bring me soon
 To that new world of light and bliss, among
 The gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
 At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
 Thy daughter, and thy darling, without end." 870

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
 Sad instrument of all our wo ! she took ;
 And towards the gate rolling her bestial train,
 Forthwith the huge porticullis high up-drew ;
 Which but herself, not all the Stygian powers 875
 Could once have mov'd ; then in the key-hole turns
 Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
 Of massy iron, or solid rock, with ease
 Unfastens : on a sudden open fly,
 With impetuous recoil, and jarring sound, 880

Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
 Harsh thunder, that the iowest bottom shook
 Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
 Excell'd her power; the gates wide open stood,
 That with extended wings a banner'd host 885
 Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
 With horse, and chariots, rank'd in loose array,
 So wide they stood! and like a furnace mouth,
 Cast forth redounding smoke, and ruddy flame.
 Before their eyes in sudden view appear 890
 The secrets of the hoary deep; a dark
 Illimitable ocean, without bound,
 Without dimension; where length, breadth, and
 height,
 And time, and place are lost; where eldest Night
 And Chaos, ancestor's of Nature, hold 895
 Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
 Of endless wars, and by confusion stand:
 For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
 Strive here for mast'ry, and to battle bring
 Their embryon atoms; they around the flag 900
 Of each his faction, in their several clans,
 Light arm'd, or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
 Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
 Of Barca, or Cyrene's torrid soil,
 Levied to side with warring winds and poise 905
 Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
 He rules a moment: Chaos umpire sits,
 And by decision more embroils the fray,
 By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
 Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss, 910
 (The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,)
 Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
 But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
 Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
 (Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain 915
 His dark materials to create more worlds,)
 Into this wild abyss the wary fiend
 Stood on the brink of hell, and look'd awhile,
 Pond'ring his voyage; (for no narrow frith
 He had to cross:) nor was his ear less peal'd 920
 With noises loud, and ruinous, (to compare
 Great things with small,) than when Bellona storms,
 With all her batt'ring engines bent to raze
 Some capital city; or less than if this frame

If heaven were falling, and these elements 925
 rolling had from her axle torn
 earth's earth. At last his sail-broad vans
 Leads to flight, and in the surging smoke
 Up-tosses spurs the ground: thence many a league,
 As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides 930
 Audacious; but that seat soon failing, meets
 A vast vacuity: all unawares,
 Flutt'ring his pennons vain, plump down he drops
 Ten thousand fathom deep: and to this hour
 Down had been falling, had not by ill chance 935
 The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
 Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
 As many miles aloft: that fury stay'd,
 Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
 Nor good dry land, nigh founder'd on he fares, 940
 Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
 Half flying; behooves him now both oar and sail.
 As when a griffon, through the wilderness
 With winged course o'er hill, or moory dale,
 Pursues the Arimaspians, who by stealth 945
 Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
 The guarded gold: so eagerly the fiend
 O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense or rare,
 With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way;
 And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies. 950
 At length a universal hubbub wild
 Of stunning sounds, and voices all confus'd,
 Borne through the hollow dark assaults his ear
 With loudest vehemence: thither he plies,
 Undaunted to meet there whatever power, 955
 Or spirit, of the nethermost abyss,
 Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
 Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies,
 Bordering on light: when strait behold the throne
 Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread 960
 Wide on the wasteful deep: with him enthron'd
 Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
 The consort of his reign: and by them stood
 Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
 Of Demogorgon: Rumour next, and Chance, 965
 And Tumult, and Confusion all embroil'd,
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
 To whom Satan turning boldly, thus: "Ye powers,
 And spirits of this nethermost abyss,

Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy 976
 With purpose to explore, or to disturb
 The secrets of your realm; but by constraint
 Wand'ring this darksome desert, as my way
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light.
 Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek 975
 What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
 Confine with heaven: or if some other place
 From your dominion won, th' etherial king
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive
 I travel this profound: direct my course; 980
 Directed, no mean recompense it brings
 To your behoof: if I that region lost,
 All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
 To her original darkness, and your sway,
 (Which is my present journey,) and once more 985
 Erect the standard there of ancient Night;
 Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge!"

Thus Satan; and him thus the anarch old,
 With fault'ring speech, and visage incompos'd,
 Answer'd: "I know thee stranger, who thou art, 990
 That mighty leading angel, who of late
 Made head against heaven's King, tho' overthrown.
 I saw, and heard; for such a num'rous host
 Fled not in silence through the frighted deep,
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout, 995
 Confusion worse confounded: and heaven-gates
 Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
 Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
 Keep residence; if all I can will serve,
 That little which is left so to defend, 1000
 Encroach'd on still through our intestine broils,
 Weak'ning the sceptre of old Night: first hell,
 Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath:
 Now lately heaven and earth, another world
 Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain, 1005
 To that side heaven from whence your legions fell:
 If that way be your walk, you have not far;
 So much the nearer danger; go, and speed.
 Havoc, and spoil, and ruin are my gain."

He ceas'd, and Satan staid not to reply, 1010
 But glad that now the sea should find a shore,
 With fresh alacrity, and force renew'd,

Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
 Into the wild expanse ; and through the shock
 Of fighting elements, on all sides round 1015
 Environ'd, wins his way : harder beset,
 And more endanger'd, than when Argo pass'd
 Through Bosphorus, betwixt the jussling rocks :
 Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
 Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steer'd. 1020
 So he with difficulty, and labour hard
 Mov'd on ; with difficulty and labour he :
 But he once pass'd, soon after, when man fell,
 Strange alteration ! Sin, and Death, amain,
 Following his tract (such was the will of heaven !)
 Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way 1026
 Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
 Tamely endur'd a bridge of wondrous length,
 From hell continued, reaching th' utmost orb
 Of this frail world ; by which the spirits perverse
 With easy intercourse pass to and fro, 1031
 To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
 God and good angels guard by special grace.

But now at last the sacred influence
 Of light appears, and from the walls of heaven 1035
 Shoots far into the bosom of dim night
 A glimmering dawn : here Nature first begins
 Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,
 As from her outmost works a broken foe,
 With tumult less, and with less hostile din ; 1040
 That Satan with less toil, and now with ease,
 Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light ;
 And like a weather-beaten vessel holds
 Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn :
 Or in the emptier waste, resembling air, 1045
 Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
 Far off th' empyreal heaven, extended wide
 In circuit undetermin'd square or round :
 With opal towers and battlements adorn'd
 Of living saphire, (once his native scat !) 1050
 And fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
 This pendent world, in bigness as a star
 Of smallest magnitude, close by the moon.
 Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,
 Accurs'd and in a cursed hour, he hies. 1055

PARADISE LOST

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

God sitting on his throne sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shows him to the Son who sat at his right hand; foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind: clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created man free, and able enough to have withstood his tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards Man; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended towards Man without the satisfaction of divine justice; Man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and, therefore, with all his progeny devoted to death, must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for Man. the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in heaven and earth; commands all the angels to adore him; they obey, and hymning to their harps in full choir, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of Vanity; what persons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the gate of heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it; his passage thence to the orb of the sun: he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb; but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and pretending a zealous desire to

behold the new creation and Man whom God had placed there, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed; alights first on mount Niphates.

HAIL holy Light, offspring of heaven first-born.
 Or of th' eternal co-eternal beam!
 May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,
 And never but in an unapproach'd light
 Dwelt from eternity; dwelt then in thee, 5
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate!
 Or hearest thou rather pure ethereal stream,
 Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,
 Before the heavens thou wert, and at the voice
 Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest 10
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless infinite.
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
 Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
 In that obscure sojourn; while in my flight 15
 Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
 With other notes than to th' Orphean lyre,
 I sung of Chaos, and eternal Night;
 Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to reascend, 20
 Though hard, and rare! Thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sovereign vital lamp: but thou
 Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
 So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs, 25
 Or dim suffusion veil'd! Yet not the more
 Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
 Smit with the love of sacred song: but chief
 Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath, 30
 That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
 Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
 Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
 (So were I equall'd with them in renown!)
 Blind Thamyris, and blind Mæonides: 35
 And Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old.
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
 Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird

Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year 40
 Seasons return; but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine:
 But cloud instead, and ever-during dark 45
 Surrounds me! from the cheerful ways of men
 Cut off; and for the book of knowledge fair,
 Presented with a universal blank
 Of nature's works, to me expung'd and raz'd,
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out! 50
 So much the rather thou, celestial Light!
 Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
 Irradiate; there plant eyes; all mist from thence
 Purge and disperse; that I may see and tell
 Of things invisible to mortal sight. 55

Now had the Almighty Father from above,
 (From the pure empyrean where he sits
 High thron'd above all height,) bent down his eye,
 His own works and their works at once to view:
 About him all the sanctities of heaven 60
 Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
 Beatitude past utterance: on his right
 The radiant image of his glory sat,
 His only Son. On earth he first beheld 65
 Our two first parents (yet the only two
 Of mankind) in the happy garden plac'd,
 Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love;
 Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
 In blissful solitude. He then survey'd
 Hell, and the gulf between, and Satan there 70
 Coasting the wall of heaven on this side night,
 In the dun air sublime; and ready now
 To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet,
 On the bare outside of this world, that seem'd
 Firm land imbosom'd without firmament; 75
 Uncertain which, in ocean, or in air.
 Him God beholding from his prospect high,
 Wherein past, present, future he beholds,
 Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake:

"Only begotten Son! seest thou what rage 80
 Transports our adversary, whom no bounds

Prescrib'd, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
 Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss
 Wide-interrupt, can hold? So bent he seems
 On desperate revenge, that shall redound 85
 Upon his own rebellious head. And now
 Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
 Not far off heaven, in the precincts of light,
 Directly towards the new-created world.
 And man there plac'd; with purpose to assay 90
 If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
 By some false guile pervert: and shall pervert;
 For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
 And easily transgress the sole command,
 Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall, 95
 He, and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
 Whose but his own? Ingrate! he had of me
 All he could have: I made him just and right;
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 Such I created all th' ethereal powers, 100
 And spirits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd-
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,
 Where only what they needs must do, appear'd; 105
 Not, what they would? What praise could they
 receive?
 What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
 When will and reason (reason also is choice)
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
 Made passive both, had serv'd necessity, 110
 Not me? They therefore, as to right belong'd,
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate;
 As if predestination over-rul'd
 Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree, 115
 Or high foreknowledge. They themselves decreed
 Their own revolt, not, I: if I foreknew,
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
 Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.
 So without least impulse, or shadow of fate, 120
 Or ought by me immutably foreseen,
 They trespass; authors to themselves in all,
 Both what they judge, and what they choose; for so
 I form'd them free, and free they must remain,
 Till they enthral themselves: I else must change

Their nature, and revoke the high decree 126
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
 Their freedom; they themselves ordain'd their fall.
 The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
 Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: man falls, deceiv'd, 136
 By th' other first: man, therefore, shall find grace,
 The other none. In mercy, and justice both,
 Through heaven and earth, so shall my glory excel.
 But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine."

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
 All heaven, and in the blessed spirits elect 136
 Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd.
 Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
 Most glorious; in him all his Father shone
 Substantially express'd; and in his face 140
 Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
 Love without end, and without measure grace;
 Which uttering, thus he to his father spake:

"O Father! gracious was that word which clos'd
 Thy sovereign sentence, that man should find grace
 For which both heaven and earth shall high extol
 Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound 147
 Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
 Encompass'd shall resound thee ever bless'd.
 For should man finally be lost, should man 150
 Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,
 Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
 With his own folly? That be from thee far,
 That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
 Of all things made, and judgest only right. 155
 Or shall the adversary thus obtain
 His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought;
 Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
 Yet, with revenge accomplish'd, and to hell 160
 Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
 By him corrupted? Or wilt thou thyself
 Abolish thy creation, and unmake,
 For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
 So should thy goodness and thy greatness, both 165
 Be questioned, and blasphem'd without defence."

To whom the great Creator thus replied:

" O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
 Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
 My word, my wisdom, and effectual might ! . 170
 All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
 As my eternal purpose hath decreed.
 Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
 Freely vouchsaf'd : once more I will renew 175
 His lapsed powers, though forfeit, and intrall'd
 By sin to foul exorbitant desires :
 Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
 On even ground against his mortal foe :
 By me upheld, that he may know how frail 180
 His fallen condition is, and to me owe
 All his deliverance, and to none but me.
 Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
 Elect above the rest : so is my will .
 ' The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd 185
 ' Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
 ' Th' incens'd Deity, while offer'd grace
 Invites : for I will clear their senses dark,
 What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
 ' To pray, repent, and bring obedience due. 190
 To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
 Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
 Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut ;
 And I will place within them as a guide
 My umpire Conscience ; whom if they will hear, 195
 Light after light well us'd they shall attain,
 And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
 ' This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,
 They who neglect and scorn shall never taste ;
 But hard be harden'd, blind he blinded more, 200
 ' That they may stumble on, and deeper fall ;
 And none but such from mercy I exclude.
 But yet all is not done : Man disobeying,
 Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
 Against the high supremacy of heaven, 205
 Affecting Godhead, and so losing all,
 To expiate his treason hath nought left,
 But to destruction, sacred and devote,
 He with his whole posterity must die ;
 Die he or justice must ; unless for him 210
 Some other able, and as willing, pay
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.

Say, heavenly powers, where shall we find such love?
 Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
 Man's mortal crime, and just, th' unjust to save?
 Dwells in all heaven charity so dear?" 216

He ask'd, but all the heavenly choir stood mute,
 And silence was in heaven: on man's behalf
 Patron or intercessor none appear'd;
 Much less that durst upon his own head draw 220
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
 And now, without redemption, all mankind
 Must have been lost, adjudg'd to death and hell
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
 In whom the fulness dwells of love divine, 225
 His dearest mediation thus renew'd:

"Father, thy word is pass'd; man shall find grace
 And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
 The speediest of thy winged messengers,
 To visit all thy creatures, and to all 230
 Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought?
 Happy for man, so coming! he her aid
 Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
 Atonement for himself, or offering meet,
 (Indebted, and undone!) hath none to bring. 235
 Behold me then! me for him, life for life
 I offer; on me let thine anger fall;
 Account me man: I for his sake will leave
 Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
 Freely put off, and for him lastly die 240
 Well pleas'd: on me let death wreak all his rage:
 Under his gloomy power I shall not long
 Lie vanquish'd; thou has given me to possess
 Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,
 Though now to death I yield, and am his due 245
 All that of me can die; yet that debt paid,
 Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
 His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
 For ever with corruption there to dwell;
 But I shall rise victorious, and subdue 250
 My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
 Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
 Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
 I through the ample air in triumph high
 Shall lead hell captive maugre hell! and show 255

The powers of darkness bound. Thou at the sight
 Pleas'd, out of heaven shalt look down and smile ;
 While by thee rais'd I ruin all my foes,
 Death last, and with his carcass glut the graves :
 Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd, 260
 Shall enter heaven, long absent, and return,
 Father! to see thy face, wherein no cloud
 Of anger shall remain ; but peace assur'd
 And reconcilment : wrath shall be no more
 Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire." 265

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
 Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
 To mortal men, above which only shone
 Filial obedience : as a sacrifice,
 Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will 270
 Of his great Father. Admiration seiz'd
 All heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend,
 Wond'ring ; but soon th' Almighty thus replied .

" O thou, in heaven and earth the only peace
 Found out for mankind under wrath ! O thou, 275
 My sole complacence ! well thou know'st how dear
 To me are all my works, nor man the least,
 Though last created ; that for him I spare
 Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
 By loosing thee a while, the whole race lost. 280
 Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
 Their nature also to thy nature join,
 And be thyself man among men on earth,
 Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
 By wondrous birth : be thou in Adam's room, 285
 The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
 As in him perish all men, so in thee,
 As from a second root, shall be restor'd
 As many as are restor'd, without thee none.
 His crime makes guilty all his sons ; thy merit 290
 Imputed shall absolve them who renounce
 Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
 And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
 Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
 Shall satisfy for man, be judg'd, and die, 295
 And dying rise, and rising with him raise
 His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
 So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate,

Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
 So dearly to redeem what belish hate 300
 So easily destroy'd, and still destroys,
 In those who, when they may accept not grace.
 Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
 Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
 Because thou hast, though thron'd in highest bliss 305
 Equal to God, and equally enjoying
 Godlike fruition, quitted all to save
 A world from utter loss, and hast been found
 By merit more than birthright Son of God.
 Found worthiest to be so by being good, 310
 Far more than great or high: because in thee
 Love hath abounded more than glory abounds;
 Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
 With thee thy manhood also to this throne:
 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign 315
 Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
 Anointed Universal King; all power
 I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
 Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme,
 Thrones, principdoms, powers, dominions, I reduce,
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide 321
 In heaven, or earth, or under earth in hell.
 When thou, attended gloriously from heaven,
 Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
 The summoning archangels to proclaim 325
 Thy dread tribunal: forthwith from all winds
 The living, and forthwith the cited dead
 Of all past ages to the general doom
 Shall hasten, such a peal shall rouse their sleep:
 Then, all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge 330
 Bad men and angels; they arraign'd shall sink
 Beneath thy sentence; hell (her numbers full
 Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
 The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
 New heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell;
 And, after all their tribulations long, 336
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
 With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
 Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
 For regal sceptre then no more shall need; 340
 God shall be all in all. But all ye gods,
 Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
 Adore the Son, and honour him as me!"

No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
 The multitude of angels, with a shout 345
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet,
 As from bless'd voices uttering joy, heaven rung
 With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
 Th' eternal regions. Lowly reverent
 Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground
 With solemn adoration down they cast 351
 Their crowns, inwove with amaranth and gold ;
 Immortal amaranth ! a flower which once
 In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
 Began to bloom ; but soon for man's offence 355
 To heaven remov'd, where first it grew, there grows,
 And flowers aloft, shading the fount of life ;
 And where the river of bliss thro' midst of heaven
 Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream :
 With these, that never fade, the spirits elect 360
 Bind their resplendent locks, inwreath'd with beams,
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
 Impurpled with celestial roses smil'd.
 Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took,
 Harps ever tun'd, that, glittering by their side, 366
 Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
 Of charming symphony they introduce
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high ;
 No voice exempt ; no voice but well could join 370
 Melodious part, such concord is in heaven.

"Thee, Father," first they sung, "omnipotent,
 Immutable, immortal, infinite,
 Eternal King ; thee, Author of all being,
 Fountain of light, thyself invisible 375
 Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitt'st
 Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
 The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud,
 Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
 Dark with excessive bright, thy skirts appear, 380
 Yet dazzle heaven, that brightest seraphim
 Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes."
 "Thee," next they sang, "of all creation first,
 Begotten Son, divine similitude !
 In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud 385
 Made visible, th' almighty Father shines,
 Whom else no creature can behold : on thee

Impress'd, th' effulgence of his glory abides,
 Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests.
 He heaven of heavens, and all the powers therein,
 By thee created, and by thee threw down 391
 Th' aspiring dominations: thou that day
 Thy Father's dreadful thunder did not spare,
 Nor stop the flaming chariot-wheels, that shook
 Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks 395
 'Tkou drov'st warring angels disarray'd.
 Back from pursuit thy powers with loud acclaim
 Thee only extol'd, Son of thy Father's might,
 To execute fierce vengeance on his foes.
 Not so on man: him thro' their malice fallen, 400
 Father of mercy and grace! thou didst not doom
 So strictly, but much more to pity incline:
 No sooner did thy dear and only Son
 Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail man
 So strictly, but much more to pity incline, 405
 He, to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
 Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
 Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
 Second to thee, offer'd himself to die
 For man's offence. O unexampled love! 410
 Love no where to be found less than divine!
 Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men! Thy name
 Shall be the copious matter of my song
 Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
 Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin." 415

Thus they in heaven, above the starry sphere,
 Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
 Meanwhile upon the firm opacous globe
 Of this round world, whose first convex divides
 The luminous inferior orbs, enclos'd 420
 From Chaos, and th' inroad of darkness old,
 Satan alighted walks. A globe far off
 It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent,
 Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of high
 Starless expos'd, and ever-threat'ning storms 425
 Of Chaos blust'ring round, inclement sky,
 Save on that side from which the wall of heaven,
 Though distant far, some small reflection gains
 Of glimmering air, less vex'd with tempest loud:
 Here walk'd the fiend at large in spacious field. 430
 As when a vulture, on Imaus bred,

Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
To gorge the flesh of lambs, or yeanling kids
On hills where flocks are fed, flies tow'rd's the springs
Of Ganges, or Hydaspes, Indian streams ; 436
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chinese drive
With sails of wind their cany wagons light :
So on this windy sea of land, the fiend 440
Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey ;
Alone, for other creature in this place,
Living or lifeless, to be found was none ;
None yet ; but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither like aerial vapours flew, 445
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men :
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or th' other life : 450
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
Nought seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds :
All th' unaccomplish'd works of nature's hand, 455
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution, wander here :
Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dream'd ;
Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460
Translated saints or middle spirits hold,
Betwixt the angelical and human kind.
Hither, of ill-join'd sons and daughters born,
First from the ancient world those giants came,
With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd
The builders next of Babel on the plain 466
Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build :
Others came single ; he who, to be deem'd
A god, leap'd fondly into Ætna's flames,
Empedocles ; and he who, to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
Cleombrotus ; and many more too long,
Embryos, and idiots, eremites, and friars,
White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery.
Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek

In Golgotha him dead, who lives in heaven ;
 And they who, to be sure of Paradise,
 Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd, 486
 They pass the planets seven, and pass the fix'd,
 And that chrystalline sphere whose balance weighs
 The trepidation talk'd, and that first-mov'd :
 And now Saint Peter at heaven's wicket seems
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot 485
 Of heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when lo'
 A violent cross wind from either coast
 Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry
 Into the devious air ; then might ye see
 Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost
 And flutter'd into rags ; then reliques, beads, 491
 Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
 The sport of winds : all these, up-whirl'd aloft,
 Fly o'er the backside of the world far off,
 Into a Limbo large and broad, since call'd 495
 The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
 Long after : now unpeopled, and untrod.
 All this dark globe the fiend found as he pass'd,
 And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
 Of dawning light turn'd thither-ward in haste 500
 His travell'd steps : far distant he descries,
 Ascending by degrees magnificent
 Up to the wall of heaven, a structure high,
 At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
 The work as of a kingly palace gate, 505
 With frontispiece of diamond, and gold
 Embellish'd ; thick with sparkling orient gems
 The portal shone, inimitable on earth,
 By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
 The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw 510
 Angels ascending and descending, bands
 Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
 To Padan-aram, in the field of Luz,
 Dreaming by night under the open sky,
 And waking cried, ' This is the gate of heaven.' 515
 Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
 There always, but drawn up to heaven sometimes
 Viewless ; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
 Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
 Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd, 520
 Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake

Wrapp'd in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
 The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
 The fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
 His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss: 525
 Direct against which open'd from beneath,
 Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
 A passage down to th' earth, a passage wide,
 Wider by far than that of after-times
 Over mount Sion, and, though that were large, 530
 Over the promis'd Land to God so dear,
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
 On high behests his angels to and fro
 Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard,
 From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood, 535
 To Beersaba, where the Holy Land
 Borders on Egypt and th' Arabian shore ;
 So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
 To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
 Satan from hence, now on the lower stair, 540
 That scal'd by steps of gold to heaven gate,
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
 Of all this world at once. As when a scout,
 Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
 All night, at last, by break of cheerful dawn, 545
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
 Which to his eye discovers unaware
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land
 First seen, or some renown'd metropolis,
 With glist'ring spires and pinnacles adorn'd, 550
 Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams
 Such wonder seiz'd, though after heaven seen,
 The spirit malign ; but much more envy seiz'd
 At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
 Round he surveys (and well might where he stood
 So high above the circling canopy 555
 Of night's extended shade) from eastern point
 Of Libra, to the fleecy star, that bears
 Andromeda far off Atlantic seas,
 Beyond th' horizon : then from pole to pole 560
 He views in breadth ; and without longer pause
 Down right into the world's first region throws
 His flight precipitant, and winds with ease,
 Through the pure marble air his oblique way,
 Amongst innumerable stars, that shone, 565
 Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other world's ;

Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
 Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
 Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,
 Thrice happy isles! But who dwelt happy there
 He stay'd not to inquire. Above them all 571
 The golden sun, in splendour likest heaven,
 Allur'd his eye; thither his course he bends
 Through the calm firmament, (but, up or down
 By centre or eccentric, hard to tell; 575
 Or longitude,) where the great luminary,
 Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
 That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
 Dispenses light from far; they as they move
 Their starry dance in numbers that compute 580
 Days, months, and years, tow'rd's his all-cheering lamp
 Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
 By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
 The universe, and to each inward part,
 With gentle penetration, though unseen, 585
 Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep;
 So wondrously was set his station bright.
 There lands the fiend, a spot like which perhaps
 Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb,
 Through his glaz'd optic tube, yet never saw. 590
 The place he found beyond expression bright,
 Compar'd with ought on earth, metal, or stone:
 Not all parts alike, but all alike inform'd
 With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;
 If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear; 595
 If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
 Ruby or topaz, or the twelve that shone
 In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides
 Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen,
 That stone, or like to that which here below 600
 Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
 In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
 Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
 In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
 Drain'd through a limbec to his native form. 605
 What wonder then if fields and regions here
 Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
 Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
 Th' arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,
 Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd, 610
 Here in the dark so many precious things

Of colour glorious, and effect so rare ?
 Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
 Undazzled ; far and wide his eye commands
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade, 615
 But all sunshine, as when his beams at noon
 Culminate from th' equator, as they now
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
 Shadow from body opaque can fall ; and th' air,
 No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray 620
 To objects distant far, whereby he soon
 Saw within ken a glorious angel stand,
 The same whom John saw also in the sun :
 His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid :
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar 625
 Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
 Illustrious on his shoulders, fledged with wings,
 Lay waving round ; on some great charge employ'd
 He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
 Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope 630
 To find who might direct his wand'ring flight
 To Paradise, the happy seat of man,
 His journey's end, and our beginning wo.
 But first he casts to change his proper shape,
 Which else might work him danger or delay : 635
 And now a stripling cherub he appears,
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
 Youth smil'd celestial, and to every limb
 Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd :
 Under a coronet his flowing hair 640
 In curls on either cheek play'd ; wings he wore
 Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold
 His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
 Before his decent steps a silver wand.
 He drew not nigh unheard ; the angel bright, 645
 Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
 Admonish'd by his ear ; and strait was known
 Th' archangel Uriel, one of the seven
 Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
 Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650
 That run through all the heavens, or down to th' earth
 Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
 O'er sea and land : him Satan thus accosts :

" Uriel ! for thou of those seven spirits that stand
 In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright, 655

The first art wont his great authentic will
 Interpreter through highest heaven to bring,
 Where all his sons thy embassy attend ;
 And here art likeliest by supreme decree
 Like honour to obtain, and as his eye 660
 To visit oft this new creation round ;
 Unspeakable desire to see, and know
 All these his wondrous works, but chiefly man,
 His chief delight and favour ; him, for whom
 All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd, 665
 Hath brought me from the choirs of cherubim
 Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest seraph ! tell
 In which of all these shining orbs hath man
 His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
 But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell ; 670
 That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
 Or open admiration, him behold,
 On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
 Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd ;
 That both in him and all things, as is meet, 675
 The universal Maker we may praise ;
 Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes
 To deepest hell ; and, to repair that loss,
 Created this new happy race of men
 To serve him better : wise are all his ways." 680

So speak the false dissembler unperceiv'd ;
 For neither man nor angel can discern
 Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
 Invisible, except to God alone, 684
 By his permissive will, through heaven and earth :
 And oft though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
 At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
 Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
 Where no ill seems ; which now for once beguil'd
 Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held 690
 The sharpest sighted spirit of all in heaven ;
 Who to the fraudulent imposter foul,
 In his uprightness, answer thus return'd .
 "Fair angel ! thy desire which tends to know
 The works of God, thereby to glorify 695
 The great Work-Master, leads to no excess
 That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
 The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
 From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,

To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps, 700
 Contented with report, hear only in heaven:
 For wonderful indeed are all his works,
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be ail
 Had in remembrance always with delight:
 But what created mind can comprehend 705
 Their number, or the wisdom infinite
 That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
 I saw when at his word the formless mass,
 This world's material mould, came to a heap:
 Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar 710
 Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd;
 Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
 Light shone, and order from disorder sprung.
 Swift to their several quarters hasted then
 The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire, 715
 And this ethereal quintessence of heaven
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
 That roll'd orbicular, and turned to stars
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
 Each had his place appointed, each his course; 720
 The rest in circuit walls this universe.
 Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
 With light from hence, though but reflected, shines:
 That place is Earth, the seat of man; that light
 His day, which else, as th' other hemisphere, 725
 Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring moon
 (So call that opposite fair star) her aid
 Timely interposes, and her monthly round,
 Still ending, still renewing, through mid heaven,
 With borrow'd light her countenance triform 730
 Hence fills and empties to enlighten th' earth,
 And in her pale dominion checks the night.
 That spot to which I point is Paradise,
 Adam's abode, these lofty shades his bower: 734
 Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires."
 Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan bowing low,
 As to superior spirits is wont in heaven,
 Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
 Took leave, and tow'rd the coast of earth beneath,
 Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hop'd success, 740
 Throws his steep flight in many an airy wheel,
 Nor staid, till on Niphates' top he lights.

PARADISE LOST

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and Man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described, overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thercon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress: then leaves them a while, to know further of their state by some other means. Meanwhile Uriel, descending on a sun-beam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escaped the deep, and passed at noon by his sphere, in the shape of a good angel, down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel, drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve

tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers, prepares resistance, but hindered by a sign from heaven, flies out of Paradise.

O FOR that warning voice, which he who saw
 Th' Apocalypse heard cry in heaven aloud,
 Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
 Came furious down to be reveng'd on men
 'Wo to th' inhabitants on earth! that now, 5
 While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
 The coming of their secret foe, and scap'd,
 Haply so scap'd his mortal snare: for now
 Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
 The tempter, ere th' accuser of mankind, 10
 To wreak on innocent frail man his loss
 Of that first battle, and his flight to hell.
 Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold,
 Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
 Begins his dire attempt; which nigh the birth 15
 Now rolling, boils in his tumultuous breast,
 And like a devilish engine back recoils
 Upon himself: horror and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
 'The hell within him; for within him hell 20
 He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
 One step, no more than from himself, can fly
 By change of place: now conscience wakes despair
 That slumber'd; wakes the bitter memory
 Of what he was, what is, and what must be 25
 Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
 Sometimes tow'rs Eden, which now in his view
 Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad;
 Sometimes tow'rs heaven, and the full blazing sun,
 Which now sat high in his meridian tower 30
 Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began

“O thou! that with surpassing glory crown'd,
 Look'st from thy sole dominion like the god
 Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
 Hide their diminish'd heads; to thee I call, 35
 But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
 O sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,

That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell; how glorious once above thy sphere;
 Till pride and worse ambition threw me down, 40
 Warring in heaven against heaven's matchless King
 Ah, wherefore! he deserv'd no such return
 From me, whom he created what I was
 In that bright eminence, and with his good
 Upbraided none; nor was his service hard, 45
 What could be less than to afford him praise,
 The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
 How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
 And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
 I s'dain'd subjection, and thought one step higher 50
 Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
 The debt immense of endless gratitude,
 So burdensome still paying, still to owe;
 Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd,
 And understood not that a grateful mind 55
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
 Indebted and discharg'd: what burden then?
 O had his powerful destiny ordain'd
 Me some inferior angel, I had stood
 Then happy; no unbounded hope had rais'd 60
 Ambition. Yet why not? some other power
 As great might have aspir'd, and me, tho' mean,
 Drawn to his part; but other powers as great
 Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
 Or from without, to all temptations arm'd. 65
 Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?
 Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what t' accuse,
 But heaven's free love dealt equally to all?
 Be then his love accurs'd, since love or hate,
 'To me alike, it deals eternal wo. 70
 Nay curs'd be thou; since against his thy will
 Chose freely, what it now so justly rues.
 Me miserable! which way shall I fly
 Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
 Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell; 75
 And in the lowest deep a lower deep,
 Still threat'ning to devour me, opens wide,
 To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.
 O then at last relent: is there no place
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left? 80
 None left but by submission; and that word
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame

Among the spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd
 With other promises and other vaunts
 Than to submit, boasting I could subdue 85
 Th' Omnipotent. Ay me, they little know
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
 Under what torments inwardly I groan,
 While they adore me on the throne of hell.
 With diadem and sceptre high advanc'd, 90
 The lower still I fall, only supreme
 In misery ; such joy ambition finds.
 But say I could repent and could obtain
 By act of grace my former state ; how soon 94
 Would height recal high thoughts, how soon unsay
 What feign'd submission swore ! ease would recant
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
 For never can true reconcilment grow,
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep ;
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 100
 And heavier fall : so should I purchase dear
 Short intermission bought with double smart.
 This knows my punisher ; therefore as far
 From granting he, as I from begging peace :
 All hope excluded thus, behold, instead 105
 Of us, outcast, exil'd, his new delight,
 Mankind, created, and for him this world.
 So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,
 Farewell remorse : all good to me is lost ;
 Evil be thou my good ; by thee at least 110
 Divided empire with heaven's King I hold,
 By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign ;
 As man ere long, and this new world shall know."

Thus while he spake each passion dimm'd his face,
 Thrice chang'd with pale ire, envy, and despair ; 116
 Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
 Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld :
 For heavenly minds from such distempers soul
 Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
 Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm, 120
 Artificer of fraud ! And was the first
 That practis'd falsehood, under saintly show
 Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge.
 Yet not enough had practis'd, to deceive 124
 Uriel once warn'd ; whose eye pursued him down
 The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount

Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall
 Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
 He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then alone,
 As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen. 130
 So, on he fares; and to the border comes
 Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
 Now nearer, crowns with her inclosure green,
 As with a rural mound, the champaign head
 Of a steep wilderness; whose hairy sides 135
 With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
 Access denied: and over head up-grew
 Insuperable height of loftiest shade,
 Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
 A sylvan scene! And, as the ranks ascend, 140
 Shade above shade, a woody theatre
 Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
 The verdurous wall of Paradise up-sprung:
 Which to our general sire gave prospect large
 Into his nether empire, neighb'ring round. 145
 And higher than that wall a circling row
 Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
 Blossoms, and fruits at once of golden hue,
 Appear'd, with gay enamel'd colours mix'd:
 On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams,
 Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow, 151
 When God has shower'd the earth; so lovely seem'd
 That landscape! And of pure now purer air
 Meets his approach; and to the heart inspires
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive 155
 All sadness but despair: now gentle gales,
 Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
 Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past 160
 Mozambic; off at sea north-east winds blow
 Sabeian odours, from the spicy shore
 Of Araby the bless'd, with such delay [league
 Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a
 Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles:
 So entertain'd those odorous sweets the fiend, 166
 Who came their bane; though with them better
 Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume [pleas'd
 That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170
 From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.

Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill
 Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow ;
 But further way found none, so thick intwin'd,
 As one continued brake, the undergrowth 175
 Of snrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
 All path of man or beast that pass'd that way.
 One gate there only was and that look'd east
 On th' other side ; which when th' arch-felon saw,
 Due entrance he disdain'd, and in contempt 180
 At one slight bound high overleap'd all bound
 Of hill, or highest wall, and sheer within
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
 Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve,
 In hurdled cotes amid the field secure, 186
 Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold :
 Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
 Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
 Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault, 190
 In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles :
 So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold ;
 So since into his church lewd hirelings climb ;
 Thence up he flew and on the tree of life,
 (The middle tree, and highest there that grew,) 193
 Sat like a cormorant ; yet not true life
 Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
 To them who liv'd : nor on the virtue thought
 Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd
 For prospect, what well us'd had been the pledge
 Of immortality. So little knows 201
 Any, but God alone, to value right
 The good before him, but perverts best things
 To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
 Beneath him, with new wonder, now he views, 205
 To all delight of human sense expos'd
 In narrow room, nature's whole wealth, yea more,
 A heaven on earth ! For blissful Paradise
 Of God the garden was, by him in th' east
 Of Eden planted ; Eden stretch'd her line 210
 From Auran eastward to the royal towers
 Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
 Or where the sons of Eden long before
 Dwelt in Telassar. In this pleasant soil
 His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd. 215
 Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow

All trees of noblest kind, for sight, smell, taste ;
 And all amid them stood the tree of life,
 High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
 Of vegetable gold : and next to life, 220
 Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by ;
 Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill !
 Southward through Eden went a river large,
 Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
 Pass'd underneath ingulf'd ; for God had thrown 225
 That mountain as his garden mould, high rais'd
 Upon the rapid current, which through veins
 Of porous earth, with kindly thirst updrawn,
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
 Watered the garden ; thence united fell 230
 Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
 Which from his darksome passage now appears :
 And now divided into four main streams,
 Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
 And country, whereof he needs no account : 235
 But rather to tell, (if art could tell
 How,) from sapphire fount the crisped brooks
 Rolling on orient pearls, and sands of gold,
 With mazy error under pendent shades
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240
 Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
 In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
 Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
 Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
 The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade 245
 Imbrown'd the noon-tide bowers. Thus was this
 A happy rural seat of various views : [place,
 Groves where rich trees wept odorcus gums and
 balm ;
 Others whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,
 Hung amiable : Hesperian fables true, 250
 If true, here only, and of delicious taste.
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
 Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd :
 Or palmy hillock, or the flowery lap
 Of some irriguous valley spread her store ; 255
 Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
 Another side, umbrageous grots, and caves
 Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vin
 Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
 Luxuriant : meanwhile murm'ring waters fall 260

Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,
 That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
 Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
 The birds their choir apply : airs vernal airs,
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune 265
 The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
 Knit with the Graces, and the Hours, in dance,
 Led on th' eternal spring. Not that fair field
 Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
 Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis 270
 Was gather'd ; which cost Ceres all that pain
 To seek her thro' the world ; nor that sweet grove
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
 Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
 Of Eden strive : nor that Nyseian isle 275
 Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
 Whom Gentiles Ammon call, and Libyan Jove,
 Hid Amalthea, and her florid son,
 Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye ;
 Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard, 280
 Mount Amara, though this be some suppos'd
 True Paradise, under the Ethiop line
 By Nilus' head, enclos'd with shining rock,
 A whole day's journéy high, but wide remote
 From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend 285
 Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
 Of living creatures new to sight and strange.

Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
 Godlike erect, with native honour clad,
 In naked majesty seem'd lords of all, 290
 And worthy seem'd ; for in their looks divine
 The image of their glorious Maker shone,
 Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
 (Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd,)
 Whence true authority in men ; though both 295
 Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd ;
 For contemplation he and valour form'd,
 For softness she and sweet attractive grace,
 He for God only, she for God in him.
 His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd 300
 Absolute rule ; and hyacinthine locks
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung
 Clust'ring, but not beneath his shoulders broad :
 She, as a veil, down to the slender waist

Her unadorned golden tresses wore 305
 Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd
 As the vine curls her tendrils, which implie ;
 Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway
 And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
 Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, 310
 And sweet reluctant amorous delay.
 Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd ;
 Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
 Of nature's works, honour dishonourable :
 Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind 315
 With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
 And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
 Simplicity and spotless innocence !
 So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
 Of God or angel, for they thought no ill: 320
 So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
 That ever since in love's embraces met ;
 Adam, the goodliest man of men since born
 His sons ; the fairest of her daughters, Eve.
 Under a tuft of shade, that on a green 325
 Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain side,
 They sat them down : and, after no more toil
 Of their sweet gard'ning labour than suffic'd
 To recommend cool Zephyr, and make ease
 More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite 330
 More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell,
 Nectarine fruits which the compliant boughs
 Yielded them, sidelong as they sat recline
 On the soft downy bank damask'd with flowers :
 The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind 335
 Still as they thirsted scoop the brimming stream ;
 Nor gentle purpose nor endearing smiles
 Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems
 Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
 Alone as they. About them frisking play'd 340
 All beasts of th' earth, since wild, and of all chase,
 In wood or wilderness, forest or den ;
 Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
 Dandled the kid ; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
 Gambol'd before them ; the unwieldy elephant, 345
 To make them mirth, us'd all his might, and wreath'd
 His lithe proboscis ; close the serpent sly
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
 His braided train, and of his fatal guile

Gave proof unheeded ; others on the grass 350
 Couch'd, and, now fill'd with pasture, gazing sat,
 Or bedward ruminating ; for the sun
 Declin'd was hasting now with prone career
 To th' ocean isles, and in th' ascending scale
 Of heaven the stars that usher evening rose : 355
 When Satan, still in gaze as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad :

“ O hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold ?
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
 Creatures of other mould ; earth-born perhaps, 360
 Not spirits ; yet to heavenly spirits bright
 Little inferior ; whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace
 The hand that form'd them on their shape hath
 pour'd. 365

Ah, gentle pair ! ye little think how nigh
 Your change approaches ; when all these delights
 Will vanish, and deliver ye to wo ;
 More wo, the more your taste is now of joy :
 Happy ! but for so happy ill secur'd 370
 Long to continue ; and this high seat your heaven,
 Ill-fenc'd for heaven, to keep out such a foe
 As now is enter'd : yet no purpos'd foe
 To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
 Though I unpitied. League with you I seek, 375
 And mutual amity, so strait, so close,
 That I with you must dwell, or you with me
 Henceforth : my dwelling haply may not please,
 Like this fair Paradise, your sense ; yet such
 Accept your Maker's work ; He gave it me, 380
 Which I as freely give : hell shall unfold,
 To entertain you two, her widest gates,
 And send forth all her kings : there will be room,
 (Not like these narrow limits,) to receive
 Your numerous offspring : if no better place, 385
 Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
 On you, who wrong'd me not, for him who wrong'd.
 And should I at your harmless innocence
 Melt, (as I do,) yet public reason just,
 Honour and empire with revenge enlarg'd, 390
 By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
 To do, what else (though damn'd) I should abhor.”

So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
 (The tyrant's plea,) excus'd his devilish deeds.
 Then from his lofty stand on that high tree, 395
 Down he alights among the sportful herd
 Of those four-footed kinds; himself now one,
 Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end
 Nearer to view his prey, and unespied 399
 To mark what of their state he more might learn
 By word or action mark'd: about them round
 A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
 Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied,
 In some purlieu, two gentle fawns at play,
 Strait couches close, then rising changes oft . 405
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,
 Grip'd in each paw: when Adam, first of men,
 To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech,
 Turn'd him, all ear, to hear new utterance flow: 410

"Sole partner, and sole part of all these joys!
 Dearer thyself than all: needs must the power
 That made us, and for us this ample world,
 Be infinitely good, and of his good
 As liberal, and free as infinite; 415
 That rais'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
 In all this happiness, who at his hand
 Have nothing merited, nor can perform
 Ought whereof he hath need: he who requires
 From us no other service than to keep 420
 This one, this easy charge, 'Of all the trees
 In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
 So various, not to taste that only tree
 Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life.'
 So near grows death to life! whate'er death is; 425
 Some dreadful thing no doubt: for well thou know'st
 God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,
 The only sign of our obedience left,
 Among so many signs of power and rule,
 Confer'd upon us; and dominion given 430
 Over all other creatures that possess
 Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
 One easy prohibition, who enjoy
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
 Unlimited of manifold delights: 435
 But let us ever praise him, and extol

His bounty, following cur delightful task,
 To prune these growing plants, and tend these
 flowers;
 Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet."

To whom thus Eve replied: "O thou for whom,
 And from whom, I was form'd; flesh of thy flesh;
 And without whom am to no end; my guide 442
 And head! what thou hast said is just and right.
 For we to him indeed all praises owe,
 And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy 445
 So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
 Pre-eminent by so much odds; while thou
 Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep
 I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd 450
 Under a shade on flowers; much wond'ring where
 And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
 Not distant far from thence a murmu'ring sound
 Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
 Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd, 455
 Pure as th' expanse of heaven: I thither went,
 With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down
 On the green bank, to look into the clear
 Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
 As I bent down to look, just opposite 460
 A shape within the wat'ry gleam appear'd,
 Bending to look on me: I started back;
 It started back: but pleas'd I soon return'd;
 Pleas'd it return'd as soon; with answering looks
 Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd 465
 Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
 Had not a voice thus warn'd me: 'What thou seest,
 What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
 With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
 And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470
 Thy coming, and thy soft embraces; he
 Whose image thou art: him thou shalt enjoy,
 Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
 Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd
 Mother of human race.' What could I do 475
 But follow straight, invisibly thus led
 Till I espied thee, fair indeed, and tall,
 Under a platan; yet, methought, less fair,
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild

Than that smooth wat'ry image: back I turn'd ; 480
 Thou following cried'st aloud, 'Return, fair Eve,
 Whom fliest thou? Whom thou fliest, of him thou art,
 His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
 Substantial life, to have thee by my side 485
 Henceforth an individual solace dear:
 Part of my soul I seek thee; and thee claim,
 My other half.'—With that, thy gentle hand
 Seiz'd mine; I yielded; and from that time see
 How beauty is excell'd by manly grace, 490
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair."

So spake our general mother; and with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,
 And meek surrender, half embracing lean'd 495
 On our first father: half her swelling breast
 Naked met his, under the flowing gold
 Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
 Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
 Smil'd with superior love; as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds, 500
 That shed May flowers; and press'd her matron lip
 With kisses pure; aside the Devil turn'd
 For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
 Eyed them askance; and to himself thus plain'd:

"Sight hateful, sight tormenting! Thus these two,
 Imparadis'd in one another's arms, 506
 (The happier Eden!) shall enjoy their fill
 Of bliss on bliss: while I to hell am thrust,
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
 Amongst our other torments not the least, 510
 Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing, pines.
 Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
 From their own mouths: all is not theirs it seems:
 One fatal tree there stands of knowledge call'd,
 Forbidden them to taste. Knowledge forbidden?
 Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord 516
 Envy them that? Can it be sin to know?
 Can it be death? And do they only stand
 By ignorance? Is that their happy state,
 The proof of their obedience and their faith? 520
 O fair foundation laid whereon to build
 Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds

With more desire to know, and to reject
 Envious commands, invented with design 524
 To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt
 Equal with gods: aspiring to be such,
 They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
 But first, with narrow search I must walk round
 This garden, and no corner leave unspied;
 A chance but chance may lead where I may meet 530
 Some wand'ring spirit of heaven. by fountain side
 Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
 What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
 Yet happy pair! Enjoy, till I return,
 Short pleasures; for long woes are to succeed!" 535

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
 But with sly circumspection, and began,
 Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his
 roam,

Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where heaven
 With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun 540
 Slowly descended; and with right aspect
 Against the eastern gate of Paradise
 Levell'd his evening rays: it was a rock
 Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,
 Conspicuous far; winding with one ascent 545
 Accessible from earth, one entrance high:
 The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
 Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
 Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
 Chief of th' angelic guards, awaiting night: 550
 About him exercis'd heroic games
 Th' unarm'd youth of heaven; but nigh at hand
 Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
 Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even 555
 On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star
 In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fir'd
 Impress the air, and shows the mariner
 From what point of his compass to beware
 Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste: 560

"Gabriel! 'To thee thy course by lot hath given
 Charge, and strict watch, that to this happy place
 No evil thing approach, or enter in.
 This day, at height of noon, came to my sphere

A spirit; zealous, as he seem'd, to know 565
 More of th' Almighty's work; and chiefly man,
 God's latest image: I describ'd his way,
 Bent all on speed, and mark'd his airy gait:
 But, in the mount that lies from Eden north,
 Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks 570
 Alien from heaven, with passions foul obscur'd:
 Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
 Lost sight of him. One of the banish'd crew,
 I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep, to raise
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find." 575

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd:
 "Uriel! No wonder if thy perfect sight,
 Amid the sun's bright circle, where thou sitt'st,
 See far and wide: in at this gate none pass
 The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come 580
 Well known from heaven; and since meridian hour
 No creature thence: if spirit of other sort,
 So minded, have o'erleap'd these earthy bounds
 On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
 Spiritual substance with corporeal bar. 585
 But, if within the circuit of these walks,
 In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
 Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know."

So promis'd he: and Uriel to his charge [rais'd,
 Return'd, on that bright beam, whose point now
 Bore him slope downward to the sun, now fallen 591
 Beneath th' Azores: whither the prime orb,
 Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
 Diurnal; or this less voluble earth,
 By shorter flight to th' east, had left him there, 595
 Arraying with reflected purple and gold
 The clouds that on his western throne attend.

Now came still evening on, and twilight grey
 Had in her sober livery all things clad:
 Silence accompanied; for beast, and bird, 600
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests,
 Were slunk; all but the wakeful nightingale;
 She all night long her amorous descant sung;
 Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the firmament
 With living sapphires; Hesperus, that led 605
 The starry host, rode brightest; till the moon

Rising in clouded majesty, at length,
 Apparent queen, unveil'd her peerless light,
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

When Adam thus to Eve: "Fair consort! th' hour
 Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest, 611
 Mind us of like repose; since God hath set
 Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
 Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,
 Now falling with soft slumb'rous weight, inclines
 Our eyelids; other creatures all day long 616
 Rove idle, unemploy'd, and less need rest:
 Man hath his daily work of body, or mind,
 Appointed, which declares his dignity,
 And the regard of heaven on all his ways: 620
 While other animals unactive range;
 And of their doings God takes no account.
 To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
 With first approach of light, we must be risen,
 And at our pleasant labour, to reform 625
 Yon flowery arbours; yonder alleys green,
 Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown:
 That mock our scant manuring, and require
 More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth:
 Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums, 630
 That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,
 Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease:
 Meanwhile, as nature wills, night bids us rest."

To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorn'd.
 "My author, and disposer! What thou bid'st 635
 Unargued I obey; so God ordains:
 God is thy law, thou mine; to know no more
 Is woman's happiest knowledge and her praise.
 With thee conversing I forget all time;
 All seasons and their change, all please alike: 640
 Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
 With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun,
 When first on this delightful land he spreads
 His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
 Glist'ring with dew: fragrant the fertile earth 645
 After soft showers: and sweet the coming on
 Of grateful evening mild: then silent night,
 With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
 And these the gems of heaven, her starry train:

But neither breath of morn, when she ascends 650
 With charm of earliest birds : nor rising sun
 On this delightful land : nor herb, fruit, flower,
 Glist'ring with dew : nor fragrance after showers .
 Nor grateful evening mild : nor silent night,
 With this her solemn bird : nor walk by moon, 655
 Or glitt'ring starlight, without thee is sweet.
 But wherefore all night long shine these ? For whom
 This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes ?"

To whom our general ancestor replied :
 "Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve, 660
 These have their course to finish round the earth
 By morrow evening, and from land to land
 In order, though to nations yet unborn,
 Minist'ring light prepar'd, they set and rise ;
 Lest total darkness should by night regain 665
 Her old possession, and extinguish life
 In nature and all things, which these soft fires
 Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
 Of various influence foment and warm,
 Temper or nourish, or in part shed down 670
 Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
 On earth, made hereby apter to receive
 Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
 These then, though unbeheld in deep of night, 674
 Shine not in vain ; nor think, tho' men were none,
 That heaven would want spectators, God want praise,
 Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
 Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep :
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
 Both day and night. How often, from the steep 680
 Of echoing hill, or thicket, have we heard
 Celestial voices, to the midnight air,
 Sole, or responsive each to others note,
 Singing the great Creator ? oft in bands 684
 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
 With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds,
 In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heaven."

Thus talking, hand in hand alone they pass'd
 On to their blissful bower : it was a place 690
 Chosen by the sov'reign Planter, when he fram'd
 All things to man's delightful use : the roof,

This said unanimous, and other rites
 Observing none, but adoration pure,
 Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
 Handed they went; and eas'd the putting off
 These troublesome disguises which we wear, 740
 Straight side by side were laid: nor turn'd, I ween,
 Adam from his fair spouse; nor Eve the rites
 Mysterious of connubial love refus'd:
 Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
 Of purity, and place, and innocence: 745
 Defaming as impure what God declares
 Pure; and commands to some, leaves free to all.
 Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain,
 But our destroyer, foe to God and man?
 Hail, wedded love! mysterious law, true source 750
 Of human offspring, sole propriety
 In Paradise! of all things common else.
 By thee adulterous lust was driven from men,
 Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,
 Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure, 755
 Relations dear, and all the charities
 Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
 Far be it, that I should write thee sin, or blame!
 Or think thee unbecoming holiest place;
 Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets! 760
 Whose bed is undefil'd, and chaste, pronounc'd,
 Present, or past; as saints and patriarchs us'd.
 Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
 His constant lamp; and waves his purple wings;
 Reigns here, and revels: not in the bought smile
 Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd; 766
 Casual fruition! nor in court amours,
 Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
 Or serenade, which the starv'd lover sings
 To his proud fair; best quitted with disdain. 770
 These, lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept;
 And on their naked limbs the flowery roof
 Shower'd roses, which the morn repaired. Sleep on.
 Bless'd pair; and O yet happiest, if ye seek
 No happier state, and know to know no more. 775

Now had night measur'd with her shadowy cone
 Half-way up hill this vast sublunar vault:
 And from their ivory port the cherubim
 Forth issuing at th' accustom'd hour, stood arm'd

To their night watches in warlike parade, 790
When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake :

“Uzziel! half these draw off, and coast the south
With strictest watch: these other wheel the north;
Our circuit meets full west.” As flame they part,
Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear. 795
From these, two strong and subtle spirits he call'd,
That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge:

“Ithuriel, and Zephon! with wing'd speed
Search thro' this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook
But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, 790
Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.
This evening from the sun's decline arriv'd,
Who tells of some infernal spirit, seen
Hitherward bent, (who could have thought?) escap'd
The bars of hell; on errand bad, no doubt: 795
Such, where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.”

So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon: these to the bower direct,
In search of whom they sought: him there they
found,
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve; 800
Assaying, by his devilish art, to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions, as he list, phantoms, and dreams:
Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
Th' animal spirits, that from pure blood arise, 805
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure; thence raise
At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts;
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits engend'ring pride.
Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear 810
Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness; up he starts,
Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid 815
Fit for the tun, some magazine to store
Against a rumour'd war, the smutty grain
With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the air:
So started up in his own shape the fiend.
Back stepp'd those two fair angels, half amaz'd, 820

So sudden to behold the grisly king ;
Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon :

“ Which of those rebel spirits, adjudg'd to hell,
Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison ? and transform'd
Why sat'st thou, like an enemy in wait, 825
Here watching at the head of these that sleep ? ”

“ Know ye not then, ” said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
“ Know ye not me ? ye knew me once no mate
For you ; there sitting where ye durst not soar :
Not to know me argues yourselves unknown, 830
The lowest of your throng : or if ye know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain ? ”

To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn
“ Think not revolted spirit, thy shape the same, 835
Or undiminish'd brightness, to be known
As when thou stood'st in heaven, upright and pure
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee ; and thou resemblest now
Thy sin, and place of doom, obscure and foul. 840
But come ; for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm. ”

So spake the cherub ; and his grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace 845
Invincible : abash'd the Devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely ; saw, and pin'd
His loss : but chiefly to find here observ'd
His lustre visibly impair'd : yet seem'd 850
Undaunted. “ If I must contend, ” said he,
“ Best with the best, the sender not the sent,
Or all at once ; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost. ” “ Thy fear, ” said Zephon bold,
“ Will save us trial what the least can do 855
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak. ”

The fiend replied not, overcome with rage ;
But like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on
Champing his iron curb : to strive or fly
He held it vain ; awe from above had quell'd 860

His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
 The western point, where those half-rounding guards
 Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
 Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,
 Gabriel, from the front thus call'd aloud : 865

“O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
 Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
 Ithuriel and Zepnon through the shade,
 And with them comes a third of regal port,
 But faded splendour wan ; who, by his gait 870
 And fierce demeanour, seems the prince of hell,
 Not likely to part hence without contest ;
 Stand firm, for in his look defiance lowers.”

He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd,
 And brief related whom they brought, where found,
 How busied, in what form and posture couch'd. 876

To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake :
 “Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd
 To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
 Of others, who approve not to transgress 880
 By thy example, but have power and right
 To question thy bold entrance on this place ;
 Employ'd it seems to violate sleep, and those
 Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?”

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow :
 “Gabriel, thou hadst in heaven th' esteem of wise,
 And such I held thee ; but this question ask'd 887
 Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain ?
 Who would not, finding way, break loose from hell,
 Though thither doom'd ? Thou wouldst thyself, no
 doubt, 890
 And boldly venture to whatever place
 Farthest from pain, where thou might'st hope to
 change
 Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
 Dole with delight, which in this place I sought ;
 To thee no reason, who know'st only good, 895
 But evil hast not tried ; and wilt object
 His will who bound us ? let him surer bar
 His iron gates, if he intends our stay
 In that dark durance : thus much what was ask'd,

The rest is true, they found me where they say; 900
But that implies not violence or harm."

'Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel mov'd,
Disdainfully, half-smiling, thus replied:
" O loss of one in heaven to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew, 905
And now returns him from his prison scap'd,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicens'd, from his bounds in hell prescrib'd;
So wise he judges it to fly from pain 910
However, and to scape his punishment.
So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
Which thou incur'st by flying, meet thy flight
Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain 915
Can equal anger infinite provok'd.
But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
Came not all hell broke loose? is pain to them
Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they
Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief, 920
The first in flight from pain, hadst thou alleg'd
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive."

To which the fiend thus answer'd, frowning stern:
" Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain, 925
Insulting angel: well thou know'st I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid
The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
And seconded thy else not dreaded spear:
But still thy words at random, as before, 930
Argue thy inexperience what behoves,
From hard assays and ill successes past,
A faithful leader, not to hazard all
Through ways of danger by himself untried.
{, therefore, I alone first undertook 935
To wing the desolate abyss, and spy
This new created world, whereof in hell
Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted powers
To settle here on earth, or in mid air; 940
Though for possession put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against;

Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
High up in heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight." 945

To whom the warrior angel soon replied :
" To say and straight unsay, pretending first
Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no 'eader but a liar trac'd,
Satan, and couldst thou faithful add ? O name 950
O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd !
Faithful to whom ? to thy rebellious crew ?
Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,
Your military obedience, to dissolve 955
Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd power supreme ?
And thou, sly hypocrite ! who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawn'd and cring'd, and servilely ador'd
Heaven's awful monarch ? wherefore, but in hope
To dispossess him, and thyself to reign ? 961
But mark what I areed thee now—Avaunt ;
Fly thither whence thou fledst : if from this hour
Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd, 965
And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
The facile gates of hell too slightly barr'd."

So threaten'd he ; but Satan to no threats
Gave heed, but waxing more in rage, replied :

" Then when I am thy captive talk of chains, 970
Proud liminary cherub, but ere then
Far heavier load tnyself expect to feel
From my prevailing arm ; though heaven's King
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
Us'd to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels 975
In progress through the road of heaven star-pav'd."

While thus he spake, th' angelic squadron bright
Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported spears, as thick as when a field 980
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
Her bearded groves of ears, which way the wind
Sways them ; the careful ploughman doubting stands,

Lest on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff. On th' other side, Satan, alarm'd, 985
 Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
 Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd :
 His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
 Sat horror plum'd ; nor wanted in his grasp
 What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful
 deeds 990

Might have ensu'd ; nor only Paradise
 In this commotion, but the starry cope
 Of heaven perhaps, or all the elements,
 At least had gone to wrack, disturb'd, and torn
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon 995
 Th' Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
 Hung forth in heaven his golden scales, yet seen
 Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
 Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
 The pendulous round earth with balanc'd air 1000
 In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
 Battles and realms : in these he put two weights,
 The sequel each of parting and of fight ;
 The latter quick up flew, and kick'd the beam ;
 Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend : 1005

“Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st
 mine,
 Neither our own, but given ; what folly then
 To boast what arms can do ? since thine no more
 Than heaven permits, nor mine, tho' doubled now
 To trample thee as mire : for proof look up, 1010
 And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
 Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how
 weak,
 If thou resist.” The fiend look'd up, and knew
 His mounted scale aloft : nor more ; but fled 1014
 Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

Morning approached, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her. They come forth to their day-labours: their morning hymn at the door of their bower. God, to render man inexcusable, sends Raphael to admonish him of his obedience; of his free estate; of his enemy near at hand, who he is, and why his enemy; and whatever else may avail Adam to know. Raphael comes down to Paradise: his appearance described; his coming discerned by Adam afar off sitting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Paradise got together by Eve; their discourse at table. Raphael performs his message, minds Adam of his state and of his enemy; relates, at Adam's request, who that enemy is, and how he came to be so, beginning from his first revolt in heaven, and the occasion thereof; how he drew his legions after him to the parts of the north, and there incited them to rebel with him, persuading all but only Abdiel, a seraph, who in argument dissuades and opposes him, then forsakes him.

Now Morn, her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam wak'd, so custom'd, for his sleep
Was airy-light, from pure digestion bred,
And temp'rate vapours bland, which th' only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,

Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill matin song
 Of birds on every bough : so much the more
 His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
 With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek, 10
 As through unquiet rest : he, on his side
 Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love,
 Hung over her enamour'd ; and beheld
 Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
 Shot forth peculiar graces ; then, with voice 15
 Mild as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
 Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus : " Awake,
 My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
 Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight !
 Awake ; the morning shines and the fresh field 20
 Calls us ; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
 Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
 What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
 How nature paints her colours, how the bee
 Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet." 25

Such whisp'ring wak'd her, but with startled eye
 On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake :

" O sole, in whom my thoughts find all repose,
 My glory, my perfection ! glad I see
 Thy face and morn return'd ; for I this night 30
 (Such night till this, I never pass'd) have dream'd,
 If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
 Works of day past, or morrow's next design,
 But of offence and trouble, which my mind
 Knew never till this irksome night. Methought 35
 Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
 With gentle voice ; I thought it thine ; it said,
 Why sleep'st thou, Eve ? now is the pleasant time,
 The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
 To the night-warbling bird, that now awake 40
 Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song ; now reigns
 Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
 Shadowy sets off the face of things ; in vain,
 If none regard ; heaven wakes with all his eyes,
 Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire ? 45
 In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
 Attracted by the beauty still to gaze.
 I rose as at thy call, but found thee not :
 To find thee I directed then my walk ;

And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways 50
 That brought me on a sudden to the tree
 Of interdicted knowledge : fair it seem'd,
 Much fairer to my fancy than by day ;
 And, as I wond'ring look'd, beside it stood
 One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from heaven
 By us oft seen : his dewy locks distill'd 56
 Ambrosia ; on that tree he also gaz'd ;
 And, ' O fair plant,' said he, ' with fruit surcharg'd,
 Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet ?
 Nor God, nor man ? is knowledge so despis'd ? 60
 Or envy, or what reserve, forbids to taste ?
 Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
 Longer thy offer'd good ; why else set here ?'
 This said he paus'd not, but with vent'rous arm
 He pluck'd, he tasted ; me damp horror chill'd 65
 At such bold words, vouch'd with a deed so bold :
 But he thus, overjoy'd : ' O fruit divine,
 Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,
 Forbidden here, it seems as only fit
 For gods, yet able to make gods of men : 70
 And why not gods of men, since good, the more
 Communicated, more abundant grows,
 The author not impair'd, but honour'd more ?
 Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve,
 Partake thou also ; happy though thou art, 75
 Happier thou may'st be, worthier canst not be :
 Take this, and be henceforth among the gods,
 Thyself a goddess, not to earth confin'd,
 But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes
 Ascend to heaven, by merit thine, and see 80
 What life the gods live there, and such live thou.'
 So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
 Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part
 Which he had pluck'd ; the pleasant savoury smell
 So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought, 85
 Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
 With him I flew, and underneath beheld
 The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide
 And various : wond'ring at my flight and change
 To this high exaltation ; suddenly 90
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
 And fell asleep ; but O how glad I wak'd
 To find this but a dream." Thus Eve her sight
 Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad

"Best image of myself and dearer half, 95
 The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
 Affects me equally; nor can I like
 This uncouth dream, of evil sprung I fear;
 Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,
 Created pure. But know, that in the soul 100
 Are many lesser faculties, that serve
 Reason as chief; among these Fancy next
 Her office holds; of all external things,
 Which the five watchful senses represent,
 She forms imaginations, airy shapes, 105
 Which Reason, joining or disjoining, frames
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
 Into her private cell when nature rests.
 Oft in her absence mimic Fancy wakes 110
 To imitate her; but misjoining shapes,
 Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
 Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.
 Some such resemblances methinks I find
 Of our last evening's talk in this thy dream, 115
 But with addition strange: yet be not sad:
 Evil into the mind of God or man
 May come and go, so un approv'd, and leave
 No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope,
 That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream, 120
 Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
 Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,
 That wont to be more cheerful and serene,
 Than when fair morning first smiles on the world;
 And let us to our fresh employments rise, 125
 Among the graves, the fountains, and the flowers,
 That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
 Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store."

So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd;
 But silently a gentle tear let fall 130
 From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair;
 Two other precious drops that ready stood,
 Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
 Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
 And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended. 135

So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
 But first, from under shady arborous roof,

Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring, and the sun, who scarce up-risen,
With wheels yet hov'ring o'er the ocean brim, 140
Shot parallel to th' earth his dewy ray,
Discov'ring in wide landscape all the east
Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid 145
In various style; for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounc'd or sung
Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse;
More tunable than needed lute or harp 151
To add more sweetness; and they thus began;

“These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good!
Almighty! thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair, thyself how wondrous then!
Unspeakable, who sitt'st above these heavens 156
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.
Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light, 160
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in heaven:
On earth join all ye creatures, to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end. 165
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. 170
Thou sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st,
Moon that now meet'st the orient sun, now fliest 175
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;
And ye five other wand'ring fires, that move
In mystic dance, not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth 180

Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run
 Perpetual circle, multiform; and mix,
 And nourish all things; let your ceaseless change
 Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
 Ye mists and exhalations, that now rise 185
 From hill or steaming lake, dusky or grey,
 Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
 In honour to the world's, great Author rise;
 Whether to deck with clouds th' uncolour'd sky,
 Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers, 190
 Rising or falling still advance his praise.
 His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
 Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops ye pines,
 With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
 Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow, 195
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
 Join voices all ye living souls; ye birds,
 That singing up to heaven-gate ascend,
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
 Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk 200
 The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep,
 Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
 To hill or valley; fountain or fresh shade,
 Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
 Hail, universal Lord! be bounteous still 205
 To give us only good; and, if the night
 Have gather'd ought of evil, or conceal'd,
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark!"

So pray'd they, innocent; and to their thoughts
 Firm peace recover'd soon, and wonted calm. 210
 On to their morning's rural work they haste,
 Among sweet dews and flowers; where any row
 Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd too far
 Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check
 Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine 215
 To wed her elm; she spous'd about him twines
 Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
 Her dower, th' adopted clusters, to adorn
 His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd behold
 With pity heaven's high King, and to him call'd 220
 Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deign'd
 To travel with Tobias, and secur'd
 His marriage with the seventimes-wedded maid.

“Raphael,” said he, “thou hear’st what stir on
earth

Satan, from hell scap’d through the darksome gulf
Hath rais’d in Paradise, and how disturb’d 226
This night the human pair; how he designs
In them at once to ruin all mankind.
Go, therefore, half this day as friend with friend
Converse with Adam, in what bower or shade 230
Thou find’st him, from the heat of noon retir’d,
To respite his day-labour with repast,
Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
As may advise him of his happy state,
Happiness in his power left free to will, 235
Left to his own free will; his will, though free,
Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware
He swerve not, too secure: tell him withal,
His danger, and from whom; what enemy,
Late fallen himself from heaven, is plotting now 240
The fall of others from like state of bliss;
By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;
But by deceit and lies: this let him know,
Lest wilfully transgressing he pretend
Surprisal, unadmonish’d, unforeshow’d.” 245

So spake th’ eternal Father, and fulfill’d
All justice: nor delay’d the wing’d saint
After his charge receiv’d; but from among
Thousand celestial ardours, where he stood
Veil’d with gorgeous wings, up springing light, 250
Flew thro’ the midst of heaven; th’ angelic choirs
On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
Through all the empyreal road; till at the gate
Of heaven arriv’d, the gate self-open’d wide,
On golden hinges turning, as by work 255
Divine the sov’reign Architect had fram’d.
From hence, no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Star interpos’d, however small, he sees,
Not unconform to other shining globes,
Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crown’d
Above all hills. As when by night the glass 261
Of Galileo, less assur’d, observes
Imagin’d lands and regions in the moon;
Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades,
Delos or Samos first appearing, kens 265
A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flames

He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
 Sails between worlds and worlds; with steady wing,
 Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
 Winnows the buxom air; till, within soar 270
 Of tow'ring eagles, t' all the fowls he seems
 A phoenix, gaz'd by all, as that sole bird,
 When to inshrine his reliques in the sun's
 Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
 At once on th' eastern cliff of Paradise 275
 He lights, and to his proper shape returns,
 A seraph wing'd; six wings he wore to shade
 His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
 With regal ornament; the middle pair 280
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
 And colours dipp'd in heaven; the third his feet
 Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
 Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood, 285
 And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
 The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
 Of angels under watch; and to his state,
 And to his message high, in honour rise; 289
 For on some message high they guess'd him bound.
 Their glittering tents he pass'd, and now is come
 Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
 And flowering odours, cassia, nard, and balm;
 A wildness of sweets; for Nature here
 Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will 295
 Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
 Wild above rule or art; enormous bliss.
 Him, through the spicy forest onward come,
 Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
 Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun 300
 Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
 Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam
 needs:
 And Eve within, due at her hour, prepar'd
 For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
 True appetite, and not disrelish thirst 305
 Of nect'rous draughts between, from milky stream,
 Berry or grape; to whom thus Adam call'd:

"Haste hither, Eve, and, worth thy sight, behold,
 Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape,

Comes this way moving ; seems another morn 310
 Risen on mid-noon : some great behest from heaven
 To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
 This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
 And what thy stores contain bring forth, and pour
 Abundance, fit to honour and receive 315
 Our heavenly stranger : well we may afford
 Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
 From large bestow'd, where nature multiplies
 Her fertile growth, and by disburd'ning grows
 More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare." 320

To whom thus Eve: "Adam, earth's hallow'd
 mould,
 Of God inspir'd, small store will serve, where store
 All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk ;
 Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
 To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes : 325
 But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
 Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
 To entertain our angel guest, as he
 Beholding shall confess, that here on earth
 God hath dispers'd his bounties as in heaven." 330

So saying, with despatchful looks in haste
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
 What choice to choose for delicacy best ;
 What order, so contriv'd as not to mix
 Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring 335
 Taste after taste, upheld with kindest change :
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
 Whatever earth, all bearing mother, yields
 In India East or West, or middle shore
 In Pontus, or the Punic coast, or where 340
 Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds in coat
 Rough or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell,
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
 Heaps with unsparing hand ; for drink the grape
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meathes 345
 From many a berry ; and from sweet kernels press'd
 She tempers dulcet creams ; nor these to hold
 Wants her fit vessels pure ; then strews the ground
 With rose and odours from the shrub unfum'd.

Meanwhile our primitive great sire, to meet 350

His godlike guest, walks forth, without more train
 Accompanied than with his own complete
 Perfections : in himself was all his state,
 More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
 On princes, when their rich retinue long 355
 Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold,
 Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
 Nearer his presence Adam, though not awed,
 Yet with submissive approach, and reverence meek,
 As to a superior nature, bowing low 360
 Thus said: " Native of heaven! for other place
 None can than heaven such glorious shape contain;
 Since, by descending from the thrones above,
 Those happy places thou hast deign'd awhile
 To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us 365
 Two only, who yet by sov'reign gift possess
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
 To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
 To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
 Be over, and the sun more cool decline." 370

Whom thus th' angelic virtue answer'd mild :
 Adam ! I therefore came ; nor art thou such
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
 As may not oft invite, though spirits of heaven,
 To visit thee : lead on then where thy bower 375
 O'ershades ; for these midhours, till evening rise,
 I have at will." So to the sylvan lodge
 They came, that like Pomona's arbour smil'd
 With flowerets deck'd and fragrant smells ; but Eve,
 Undeck'd save with herself, more lovely fair 380
 Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
 Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,
 Stood to entertain her guest from heaven : no veil
 She needed, virtue proof ; no thought infirm
 Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel 'Hail' 385
 Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd
 Long after to bless'd Mary, second Eve.

" Hail, mother of mankind ! whose fruitful womb
 Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
 Than with these various fruits the trees of God 390
 Have heap'd this table." Rais'd of grassy turf
 Their table was, and mossy seats had round ;
 And on her ample square from side to side

All autumn pil'd, though spring and autumn here
 Danc'd hand in hand. Awhile discourse they hold,
 No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began 396
 Our author: "Heavenly stranger! pleas'd to taste
 These bounties, which our nourisher, from whom
 All perfect good, unmeasur'd out, descends
 To us for food and for delight, hath caus'd 400
 Th' earth to yield; unsavoury food perhaps
 To spiritual natures; only this I know,
 That one celestial Father gives to all."

To whom the angel: "Therefore what he gives
 (Whose praise be ever sung!) to man in part 403
 Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found
 No ingrateful food: and food alike those pure
 Intellectual substances require,
 As doth your rational; and both contain
 Within them every lower faculty 410
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste;
 Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
 And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
 For know, whatever was created, needs
 To be sustain'd and fed; of elements, 415
 The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
 Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
 Ethereal, and, as lowest, first the moon;
 Whence in her visage round, those spots unpurg'd
 Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd. 420
 Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
 From her moist continent to higher orbs.
 The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
 From all his alimantal recompense
 In humid exhalations; and at even 425
 Sups with the ocean. Though in heaven the trees
 Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
 Yield nectar; tho' from off the boughs each morn
 We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
 Cover'd with pearly grain: yet God hath here 430
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,
 As may compare with heaven; and to taste
 Think not I shall be nice." So down they sat,
 And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
 The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss 435
 Of theologians, but with keen despatch
 Of real hunger, and concoctive heat

To transubstantiate ; what redounds, transpires
 Through spirits with ease ; nor wonder, if by fire
 Of sooty coal, th' empiric alchemist 446
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
 As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve
 Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
 With pleasant liquors crown'd. O innocence 445
 Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
 Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
 Enamour'd at that sight ; but in those hearts
 Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
 Was understood, the injur'd lover's hell. 450

Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd
 Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
 In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass,
 Given him by this great conference, to know
 Of things above this world, and of their being 455
 Who dwell in heaven, whose excellence he saw
 Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms
 Divine effulgence, whose high power so far
 Exceeded human, and his wary speech
 Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd ; 460

“Inhabitant with God! now know I well
 Thy favour, in this honour done to man,
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd
 To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
 Food not of angels, yet accepted so, 465
 As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
 At heaven's high feasts to have fed: yet what
 compare?”

To whom the winged hierarch replied:
 “O Adam! one almighty is, from whom
 All things proceed, and up to him return, 470
 If not depriv'd from good, created all
 Such to perfection, one first matter all,
 Endued with various forms various degrees
 Of substance, and, in things that live, of life;
 But more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure, 475
 As nearer to him plac'd, or nearer tending,
 Each in their several active spheres assign'd
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds

Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
Spirits lighter the green stalk, from thence the
leaves 480

More airy, last the bright consummate flower
Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,
The vital spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual; give both life and sense, 485
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
Reason receives, and reason is her being,
Discursive, or intuitive; discourse
Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
Differing but in degree, of kind the same. 490
Wonder not, then, what God for you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance: time may come, when men
With angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare; 495
And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
Improv'd by tract of time, and wing'd ascend
Ethereal, as we, or may at choice
Here or in heavenly Paradises dwell; 500
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,
Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more." 505

To whom the patriarch of mankind replied:
"O favourable spirit, propitious guest!
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
From centre to circumference, whereon, 510
In contemplation of created things,
By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
What meant that caution join'd, 'If ye be found
Obedient?' can we want obedience then
To him, or possibly his love desert, 515
Who form'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here,
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?"

To whom the angel: "Son of heaven and earth,
Attend! That thou art happy, owe to God; 520

That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
 That is, to thy obedience ; therein stand.
 This was that caution given thee ; be advis'd.
 God made thee perfect, not immutable ;
 And good he made thee, but to persevere 525
 He left it in thy power ; ordain'd thy will
 By nature free, not overrul'd by fate
 Inextricable, or strict necessity :
 Our voluntary service he requires,
 Not our necessitated ; such with him 530
 Finds no acceptance, nor can find ; for how
 Can hearts not free be tried whether they serve
 Willing or no, who will but what they must
 By destiny, and can no other choose ?
 Myself, and all th' angelic host that stand 535
 In sight of God enthron'd, our happy state
 Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds ;
 On other surety none ; freely we serve,
 Because we freely love, as in our will
 To love or not ; in this we stand or fall : 540
 And some are fallen, to disobedience fallen,
 And so from heaven to deepest hell ; O fall
 From what high state of bliss into what wo !"

To whom our great progenitor : " Thy words
 Attentive, and with more delighted ear 545
 Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
 Cherubic songs by night from neigh'ring hills
 Aerial music send : nor knew I not
 To be both will and deed created free ;
 Yet that we never shall forget to love 550
 Our Maker, and obey him, whose command
 Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
 Assur'd me, and still assure : tho' what thou tell'st
 Hath pass'd in heaven, some doubt within me move,
 But more desire to hear, if thou consent, 555
 The full relation, which must needs be strange,
 Worthy of sacred silence to be heard ;
 And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun
 Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins
 His other half in the great zone of heaven." 560

Thus Adam made request ; and Raphael,
 After short pause assenting, thus began .

"High matter thou enjoin'st me, O prime of men!
 Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate
 To human sense th' invisible exploits 565
 Of warring spirits? how, without remorse,
 The ruin of so many, glorious once,
 And perfect while they stood? how, last, unfold
 The secrets of another world, perhaps
 Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good 570
 This is dispens'd; and what surmounts the reach
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
 By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
 As may express them best; though what if earth
 Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein, 575
 Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?

"As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
 Reign'd where these heavens now roll, where earth
 now rests

Upon her centre pois'd; when, on a day,
 (For time, though in eternity, applied 580
 To motion, measures all things durable
 By present, past, and future,) on such day
 As heaven's great year brings forth, th' empyreal host
 Of angels, by imperial summons call'd,
 Innumerable, before th' Almighty's throne 585
 Forthwith from all the ends of heaven appear'd
 Under their hierarchs in orders bright:
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
 Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear,
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve 590
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
 Or in their glittering tissues bear emblaz'd
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
 Recorded eminent. Thus, when in orbs
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood, 595
 Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
 By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,
 Amidst, as from a flaming mount, whose top
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake:

"Hear, all ye angels, progeny of light, 600
 Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers!
 Hear my decree, which unrevok'd shall stand.
 'This day I have begot whom I declare
 My only Son, and on this holy hill

Him have anointed, whom ye now behold 605
 At my right hand ; your head I him appoint ;
 And by myself have sworn, to him shall bow
 All knees in heaven, and shall confess him Lord.
 Under his great vicegerent reign abide
 United as one individual soul, 610
 For ever happy. Him who disobeys,
 Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day,
 Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
 Into utter darkness, deep ingulf'd, his place
 Ordain'd, without redemption, without end 615

“So spake th’ Omnipotent, and with his words
 All seem’d well pleas’d ; all seem’d, but were not all.
 That day, as other solemn days, they spent
 In song and dance about the sacred hill ;
 Mystical dance ! which yonder starry sphere 620
 Of planets and of fix’d in all her wheels
 Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
 Eccentric, intervolv’d, yet regular
 Then most, when most irregular they seem
 And in their motions harmony divine 625
 So smooths her charming tones, that God’s own ear
 Listens delighted. Evening now approach’d
 (For we have also our evening and our morn,
 We ours for change delectable, not need ;)
 Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn 630
 Desirous ; all in circles as they stood,
 Tables are set, and on a sudden pil’d
 With angel’s food, and rubied nectar flows
 In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
 Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of heaven. 635
 On flowers repos’d, and with fresh flowerets crown’d,
 They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
 Quaff immortality and joy, secure
 Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
 Excess, before the all bounteous King, who shower’d
 With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy. 641
 Now, when ambrosial night with clouds exhal’d
 From that high mount of God, whence light and
 shade
 Spring both, the face of brightest heaven had chang’d
 To grateful twilight, (for night comes not there 645
 In darker veil,) and roseate dews dispos’d
 All but th’ unsleeping eyes of God to rest ;

Wide over all the plain, and wider far
 Than all this globous earth in plain outspread,
 (Such are the courts of God,) th' angelic throng, 650
 Dispers'd in bands and files, their camp extend
 By living streams among the trees of life,
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden rear'd,
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
 Fann'd with cool winds, save those who in their course
 Melodious hymns about the sov'reign throne 656
 Alternate all night long: but not so wak'd
 Satan (so call him now, his former name
 Is heard no more in heaven;) he of the first,
 If not the first archangel, great in power, 660
 In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
 With envy against the Son of God, that day
 Honour'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd
 Messiah, King anointed, could not bear, 664
 Thro' pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd.
 Deep malice thence conceiving, and disdain,
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd
 With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
 Unworshipp'd, unbey'd the throne supreme, 670
 Contemptuous, and his next subordinate
 Awak'ning, thus to him in secret spake:

“Sleep'st thou, companion dear! what sleep can
 close

Thy eye-lids? and remember'st what decree
 Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips 675
 Of heaven's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts
 Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont t' impart;
 Both waking we were one; how then can now
 Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest impos'd;
 New laws from him who reigns, new minds may
 raise 680

In us who serve, new counsels, to debate
 What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
 To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
 Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
 Tell them that by command, ere yet dunn night 685
 Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
 And all who under me their banners wave,
 Homeward with flying march where we possess
 The quarters of the north: there to prepare

Fit entertainment to receive our King, 690
 The great Messiah, and his new commands,
 Who speedily through all the hierarchies
 Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.'

"So spake the false archangel, and infus'd
 Bad influence into th' unweary breast 695
 Of his associate : he together calls,
 Or several one by one, the regent powers,
 Under him regent ; tells, as he was taught,
 That, the Most High commanding, now ere night,
 Now ere dim night had disincumber'd heaven, 700
 The great hierarchal standard was to move ;
 Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
 Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
 Or taint integrity. But all obey'd
 The wonted signal, and superior voice 705
 Of their great potentate ; for great indeed
 His name, and high was his degree in heaven :
 His count'nance, as the morning star that guides
 The starry flock, allur'd them, and with lies
 Drew after him the third part of heaven's host. 710
 Meanwhile th' eternal eye, whose sight discerns
 Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
 And from within the golden lamps that burn
 Nightly before him, saw, without their light,
 Rebellion rising ; saw, in whom, how spread 715
 Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
 Were banded to oppose his high decree ;
 And, smiling, to his only Son thus said :

"Son ! thou in whom my glory I behold
 In full resplendence, Heir of all my might, 720
 Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
 Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
 We mean to hold what anciently we claim
 Of deity or empire ; such a foe
 Is rising, who intends to erect his throne 725
 Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north ;
 Nor so content, hath in his thought to try,
 In battle, what our power is, or our right.
 Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
 With speed what force is left, and all employ 730
 In our defence, lest unawares we lose
 This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.'

"To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear,
 Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
 Made answer: 'Mighty Father! thou thy foes 735
 Justly nast in derision, and, secure,
 Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain;
 Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
 Illustrates, when they see all regal power
 Given me to quell their pride, and in event 740
 Know whether I be dext'rous to subdue
 Thy rebels, or be found the worst in heaven.'

So spake the Son; but Satan with his powers
 Far was advanc'd on winged speed, an host
 Innumerable as the stars of night, 745
 Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
 In pearls on every leaf, and every flower.
 Regions they pass'd, the mighty regencies
 Of seraphim, and potentates, and thrones,
 In their triple degrees; regions to which 750
 All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
 Than what this garden is to all the earth,
 And all the sea, from one entire globose
 Stretch'd into longitude; which, having pass'd,
 At length into the limits of the north 755
 They came; and Satan to his royal seat
 High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
 Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and towers
 From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold;
 The palace of great Lucifer, (so call 760
 That structure in the dialect of men
 Interpreted,) which not long after he,
 Affecting all equality with God,
 In imitation of that mount whereon
 Messiah was declar'd in sight of heaven, 765
 The Mountain of the Congregation call'd;
 For thither he assembled all his train,
 Pretending so commanded, to consult
 About the great reception of their King
 Thither to come, and with calumnious art 770
 Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears:

"Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues,
 If these magnificent titles yet remain
 powers!

Not merely titular, since by decree

Another now hath to himself engross'd 775
 All power, and us eclips'd, under the name
 Of King Anointed; for whom all this haste
 Of midnight march, and hurrica meeting here;
 This only to consult how we may best,
 With what may be devis'd of honours new, 780
 Receive him, coming to receive from us
 Knee-tribute, yet unpaid; prostration vile,
 Too much to one, but double how endur'd,
 To one, and to his image now proclaim'd?
 But what if better counsels might erect 785
 Our minds, and teach us to cast off this ycke?
 Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
 The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust
 To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves
 Natives and sons of heaven, possess'd before 790
 By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
 Equally free; for orders and degrees
 Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
 Who can in reason then, or right, assume
 Monarchy over such as live by right 795
 His equals, if in power and splendour less,
 In freedom equal? Or can introduce
 Law and edict on us, who without law
 Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
 And look for adoration, to th' abuse 800
 Of those imperial titles, which assert
 Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve!

"Thus far his bold discourse without control
 Had audience; when among the seraphim
 Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd 805
 The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
 Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe,
 The current of his fury thus oppos'd:

"O argument blasphemous, false and proud!
 Words which no ear ever to hear in heaven 810
 Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate,
 In place thyself so high above thy peers.
 Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
 The just decree of God, pronounc'd and sworn,
 That to his only Son, by right endur'd 815
 With regal sceptre, every soul in heaven

Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
 Confess him rightful King? Unjust, thou say'st,
 Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
 And equal over equals to let reign, 820
 One over all with unsucceeded power.
 Shalt thou give law to God? Shalt thou dispute
 With him the points of liberty, who made
 Thee what thou art, and form'd the powers of heaven
 Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being?
 Yet, by experience taught, we know how good, 826
 And of our good, and of our dignity
 How provident he is; how far from thought
 To make us less, bent rather to exalt
 Our happy state, under one head more near 830
 United. But to grant it thee unjust,
 That equal over equals monarch reign:
 Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
 Or all angelic nature join'd in one,
 Equal to him, begotten Son? by whom, 835
 As by his Word, the mighty Father made
 All things, even thee; and all the spirits of heaven
 By him created in their bright degrees,
 Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory nam'd
 Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers,
 Essential powers, nor by his reign obscur'd, 841
 But more illustrious made; since he, the head,
 One of our number thus reduc'd becomes;
 His laws our laws; all honour to him done
 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
 And tempt not these; but hasten to appease 846
 Th' incensed Father, and th' incensed Son,
 While pardon may be found, in time besought.'

"So spake the fervent angel; but his zeal
 None seconded, as out of season judg'd, 850
 Or singular and rash; whereat rejoic'd
 Th' apostate, and more haughty thus replied:
 'That we were form'd then say'st thou? and the work
 Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
 From Father to his Son? Strange point and new!
 Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd, who
 saw 856
 When this creation was? remember'st thou
 Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?

We know no time when we were not as now ;
 Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd 860
 By our own quik'ning power, when fatal course
 Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
 Of this our native heaven, ethereal sons.
 Our puissance is our own ; our own right hand
 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try 865
 Who is our equal : then thou shalt behold
 Whether by supplication we intend
 Address, and to begirt th' Almighty throne
 Beseeching or besieging. This report,
 These tidings carry to th' anointed King ; 870
 And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.'

“ He said, and, as the sound of waters deep,
 Hoarse murmur echoed to his words applause
 Through the infinite host ; nor less for that
 The flaming seraph, fearless, though alone 875
 Encompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold :

“ ‘ O alienate from God, O spirit accurs'd,
 Forsaken of all good ! I see thy fall
 Determin'd, and thy hapless crew involv'd
 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread 880
 Both of thy crime and punishment : henceforth
 No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
 Of God's Messiah ; those indulgent laws
 Will not be now vouchsaf'd : other decrees
 Against thee are gone forth without recall ; 885
 That golden sceptre, which thou didst reject,
 Is now an iron rod to bruise and break
 Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise ;
 Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
 These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath 890
 Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
 Distinguish not : for soon expect to feel
 His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
 Then who created thee lamenting learn,
 When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know 895

“ So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
 Among the faithless, faithful only he
 Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
 Unshaken, uneduc'd, unterrified,

His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal ; 900
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
Long ~~we~~ through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
Superior, nor of violence fear'd ought ; 905
And with retorted scorn his back he turn'd
On these proud ~~works~~ his swift destruction doom'd.

END OF BOOK FIFTH.

PARADISE LOST

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

Raphael continues to relate how Michael and Gabriel were sent forth to battle against Satan and his angels. The first fight described. Satan and his powers retire under night. He calls a council, invents devilish engines, which in the second day's fight put Michael and his angels to some disorder : but they at length pulling up mountains, overwhelmed both the force and machines of Satan. Yet the tumult not so ending, God on the third day sends Messiah his Son, for whom he had reserved the glory of that victory : He, in the power of his Father, coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, pursues them, unable to resist, towards the wall of heaven : which opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place of punishment prepared for them in the deep. Messiah returns with triumph to his Father.

“ All night the dreadless angel, unpursued,
Through heaven's wide champain held his way ; till
 morn,
Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand
Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne, 5
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through
 heaven
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night ;

Light issues forth, and at the other door
 Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour 10
 To veil the heaven, though darkness there might well
 Seem twilight here : and now went forth the morn,
 Such as in highest heaven, array'd in gold
 Empyreal ; from before her vanish'd night,
 Shot thro' with orient beams ; when all the plain, 15
 Cover'd with thick embattled squadrons bright,
 Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
 Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
 War he perceiv'd, war in procinct, and found.
 Already known, what he for news had thought 20
 To have reported : gladly then he mix'd
 Among those friendly powers, who him receiv'd
 With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
 That of so many myriads fallen, yet one
 Return'd not lost. On to the sacred hill 25
 They led him high applauded, and present
 Before the seat supreme ; from whence a voice,
 From midst a golden cloud, thus mild was heard :

“ ‘ Servant of God ! well done, well hast thou fought
 The better fight, who single hast maintain'd 30
 Against revolted multitudes the cause
 Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms ;
 And for the testimony of truth hast borne
 Universal reproach, far worse to bear
 Than violence ; for this was all thy care 35
 To stand approv'd in sight of God, though worlds
 Judg'd thee perverse : the easier conquest now
 Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
 Back to thy foes more glorious to return,
 Than scorn'd thou didst depart, and to subdue 40
 By force, who reason for their law refuse,
 Right reason for their law, and for their king
 Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.
 Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,
 And thou, in military prowess next, 45
 Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
 Invincible ; lead forth my armed saints,
 By thousands and by millions rang'd for fight,
 Equal in number to that godless crew
 Rebellious ; then with fire and hostile arms 50
 Fearless assault, and to the brow of heaven
 Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss

Into their place of punishment, the gulf
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
His fiery Chaos to receive their fall.' 55

“So spake the Sovereign voice, and clouds began
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
Of wrath awak'd; nor with less dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow: 60
At which command the powers militant,
That stood for heaven, in mighty quadrate join'd
Of union irresistible, mov'd on
In silence their bright legions, to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breath'd 65
Heroic ardour to advent'rous deeds,
Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
Nor strait'ning vale, nor wood, nor stream divides 70
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground
Their march was, and the passive air upoore
Their nimble tread; as when the total kind
Of birds, in orderly array, on wing,
Came, summon'd over Eden, to receive 75
Their names of thee; so over many a tract
Of heaven they march'd, and many a province wide
Tenfold the length of this terrene. At last,
Far in th' horizon, to the north, appear'd
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd 80
In battailous aspect, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portray'd
The banded powers of Satan, hasting on 85
With furious expedition; for they ween'd
That self-same day, by fight, or by surprise,
To win the mount of God, and on his throne
To set the envier of his state, the proud
Aspirer; but their thoughts prov'd fond and vain 90
In the midway: though strange to us it seem'd
At first, that angel should with angel war,
And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
So oft in festival of joy and love
Unanimous, as sons of one great sire, 95
Hymning th' eternal Father. But the shout

Of battle now began, and rishing sound
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
 High in the midst, exalted as a god,
 Th' apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat, 100
 Idol of majesty divine, enclos'd
 With flaming cherubim and golden shields;
 Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
 'T'wixt host and host but narrow space was left,
 A dreadful interval, and front to front 105
 Presented stood in terrible array
 Of hideous length; before the cloudy van,
 On the rough edge of battle ere it join'd,
 Satan, with vast and haughty strides, advanc'd,
 Came tow'ring, arm'd in adamant and gold. 110
 Abdiel that sight endur'd not, where he stood
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores :

“ ‘O heaven! that such resemblance of the highest
 Should yet remain, where faith and reality 115
 Remain not : wherefore should not strength and might
 There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
 Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable?
 His puissance, trusting in th' Almighty's aid,
 I mean to try, whose reason I have tried 120
 Unsound and false; nor is it ought but just,
 That he who in debate of truth hath won,
 Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
 Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,
 When reason hath to deal with force, yet so 125
 Best reason is that reason overcome.’

“So pondering, and from his arm'd peers
 Forth stepping opposite, half way he met
 His daring foe, at this prevention more
 Incens'd, and thus securely him defied : 130

“ ‘Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have
 reach'd
 The height of thy aspiring unoppos'd,
 The throne of God unguarded, and his side
 Abandon'd at the terror of thy power
 Or potent tongue : fool, not to think how vain 135
 Against th' Omnipotent to rise in arms;
 Who out of smallest things could without end

Have rais'd incessant armies to defeat
 Thy folly ; or with solitary hand,
 Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow 140
 Unaided could have finish'd thee, and whelm'd
 Thy legions under darkness. But thou seest
 All are not of thy train ; there be who faith
 Prefer, and piety to God, though then
 To thee not visible, when I alone 145
 Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent
 From all ; my sect thou seest ; now learn too late
 How few sometimes may know, when thousands err.

“ Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
 Thus answer'd : ‘ Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour 150
 Of my revenge, first sought for, thou return'st
 From flight, seditious angel, to receive
 Thy merited reward, the first assay
 Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue,
 Inspir'd with contradiction, durst oppose 155
 A third part of the gods, in synod met
 Their deities to assert, who, while they feel
 Vigour divine within them, can allow
 Omnipotence to none. But well thou com'st
 Before thy fellows, ambitious to win 160
 From me some plume, that thy success may show
 Destruction to the rest : this pause between
 (Unanswer'd lest thou boast) to let thee know ;
 At first I thought that liberty and heaven
 To heavenly souls had been all one ; but now 165
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
 Minist'ring spirits, train'd up in feast and song ;
 Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of heaven,
 Servility with freedom to contend, 169
 As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.’

“ To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied :
 ‘ Apostate, still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote :
 Unjustly thou depriv'st it with the name
 Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains, 175
 Or Nature ; God and Nature bid the same,
 When he who rules worthiest, and excels
 Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
 To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
 Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee, 180

Thyself not free, but to thyself inthral'd ;
 Yet lewdly dar'st our minist'ring upbraid.
 Reign thou in hell, thy kingdom ; let me serve
 In heaven God ever bless'd and his divine
 Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd ; 185
 Yet chains in hell, not realms expect ; meanwhile
 From me return'd, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
 This greeting on thy impious crest receive.'

"So saying, a noble strcke he lifted high,
 Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell 190
 On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
 Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
 Such ruin intercept : ten paces huge
 He back recoil'd : the tenth on bended knee
 His massy spear upstay'd ; as if on earth 195
 Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
 Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat,
 Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seiz'd
 The rebel thrones, but greater rage to see
 Thus foil'd their mightiest ; ours joy fill'd, and shout,
 Presage of victory, and fierce desire 201
 Of battle : whereat Michael bid sound
 Th' archangel trumpet : through the vast of heaven
 It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
 Hosannah to th' Highest ; nor stood at gaze 205
 The adverse legions, nor less hideous join'd
 The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
 And clamour such as heard in heaven till now
 Was never ; arms on armour clashing bray'd
 Horrible discord, and the madding wheels 210
 Of brazen chariots rag'd ; dire was the noise
 Of conflict ; over head the dismal hiss
 Of fiery darts in flaming vollies flew,
 And flying, vaulted either host with fire.
 So under fiery cope together rush'd 215
 Both battles main, with ruinous assault
 And inextinguishable rage ; all heaven
 Resounded, and had earth been then, all earth
 Had to her centre shook. What wonder ? when
 Millions of fierce encount'ring angels fought 220
 On either side, the least of whom could wield
 These elements, and arm him with the force
 Of all their regions : how much more of power
 Army against army numberless to raise

Dreadful comouſtion warring, and diſturb, 225
 Though not deſtroy, their happy native ſeat ;
 Had not th' eternal King omnipotent
 From his ſtrong hold of heaven high overrul'd
 And limited their might ; though number'd ſuch
 As each divided legion might have ſeem'd 230
 A numerous hoſt, in ſtrength each arm'd hand
 A legion, led in fight, yet leader ſeem'd,
 Each warrior ſingle as in chief, expert
 When to advance, or ſtand, or turn the ſway
 Of battle, open when, and when to cloſe 235
 The ridges of grim war : no thought of flight,
 None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
 That argued fear ; each on himſelf relied,
 As only in his arm the moment lay
 Of victory. Deeds of eternal fame 240
 Were done, but infinite ; for wide was ſpread
 That war and various, ſometimes on firm ground
 A ſtanding fight, then, ſoaring on main wing,
 Tormented all the air ; all air ſeem'd then
 Conſlicting fire. Long time in even ſcale 245
 The battle hung ; till Satan, who that day
 Prodigious power had ſhown, and met in arms
 No equal, ranging through the dire attack
 Of fighting ſeraphim confus'd, at length
 Saw where the ſword of Michael ſmote and fell'd 250
 Squadrons at once : with huge two-handed ſway,
 Brandiſh'd aloft, the horrid edge came down
 Wide waſting ; ſuch deſtruction to withſtand
 He haſted, and oppos'd the rocky orb
 Of tenfold adamant, his ample ſhield, 255
 A vaſt circumference. At his approach
 The great archangel from his warlike toil
 Surceaſ'd, and glad, as hoping here to end
 Inteſtine war in heaven, th' arch-foe ſubdu'd,
 Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hoſtile frown, 260
 And viſage all inflam'd, firſt thus began :

“ ‘ Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
 Unnam'd in heaven, now plenteous, as thou ſeeſt
 Theſe acts of hateful ſtrife, hateful to all,
 Though heaviest by juſt meaſure on thyſelf 265
 And thy adherents : how haſt thou diſturb'd
 Heaven's bleſſed peace, and into nature brought
 Miſery, uncreated till the crime

Of thy rebellion? how hast thou install'd
 Thy malice into thousands, once upright 270
 And faithful, now prov'd false? But think not here
 To trouble holy rest; heaven casts thee out
 From all her confines. Heaven the seat of bliss,
 Brooks not the works of violence and war:
 Hence then, and evil go with thee along, 275
 Thy offspring, to the place of evil, hell,
 Thou and thy wicked crew; there mingle broils,
 Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
 Or some more sudden vengeance, wing'd from God,
 Precipitate thee with augmented pain! 280

“So spake the prince of angels; to whom thus
 The adversary: ‘Nor think thou with wind
 Of airy threats to awe whom yet with deeds
 Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these
 To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise 285
 Unvanquish'd, easier to transact with me
 That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
 To chase me hence? err not that so shall end
 The strife which thou call'st evil, but we style
 The strife of glory; which we mean to win, 290
 Or turn this heaven itself into the hell
 Thou fablest, here however to dwell free,
 If not to reign: meanwhile thy utmost force,
 And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,
 I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.’ 295

“They ended parle, and both address'd for fight
 Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
 Of angels, can relate, or to what things
 Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift
 Human imagination to such height 300
 Of godlike power? for likest gods they seem'd,
 Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms,
 Fit to decide the empire of great heaven.
 Now wav'd their fiery swords, and in the air
 Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields 305
 Blaz'd opposite, while expectation stood
 In horror; from each hand with speed retir'd,
 Where erst was thickest fight, th' angelic throng,
 And left large fields unsafe within the wind
 Of such commotion: such as, to set forth 310
 Great things by small, if Nature's concord broke

Among the constellations war were sprung,
 Two planets rushing from aspect malign
 Of fiercest opposition in mid-sky
 Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound,
 Together both with next t' Almighty arm 316
 Uplifted eminent, one stroke they aim'd
 That might determine, and not need repeat,
 As not of power at once; nor odds appear'd
 In might or swift prevention: but the sword 320
 Of Michael, from the armoury of God,
 Was given him temper'd so, that neither keen
 Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
 The sword of Satan with steep force to smite
 Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stay'd, 325
 But with swift wheel reverse, deep ent'ring shar'd
 All his right side: then Satan first knew pain,
 And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd; so sore
 The grinding sword with discontinuous wound
 Pass'd thro' him; but th' ethereal substance clos'd.
 Not long divisible; and from the gash 331
 A stream of hec'trous humour issuing flow'd
 Sanguine, such as celestial spirits may bleed,
 And all his armour stain'd ere while so bright.
 Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run 335
 By angels many and strong, who interpos'd
 Defence, while others bore him on their shields
 Back to his chariot, where it stood retir'd
 From off the files of war; there they him laid
 Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame, 340
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride
 Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
 His confidence to equal God in power.
 Yet soon he heal'd; for spirits that live throughout
 Vital in every part, not as frail man 345
 In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
 Cannot but by annihilating die;
 Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
 Receive, no more than can the fluid air:
 All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear, 350
 All intellect, all sense; and as they please,
 They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size,
 Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.

"Meanwhile in other parts like deeds deserv'd
 Memorial, where the might o' Gabriel fought, 355

And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
 Of Moloeh, furious king; who him defied,
 And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound
 Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of heaven
 Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous: but anon, 360
 Down cloven to the waist, with shatter'd arms
 And uncouth pain, fled bellowing. Or each wing
 Uriel and Raphael his vaunting foe,
 Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
 Vanquish'd Adramelech and Asmadai, 365
 Two potent thrones, that to be less than gods
 Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
 Mangled with ghastly wounds thro' plate and mail,
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
 'The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow 370
 Ariel and Arioch, and the violence
 Of Ramiel, scorch'd and blasted, overthrew.
 I might relate of thousands, and their names
 Eternize here on earth; but those elect
 Angels, contented with their fame in heaven, 375
 Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,
 In might though wondrous, and in acts of war,
 Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
 Cancel'd from heaven and sacred memory,
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell. 380
 For strength, from truth divided and from just,
 Illaudable, nought merits but dispraise
 And ignominy, yet to glory aspires
 Vain glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
 Therefore eternal silence be their doom. 385

"And now their mightiest quell'd, the battle
 swerv'd,

With many an inroad gor'd: deformed rout
 Enter'd, and foul disorder; all the ground
 With shiver'd armour strown, and on a heap
 Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd, 390
 And fiery foaming steeds; what stood, recoil'd,
 O'erwearied, through the faint Satanic host
 Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpris'd,
 Then first with fear surpris'd and sense of pain,
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought 395
 By sin of disobedience, till that hour
 Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
 Far other wise, th' inviolable saints

In cubic phalanx firm advanc'd entire,
 Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd ; 400
 Such high advantages their innocence
 Gave them above their foes, not to have sinn'd,
 Not to have disobey'd ; in fight they stood
 Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd 404
 By wound, tho' from their place by violence mov'd.

“Now night her course began, and over heaven
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,
 And silence on the odious din of war :
 Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,
 Victor and vanquish'd. On the foughten field 410
 Michael and his angels prevalent
 Encamping, plac'd in guard their watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires : on th' other part
 Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,
 Far in the dark dislodg'd ; and, void of rest, 415
 His potentates to council call'd by night ;
 And in the midst thus undismay'd began :

“O now in danger tried, now known in arms
 Not to be overpower'd, companions dear,
 Found worthy not of liberty alone, 420
 Too mean pretence, but, what we more affect,
 Honour, dominion, glory, and renown ;
 Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight,
 (And if one day, why not eternal days ?)
 What heavens's Lord had powerfullest to send 425
 Against us from about his throne, and judg'd
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
 But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
 Of future we may deem him, though till now
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm'd, 430
 Some disadvantage we endur'd and pain,
 Till now not known, but known, as soon contemn'd ;
 Since now we find this our empyreal form
 Incapable of mortal injury,
 Imperishable, and, though pierc'd with wounds, 435
 Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd.
 Of evil then so small, as easy think
 The remedy ; perhaps more valid arms,
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
 May serve to better us, and worse our foes, 440
 Or equal what between us made the odds,

In nature none: if other hidden cause
 Left them superior, while we can preserve
 Unhurt our minds and understanding sound,
 Due search and consultation will disclose.' 445

“ He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood
 Nisroch, of principalities the prime;
 As one he stood escap'd from cruel fight,
 Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havoc hewn,
 And cloudy in aspect thus answ'ring spake: 450
 ' Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free
 Enjoyment of our right as gods; yet hard
 For gods, and too unequal work we find,
 Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
 Against unpain'd, impassive; from which evil 455
 Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails
 Valour or strength, though matchless, quell'd with pain
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
 Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine, 460
 But live content, which is the calmest life
 But pain is perfect misery, the worst
 Of evils, and excessive, overturns
 All patience. He who, therefore, can invent
 With what more forcible we may offend 465
 Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
 Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
 No less than for deliverance what we owe.'

“ Whereto with look compos'd Satan replied:
 ' Not uninvented that, which thou aright 470
 Believ'st so main to our success, I bring.
 Which of us who beholds the bright surface
 Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,
 This continent of spacious heaven, adorn'd 474
 With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial, gems, and gold;
 Whose eye so superficially surveys
 These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
 Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
 Of spiritous and fiery spume, till touch'd
 With heaven's ray, and temper'd, they shoot forth
 So beauteous, opening to the ambient light? 481
 These in their dark nativity the deep
 Shall yield us pregnant with infernal flame;
 Which into hollow engines long and round

Thick-ramm'd, at th' other bore with touch of fire
 Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth 486
 From far, with thund'ring noise, among our foes
 Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
 To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarm'd 490
 The Thund'rer of his only dreaded bolt.
 Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn
 Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive;
 Abandon fear; to strength and counsel join'd
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despair'd.' 495

“He ended, and his words their drooping cheer
 Enlighten'd, and their languish'd hope reviv'd.
 Th' invention all admir'd, and each how he
 To be th' inventor miss'd; so easy it seem'd
 Once found, which yet unfound, most would have
 thought 500
 Impossible: yet haply of thy race,
 In future days, if malice should abound,
 Some one, intent on mischief, or inspir'd
 With devilish machination, might devise
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men 505
 For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
 Forthwith from council to the work they flew;
 None arguing stood; innumerable hands
 Were ready; in a moment up they turn'd
 Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath 514
 Th' originals of nature in their crude
 Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam
 They found, they mingled, and with subtle art,
 Concocted and adjusted, they reduc'd
 To blackest grain, and into store convey'd: 515
 Part hidden veins digg'd up (nor hath this earth
 Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,
 Whereof to found their engines and their balls
 Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
 Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire. 520
 So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,
 Secret they finish'd and in order set,
 With silent circumspection unespied.

“Now when fair morn orient in heaven appear'd,
 Up rose the victor angels, and to arms 525
 The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood

Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
 Soon banded ; others from the dawning hills
 Look'd round, and scouts each coast light-arm'd scour
 Each quarter, to descry the distant foe, 530
 Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for fight,
 In motion or in halt : him soon they met
 Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
 But firm battalion ; back with speediest sail
 Zophiel, of cherubim the swiftest wing, 535
 Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cried :

“ ‘ Arm warriors, arm for fight ; the foe at hand,
 Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
 This day ; fear not his flight ; so thick a cloud
 He comes, and settled in his face I see 540
 Sad resolution and secure ; let each
 His adamantine coat gird well, and each
 Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,
 Borne even or high ; for this day will pour down,
 If I conjecture ought, no drizzling snow, 545
 But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire.’ ”

“ So warn'd he them, aware themselves, and soon
 In order, quit of all impediment ;
 Instant without disturb they took alarm,
 And onward move embattled : when behold 550
 Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
 Approaching, gross and huge, in hollow cube
 Training his devilish enginry, impal'd
 On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood 555
 Awhile ; but suddenly at head appear'd
 Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud :

“ ‘ Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold ;
 That all may see who hate us, how we seek
 Peace and composure, and with open breast 560
 Stand ready to receive them, if they like
 Our overture, and turn not back perverse :
 But that I doubt ; however, witness heaven,
 Heaven witness thou anon, while we discharge
 Freely our part , ye who appointed stand, 565
 Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
 What we propound, and loud that all may hear.’ ”

"So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
 Had ended, when to right and left the front
 Divided, and to either flank retir'd ; 570
 Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange,
 A triple mounted row of pillars laid
 On wheels (for like to pillars most they seem'd
 Or hollow'd bodies made of oak or fir,
 With branches lopt, in wood or mountain fell'd) 575
 Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths
 With hideous orifice gap'd on us wide,
 Portending hollow truce: at each behind
 A seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
 Stood waving tipt with fire ; while we suspense 580
 Collected stood within our thoughts amus'd ;
 Not long, for sudden all at once their reeds
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
 With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame, 584
 But soon obscur'd with smoke, all heaven appear'd,
 From those deep-throated engines belch'd, whose roar
 Embowel'd with outrageous noise the air,
 And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
 Their devilish glut, chain'd thunderbolts and hail
 Of iron globes ; which on the victor host 590
 Levell'd, with such impetuous fury smote,
 That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
 'Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
 By thousands, angel on archangel roll'd ;
 The sooner for their arms ; unarm'd they might 595
 Have easily as spirits evaded swift
 By quick contraction or remove ; but now
 Foul dissipation follow'd and forc'd rout ;
 Nor serv'd it to relax their serried files.
 What should they do ? if on they rush'd, repulse 600
 Repeated, and indecent overthrow
 Doubled, would render them yet more despis'd,
 And to their foes a laughter ; for in view
 Stood rank'd of seraphim another row,
 In posture to displode their second tire 605
 Of thunder : back defeated to return
 They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld their plight,
 And to his mates thus in derision call'd :

"O friends ! why come not on these victors
 proud ?
 Ere while they fierce were coming ; and when we 610

To entertain them fair with open front
 And breast, (what could we more?) propounded terms
 Of composition, straight they chang'd their minds,
 Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell, 614
 As they would dance; yet for a dance they seem'd
 Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps
 For joy of offer'd peace: but I suppose,
 If our proposals once again were heard,
 We should compel them to a quick result.'

"To whom thus Belial in like gamesome mood: 620
 'Leader! the terms we sent were terms of weight,
 Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home,
 Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
 And stumbled many; who receives them right,
 Had need from head to foot well understand; 625
 Not understood, this gift they have besides,
 They show us when our foes walk not upright.'

"So they among themselves in pleasant vein
 Stood scoffing, heighten'd in their thoughts beyond
 All doubt of victory; eternal might 630
 To match with their inventions they presum'd
 So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
 And all his host derided, while they stood
 Awhile in trouble: but they stood not long;
 Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
 Against such hellish mischief fit t' oppose. 636
 Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,
 Which God hath in his mighty angels plac'd)
 Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
 (For earth hath this variety from heaven 640
 Of pleasure situate in hill and dale)
 Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew:
 From their foundations loos'ning to and fro
 They pluck'd the seated hills with all their load,
 Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops 645
 Uplifting bore them in their hands. Amaze,
 Be sure, and terror seiz'd the rebel host,
 When coming towards them so dread they saw
 The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd;
 Till on those cursed engines triple-row 650
 They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence
 Under the weight of mountains buried deep;
 Themselves invaded next, and on their heads

Main promontories flung, which in the air 654
 Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd;
 Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and
 bruise'd

Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
 Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,
 Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
 Out of such prison, though spirits of purest light,
 Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown. 661

The rest, in imitation, to like arms
 Betook them, and the neighb'ring hills uptore;
 So hills amid the air encounter'd hills,
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire, 665

That under ground they fought in dismal shade;
 Infernal noise; war seem'd a civil game
 To this uproar; horrid confusion heap'd
 Upon confusion rose. And now all heaven 670

Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread,
 Had not th' almighty Father, where he sits
 Shrin'd in his sanctuary of heaven secure,
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen

This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd;
 That his great purpose he might so fulfil, 675
 To honour his anointed Son aveng'd
 Upon his enemies, and to declare

All power on him transferr'd; whence to his Son
 Th' assessor of his throne, he thus began:

““ Effulgence of my glory, Son belov'd, 680

Son, in whose face invisible is beheld,
 Visibly, what by deity I am,
 And in whose hand what by decree I do,
 Second Omnipotence; two days are past,

Two days, as we compute the days of heaven, 685
 Since Michael and his powers went forth to tame
 These disobedient: sore hath been their fight,
 As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd;

For to themselves I left them, and thou know'st,
 Equal in their creation they were form'd, 690
 Save what sin hath impair'd, which yet hath wrought
 Insensibly, for I suspend their doom;

Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
 Endless, and no solution will be found.
 War wearied hath perform'd what war can do, 695
 And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,

With mountains as with weapons arm'd, which
makes

Wild work in heaven, and dangerous to the main.
Two days are therefore pass'd, the third is thine;
For thee I have ordain'd it, and thus far 700
Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
Of ending this great war, since none but Thou
Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know
In heaven and hell thy power above compare; 705
And this perverse commotion govern'd thus,
'To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir
Of all things, to be Heir, and to be King
By sacred unction, thy deserv'd right.
Go then, thou Mightiest, in thy Father's might, 710
Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
'That shake heaven's basis, bring forth all my war,
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;
Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out 715
From all heaven's bounds into the utter deep:
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
God, and Messiah his anointed King.'

“He said, and on his Son with rays direct
Shone full; he all his Father full express'd 720
Ineffably into his face receiv'd;
And thus the filial Godhead answer'ing spake:

‘O Father, O supreme of heav'nly thrones,
First, highest, holiest, best! thou always seek'st
To glorify thy Son, I always Thee, 725
As is most just; this I my glory account,
My exaltation, and my whole delight,
That thou in me, well pleas'd, declar'st thy will
Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume, 730
And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
For ever, and in me all whom thou lov'st:
But whom thou hatest I hate, and can put on
Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on, 735
Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,
Arm'd with thy might, rid heaven of these rebell'd,

To their prepar'd ill mansion driven down,
 To chains of darkness, and th' undying worm,
 That from thy just obedience could revolt, 740
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.
 Then shall thy saints unmix'd, and from th' impure
 Far separate, circling thy holy mount,
 Unfeigned hallelujahs to thee sing,
 Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief'

" So said, he, o'er his sceptre bowing, rose 745
 From the right hand of glory where he sat ;
 And the third sacred morn began to shine,
 Dawning through heaven : forth rush'd with whirl-
 wind round

The chariot of paternal Deity, 750
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
 Itself instinct with spirit, but convey'd
 By four cherubic shapes ; four faces each
 Had wondrous ; as with stars their bodies all
 And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels
 Of beryl, and careering fires between ; 756
 Over their heads a crystal firmament
 Whereon a sapphire throne inlaid with pure
 Amber, and colours of the showery arch.
 He in celestial panoply all arm'd 760
 Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
 Ascended , at his right hand victory
 Sat eagle-wing'd ; beside him hung his bow
 And quiver with three-bolted thunder stor'd,
 And from about him fierce effusion roll'd 765
 Of smoke and bickering flames and sparkles dire
 Attended with ten thousand thousand saints
 He onward came, far off his coming shone ;
 And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
 Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen : 770
 He on the wings of cherub rode sublime
 On the chrstalline sky, in sapphire thron'd,
 Illustrious far and wide, but by his own
 First seen ; them unexpected joy surpris'd
 When the great ensign of Messiah blaz'd 775
 Aloft by angels borne, his sign in heaven ;
 Under whose conduct Michael soon reduc'd
 His army, circumfus'd on either wing,
 Under their head embodied all in one.

Before him power divine his way prepar'd : 780
 At his command th' uprooted hills retir'd
 Each to his place ; they heard his voice and went
 Obsequious ; heaven his wonted face renew'd,
 And with fresh flowerets hill and valley smil'd.
 This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdur'd, 785
 And to rebellious fight rallied their powers
 Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.
 In heavenly spirits could such perverseness dwell,
 But to convince the proud what signs avail,
 Or wonders move, th' obdurate to relent ? 790
 They, harden'd more by what might most reclaim,
 Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
 Took envy ; and, aspiring to his height,
 Stood re-embattled fierce, by force or fraud
 Weening to prosper and at length prevail 795
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall
 In universal ruin last ; and now
 To final battle drew, disdain'ing flight,
 Or faint retreat ; when the great Son of God
 'To all his host on either hand thus spake : 800

“ ‘Stand still in bright array, ye saints ! here stand,

Ye angels arm'd, this day from battle rest ;
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause ;
 And as ye have receiv'd, so have ye done 805
 Invincibly ; but of this cursed crew
 The punishment to other hand belongs ;
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints
 Number to this day's work is not ordain'd,
 Nor multitude ; stand only and behold 810
 God's indignation on these godless pour'd
 By me ; not you, but me, they have despis'd
 Yet envied ; against me is all their rage,
 Because the Father, to whom in heaven supreme
 Kingdom, and power, and glory appertains, 815
 Hath honour'd me according to his will.
 Therefore to me their doom he hath assign'd ;
 That they may have their wish, to try with me
 In battle which the stronger proves ; they all,
 Or I alone against them, since by strength 820
 They measure all, of other excellence

Not emulous, nor care who them excels ;
Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.'

“So spake the Son, and into terror chang'd
His count'nance, too severe to be beheld, 825
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
At once the Four spread out their starry wings,
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host. 830
He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night ; under his burning wheels
The steadfast empyrean shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arriv'd, in his right hand 835
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infix'd
Plagues ; they, astonish'd, all resistance lost,
All courage down their idle weapons dropp'd ;
O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode
Of thrones, and mighty seraphim prostrate, 841
That wish'd the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.
Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
His arrows, from the fourfold-visag'd Four 845
Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes ;
One spirit in them rul'd, and every eye
Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
Among th' accurs'd, that wither'd all their strength,
And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd, 851
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid volley : for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of heaven : 855
The overthrown he rais'd, and, as a herd
Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd,
Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursu'd,
With terrors and with furies, to the bounds
And crystal wall of heaven, which opening wide 860
Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclos'd
Into the wasteful deep ; the monstrous sigh
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urg'd them behind ; headlong themselves they threw

Down from the verge of heaven ; eternal wrath 865
 Burn'd after them to the bottomless pit.

“ Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, hell saw
 Heaven ruining from heaven, and would have fled
 Affrighted ; but strict Fate had cast too deep
 Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound. 870
 Nine days they fell ; confounded Chaos roar'd,
 And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
 Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
 Encumber'd him with ruin : hell at last
 Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd :
 Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire 876
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
 Disburden'd heaven rejoic'd, and soon repair'd
 Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.

“ Sole victor, from th' expulsion of his foes, 880
 Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd :
 To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
 Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
 With jubilee advanc'd ; and as they went,
 Shaded with branching palm, each order bright, 885
 Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
 Son, Heir, and Lord ! to him dominion given,
 Worthiest to reign : he celebrated rode
 Triumphant through mid heaven, into the courts
 And temple of his mighty Father thron'd 890
 On high ; who into glory him receiv'd,
 Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

“ Thus, measuring things in heaven by things on
 earth,
 At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
 By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd 895
 What might have else to human race been hid ;
 The discord which befel, and war in heaven
 Among the angelic powers, and the deep fall
 Of those too high aspiring, who rebell'd
 With Satan ; he who envies now thy state, 900
 Who now is plotting how he may seduce
 Thee also from obedience, that with him,
 Bereav'd of happiness, thou may'st partake
 His punishment, eternal misery ;

Which would be all his solace and revenge, 905
As a despite done against the Most High,
Thee once to gain companion of his wee,
But listen not to his temptations; warn
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard,
By terrible example, the reward 910
Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,
Yet fell. Remember, and fear to transgress”

END OF BOOK SIXTH.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Raphael, at the request of Adam, relates how and wherefore this world was first created; that God, after the expelling of Satan and his angels out of heaven, declared his pleasure to create another world, and other creatures to dwell therein; sends his Son with glory and attendance of angels to perform the work of creation in six days: the angels celebrate with hymns the performance thereof, and his re-ascension into heaven.

DESCEND from heaven, Urania! by that name
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing.
The meaning not the name, I call: for thou
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but, heavenly born,
Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play 10
In presence of th' almighty Father, pleas'd
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee
Into the heaven of heavens I have presum'd,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy temp'ring; with like safety guided down 15
Return me to my native element:
Lest from this flying steed unrein'd, (as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime,
Dismounted, on th' Aleian field I fail,
Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn. 20

Half yet remains unsung, but narrow bound
 Within the visible diurnal sphere ;
 Standing on earth, not wrapp'd above the pole,
 More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchang'd
 To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days, 25
 On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues ;
 In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
 And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou
 Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
 Purples the east. Still govern thou my song, 30
 Urania ! and fit audience find though few.
 But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
 Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
 Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
 In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears 35
 To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
 Both harp and voice ; nor could the Muse defend
 Her son. So fall not thou, who thee implores ;
 For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.

Say, goddess, what ensued when Raphael, 40
 The affable archangel, had forewarn'd
 Adam by dire example to beware
 Apostacy, by what befell in heaven
 To those apostates, lest the like befall
 In Paradise to Adam or his race, 45
 Charg'd not to touch the interdicted tree,
 If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
 So easily obey'd, amid the choice
 Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
 Though wand'ring. He with his consorted Eve 50
 The story heard attentive, and was fill'd
 With admiration and deep muse, to hear
 Of things so high and strange, things to their thought
 So unimaginable as hate in heaven,
 And war so near the peace of God in bliss 55
 With such confusion : but the evil soon,
 Driven back, redounded as a flood on those
 From whom it sprung, impossible to mix
 With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd
 The doubts that in his heart arose : and now 60
 Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
 What nearer might concern him ; how this world
 Of heaven and earth conspicuous first began,
 When, and whereof created, for what cause,

What within Eden, or without was done 65
 Before his memory ; as one whose drought,
 Yet scarce allay'd, still eyes the current stream,
 Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,
 Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly guest :

“Great things, and full of wonder in our ears, 70
 Far differing from this world, thou hast reveal'd,
 Divine interpreter, by favour sent
 Down from the empyrean to forewarn
 Us timely of what might else have been our loss, 74
 Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach :
 For which to th' infinitely Good we owe
 Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
 Receive, with solemn purpose to observe
 Immutably his sov'reign will, the end
 Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsaf'd 80
 Gently for our instruction to impart
 Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd
 Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seem'd,
 Deign to descend now lower, and relate
 What may no less perhaps avail us known ; 85
 How first began this heaven, which we behold
 Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd
 Innumerable, and this which yields or fills
 All space, the ambient air wide interfus'd
 Embracing round this florid earth ; what cause 90
 Mov'd the Creator, in his holy rest
 Through all eternity, so late to build
 In Chaos, and, the work begun, how soon
 Absolv'd, if unforbid thou may'st unfold
 What we, not to explore the secrets, ask 95
 Of his eternal empire, but the more
 To magnify his works the more we know.
 And the great light of day yet wants to run
 Much of his race tho' steep ; suspense in heaven,
 Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears, 100
 And longer will delay to hear thee tell
 His generation, and the rising birth
 Of Nature from the unapparent deep.
 Or if the star of evening and the moon
 Haste to thy audience, night with her will bring 105
 Silence, and sleep, list'ning to thee, will watch.
 Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
 End, dismiss thee ere the morning shine.”

Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought ;
 And thus the godlike angel answer'd mild : 110

“ This also thy request, with caution ask'd,
 Obtain : though to recount almighty works
 What words or tongue of seraph can suffice,
 Or heart of man suffice to comprehend ?
 Yet what thou can'st attain, which best may serve
 To glorify the Maker, and infer 116
 Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
 Thy hearing ; such commission from above
 I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire
 Of knowledge within bounds ; beyond abstain 120
 To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope
 Things not reveal'd, which th' invisible King,
 Only omniscient, hath suppress'd in night,
 To none communicable in earth or heaven :
 Enough is left besides to search and know. 125
 But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
 Her temp'rance over appetite, to know
 In measure what the mind may well contain ;
 Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
 Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind. 130

“ Know then, that after Lucifer from heaven
 (So call him, brighter once amidst the host
 Of angels than that star the stars among)
 Fell with his flaming legions through the deep
 Into his place, and the great Son return'd 135
 Victorious with his saints, th' omnipotent
 Eternal Father from his throne beheld
 Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake :

“ At least our envious foe hath fail'd, who thought
 All like himself rebellious, by whose aid 140
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat
 Of Deity supreme, us dispossess'd,
 He trusted to have seiz'd, and into fraud
 Drew many, whom their place knows here no more ;
 Yet far the greater part have kept, I see, 145
 Their station ; heaven yet populous retains
 Number sufficient to possess her realms
 Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
 With ministeries due and solemn rites :

But lest his heart exalt him in the harm 150
 Already done, to have dispeopled heaven,
 My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
 That detriment, if such it be to lose
 Self-lost, and in a moment will create
 Another world, out of one man a race 155
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
 Not here, till by degrees of merit rais'd
 They open to themselves at length the way
 Up hither, under long obedience tried,
 And earth be chang'd to heaven, and heaven to
 earth, 160
 One kingdom, joy and union without end.
 Meanwhile inhabit lax, ye powers of heaven,
 And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee
 This I perform; speak thou, and be it done:
 My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee 165
 I send along; ride forth, and bid the deep
 Within appointed bounds be heaven and earth,
 Boundless the deep, because I am who fill
 Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.
 Though I uncircumscrib'd myself retire, 170
 And put not forth my goodness, which is free
 To act or not, necessity and chance
 Approach not me, and what I will is fate.*

"So spake th' Almighty, and to what he spake
 His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect. 175
 Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
 Than time or motion; but to human ears
 Cannot without process of speech be told,
 So told as earthly notion can receive.
 Great triumph and rejoicing was in heaven, 180
 When such was heard declar'd th' Almighty's will;
 Glory they sung to the Most High, good-will
 To future men, and in their dwellings peace:
 Glory to him, whose just avenging ire
 Had driven out th' ungodly from his sight, 185
 And th' habitations of the just; to him
 Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordain'd
 Good out of evil to create, instead
 Of spirits malign, a better race to bring
 Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse 190
 His good to worlds and ages infinite.

"So sang the hierarchies: meanwhile the Son
 On his great expedition now appear'd,
 Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
 Of majesty divine; sapience and love 195
 Immense, and all his Father in him shone.
 About his chariot numberless were pour'd
 Cherub and seraph, potentates and thrones,
 And virtues, winged spirits, and chariots wing'd
 From th' armoury of God, where stand of old 200
 Myriads between two brazen mountains lodg'd,
 Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,
 Celestial equipage! and now came forth
 Spontaneous, for within them spirit liv'd,
 Attendant on their Lord: heaven open'd wide 205
 Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound!
 On golden hinges moving, to let forth
 The King of glory, in his powerful Word
 And Spirit coming to create new worlds.
 On heavenly ground they stood, and from the shore
 They view'd the vast immeasurable abyss 211
 Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
 Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
 And surging waves, as mountains to assault 214
 Heaven's height, and with the centre mix the pole.

"Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep,
 peace!"

Said then th' omnicific Word, 'your discord end:
 Nor stand, but, on the wings of cherubim
 Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
 Far into Chaos, and the world unborn; 220
 For Chaos heard his voice. Him all his train
 Follow'd in bright possession to behold
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.
 Then staid the fervid wheels, and in his hand
 He took the golden compasses, prepar'd 225
 In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
 This universe, and all created things:
 One foot he centred, and the other turn'd.
 Round through the vast profundity obscure,
 And said, 'Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
 This be thy just circumference, O world!' 231

"Thus God the heaven created, thus the earth,
 Matter unform'd and void: darkness profound

Cover'd th' abyss ; but on the wat'ry calm
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread, 235
 And vital virtue infus'd, and vital warmth
 Throughout the fluid mass ; but downward purg'd
 'The black, tartareous, cold, infernal dregs,
 Adverse to life ; then founded, then conglob'd
 Like things to like, the rest to several place 240
 Disparted, and between spun out the air :
 And earth self-balanç'd on her centre hung.

“‘Let there be light!’ said God, and forthwith
 light

Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
 Sprung from the deep, and from her native east 245
 To journey through the airy gloom began,
 Spher'd in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
 Was not ; she in a cloudy tabernacle
 Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good ;
 And light from darkness by the hemisphere 250
 Divided : light the day, and darkness night
 He nam'd. Thus was the first day even and morn.
 Nor pass'd uncelebrated, nor unsung
 By the celestial choirs, when orient light
 Exhaling first from darkness they beheld ; 255
 Birth-day of heaven and earth ! with joy and shout
 The hollow universal orb they fill'd,
 And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd
 God and his works, Creator him they sung,
 Both when first evening was, and when first morn.

“‘Again, God said, ‘Let there be firmament 261
 Amid the waters, and let it divide
 The waters from the waters!’ And God made
 The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
 Transparent, elemental air, diffus'd 265
 In circuit to the uttermost convex
 Of this great round ; partition firm and sure,
 The waters underneath from those above
 Dividing ; for as earth, so he the world
 Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide 270
 Crystalline ocean, and the loud misrule
 Of Chaos far remov'd, lest fierce extremes
 Contiguous might distemper the whole frame.
 And heaven he nam'd the firmament : so even
 And morning chorus sung the second day. 275

"The earth was form'd ; but in the womb as yet
 Of waters, embryon immature, involv'd,
 Appear'd not : over all the face of earth
 Main ocean flow'd, not idle, but with warm
 Prolific humour soft'ning all her globe, 280
 Fermented the great mother to conceive,
 Satiated with genial moisture : when God said,
 'Be gather'd now ye waters under heaven
 Into one place, and let dry land appear !'
 Immediately the mountains huge appear 285
 Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
 Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky ;
 So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low
 Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
 Capacious bed of waters : thither they 290
 Hasted with glad precipitance, uprell'd
 As drops on dust conglobing from the dry ;
 Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
 For haste ; such flight the great command impress'd
 On the swift floods. As armies at the call 295
 Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
 Troop to their standard, so the wat'ry throng,
 Wave rolling after wave, where way they found ;
 If steep, with torrent rapture ; if through plain,
 Soft-ebbing ; nor withstood them rock or hill ; 300
 But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
 With serpent-error wand'ring, found their way,
 And on the washy ooze deep channels wore ;
 Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
 All but within those banks, where rivers now 305
 Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
 The dry land, earth, and the great receptacle
 Of congregated waters, he call'd seas :
 And saw that it was good, and said, 'Let the earth
 Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed, 310
 And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
 Whose seed is in herself upon the earth !'
 He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
 Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
 Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
 Her universal face with pleasant green ; 316
 Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flower'd
 Opening their various colours, and made gay
 Her bosom smelling sweet ; and these scarce blown,
 Forth flourish'd thick the clustering vine, forth crept

The smelling gourd, up stood the corny reed 321
 Embattled in her field, and th' humble shrub,
 And bush with frizzled hair implicit: last
 Rose as in dance the stately trees, and spread
 Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd
 Their blossoms; with high woods the hills were
 crown'd, 326
 With tufts the valleys, and each fountain side,
 With borders long the rivers; that earth now
 Seem'd like to heaven, a seat where gods might
 dwell,
 Or wander with delight, and love to haunt 330
 Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd
 Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
 None was; but from the earth a dewy mist
 Went up, and water'd all the ground, and each 334
 Plant of the field, which ere it was in the th' earth
 God made, and every herb, before it grew
 On the green stem. God saw that it was good:
 So even and morn recorded the third day.

“Again the Almighty spake: ‘Let there be lights
 High in th' expanse of heaven, to divide 340
 The day from night; and let them be for signs,
 For seasons, and for days, and circling years;
 And let them be for lights, as I ordain
 Their office in the firmament of heaven,
 To give light on the earth!’ and it was so. 345
 And God made two great lights, great for their use
 To man, the greater to have rule by day,
 The less by night altern; and made the stars,
 And set them in the firmament of heaven
 T' illuminate the earth, and rule the day 350
 In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
 And light from darkness to divide. God saw
 Surveying his great work, that it was good:
 For of celestial bodies first the sun,
 A mighty sphere! he fram'd; unlightsome first, 355
 Though of ethereal mould; then form'd the moon
 Globose, and every magnitude of stars,
 And sow'd with stars the heaven thick as a field.
 Of light by far the greater part he took,
 Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd 360
 In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
 And drink the liquid light, firm to retain

Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light.
 Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
 Repairing, in their golden urns draw light, 365
 And hence the morning planet gilds her horns ;
 By tincture or reflection they augment
 Their small peculiar, though, from human sight
 So far remote, with diminution seen.
 First in his east the glorious lamp was seen, 370
 Regent of day, and all th' horizon round
 Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
 His longitude through heaven's high road ; the grey
 Dawn and the Pleiades before him danc'd
 Shedding sweet influence. Less bright the moon, 375
 But opposite in levell'd west was set
 His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
 From him, for other light she needed none
 In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
 Till night, then in the east her turn she shines, 380
 Revolv'd on heaven's great axle, and her reign
 With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
 With thousand thousand stars, that then appear'd
 Spangling the hemisphere. Then, first adorn'd
 With her bright luminaries that set and rose, 385
 Glad evening and glad morn crown'd the fourth day

" And God said, ' Let the waters generate
 Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul :
 And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
 Display'd on the open firmament of heaven ! ' 390
 And God created the great whales, and each
 Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
 The waters generated by their kinds ;
 And every bird of wing after his kind :
 And saw that it was good, and bless'd them, saying,
 ' Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas, 396
 And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill ;
 And let the fowl be multiplied on th' earth !'
 Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay.
 With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals 400
 Of fish, that with their fins and shining scales
 Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft
 Bank the mid-sea : part single, or with mate,
 Graze the sea-weed, their pasture, and thro' groves
 Of coral stray, or, sporting, with quick glance, 405
 Show to the sun their wav'd coats dropp'd with gold ,

Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend
 Moist nutriment, or under rocks their food
 In jointed armour watch : on smooth the seal,
 And bended dolphins, play ; part huge of bulk 410
 Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
 Tempest there ocean. There the leviathan,
 Hugest of living creatures, on the deep,
 Stretch'd like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
 And seems a moving land, and at his gills 415
 Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.
 Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,
 Their brood as numerous hatch, from th' egg that soon
 Bursting with kindly rupture, forth disclos'd 419
 Their callow young, but feather'd soon and fledge,
 They summ'd their pens, and soaring th' air sublime,
 With clang despis'd the ground, under a cloud
 In prospect ; there the eagle and the stork
 On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries build :
 Part loosely wing the region, part more wise 425
 In common, rang'd in figure, wedge their way,
 Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
 Their airy caravan, high over seas
 Flying, and over lands with mutual wing
 Easing their flight : so steers the prudent crane 430
 Her annual voyage, borne on winds ; the air
 Floats, as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes.
 From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
 Solac'd the woods, and spread their painted wings
 Till even ; nor then the solemn nightingale 435
 Ceas'd warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays :
 Others on silver lakes and rivers bath'd
 Their downy breast ; the swan, with arched neck
 Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
 Her state with oary feet ; yet oft they quit 440
 The dank, and, rising on stiff pennons, tower
 The mid aerial sky. Others on ground
 Walk'd firm ; the crested cock, whose clarion sounds
 The silent hours, and the other whose gay train
 Adorns him, coloured with the florid hue 445
 Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
 With fish replenish'd, and the air with fowl,
 Evening and morn solemniz'd the fifth day.

"The sixth, and of creation last, arose
 With evening harps and matin when God said, 450

Let th' earth bring forth soul living in ner kind,
 Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of th' earth,
 Each in their kind !' The earth obey'd, and straight,
 Opening her fertile womb, teem'd at a birth
 Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms, 455
 Lim'd and full grown : out of the ground up-rose,
 As from his lair, the wild beast, where he wons
 In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den ;
 Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd.
 The cattle in the fields and meadows green : 460
 Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
 Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.
 The grassy clods now calv'd, now half appear'd
 The tawny lion, pawing to get free 464
 His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,
 And rampant shakes his brinded mane ; the ounce,
 The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole
 Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
 In hillocks ; the swift stag from under ground 469
 Bore up his branching head ; scarce from his mould
 Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd
 His vastness ; fleec'd the flocks and bleating rose.
 As plants ; ambiguous between sea and land
 The river horse and scaly crocodile.
 At once came forth whatever creeps the ground, 475
 Insect or worm : those wav'd their limber fans
 For wings, and smallest lineaments exact,
 In all the liveries deck'd of summer's pride,
 With spots of gold and purple, azure and green,
 These as a line their long dimension drew. 480
 Streaking the ground with sinuous trace ; not all
 Minims of nature ; some of serpent kind,
 Wondrous in length and corpulence, involv'd
 Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
 The parsimonious emmet, provident 485
 Of future, in small room large heart enclos'd
 Pattern of just equality pernaps
 Hereafter, join'd in her popular tribes
 Of commonalty ; swarming next appear'd
 The female bee, that feeds her husband drone 490
 Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
 With honey stor'd. The rest are numberless,
 And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them
 names,

Needless to thee repeated ; nor unknown
 The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field, 495
 Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
 And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
 Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.

“Now heaven in all her glory shone, and roll'd
 Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand 500
 First wheel'd their course ; earth, in her rich attire,
 Consummate lovely smil'd ; air, water, earth,
 By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swam, was
 walk'd

Frequent : and of the sixth day yet remain'd ;
 There wanted yet the master work, the end 505

Of all yet done ; a creature who, not prone
 And brute as other creatures, but endued
 With sanctity of reason, might erect
 His stature, and upright, with front serene,
 Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence 510

Magnanimous to correspond with heaven ;
 But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
 Descends, thither with heart and voice, and eyes,
 Directed in devotion, to adore

And worship God supreme, who made him chief
 Of all his works : therefore th' Omnipotent 516

Eternal Father (for where is not he
 Present ?) thus to his Son audibly spake :

“Let us make now Man in our image, Man
 In our similitude, and let them rule 520

Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
 Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
 And every creeping thing that creeps the ground !
 This said, he form'd thee, Adam, thee, O Man !
 Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath'd 525

The breath of life ; in his own image he
 Created thee, in the image of God
 Express, and thou became'st a living soul.

Male he created thee, but thy consort
 Female, for race ; then bless'd mankind, and said,
 ‘Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth, 531

Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold,
 Over fish of the sea, and fowl of th' air,
 And every living thing that moves on th' earth.
 Wherever thus created, for no place 535

Is yet distinct by name.' Thence, as thou know'st,
 He brought thee into this delicious grove,
 This garden, planted with the trees of God,
 Delectable both to behold and taste ;
 And freely all their pleasant fruit for food 540
 Gave thee ; all sorts are here that all the earth yields,
 Variety without end ; but of the tree,
 Which tasted works knowledge of good and evil,
 Thou may'st not ; in the day thou eat'st, thou diest ;
 Death is the penalty impos'd : beware, 545
 And govern well thy appetite, lest Sin
 Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.

“ Here finish'd he, and all that he had made
 View'd, and behold, all was entirely good ;
 So even and morn accomplish'd the sixth day : 550
 Yet not till the Creator from his work
 Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd,
 Up to the heaven of heavens, his high abode,
 Thence to behold this new-created world,
 Th' addition of his empire, how it show'd 555
 In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
 Answering his great idea. Up he rode,
 Follow'd with acclamation, and the sound
 Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tun'd
 Angelic harmonies : the earth, the air 560
 Resounded, (thou remember'st, for thou heard'st)
 The heavens, and all the constellations rung,
 The planets in their station list'ning stood,
 While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
 ‘ Open, ye everlasting gates !’ they sung, 565
 ‘ Open ye heavens ! your living doors ; let in
 The great Creator from his work return'd
 Magnificent, his six days work, a world :
 Open, and henceforth oft ; for God will deign
 To visit oft the dwellings of just men 570
 Delighted, and with frequent intercourse
 Thither will send his winged messengers
 On errands of supernal grace.’ So sung
 The glorious train ascending : He through heaven,
 That open'd wide her blazing portals, led 575
 To God's eternal house direct the way,
 A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold,
 And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
 Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,

Which nightly as a circling zone thou seest 580
 Powder'd with stars. And now on earth the seventh
 Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
 Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
 Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
 Of heaven's high seated top, th' imperial throne 585
 Of Godhead, fix'd for ever firm and sure,
 'The Filial Power arriv'd, and sat him down
 With his great Father, for he also went
 Invisible, yet stay'd, (such privilege
 Hath Omnipresence,) and the work ordain'd 590
 Author and end of all things, and from work
 Now resting, bless'd and hallow'd the seventh day,
 As resting on that day from all his work,
 But not in silence holy kept; the harp
 Had work and rested not, the solemn pipe, 595
 And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
 All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,
 Temper'd soft tunings intermix'd with voice
 Choral or unison: of incense clouds
 Fuming from golden censers hid the mount. 600
 Creation and the six days acts they sung:
 'Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite
 Thy power; what thought can measure thee, or tongue
 Relate thee? greater now in thy return
 Than from the giant angels; thee that day 605
 Thy thunders magnified; but to create
 Is greater than, created, to destroy.
 Who can impair, thee, mighty King, or bound
 Thy empire? easily the proud attempt
 Of spirits apostate and their counsels vain 610
 Thou hast repell'd, while impiously they thought
 Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
 The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
 To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
 To manifest the more thy might: his evil 615
 Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
 Witness this new-made world, another heaven
 From heaven-gate not far, founded in view
 On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;
 Of amplitude almost immense, with stars 620
 Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
 Of destin'd habitation; but thou know'st
 Their seasons: among these the seat of men,
 Earth with her nether ocean circumfus'd, 624

Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men,
 And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanc'd,
 Created in his image, there to dwell
 And worship him, and in reward to rule
 Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,
 And multiply a race of worshippers 630
 Holy and just: thrice happy, if they know
 Their happiness, and persevere upright!

"So sung they, and the empyrean rung
 With hallelujahs: thus was Sabbath kept.
 And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd 635
 How first this world and face of things began,
 And what before thy memory was done
 From the beginning, that posterity
 Inform'd by thee might know; if else thou seek'st
 Ought, not surpassing human measure, say." 640

11*

END OF BOOK SEVENTH.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

Adam inquires concerning celestial motions; is doubtfully answered, and exhorted to search rather things more worthy of knowledge. Adam assents, and, still desirous to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remembered since his own creation, his placing in Paradise, his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society, his first meeting and nuptials with Eve; his discourse with the angel thereupon, who, after admonitions repeated, departs.

THE angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he awhile
Thought him still speaking, still stood fix'd to hear:
Then, as new wak'd, thus gratefully replied.

“What thanks sufficient, or what recompense 5
Equal have I to render thee, divine
Historian! who thus largely hast aſſay'd
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsaf'd
This friendly condescension, to relate
Things else by me unsearchable, now heard 10
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator? Something yet of doubt remains,
Which only thy solution can resolve.*
When I behold this goodly frame, this world, 15
Of heaven and earth consisting, and compute
Their magnitudes, this earth a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compar'd

And all her number'd stars, that seem to roll
 Spaces incomprehensible, (for such 20
 Their distance argues and their swift return
 Diurnal,) merely to officiate light
 Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,
 One day and night, in all their vast survey
 Useless besides ; reasoning, I oft admire 25
 How Nature, wise and frugal, could commit
 Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
 So many nobler bodies to create,
 Greater so manifold, to this one use,
 For ought appears, and on their orbs impose 50
 Such restless revolution, day by day
 Repeated, while the sedentary earth,
 That better might with far less compass move,
 Serv'd by more noble than herself, attains
 Her end without icast motion, and receives, 35
 As tribute, such a sunless journey brought
 Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light ;
 Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails."

So spake our sire, and by his count'nance seem'd
 Ent'ring on studious thoughts abstruse, which Eve
 Perceiving, where she sat retir'd in sight 41
 With lowliness majestic from her seat,
 And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
 Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
 To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom, 45
 Her nursery ; they at her coming sprung,
 And, touch'd by her fair tendance, gladlier grew.
 Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
 Delighted, or not capable her ear
 Of what was high : such pleasure she reserv'd 50
 Adam relating, the sole auditress ;
 Her husband the relater she prefer'd
 Before the angel, and of him to ask
 Chose rather ; he, she knew, would intermix
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute 55
 With conjugal caresses ; from his lip
 Not words alone pleas'd her. (O ! when meet now
 Such pairs, in love and mutual honour join'd ?)
 With goddess-like demeanour forth she went,
 Not unattended, for on her as queen 60
 A pomp of winning graces waited still,
 And from about her shot darts of desire

Into all eyes to wish her still in sight.
 And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt propos'd,
 Benevolent and facile thus replied : 65

“ To ask or search I blame thee not, for heaven
 Is as the book of God before thee set,
 Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
 His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years;
 This to attain, whether heaven move or earth, 70
 Imports not if thou reckon right; the rest
 From man or angel the great Architect
 Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
 His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
 Rather admire; or if they list to try 75
 Conjecture, he his fabric of the heavens
 Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
 His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
 Hereafter, when they come to model heaven
 And calculate the stars, how they will wield 80
 The mighty frame, how build, unbuild, contrive
 To save appearances, how gird the sphere
 With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,
 Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb;
 Already by thy reasoning this I guess 85
 Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
 That bodies bright and greater should not serve
 The less not bright, nor heaven such journies run,
 Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
 The benefit. Consider first, that great 90
 Or bright infers not excellence: the earth
 Though, in comparison of heaven, so small,
 Nor glist'ring, may of solid good contain
 More plenty than the sun that barren shines,
 Whose virtue on itself works no effect, 95
 But in the fruitful earth; there, first receiv'd,
 His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.
 Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
 Officious, but to thee, earth's habitant.
 And for the heaven's wide circuit, let it speak 100
 The Maker's high magnificence, who built
 So spacious, and his line stretch'd out so far;
 That man may know he dwells not in his own;
 An edifice too large for him to fill,
 Lodg'd in a small partition, and the rest 105
 Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best know

The swiftness of those circles attribute,
 Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
 That to corporeal substances could add 109
 Speed almost spiritual: me thou think'st not slow,
 Who since the morning hour set out from heaven
 Where God resides, and ere mid-day arriv'd
 In Eden; distance inexpressible
 By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
 Admitting motion in the heavens, to show 115
 Invalid that which thee to doubt it mov'd;
 Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
 To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
 God, to remove his ways from human sense,
 Plac'd heaven from earth so far, that earthly sight,
 If it presume, might err in things too high, 121
 And no advantage gain. What if the sun
 Be centre to the world, and other stars,
 By his attractive virtue and their own
 Incited, dance about him various rounds? 125
 Their wand'ring course now high, now low, then hid,
 Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
 In six thou seest; and what if seventh to these
 The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,
 Insensibly three different motions move? 130
 Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
 Mov'd contrary with thwart obliquities,
 Or save the sun his labour, and that swift
 Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb suppos'd,
 Invisibly above all stars, the wheel 135
 Of night; which needs not thy belief,
 Industrious of herself, fetch day
 Travelling east, and with her part averse
 From the sun's beam meet night, her other part
 Still luminous by his ray. What if that light, 140
 Sent from her through the wide transpicious air
 To the terrestrial moon be as a star
 Enlight'ning her by day, as she by night
 This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,
 Fields and inhabitants. Her spots thou seest 145
 As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
 Fruits in her soften'd soil, for some to eat
 Allotted there; and other suns perhaps
 With their attendant moons thou wilt descry
 Communicating male and female light, 150
 Which two great sexes animate the world.

Stor'd in each orb perhaps with some that live :
 For such vast room in Nature unpossess'd
 By living soul, desert and desolate,
 Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute 155
 Each orb a glimpse of light convey'd so far
 Down to this habitable, which returns
 Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
 But whether thus these things, or whether not ;
 Whether the sun predominant in heaven 160
 Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun ;
 He from the east his flaming road begin,
 Or she from the west her silent course advance,
 With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps
 On her soft axle, while she paces even, 165
 And bears thee soft with the smooth air along
 Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid,
 Leave them to God above, him serve and fear ;
 Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
 Wherever plac'd, let him dispose : joy thou 170
 In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
 And thy fair Eve ; heaven is for thee too high
 To know what passes there ; be lowly wise :
 Think only what concerns thee and thy being ;
 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there 175
 Live, in what state, condition, or degree,
 Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd,
 Not of earth only, but of highest heaven."

To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, replied :
 "How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure 180
 Intelligence of heaven, angel serene !
 And, freed from intricacies, taught to live,
 The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts
 To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
 God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares, 185
 And, not molest us, unless we ourselves
 Seek them with wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain.
 But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
 Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end ;
 Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn, 190
 That not to know at large of things remote,
 From use obscure and subtle, but to know
 That which before us lies in daily life,
 Is the prime wisdom ; what is more, is fume
 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence, 195

And renders us in things that most concern
 Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.
 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
 Useful, whence haply mention may arise 205
 Of something not unseasonable to ask,
 By sufferance, and thy wonted favour deign'd.
 'Thee I have heard relating what was done
 Ere my remembrance ; now hear me relate
 My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard ; 205
 And day is yet not spent ; till then thou seest
 How subtly to detain thee I devise,
 Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
 Fond, where it not in hope of thy reply :
 For while I sit with thee I seem in heaven, 210
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
 Than fruits of palm-tree, pleasantest to thirst
 And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
 Of sweet repast ; they satiate, and soon fill 214
 Though pleasant ; but thy words, with grace divine
 Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety."

To whom thus Raphael answer'd heavenly meek .
 "Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men !
 Nor tongue ineloquent ; for God on thee
 Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd, 220
 Inward and outward both, is image fair ;
 Speaking or mute, all comeliness and grace
 Attends thee, and each word each motion forms ;
 Nor less think we in heaven of thee on earth
 Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire 255
 Gladly into the ways of God with man ;
 For God we see hath honour'd thee, and set
 On man his equal love : say, therefore, on ,
 For I that day was absent, as befell,
 Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure, 230
 Far on excursion toward the gates of hell ;
 Squar'd in full legion (such command we had)
 To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
 Or enemy, while God was in his work,
 Lest he, incens'd at such eruption bold, 235
 Destruction with creation might have mix'd.
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt
 But us he sends upon his high behests
 For state, as Sov'reign King, and to inaura

Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast sh at
 The dismal gates, and barricado'd strong ; 241
 But, long ere our approaching, heard within
 Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
 Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
 Glad we return'd up to the coasts of light' 245
 Ere sabbath evening: so we had in charge.
 But thy relation now ; for I attend,
 Pleas'd with thy words, no less than thou with mine."

So spake the godlike power, and thus our sire
 'For man to tell how human life began 250
 Is hard ; for who himself beginning knèw ?
 Desire with thee still longer to converse
 Induc'd me. As new wak'd frõm soundest sleep,
 Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid
 In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun 255
 Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.
 Straight toward heaven my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
 And gaz'd awhile the ample sky ; till rais'd
 By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,
 As thitherward endeavouring, and upright 260
 Stood on my feet ; about me round I saw
 Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
 And liquid lapse of murm'ring streams ; by these,
 Creatures that liv'd and mov'd, and walk'd, or flew,
 Birds on the branches warbling ; all things smil'd ;
 With fragrance, and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.
 Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb 267
 Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
 With supple joints, as lively vigour led :
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause, 270
 Knew not : to speak I tried, and forthwith spake
 My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
 Whate'er I saw. 'Thou sun,' said I, 'fair light,
 And thou enlighten'd earth, so fresh and gay,
 Ye hills, and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains, 275
 And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
 Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here ?
 Not of myself ; by some great Maker then,
 In goodness and in power pre-eminent ;
 Tell me how may I know him, how adore, 280
 From whom I have that thus I move, and live
 And feel that I am happier than I know.'
 While thus I call'd, and strav'd I knew not whither.

From where I first drew air, and first beheld
 This happy light, when answer none return'd, 285
 On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,
 Pensive I sat me down; there gentle sleep
 First found me, and with soft oppression seiz'd
 My drowsed sense, untroubled, though I thought
 I then was passing to my former state 290
 Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve;
 When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
 Whose inward apparition gently mov'd
 My fancy to believe I yet had being,
 And liv'd. One came, methought, of shape divine,
 And said, 'Thy mansion wants thee, Adam, rise 296
 First man, of men innumerable ordain'd
 First father! call'd by thee I come thy guide
 To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd.'
 So saying, by the hand he took me rais'd, 300
 And over fields and waters, as in air
 Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
 A woody mountain; whose high top was plain,
 A circuit wide enclos'd; with goodliest trees
 Planted, with walks and bowers, that what I saw 305
 Of earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree
 Loaden with fairest fruit, that hung to th' eye
 Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite
 To pluck and eat; whereat I wak'd, and found
 Before mine eyes all real, as the dream 310
 Had lively shadow'd. Here had new begun
 My wand'ring, had not he, who was my guide
 Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,
 Presence divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
 In adoration at his feet I fell 315
 Submiss: he rear'd me, and, 'Whom thou sought'st
 I am,'
 Said mildly, 'Author of all this thou seest
 Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
 This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
 To till, and keep, and of the fruit to eat: 320
 Of every tree that in the garden grows
 Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no deart
 But of the tree whose operation brings
 Knowledge of good and il., which I have set
 The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith, 325
 Amid the garden by the tree of life,
 Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,

And shun the bitter consequence : for know
 The day thou eatest thereof, my sole command
 Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt die, 330
 From that day mortal, and this happy state
 Shalt lose, expell'd from hence into a world
 Of wo and sorrow.' Sternly he pronounc'd
 The rigid interdiction, which resounds
 Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice 335
 Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect
 Return'd, and gracious purpose thus renew'd :
 'Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth
 To thee and to thy race I give; as lords
 Possess it, and all things that therein live, 340
 Or live in sea, or air, beast, fish, and fowl.
 In sign whereof each bird and beast behold
 After their kinds; I bring them to receive
 From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
 With low subjection; understand the same 345
 Of fish within their wat'ry residence,
 Not hither summon'd, since they cannot change
 Their element, to draw the thinner air.'
 As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
 Approaching two and two, these caw'ring low 350
 With blandishment, each bird stoop'd on his wing.
 I nam'd them, as they pass'd, and understood
 Their nature, with such knowledge God endued
 My sudden apprehension; but in these
 I found not what methought I wanted still; 355
 And to the heavenly vision thus presum'd:

"O by what name, for thou above all these,
 Above mankind, or ought than mankind higher,
 Surpassest far my naming, how may I
 Adore thee, Author of this universe, 360
 And all this good to man? for whose well-being
 So amply, and with hands so liberal,
 Thou hast provided all things: but with me
 I see not who partakes. In solitude
 What happiness, who can enjoy alone, 365
 Or all enjoying, what contentment find?
 Thus I presumptuous; and the vision bright,
 As with a smile more brighten'd, thus replied

"What call'st thou solitude? is not the earth
 With various living creatures, and the air. 370

Replenish'd, and all these at thy command
 To come and play before thee? knowest thou not
 Their language and their ways? they also know,
 And reason not contemptibly; with these
 Find pastime and bear rule; thy realm is large.' 375
 So spake the universal Lord, and seem'd
 So ord'ring. I with leave of speech implor'd,
 And humble deprecation, thus replied :

“ ‘Let not my words offend thee, heavenly Power,
 My Maker, be propitious while I speak. 380
 Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
 And these inferior far beneath me set?
 Among unequals what society
 Can sort, what harmony or true delight?
 Which must be mutual, in proportion due 385
 Given and receiv'd; but in disparity,
 The one intense, the other still remiss,
 Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
 Tedious alike: of fellowship I speak
 Such as I seek, fit to participate 390
 All rational delight, wherein the brute
 Cannot be human consort; they rejoice
 Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
 So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd;
 Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl 395
 So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;
 Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.’

“ ‘Whereto th' Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd.
 ‘A nice and subtle happiness I see
 Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice 400
 Of thy associates, Adam, and wilt taste
 No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
 What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
 Seem I to thee sufficiently possess'd
 Of happiness, or not? who am alone 405
 From all eternity, for none I know
 Second to me or like, equal much less.
 How have I then with whom to hold converse,
 Save with the creatures which I made, and those
 To me inferior, infinite descents 410
 Beneath what other creatures are to thee?’

“ ‘He ceas'd; I lowly answer'd: ‘To attain
 The height and depth of thy eternal ways

All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things
 'Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee 415
 Is no deficiency found ; not so is man,
 But in degree, the cause of his desire,
 By conversation with his like, to help
 Or solace his defects. No need that thou
 Shouldst propagate, already infinite, 420
 And through all numbers absolute, though one ;
 But man by number is to manifest
 His simple imperfection, and beget
 Like of his like, his image multiplied,
 In unity defective, which requires 425
 Collateral love, and dearest amity.
 Thou in thy secrecy, although alone,
 Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
 Social communication, yet, so pleas'd,
 Canst raise thy creatures to what height thou wilt
 Of union or communion, deified ; 431
 I by conversing cannot these erect
 From prone, nor in their ways complacence find.'
 Thus I embolden'd spake, and freedom us'd
 Permissive, and acceptance found, which gain'd
 This answer from the gracious voice divine : 436

" Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd,
 And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,
 Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thyself,
 Expressing well the spirit within thee free, 440
 My image, not imparted to the brute,
 Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee
 Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike,
 And be so minded still ; I, ere thou spak'st,
 Knew it not good for man to be alone, 445
 And no such company as then thou saw'st
 Intended thee, for trial only brought,
 To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet.
 What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd,
 Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self, 450
 Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.'

" He ended, or I heard no more, for now
 My earthly by his heavenly overpower'd
 Which it had long stood under, strain'd to th' height
 In that celestial colloquy sublime, 455
 As with an object that excels the sense,

Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
 Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
 By Nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.
 Mine eyes he clos'd, but open left the cell 460
 Of Fancy, my internal sight, by which
 Abstract, as in a trance, methought I saw,
 Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
 Still glorious before whom awake I stood ; 465
 Who, stooping, open'd my left side, and took
 From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
 And life-blood streaming fresh ; wide was the wound,
 But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd :
 The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands ;
 Under his forming hands a creature grew, 470
 Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair,
 That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
 Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd,
 And in her looks, which from that time infus'd
 Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before, 475
 And into all things from her air inspir'd
 The spirit of love and amorous delight.
 She disappear'd, and left me dark ; I wak'd
 To find her, or for ever to deplore
 Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure : 480
 When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
 Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
 With what all earth or heaven could bestow
 To make her amiable. On she came,
 Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen, 485
 And guided by his voice, nor uninform'd
 Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rites :
 Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
 In every gesture dignity and love !
 I, overjoy'd, could not forbear aloud. 490

“ ‘ This turn hath made amends ; thou hast fulfill'd
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
 Giver of all things, fair, but fairest this
 Of all thy gifts, nor enviest. I now see
 Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself 495
 Before me ; Woman is her name, of man
 Extracted : for this cause he shall forego
 Father and mother, to his wife adhere ;
 And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.’

" She heard me thus, and though divinely brought,
 Yet innocence and virgin modesty, 501
 Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,
 That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retir'd
 The more desirable, or to say all, 505
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
 Wrought in her so, that seeing me, she turn'd :
 I follow'd her ; she what was honour knew,
 And with obsequious majesty approv'd
 My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower 510
 I led her, blushing like the morn : all heaven,
 And happy constellations, on that hour
 Shed their selectest influence ; the earth
 Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill ;
 Joyous the birds ; fresh gales and gentle airs 515
 Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
 Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
 Disporting till the amorous bird of night
 Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening star
 On his hill top, to light the bridal lamp. 520

" Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
 My story to the sum of earthly bliss
 Which I enjoy, and must confess to find
 In all things else delight indeed, but such
 As, us'd or not, works in the mind no change, 525
 Nor vehement desire, these delicacies
 I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and
 flowers,
 Walks, and the melody of birds ; but here
 Far otherwise ! transported I behold,
 Transported touch ; here passion first I felt, 530
 Commotion strange ! in all enjoyments else
 Superior and unmov'd ; here only weak
 Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.
 Or nature fail'd in me, and left some part
 Not proof enough such object to sustain, 535
 Or from my side subducting, took perhaps
 More than enough ; at least on her bestow'd
 Too much of ornament, in outward show
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.
 For well I understand, in the prime end 540
 Of nature her th' inferior, in the mind
 And inward faculties, which most excel,

In outward also her resembling less
 His image who made both, and less expressing
 The character of that dominion given 545
 O'er other creatures ; yet when I approach
 Her loveliness, so absolute she seems,
 And in herself complete, so well to know
 Her own, that what she wills to do or say
 Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best ; 550
 All higher knowledge in her presence falls
 Degraded, wisdom in discourse with her
 Loses discount'nanc'd, and like folly shows ;
 Authority and reason on her wait,
 As one intended first, not after made 555
 Occasionally ; and, to consummate all,
 Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat
 Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
 About her, as a guard angelic plac'd."

To whom the angel with contracted brow : 560
 " Accuse not nature, she hath done her part ;
 Do thou but thine, and be not diffident
 Of wisdom ; she deserts thee not, if thou
 Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh,
 By attributing overmuch to things 565
 Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
 For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so ?
 An outside ? fair no doubt, and worthy well
 Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love,
 Not thy subjection : weigh with her thyself ; 570
 Then value. Oft-times nothing profits more
 Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right
 Well manag'd ; of that skill the more thou know'st,
 The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
 And to realities yield all her shows : 575
 Made to adorn for thy delight the more,
 So awful, that with honour thou may'st love
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
 But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
 Is propagated, seem such dear delight 580
 Beyond all other, think the same voachsaf'd
 To cattle and each beast ; which would not be
 To them made common and divulg'd, if ought
 Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue
 The soul of man, or passion in him move. 585
 What higher in her society thou find'st

Attractive, human, rational, love still ;
 In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
 Wherein true love consists not ; love refines
 The thoughts, and heart enlarges, hath his seat 590
 In reason, and is judicious, is the scale
 By which to heavenly love thou may'st ascend ;
 Not sunk in carnal pleasure, for which cause
 Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.'

To whom thus half-abash'd, Adam replied : 595
 "Neither her outside form'd so fair, nor ought
 In procreation common to all kinds,
 Though higher of the genial bed by far
 And with mysterious reverence I deem,) 600
 So much delights me, as those graceful acts,
 Those thousand decencies that daily flow
 From all her words and actions, mix'd with love
 And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
 Union of mind, or in us both one soul ;
 Harmony to behold in wedded pair 605
 More grateful than harmonious sound to th' ear.
 Yet these subject not ; I to thee disclose
 What inward thence I feel, not therefore foil'd,
 Who meet with various objects, from the sense
 Variously representing ; yet still free, 610
 Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
 To love thou blam'st me not, for love thou say'st
 Leads up to heaven, is both the way and guide ;
 Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask ;
 Love not the heavenly spirits, and how their love
 Express they, by looks only, or do they mix 616
 Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch ?"

To whom the angel, with a smile that glow'd
 Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue,
 Answer'd : " Let it suffice thee that thou know'st 621
 Us happy, and without love no happiness.
 Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st
 (And pure thou wert created) we enjoy
 In eminence, and obstacle find none
 Of membrane, joint or limb, exclusive bars ; 625
 Easier than air with air, if spirits embrace,
 Total they mix, union of pure with pure
 Desiring ; nor restrain'd conveyance need,
 As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.

But I can now no more ; the parting sun 630
 Beyond the earth's green Cape and verdant Isles
 Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.
 Be strong, live happy, and love ; but first of all,
 Him whom love is to obey, and keep
 His great command ; take heed lest passion sway
 Thy judgment to do ought, which else free will 636
 Would not admit : thine and of all thy sons
 The weal or wo in thee is plac'd ; beware !
 I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
 And all the bless'd : stand fast ; to stand or fall 640
 Free in thine own arbitrament it lies.
 Perfect within no outward aid require ;
 And all temptation to transgress repel."

So saying, he arose ; whom Adam thus
 Follow'd with benediction : " Since to part, 645
 Go, heavenly guest, ethereal messenger,
 Sent from whose sov'reign goodness I adore.
 Gentle to me and affable hath been
 Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever
 With grateful memory : thou to mankind 650
 Be good and friendly still, and oft return."

So parted they ; the angel up to heaven
 From the thick shade, and Adam to his bow'r.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan having compassed the earth, with meditated guilt returns as a mist by night into Paradise, and enters into the serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labours, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each labouring apart. Adam consents not, alleging the danger, lest that enemy, of whom they were forewarned, should attempt her found alone. Eve, loth to be thought not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make trial of her strength: Adam at last yields. The serpent finds her alone; his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking, with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve, wondering to hear the serpent speak, asks how he attained to human speech and such understanding not till now; the Serpent answers, that by tasting of a certain tree in the garden he attained both to speech and reason, till then void of both. Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the tree of knowledge forbidden. The Serpent, now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat: she, pleased with the taste, deliberates awhile whether to impart thereof to Adam or not; at last brings him of the fruit, relates what persuaded her to eat thereof. Adam, at first amazed, but perceiving her lost, resolves, through vehemence of love, to perish with her; and, extenuating the trespass, eats also of the fruit. The effects thereof in them both; they seek to cover their nakedness; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

No more of talk, where God or angel guest
 With man, as with his friend familiar us'd
 To sit indulgent, and with him partake
 Rural repast, permitting him the while
 Venial discourse unblam'd: I now must change 5
 Those notes to tragic; foul distrust, and breach
 Disloyal on the part of man, revolt
 And disobedience; on the part of heaven,
 Now alienated, distance and distaste,
 Anger and just rebuke, and judgment given, 10
 That brought into this world a world of wo,
 Sin, and her shadow Death, and Misery
 Death's harbinger. Sad task! yet argument
 Not less, but more heroic than the wrath
 Of stern Achilles on his foe pursu'd, 15
 Thrice fugitive, about Troy wall; or rage
 Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd:
 Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's that so long
 Perplex'd the Greek and Cytherea's son.
 If answerable style I can obtain 20
 Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
 Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
 And dictates to me slumb'ring, or inspires
 Easy my unpremeditated verse:
 Since first this subject for heroic song 25
 Pleas'd me, long choosing, and beginning late;
 Not sedulous by nature to indite
 Wars, hitherto the only argument
 Heroic deem'd, chief mast'ry to dissect
 With long and tedious havoc, fabled knights 30
 In battles feign'd; the better fortitude
 Of patience and heroic martyrdom
 Unsung; or to describe races and games,
 Or tilting furniture, emblazon'd shields,
 Impresses quaint, caparisons, and steeds; 35
 Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
 At joust and tournament; then marshal'd feast
 Serv'd up in hall with sewers, and seneschals;
 The skill of artifice or office mean,
 Not that which justly gives heroic name 40
 To person or to poem. Me, of these
 Nor skill'd nor studious, higher argument
 Remains, sufficient of itself to raise
 That name, unless an age too late, or cold
 Climate, or years, damp my intended wing 45

Depress'd, and much they may, if all be mine,
Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear.

The sun was sunk, and after him the star
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter 50
'Twixt day and night; and now from end to end
Night's hemisphere had veil'd th' horizon round:
When Satan, who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
In meditated fraud and malice, bent 55
On man's destruction, maugre what might hap
Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.
By night he fled, and at midnight return'd
From compassing the earth, cautious of day,
Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried 60
His entrance, and forewarn'd the cherubim
That kept their watch; thence, full of anguish driven,
The space of seven continued nights he rode
With darkness, thrice the equinoctial line
He circled, four times cross'd the car of night 65
From pole to pole, traversing each colure;
On th' eighth return'd, and on the coast, averse
From entrance or cherubic watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the
change, 70
Where Tigris at the foot of Paradise
Into a gulf shot under ground, till part
Rose up a fountain by the tree of life:
In with the river sunk, and with it rose
Satan involv'd in rising mist, then sought 75
Where to lie hid; sea he had search'd, and land
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool
Mæotis, up beyond the river Ob;
Downward as far antarctic; and in length
West from Orontes to the ocean barr'd 80
At Darien, thence to the land where flows
Ganges and Indus. Thus the orb he roam'd
With narrow search, and with inspection deep
Consider'd every creature which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found 85
The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
Him, after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose

Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
 To enter, and his dark suggestions hide 90
 From sharpest sight : for in the wily snake,
 Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,
 As from his wit and native subtlety
 Proceeding, which in other beasts observ'd
 Doubt might beget of diabolic power, 95
 Active within beyond the sense of brute.
 Thus he resolv'd ; but first from inward grief,
 His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd ;

“O earth, how like to heaven, if not preferr'd
 More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built 100
 With second thoughts, reforming what was old !
 For what God after better worse would build ?
 Terrestrial heaven, danc'd round by other heavens
 That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
 Light above light, for thee alone, as seems, 105
 In thee concentrating all their precious beams
 Of sacred influence ! As God in heaven
 Is centre, yet extends to all, so thou
 Centring receiv'st from all those orbs ; in thee,
 Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears
 Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth 111
 Of creatures animate with gradual life
 Of growth, sense, reason, all summ'd up in man.
 With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,
 If I could joy in ought, sweet interchange 115
 Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
 Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crown'd ;
 Rocks, dens, and caves ! But I in none of these
 Find place or refuge ; and the more I see
 Pleasures about me, so much more I feel 120
 Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
 Of contraries ; all good to me becomes
 Bane, and in heaven much worse would be my state.
 But neither here seek I, no nor in heaven,
 To dwell, unless by mast'ring heaven's Supreme ;
 Nor hope to be myself less miserable 126
 By what I seek, but others to make such
 As I, though thereby worse to me redound :
 For only in destroying I find ease
 To my relentless thoughts ; and him destroy'd, 130
 Or won to what may work his utter loss,
 For whom all this was made, all this will soon

Follow, as to him link'd in weal or wo ;
 In wo then ; that destruction wide may range.
 To me shall be the glory sole among 135
 Th' infernal powers, in one day to have marr'd
 What he, Almighty styl'd, six nights and days
 Continued making, and who knows how long
 Before had been contriving ? though perhaps
 Not longer than since I in one night freed 140
 From servitude inglorious well nigh half
 Th' angelic name, and thinner left the throng
 Of his adorers : he to be aveng'd,
 And to repair his numbers thus impair'd,
 Whether such virtue spent of old now fail'd 145
 More angels to create, if they at least
 Are his created, or to spite us more,
 Determin'd to advance into our room
 A creature form'd of earth, and him endow,
 Exalted from so base original, 150
 With heavenly spoils, our spoils. What he decreed
 He effected : man he made, and for him built
 Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
 Him lord pronounc'd, and, O indignity !
 Subjected to his service angel wings, 155
 And flaming ministers, to watch and tend
 Their earthly charge. Of these the vigilance
 I dread, and to elude, thus wrapp'd in mist
 Of midnight vapour glide obscure, and pry
 In every bush and brake, where hap may find 160
 The serpent sleeping, in whose mazy folds
 To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
 O foul descent ! that I, who erst contended
 With gods to sit the highest, am now constrain'd
 Into a beast, and mix'd with bestial slime, 165
 This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
 That to the height of Deity aspir'd ;
 But what will not ambition and revenge
 Descend to ? who aspires, must down as low
 As high he soar'd, obnoxious, first or last, 170
 To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
 Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils :
 Let it ; I reck not, so it light well aim'd,
 Since higher I fall short, on him who next
 Provokes my envy, this new fav'rite 175
 Of heaven this man of clay, son of despite,

Whom: us the more to spite his Maker rais'd
From dust. Spite then with spite is best repaid."

So saying, through each thicket, dank or dry,
Like a black mist low creeping, he held on 180
His midnight search, where soonest he might find
The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
In labyrinth of many a round self roll'd,
His head the midst, well stor'd with subtle wiles.
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den, 185
Nor nocent yet, but on the grassy herb,
Fearless, unfeard he slept: in at his mouth
The Devil enter'd, and his brutal sense,
In heart, or head, possessing, soon inspir'd
With act intelligential; but his sleep 190
Disturb'd not, waiting close th' approach of morn.

Now, when the sacred light began to dawn
In Eden on the humid flowers, that breath'd
Their morning incense, when all things that breathe
From the earth's great altar send up silent praise 195
To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
And join'd their vocal worship to the choir
Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs: 200
Then commune how that day they best may ply
Their growing work; for much their work outgrew
The hands despatch of two gard'ning so wide,
And Eve first to her husband thus began:

"Adam! well may we labour still to dress 205
This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,
Our pleasant task enjoin'd, but till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind, 210
One night or two with wanton growth derides,
Tending to wild. Thou, therefore, now advise,
Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present,
Let us divide our labours, thou where choice
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
The woodbine round this arbour, or direct 216
The clasping ivy where to climb, while I,
In yonder spring of roses intermix'd

With myrtle, find what to recess till noon :
 For while so near each other thus all day 220
 Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
 Looks intervene, and smiles, or object new
 Casual discourse draw on, which intermits
 Our day's work brought to little, though begun
 Early, and th' hour of supper comes unearn'd :” 225

To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd :
 “ Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
 Compare, above all living creatures dear !
 Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd,
 How we might well fulfil the work which here 230
 God hath assign'd us, nor of me shalt pass
 Unprais'd ; for nothing lovelier can be found
 In woman, than to study household good,
 And good works in her husband to promote.
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd 235
 Labour, as to debar us when we need
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
 Of looks and smiles ; for smiles from reason flow,
 To brute denied, and are of love the food, 240
 Love not the lowest end of human life.
 For not to irksome toil, but to delight,
 He made us, and delight to reason join'd.
 These paths and bowers, doubt not but our joint hands
 Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide 245
 As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
 Assist us : but if much converse perhaps
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield ;
 For solitude sometimes is best society,
 And short retirement urges sweet return. 250
 But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
 Befall thee sever'd from me ; for thou know'st
 What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe,
 Envyng our happiness, and of his own
 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame 255
 By sly assault ; and somewhere nigh at hand
 Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find,
 His wish and best advantage, us asunder,
 Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each
 To other speedy aid might lend at need ; 260
 Whether his first design be to withdraw
 Our fealty from God, or to disturb

Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
 Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more ;
 Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side 265
 That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects
 The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
 Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
 Who guards her, or with her the worst endures."

To whom the virgin majesty of Eve, 270
 As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
 With sweet austere composure thus replied :

" Offspring of heaven and earth, and all earth's lord '
 That such an enemy we have, who seeks
 Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn, 275
 And from the parting angel overheard,
 As in a shady nook I stood behind,
 Just then return'd at shut of evening flowers.
 But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
 To God or thee, because we have a foe 280
 May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
 His violence thou fear'st not, being such
 As we, not capable of death or pain,
 Can either not receive, or can repel.
 His fraud is then thy fear, which plain infers 285
 Thy equal fear, that my firm faith and love
 Can by his fraud be shaken or seduc'd ; [breast,
 Thoughts! which how found they harbour in thy
 Adam, misthought of her to thee so dear ?"

To whom with healing words Adam replica 290
 " Daughter of God and man, immortal Eve !
 For such thou art, from sin and blame entire ;
 Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
 Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
 Th' attempt itself, intended by our foe. 295
 For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses
 The tempted with dishonour foul, suppos'd
 Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
 Against temptation : thou thyself with scorn
 And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong, 300
 Though ineffectual found ; misdeem not then,
 If such affront I labour to avert
 From thee alone, which on us both at once
 The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare,

Or daring, first on me th' assault shall light. 305
 Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
 Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce
 Angels, nor think superfluous others aid.
 I from the influence of thy looks receive
 Access in every virtue, in thy sight 310
 More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
 Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
 Shame to be overcome or over-reach'd,
 Would utmost vigour raise, and rais'd unite.
 Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
 When I am present, and thy trial choose 316
 With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?"

So spake domestic Adam in his care
 And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
 Less attributed to her faith sincere, 320
 Thus her reply with accent sweet renew'd:

"If this be our condition, thus to dwell
 In narrow circuit straiten'd by a foe,
 Subtle or violent, we not endued
 Single with like defence, wherever met, 325
 How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
 But harm precedes not sin; only our foe
 Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem
 Of our integrity; his foul esteem
 Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns 330
 Foul on himself: then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd
 By us? who rather double honour gain
 From his surmise prov'd false, find peace within,
 Favour from heaven, our witness from th' event.
 And what is faith, love, virtue, unassay'd? 335
 Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?
 Let us not then suspect our happy state
 Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
 As not secure to single or combin'd. 340
 Frail is our happiness, if this be so,
 And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd."

To whom thus Adam fervently replied:
 "O Woman, best are all things as the will
 Of God ordain'd them; his creating hand
 Nothing imperfect or deficient left 345
 Of all that he created, much less man,

Or ought that might his happy state secure,
 Secure from outward force ; within himself
 The danger lies, yet lies within his power :
 Against his will he can receive no harm. 350
 But God left free the will ; for what obeys
 Reason is free, and reason he made right,
 But bid her well beware, and still erect,
 Lest by some fair appearing good surpris'd,
 She dictate false, and misinform the will 355
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.
 Not then mistrust, but tender love enjoins,
 That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,
 Since reason not impossibly may meet 360
 Some specious object by the foe suborn'd,
 And fall into deception unaware,
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warn'd.
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
 Were better, and most likely if from me 365
 Thou sever not : trial will come unsought.
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancy ? approve
 First thy obedience ; th' other who can know,
 Not seeing thee attempted, who attest ?
 But if thou think trial unsought may find 370
 Us both securer than thus warn'd thou seem'st,
 Go ; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more ;
 Go in thy native innocence, rely
 On what thou hast of virtue, summon all, 374
 For God tow'rds thee hath done his part, do thine."

So spake the patriarch of mankind ; but Eve
 Persisted, yet submiss, though last, replied :

" With thy permission then, and thus forewarn'd,
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
 Touch'd only, that our trial, when least sought, 380
 May find us both perhaps far less prepar'd,
 The willinger I go ; nor much expect
 A foe so proud will first the weaker seek ;
 So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse." 384

Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
 Soft she withdrew, and like a wood-nymph light,
 Oread, or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
 Betook her to the groves, but Delia's self

In gait surpass'd, and goddess-like deport ;
 Though not as she, with bow and quiver arm'd, 390
 But with such gard'ning tools as Art yet rude,
 Guiltless of fire, had form'd, or angels brought.
 To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorn'd,
 Likest she seem'd Pomona when she fled
 Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime, 395
 Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
 Her long with ardent look his eye pursu'd
 Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
 Oft he to her his charge of quick return
 Repeated, she to him as oft engag'd 400
 To be return'd by noon amid the bower,
 And all things in best order to invite
 Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
 O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve,
 Of thy presum'd return! event perverse! 405
 Thou never from that hour in Paradise
 Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose ;
 Such ambush hid among sweet flowers and shades
 Waited with heliish rancour imminent
 To intercept thy way, or send thee back 410
 Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss.
 For now, and since first break of dawn, the fiend,
 Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,
 And on his quest where likeliest he might find,
 The only two of mankind, but in them 415
 The whole included race, his purpos'd prey.
 In bower and field he sought, where any tuft
 Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
 Their tendance or plantation for delight ;
 By fountain or by shady rivulet 420
 He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
 Eve separate ; he wish'd, but not with hope
 Of what so seldom chanc'd, when to his wish,
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
 Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood, 425
 Half spied, so thick the roses bushing round
 About her glow'd ; oft stooping to support
 Each flower of slender stalk, whose head tho' gay
 Carnation, purple, azure, or speck'd with gold,
 Hung drooping unsustain'd ; them she upstays 430
 Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
 Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
 From her best prop so far, and storms so nigh.

Nearer he drew, and many a walk travers'd
 Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm; 435
 Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen,
 Among thick-woven arborets and flowers
 Imborder'd on each bank, the hand of Eve :
 Spot more delicious than those gardens feign'
 Or of reviv'd Adonis, or renown'd 440
 Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son,
 Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
 Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.
 Much he the place admir'd, the person more.
 As one who long in populous city pent, 445
 Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
 Forth issuing, on a summer's morn, to breathe
 Among the pleasant villages and farms
 Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight,
 The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine, 450
 Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound ;
 If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass,
 What pleasing seem'd, for her now pleases more,
 She most, and in her look sums all delight ;
 Such pleasure took the serpent to behold
 This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve
 Thus early, thus alone ; her heavenly form
 Angelic, but more soft and feminine,
 Her graceful innocence, her every air
 Of gesture, or least action, overaw'd 460
 His malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought :
 That space the evil one abstracted stood
 From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
 Stupidly good, of enmity disarm'd, 465
 Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge ;
 But the hot hell that always in him burns,
 Though in mid heaven, soon ended his delight,
 And tortures him now more, the more he sees
 Of pleasure not for him ordain'd : then soon 470
 Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
 Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites :

"Thoughts, whither have ye led me? with what
 sweet

Compulsion thus transported to forget
 What hither brought us! hate, not love, nor hope
 Of Paradise for hell, hope here to taste 476

Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,
 Save what is in destroying; ether joy
 To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
 Occasion which now smiles; behold alone 480
 The woman, opportune to all attempts,
 Her husband, (for I view far round,) not nigh,
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
 And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould, 485
 Foe not formidable, exempt from wound,
 (not; so much hath hell debas'd, and pain
 Enfeebled me, to what I was in heaven.
 She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods,
 Not terrible, though terror be in love 490
 And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate,
 Hate stronger, under show of love well feign'd,
 The way which to her ruin now I tend."

So spake the enemy of mankind, enclos'd
 In serpent, inmate bad, and toward Eve 495
 Address'd his way, not with indented wave,
 Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,
 Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd,
 Fold above fold, a surging maze, his head
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes; 500
 With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
 Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape,
 And lovely; never since of serpent kind
 Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang'd 505
 Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
 In Epidaurus; nor to which transform'd
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen,
 He with Olympias, this with her who bore
 Scipio, the height of Rome. With tract oblique 510
 At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
 To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
 As when a ship, by skilful steersman wrought,
 Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
 Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail: 515
 So varied he, and of his tortuous train
 Curl'd many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
 To lure her eye; she busied heard the sound
 Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as us'd
 To such disport before her through the field, 520

From every beast, more duteous at her call
 Than at Circean call the herd disguis'd,
 He bolder now, uncall'd before her stood,
 But as in gaze admiring: oft he bow'd
 His turret crest, and sleek enamell'd neck, 525
 Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
 His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length
 The eye of Eve to mark his play; he glad
 Of her attention gain'd, with serpent tongue
 Organic, or impulse of vocal air, 530
 His fraudulent temptation thus began:

“ Wonder not, sov'reign mistress, if perhaps
 Thou canst, who art sole wonder; much less arm
 Thy looks, the heaven of mildness, with disdain,
 Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze 535
 Insatiate, I thus single, nor have fear'd
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
 By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore 540
 With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
 Where universally admir'd; but here
 In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,
 Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
 Half what in thee is fair, one man except, 545
 Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who shouldst be
 seen
 A goddess among gods, ador'd and serv'd
 By angels numberless, thy daily train.”

So glaz'd the tempter, and his poem tun'd;
 Into the heart of Eve his words made way, 550
 Though at the voice much marvelling: at length
 Not unamaz'd she thus in answer spake:

“ What may this mean? language of man pro-
 nounc'd
 By tongue of brute, and human sense express'd?
 The first at least of these I thought denied 555
 To beasts, whom God on their creation day
 Created mute to all articulate sound;
 The latter I demur, for in their looks
 Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.
 Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all the field 560

I knew, but not with human voice endued ;
 Redouble then this miracle, and say,
 How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and how
 To me so friendly grown above the rest
 Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight ? 565
 Say, for such wonder claims attention due."

To whom the guileful tempter thus replied :
 "Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve !
 Easy to me it is to tell thee all
 What thou command'st, and right thou shouldst be
 obey'd : 570

I was at first as other beasts that graze
 The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
 As was my food ; nor ought but food discern'd
 Or sex, and apprehended nothing high ;
 Till on a day, roving the field, I chanc'd 575
 A goody tree far distant to behold,
 Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mix'd,
 Ruddy and gold : I nearer drew to gaze ;
 When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
 Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense 580
 Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
 Of ewe or goat drooping with milk at even,
 Unsuck'd of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
 To satisfy the sharp desire I had
 Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv'd 585
 Not to defer ; hunger and thirst at once,
 Powerful persuaders, quicken'd at the scent
 Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen.
 About the mossy trunk I wound me soon,
 For high from ground the branches would require 590
 Thy utmost reach, or Adam's : round the tree
 All other beasts that saw, with like desire
 Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
 Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
 Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill 595
 I spar'd not, for such pleasure till that hour
 At feed or fountain never had I found.
 Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
 Strange alteration in me, to degree
 Of reason in my inward powers, and speech 600
 Wanted not long, though to this shape retain'd.
 Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
 I turn'd my thoughts, and with capacious mind

Consider'd all things visible in heaven,
 Or earth, or middle. all things fair and good : 605
 But all that fair and good in thy divine
 Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,
 United I beheld ; no fair to thine
 Equivalent or second, which compell'd
 Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come 610
 And gaze, and worship thee, of right declar'd
 Sov'reign of creatures, universal dame."

So talk'd the spirited sly snake ; and Eve,
 Yet more amaz'd, unwary thus replied :
 "Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt 615
 The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd :
 But say, where grows the tree, from hence how far ?
 For many are the trees of God that grow
 In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
 To us ; in such abundance lies our choice, 620
 As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd,
 Still hanging incorruptible, till men
 Grow up to their provision, and more hands
 Help-to disburden Nature of her birth."

To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad : 625
 "Empress, the way is ready, and not long ;
 Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
 Fast by a fountain, one small thicket pass'd
 Of blowing myrrh and balm ; if thou accept
 My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon." 630

"Lead then," said Eve. He leading, swiftly roll'd
 In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
 To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
 Brightens his crest ; as when a wand'ring fire,
 Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night 635
 Condenses, and the cold environs round,
 Kindled through agitation to a flame,
 Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,
 Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
 Misleads th' amaz'd night-wand'rer from his way, 640
 Thro' bogs and mires, and oft thro' pond or pool,
 There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far,
 So glisten'd the dire snake, and into fraud
 Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree

Of prohibition, root of all our wo ; 645
Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake :

“Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither,
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee,
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects. 650
But of this tree we may not taste nor touch ;
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice ; the rest, we live
Law to ourselves, our reason is our law.”

To whom the tempter guilefully replied : 655
“Indeed ! hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these garden trees ye shall not eat,
Yet lords declar'd of all in earth or air ?”

To whom thus Eve, yet sinless : “Of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat, 660
But of the fruit of this fair tree, amidst
The garden, God hath said, ‘Ye shall not eat
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.’”

She scarce had said, though brief, when now more
bold,
The tempter, but with show of zeal and love 665
To man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on, and as to passion mov'd,
Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely and in act
Rais'd, as some great matter to begin.
As when of old some orator renown'd, 670
In Athens, or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourish'd, since mute, to some great cause address'd,
Stood in himself collected, while each part,
Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue,
Sometimes in height began, as no delay 675
Or preface brooking through his zeal of right ;
So standing, moving, or to height up-grown,
The tempter, all impassion'd, thus began :

“O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,
Mother of science ! now I feel thy power 680
Within me clear, not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of highest agents, deem'd however wise.

Queen of this universe, do not believe
 Those rigid threats of death; ye shall not die; 685
 How should ye? by the fruit? it gives you life
 To knowledge; by the threat'ner? look on me,
 Me who have touch'd and tasted, yet both live,
 And life more perfect have attain'd than fate
 Meant me, by vent'ring higher than my lot. 690
 Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
 Is open? or will God incense his ire
 For such a petty trespass, and not praise
 Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
 Of death denounc'd, whatever thing death be, 695
 Deterr'd not from achieving what might lead
 To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;
 Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
 Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd
 God, therefore, cannot hurt ye, and be just; 700
 Not just, not God; not fear'd then, nor obey'd:
 Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
 Why then was this forbid? Why but to awe;
 Why but to keep you low and ignorant,
 His worshippers; he knows that in the day 705
 Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear,
 Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
 Open'd and clear'd, and ye shall be as gods.
 Knowing both good and evil as they know.
 That ye shall be as gods, since I as man, 710
 Internal man, is but proportion meet;
 I of brute human, ye of human gods.
 So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
 Human, to put on gods; death to be wish'd,
 Though threaten'd, which no worse than this can 715
 bring.
 And wha' are gods that man may not become
 As they, participating godlike food?
 The gods are first, and that advantage use
 On our belief, that all from them proceeds:
 I question it; for this fair earth I see, 720
 Warm'd by the sun, producing every kind,
 Them nothing: if they all things, who inclos'd
 Knowledge of good and evil in this tree
 That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains
 Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies 725
 Th' offence, that man should thus attain to know?
 What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree

Impart against his will, if all be his?
 Or is it envy, and can envy dwell
 In heavenly breasts? These, these, and many more
 Causes import your need of this fair fruit. 731
 Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste."

He ended, and his words replete with guile,
 Into her heart too easy entrance won.
 Fix'd on the fruit she gaz'd, which to behold 735
 Might tempt alone, and in her ears the sound
 Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd
 With reason, to her seeming, and with truth.
 Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and wak'd
 An eager appetite, rais'd by the smell 740
 So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,
 Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,
 Solicited her longing eye; yet first,
 Pausing awhile, thus to herself she mus'd: 744

"Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,
 Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd,
 Whose taste, too long forborne, at first essay
 Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
 The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise:
 Thy praise he also, who forbids thy use, 750
 Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
 Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
 Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding
 Commends thee more, while it infers the good
 By thee communicated, and our want: 755
 For good unknown, sure is not had, or had
 And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
 In plain, then, what forbids he but to know,
 Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
 Such prohibitions bind not. But if death 760
 Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
 Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
 Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die.
 How dies the serpent? he hath eaten and lives,
 And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
 Irrational till then. For us alone 766
 Was death invented? or to us denied
 This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
 For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
 Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy 770

The good befallen him, author unsuspect,
 Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
 What fear I then, rather what know to fear
 Under this ignorance of good and evil,
 Of God or death, of law or penalty? 77.
 Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine.
 Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
 Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
 To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?"

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour 780
 Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat!
 Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,
 Sighing through all her works, gave signs of wo
 That ail was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
 The guilty serpent, and well might; for Eve, 785
 Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else
 Regarded, such delight till then, as seem'd,
 In fruit she never tasted, whether true
 Or fancied so, through expectation high
 Of knowledge, nor was Godhead from her thought.
 Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint, 791
 And knew not eating death. Sate at length,
 And heighten'd as with wine, jocund and boon,
 Thus to herself she pleasingly began:

"O sov'reign, virtuous, precious of all 'rees 795
 In Paradise, of operation bless'd
 To sapience, hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,
 And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
 Created; but henceforth my early care,
 Not without song, each morning and due praise, 800
 Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
 Of thy full branches, offer'd free to all;
 Till dieted by thee I grow mature
 In knowledge, as the gods who all things know;
 Though others envy what they cannot give; 805
 For had the gift been theirs, it had not here
 Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
 Best guide; not following thee I had remain'd
 In ignorance; thou open'st wisdom's way,
 And givest access, though secret she retire. 810
 And I perhaps am secret; heaven is high,
 High, and remote to see from thence distinct

Each thing on earth ; and other care perhaps
 May have diverted from continual watch
 Our great forbidd'g, safe with all his spies 815
 About him. But to Adam in what sort
 Shall I appear ? shall I to him make known
 As yet my change, and give him to partake
 Full happiness with me, or rather not,
 But keep the odds of knowledge in my power 820
 Without copartner ? so to add what wants
 In female sex, the more to draw his love,
 And render me more equal, and perhaps,
 A thing not undesirable, sometime
 Superior ; for inferior who is free ? 825
 This may be well : but what if God have seen,
 And death ensue ? then I shall be no more,
 And Adam, wedded to another Eve,
 Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct ;
 A death to think. Confirm'd then I resolve, 830
 Adam shall share with me in bliss or wo :
 So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
 I could endure, without him live no life."

So saying, from the tree her step she turn'd,
 But first low reverence done, as to the power 835
 That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd
 Into the plant scintill'g sap, deriv'd
 From nectar, drink of gods. Adam the while
 Waiting desirous her return, had wove
 Of choicest flowers a garland to adorn 840
 Her tresses, and her rural labours crown,
 As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
 Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new
 Solace in her return, so long delay'd ;
 Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill, 845
 Misgave him ; he the falt'ring measure felt ;
 And forth to meet her went, the way she took
 That morn when first they parted ; by the tree
 Of knowledge he must pass, there he her met,
 Scarce from the tree returning ; in her hand 850
 A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smil'd,
 New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.
 To him she hasted ; in her face excuse
 Came prologue, and apology too prompt, 854
 Which with bland words at will she thus address'd :

"Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?
 Thee I have miss'd, and thought it long, depriv'd
 Thy presence, agony of love till now
 Not felt, nor shall be twice, for never more
 Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought, 860
 The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
 Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear.
 This tree is not, as we are told, a tree
 Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
 Opening the way, but of divine effect 865
 To open eyes, and make them gods who taste;
 And hath been tasted such: the serpent wise,
 Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
 Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
 Not dead, as we are threaten'd, but henceforth 870
 Endued with human voice and human sense,
 Reasoning to admiration, and with me
 Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I
 Have also tasted, and have also found
 Th' effects to correspond; opener mine eyes, 875
 Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
 And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
 Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
 For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;
 Tedious unshar'd with thee, and odious soon. 880
 Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
 May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
 Lest thou, not tasting, different degree
 Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
 Deity for thee, when fate will not permit." 885

Thus Eve with count'nance blithe her story told,
 But in her cheek distemper flushing glow'd.
 On th' other side, Adam, soon as he heard
 The fatal trespass done by Eve, amaz'd,
 Astonished stood and blank, while horror chill 890
 Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd:
 From his slack hand the garland wreath'd for Eve
 Down dropp'd, and all the faded roses shed:
 Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
 First to himself he inwaid silence broke: 895

"O fairest of creation. . . st and best
 Of all God's works, creature in whom excell'd
 Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd

Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet.
 How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost, 900
 Defac'd, deflower'd, and how to death devote?
 Rather how hast thou yielded to transgress
 The strict forbiddance, how to violate
 The sacred fruit forbidden? some curs'd fraud
 Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown, 905
 And me with thee hath ruin'd, for with thee
 Certain my resolution is to die.
 How can I live without thee, how forego
 Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly join'd,
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn! 910
 Should God create another Eve, and I
 Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
 Would never from my heart; no, no, I feel
 The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
 Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state 915
 Mine never shall be parted, bliss or wo."

So having said, as one from sad dismay
 Recomforted, and after thoughts disturb'd,
 Submitting to what seem'd remediless,
 Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd: 920

"Bold deed thou hast presum'd, advent'rous Eve,
 And peril great provok'd, who thus hath dar'd,
 Had it been only coveting to eye
 That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,
 Much more to taste it under ban to touch. 925
 But past who can recall, or done undo?
 Not God omnipotent, nor Fate; yet so
 Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact
 Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
 Profan'd first by the serpent, by him first 930
 Made common and unhallow'd ere our taste;
 Nor yet on him found deadly, he yet lives,
 Lives as thou said'st, and gains to live as man,
 Higher degree of life; inducement strong
 To us, as likely tasting to attain 935
 Proportional ascent, which cannot be
 But to be gods, or angels demi-gods.
 Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
 Though threat'ning, will in earnest so destroy
 Us his prime creatures, dignified so high, 940
 Set over all his works, which in our fall,

For us created, needs with us must fail,
 Dependent made ; so God shall uncreate,
 Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose,
 Not well conceiv'd of God, who, though his power
 Creation could repeat, yet would be loath 946
 Us to abolish, lest the adversary
 Triumph, and say, ' Fickle their state whom God
 Most favours ; who can please him long ? Me first
 He ruin'd, now mankind ; whom will he next ? ' 950
 Matter of scorn, not to be given the foe.
 However I with thee have fix'd my lot,
 Certain to undergo like doom ; if death
 Consort with thee, death is to me as life,
 So forcible within my heart I feel 955
 The bond of nature draw me to my own,
 My own in thee, for what thou art is mine ;
 Our state cannot be sever'd, we are one,
 One flesh ; to lose thee were to lose myself."

So Adam, and thus Eve to him replied : 960
 " O glorious trial of exceeding love,
 Illustrious evidence, example high !
 Engaging me to emulate, but short
 Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
 Adam ? from whose dear side I boast me sprung, 965
 And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
 One heart, one soul in both ; whereof good proof
 This day affords, declaring thee resolv'd,
 Rather than death, or ought than death more dread,
 Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear, 970
 To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
 If any be, of tasting this fair fruit,
 Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,
 Direct, or by occasion) hath presented
 This happy trial of thy love, which else 975
 So eminently never had been known.
 Where it I thought death menac'd would ensue
 This my attempt, I would sustain alone
 The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die
 Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact 980
 Pernicious to thy peace, chiefly assur'd
 Remarkably so late of thy so true,
 So faithful love unequal'd : but I feel
 Far otherwise th' event, not death but life
 Augmented, open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys, 985

Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds."

So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy 990
Tenderly wept, much won that he his love
Had so enobled, as of choice to incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
In recompense for such compliance (bad
Such recompense best merits) from the bough 995
She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
With liberal hand : he scrupled not to eat
Against his better knowledge, not deceiv'd,
But fondly overcome with female charm.
Earth trembled from her entrails, as again 1000
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan ;
Sky lower'd, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin
Original ; while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate 1005
Her former trespass fear'd, the more to sooth
Him with her lov'd society, that now,
As with new wine intoxicated both,
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings 1010
Wherewith to scorn the earth : but that false fruit
Far other operation first display'd,
Carnal desire inflaming ; he on Eve
Began to cast lascivious eyes ; she him
As wantonly repaid ; in lust they burn : 1015
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move :

" Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant, of sapience no small part,
Since to each meaning savour we apply,
And palate call judicious ; I the praise 1020
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting ; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidden, it might be wish'd, 1025
For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
But come, so well refresh'd now let us play,
As sweet is after such delicious fare :

For never did thy beauty, since the day
 I saw thee first, and wedded thee, adorn'd 1030
 With all perfections, so inflame my sense
 With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
 Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree."

So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
 Of amorous intent, well understood 1035
 Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
 Her hand he seiz'd, and to a shady bank,
 Thick over head with verdant roof imbower'd,
 He led her, nothing loath ; flowers were the couch,
 Pansies, and violets, and asphodel, 1040
 And hyacinth, earth's freshest, softest lap.
 There they their fill of love and love's disport
 Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
 The solace of their sin, till dewy sleep
 Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play.

Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit, 1046
 That with exhilarating vapour bland
 About their spirits had play'd, and inmost powers
 Made err, was now exhal'd ; and grosser sleep,
 Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams 1050
 Encumber'd, now had left them ; up they rose
 As from unrest, and, each the other viewing,
 Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their minds
 How darken'd ; innocence, that as a veil
 Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone,
 Just confidence, and native righteousness, 1056
 And honour from about them naked left
 To guilty shame ; he cover'd, but his robe
 Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong,
 Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap 1060
 Of Philistean Dalilah, and wak'd
 Shorn of his strength. They destitute and bare
 Of all their virtue : silent, and in face
 Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute,
 Till Adam, though not less than Eve abash'd, 1065
 At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd .

"O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
 To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
 To counterfeit man's voice, true in our fall,
 False in our promis'd rising ; since our eyes 1070

Open'd we find indeed, and find we know
 Both good and evil, good lost, and evil got.
 Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,
 Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
 Of innocence, of faith, of purity, 1075
 Our wonted ornaments now soil'd and stain'd,
 And in our faces evident the signs
 Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;
 Even shame, the last of evils: of the first
 Be sure then. How shall I behold the face 1080
 Henceforth of God or angel, erst with joy
 And rapture so oft beheld? those heavenly shapes
 Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
 Insufferably bright. O might I here
 In solitude live savage, in some glade 1085
 Obscur'd, where highest woods, impenetrable
 To star or sun light, spread their umbrage broad
 And brown as evening. Cover me, ye pines,
 Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
 Hide me, where I may never see them more! 1090
 But let us now as in bad plight, devise
 What best may for the present serve to hide
 The parts of each from other, that seem most
 To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;
 Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sew'd,
 And girded on our loins, may cover round 1096
 Those middle parts, that this new comer, shame,
 There sit not, and reproach us as unclean."

So counsell'd he, and both together went
 Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose 1100
 The fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd,
 But such as at this day to Indians known
 In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms
 Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
 The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
 About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade 1106
 High overarch'd, and echoing walks between;
 There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
 Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
 At loop-holes cut thro' thickest shade. Those leaves
 They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe, 1111
 And with what skill they had, together sew'd,
 To gird their waist, vain covering if to hide
 Their guilt and dreaded shame; O how unlike

To that first naked glory! Such of late 1115
 Columbus found th' American, so girt
 With feather'd cincture, naked else and wild
 Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
 Thus fenc'd, and as they thought, their shame in part
 Cover'd, but, not at rest or ease of mind, 1120
 They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
 Rain'd at their eyes, but high winds worse within
 Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
 Mistrust, suspicion, discord, and shook sore
 Their inward state of mind, calm region once 1125
 And full of peace, now toss'd and turbulent:
 For understanding rul'd not, and the will
 Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
 To sensual appetite, who from beneath,
 Usurping over sov'reign reason, claim'd 1130
 Superior sway: from this distemper'd breast,
 Adam, estrang'd in look and alter'd style,
 Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd:

“Would thou hadst hearken'd to my words, and
 stay'd
 With me, as I besought thee, when that strange
 Desire of wand'ring this unhappy morn, 1136
 I know not whence possess'd thee; we had then
 Remain'd still happy, not as now, despoil'd
 Of all our good, sham'd, naked, miserable.
 Let none henceforth seek needless cause t' approve
 The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek 1141
 Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail.”

To whom, soon mov'd with touch of blame, thus
 Eve:
 “What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam, severe!
 Imput'st thou that to my default, or will 1145
 Of wand'ring, as thou call'st it, which who knows
 But might as ill have happen'd thou being by,
 Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
 Or here th' attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd
 Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake; 1150
 No ground of enmity between us known,
 Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
 Was I to have never parted from thy side?
 As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
 Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,

Command me absolutely not to go,
 Going into such danger as thou saidst ?
 Too facile then thou didst not much gainsay,
 Nay didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
 Hadst thou been firm and fix'd in thy dissent, 1160
 Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me."

To whom then first incens'd, Adam replied :
 "Is this the love, is this the recompense
 Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, express'd
 Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I ; 1165
 Who might have liv'd and joy'd immortal bliss,
 Yet willingly chose rather death with thee ?
 And am I now upbraided as the cause
 Of thy transgressing ? not enough severe,
 It seems in my restraint : what could I more ? 1170
 I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
 The danger, and the lurking enemy
 That lay in wait ; beyond this had been force,
 And force upon free will hath here no place.
 But confidence then bore thee on, secure 1175
 Either to meet no danger, or to find
 Matter of glorious trial ; and perhaps
 I also err'd in overmuch admiring
 What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought
 No evil durst attempt thee, but I rue 1180
 That error now, which is become my crime,
 And thou th' accuser. Thus it shall befall
 Him who to worth in woman overtrusting
 Lets her will rule ; restraint she will not brook,
 And left to herself, if evil thence ensue, 1185
 She first his weak indulgence will accuse."

Thus they in mutual accusation spent
 The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning
 And of their vain contest appear'd no end.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

Man's transgression known, the guardian angels forsake Paradise, and return up to heaven to approve their vigilance; and are approved; God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors, who descends and gives sentence accordingly; then in pity clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death, sitting till then at the gates of hell, by wondrous sympathy, feeling the success of Satan in this new world, and the sin by man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confined in hell, but to follow Satan their sire up to the place of man. To make the way easier from hell to this world to and fro, they pave a broad highway or bridge over Chaos, according to the track that Satan first made; then preparing for earth, they meet him, proud of his success, returning to hell; their mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandemonium; in full assembly relates, with boasting, his success against man; instead of applause is entertained with a general hiss by all his audience, transformed with himself also suddenly into serpents, according to his doom given in Paradise: then, deluded with a show of the forbidden tree springing up before them, they, greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death. God foretells the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but, for the present commands his angels to make several alterations in the heavens and elements. Adam, more

and more perceiving his fallen condition, heavily bewails; rejects the condolment of Eve; she persists, and at length appeases him: then, to evade the curse likely to fall on their offspring, proposes to Adam violent ways, which he approves not, but conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late promise made them, that her seed should be revenged on the Serpent, and exhorts her, with him, to seek peace with the offended Deity by repentance and supplication.

MEANWHILE the heinous and despiteful act
 Of Satan done in Paradise, and how
 He in the serpent had perverted Eve,
 Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
 Was known in heaven; for what can scape the eye
 Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
 Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just,
 Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the mind
 Of man, with strength entire, and free-will arm'd
 Complete to have discover'd and repuls'd 10
 Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
 For still they knew, and ought to have still remem-
 ber'd,
 The high injunction not to taste that fruit,
 Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,
 Incurr'd (what could they less?) the penalty, 15
 And, manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall.

Up into heaven from Paradise in haste
 Th' angelic guards ascended, mute and sad
 For man, for of his state by this they knew,
 Much wond'ring how the subtle fiend had stol'n 20
 Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news
 From earth arriv'd at heaven-gate, displeas'd
 All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare
 That time celestial visages, yet mix'd
 With pity, violated not their bliss. 25
 About the new-arriv'd in multitudes
 The ethereal people ran, to hear and know
 How all befell: they towards the throne supreme
 Accountable made haste to make appear
 With righteous plea their utmost vigilance, 30
 And easily approv'd; when the Most High

Eternal Father, from his secret cloud,
Amidst in thunder utter'd thus his voice :

“ Assembled angels, and ye powers return'd
From unsuccessful charge, be not dismay'd, 35
Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,
Which your sincerest care could not prevent ;
Foretold so lately what would come to pass
When first this tempter cross'd the gulf from hell.
I told ye then he should prevail and speed 40
On his bad errand, man should be seduc'd
And flatter'd out of all, believing lies
Against his Maker ; no decree of mine
Concurring to necessitate his fall,
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse 45
His free-will, to her own inclining left
In even scale. But fallen he is ; and now
What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass
On his transgression, death denounc'd that day ?
Which he presumes already vain and void, 50
Because not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,
By some immediate stroke ; but soon shall find
Forbearance no acquittance ere day end.
Justice shall not return as bounty scorn'd.
But whom send I to judge them ? Whom but thee,
Vicegerent Son ? to thee I have transferr'd 56
All judgment, whether in heaven, or earth, or hell.
Easy it may be seen that I intend
Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee
Man's friend, his mediator, his design'd 60
Both ransom and redeemer voluntary,
And destin'd man himself to judge man fallen.”

So spake the Father, and unfolding bright
Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
Blaz'd forth unclouded Deity ; he full 65
Resplendent all his Father manifest
Express'd, and thus divinely answer'd mild :

“ Father Eternal, thine is to decree,
Mine both in heaven and earth to do thy will
Supreme, that thou in me thy Son belov'd 70
May'st ever rest well pleas'd. I go to judge
On earth these thy transgressors, but thou know'st,
Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light,

When time shall be, for so I undertook
 Before thee; and not repenting, this obtain 75
 Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
 On me deriv'd; yet I shall temper so
 Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most
 Them fully satisfied, and Thee appease.
 Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none 80
 Are to behold the judgment, but the judg'd,
 Those two; the third best absent is condemn'd,
 Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:
 Conviction to the serpent none belongs."

Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose 85
 Of high collateral glory: him, thrones and powers,
 Princedoms and dominations, ministrant,
 Accompanied to heaven-gate, from whence
 Eden and all the coast in prospect lay.
 Down he descended straight; the speed of gods 90
 Time counts not, tho' with swiftest minutes wing'd.
 Now was the sun in western cadence low
 From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour
 To fan the earth, now wak'd, and usher in
 The evening cool, when he from wrath more cool 95
 Came the mild judge and intercessor both
 To sentence man: the voice of God they heard,
 Now walking in the garden, by soft winds
 Brought to their ears, while day declin'd; they heard,
 And from his presence hid themselves among 100
 The thickest trees, both man and wife, till God
 Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud:

"Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet
 My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
 Not pleas'd, thus entertain'd with solitude, 105
 Where obvious duty ere while appear'd unsought:
 Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
 Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth."

He came, and with him Eve, more loath, tho' first
 To offend, discount'nanc'd both, and discompos'd;
 Love was not in their looks, either to God 111
 Or to each other, but apparent guilt,
 And shame, and perturbation, and despair,
 Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.
 Whence Adam falt'ring long, thus answer'd brief

“I new'd thee in the garden, and of thy voice 116
 Afrad, being naked, hid myself.” To whom
 The gracious Judge without revile replied :
 “ My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,
 But still rejoic'd: how is it now become 120
 So dreadful to thee? that thou art naked, who
 Hath told thee? hast thou eaten of the tree,
 Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat.”

To whom thus Adam, sore beset, replied :
 “ O heaven! in evil strait this day I stand 125
 Before my Judge, either to undergo
 Myself the total crime, or to accuse
 My other self, the partner of my life ;
 Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
 I should conceal, and not expose to blame 130
 By my complaint ; but strict necessity
 Subdues me, and calamitous constraint,
 Lest on my head both sin and punishment,
 However insupportable, be all
 Devolv'd ; though should I hold my peace, yet thou
 Wouldst easily detect what I conceal. 136
 This woman, whom thou mad'st to be my help
 And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,
 So fit, so acceptable, so divine,
 That from her hand I could suspect no ill, 140
 And what she did, whatever in itself,
 Her doing seem'd to justify the deed ;
 She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.”

To whom the sov'reign Presence thus replied :
 “ Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey 145
 Before his voice, or was she made thy guide,
 Superior, or but equal, that to her
 Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
 Wherein God set thee above her, made of thee,
 And for thee, whose perfection far excell'd 150
 Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd
 She was indeed, and lovely to attract
 Thy love, not thy subjection ; and her gifts
 Were such as under government well seem'd
 Unseemly to bear rule, which was thy part 155
 And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.”

So having said, he thus to Eve in few :
 " Say, Women, what is this which thou hast done ?"

To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelm'd,
 Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge 160
 Bold or loquacious, thus abash'd, replied :
 " The serpent me beguil'd, and I did eat."

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
 To judgment he proceeded on th' accurs'd
 Serpent, though brute, unable to transfer 165
 The guilt on him who made him instrument
 Of mischief, and polluted from the end
 Of his creation ; justly then accurs'd,
 As vitiated in nature : more to know
 Concern'd not man (since he no further knew) 170
 Nor alter'd his offence ; yet God at last
 To Satan, first in sin, his doom applic'd,
 Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best :
 And on the serpent thus his curse let fall :
 " Because thou hast done this, thou art accurs'd
 Above all cattle, each beast of the field ; 176
 Upon thy belly grov'ling thou shalt go,
 And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.
 Between thee and the woman I will put
 Enmity, and between thine and her seed ; 180
 Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel."

So spake this oracle, then verified
 When Jesus, son of Mary, second Eve,
 Saw Satan fall like lightning down from heaven,
 Prince of the air ; then rising from his grave 185
 Spoil'd principalities and powers, triumph'd
 In open show, and with ascension bright,
 Captivity led captive through the air,
 The realm itself of Satan long usurp'd,
 Whom he shall tread at last under our feet ; 190
 Even he who now foretold his fatal bruise,
 And to the woman thus his sentence turn'd
 " Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
 By thy conception ; children thou shalt bring
 In sorrow forth ; and to thy husband's will 195
 Thine shall submit ; he over thee shall rule."

On Adam last thus judgment he pronounc'd.
 " Because thou hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife

And eaten of the tree, concerning which 199
 I charg'd thee, saying, 'Thou shalt not eat thereof:
 Curs'd is the ground for thy sake; thou in sorrow
 Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life;
 Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
 Unbid; and thou shalt eat th' herb of the field,
 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, 205
 Till thou return unto the ground; for thou
 Out of the ground was taken, know thy birth,
 For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return."

So judg'd he Man, both Judge and Saviour sent,
 And th' instant stroke of death denounc'd, that day
 Remov'd far off; then pitying how they stood 211
 Before him naked to the air, that now
 Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin
 Thenceforth the form of servant to assume,
 As when he wast 'd his servants feet, so now, 215
 As father of his family, he clad
 Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,
 Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid;
 And thought not much to clothe his enemies;
 Nor he their outward only with the skins 220
 Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
 Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness,
 Arraying cover'd from his Father's sight.
 To him with swift ascent he up return'd,
 Into his blissful bosom reasum'd 225
 In glory as of old; to him appeas'd
 All, though all-knowing, what had pass'd with man
 Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Meanwhile, ere thus we sinn'd and judg'd on earth,
 Within the gates of hell sat Sin and Death, 230
 In counterview within the gates, that now
 Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
 Far into Chaos, since the fiend pass'd through,
 Sin opening, who thus now to Death began:

"O son, why sit we here each other viewing 235
 Idly, while Satan, our great author, thrives
 In other worlds, and happier seat provides
 For us his offspring dear? It cannot be
 But that success attends him; if mishap,
 Ere this he had return'd, with fury driven 240

By his avengers, since no place like this
 Can fit his punishment or their revenge.
 Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
 Wings growing, and dominion given me large
 Beyond this deep ; whatever draws me on, 245
 Or sympathy, or some connatural force
 Powerful at greatest distance to unite
 With secret amity things of like kind
 By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade
 Inseparable, must with me along : 250
 For Death from Sin no power can separate.
 But lest the difficulty of passing back
 Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
 Impassable, impervious, let us try
 Advent'rous work, yet to thy power and mine 255
 Not unagreeable, to found a path
 Over this main from hell to that new world
 Where Satan now prevails, a monument
 Of merit high to all th' infernal host,
 Easing their passage hence, for intercourse, 260
 Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.
 Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
 By this new-felt attraction and instinct."

Whom thus the meagre Shadow answer'd soon .
 "Go whither fate and inclination strong 265
 Leads thee ; I shall not lag behind, nor err
 The way, thou leading, such a scent I draw
 Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
 The savour of death from all things there that live :
 Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest 270
 Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid."

So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell
 Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
 Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote
 Against the day of battle, to a field, 275
 Where armies lie encamp'd, come flying, lur'd
 With scent of living carcasses design'd
 For death, the following day, in bloody fight :
 So scented the grim Feature, and upturn'd
 His nostril wide into the murky air, 280
 Sagacious of his quarry from so far.
 Then both from out hell-gates into the waste
 Wide anarchy of Chaos damp and dark

Flew diverse, and with power (their power was great
 Hovering upon the waters, what they met, 285
 Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
 Toss'd up and down, together crowded drove
 From each side shoaling tow'rds the mouth of hell:
 As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
 Upon the Cronian sea, together drive 290
 Mountains of ice, that stop th' imagin'd way
 Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich
 Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil
 Death, with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
 As with a trident smote, and fix'd as firm 295
 As Delos floating once; the rest his look
 Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move
 And with Asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,
 Deep to the roots of hell, the gather'd beach
 They fasten'd, and the mole immense wrought on
 Over the foaming deep high-arch'd, a bridge 301
 Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
 Immoveable of this now fenceless world
 Forfeit to death; from hence a passage broad,
 Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to hell. 305
 So, if great things to small may be compar'd
 Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
 From Susa his Memnonian palace high
 Came to the sea, and over Hellespont
 Bridging his way, Europe with Asia join'd, 310
 And scourg'd with many a stroke th' indignant waves.
 Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
 Pontifical, a ridge of pendent rock,
 Over the vex'd abyss, following the track
 Of Satan to the self-same place where he 315
 First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
 From out of Chaos, to the outside bare
 Of this round world: with pins of adamant
 And chains they made all fast, too fast they made
 And durable; and now in little space 320
 The confines met of empyrean heaven
 And of this world, and on the left hand hell
 With long reach interpos'd; three several ways
 In sight, to each of these three places led.
 And now their way to earth they had descried, 325
 To Paradise first tending, when behold
 Satan, in likeness of an angel bright,
 Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering

His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose
 Disguis'd he came, but those his children dear 330
 Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.
 He, after Eve seduc'd, unminded slunk
 Into the wood fast by, and changing shape
 To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
 By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded 335
 Upon her husband, saw their shame that sought
 Vain covertures; but when he saw descend
 The Son of God to judge them, terrified
 He fled, not hoping to escape, but shun
 The present, fearing, guilty, what his wrath 340
 Might suddenly inflict; that past, return'd
 By night, and list'ning where the hapless pair
 Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,
 Thence gather'd his own doom, which understood
 Not instant, but of future time, with joy 345
 And tidings fraught, to hell he now return'd,
 And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
 Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhop'd
 Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
 Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight 350
 Of that stupendous bridge his joy increas'd.
 Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
 Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke:

"O parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
 Thy trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own,
 Thou art their author and prime architect: 356
 For I no sooner in my heart divin'd,
 My heart, which by a secret harmony
 Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet,
 That thou on earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks
 Now also evidence; but straight I felt, 361
 Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt
 That I must after thee with this thy son,
 Such fatal consequence unites us three:
 Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds, 365
 Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
 Detain from following thy illustrious track.
 Thou hast achiev'd our liberty, confin'd
 Within hell-gates, till now, thou us impower'd
 To fortify thus far, and overlay 370
 With this portentous bridge the dark abyss.
 Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won

What thy hands builded not, thy wisdom gain'd
 With odds what war hath lost, and fully aveng'd
 Our foil in heaven; here thou shalt monarch reign,
 There didst not; there let him still victor sway, 376
 As battle hath adjudg'd, from this new world
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated,
 And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
 Of all things parted by th' empyreal bounds, 380
 His quadrature, from thy orbicular world,
 Or try thee now more dang'rous to his throne."

Whom thus the prince of darkness answer'd glad
 'Fair daughter, and thou son and grandchild both,
 High proof ye now have given to be the race 386
 Of Satan, (for I glory in the name
 Antagonist of heaven's Almighty king,)
 Amply have merited of me, of all
 Th' infernal empire, that so near heaven's door
 Triumphal with triumphal act have met, 390
 Mine with this glorious work, and made one realm,
 Hell and this world one realm, one continent
 Of easy thoroughfare. Therefore while I
 Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,
 To my associate powers, them to acquaint 395
 With these successes, and with them rejoice;
 You two this way, among these numerous orbs
 All yours, right down to Paradise descend;
 There dwell and reign in bliss, thence on the earth
 Dominion exercise, and in the air. 400
 Chiefly on man, sole lord of all declar'd,
 Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
 My substitutes I send ye, and create
 Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might
 Issuing from me: on your joint vigour now 405
 My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
 Through sin to death expos'd by my exploit.
 If your joint power prevail, th' affairs of hell
 No detriment need fear; go, and be strong."

So saying, he dismiss'd them; they with speed 410
 Their course through thickest constellations held,
 Spreading their bane; the blasted stars look'd wan,
 And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse
 Then suffer'd. Th' other way Satan went down
 The causeway to hell-gate; on either side 415

Disparted Chaos, over-built, exclaim'd !
 And with rebounding surge the bars assail'd,
 That scorn'd his indignation : through the gate,
 Wide open and unguarded, Satan pass'd,
 And all about found desolate ; for those 420
 Appointed to sit there had left their charge,
 Flown to the upper world ; the rest were all
 Far to th' inland retir'd, about the walls
 Of Pandemonium, city and proud seat
 Of Lucifer, so by allusion call'd, 425
 Of that bright star to Satan paragon'd.
 There kept their watch the legions, while the grand
 In council sat, solicitous what chance
 Might intercept their emperor sent ; so he,
 Departing, gave command, and they observ'd. 430
 As when the Tartar from his Russian foe
 By Astracan over the snowy plains
 Retires ; or Bactrian Sophi from the horn
 Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond
 The realm of Aladule, in his retreat 435
 To Tauris or Casbeen : so these, the late
 Heaven banish'd host, left desert utmost hell
 Many a dark league, reduc'd in careful watch
 Round their metropolis, and now expecting 439
 Each hour their great adventurer from the search
 Of foreign worlds. He through the midst, unmark'd
 In show plebeian angel militant
 Of lowest order, pass'd ; and from the door
 Of that Plutonian hall, invisible,
 Ascended his high throne, which under state 445
 Of richest texture spread, at th' upper end
 Was plac'd in regal lustre. Down awhile
 He sat, and round about him saw unseen :
 At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head
 And shape star-bright appear'd, or brighter clad, 450
 With what permissive glory since his fall
 Was left him, or false glitter. All amaz'd
 At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng
 Bent their aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,
 Their mighty chief return'd : loud was th' acclaim ;
 Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting peers, 456
 Rais'd from their dark divan, and with like joy
 Congratulant approach'd him, who with hand
 Silence, and with these words, attention won :

" Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues,
 powers ! 460
 For in possession such, not only of right,
 I call ye and declare ye now, return'd,
 Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
 Triumphant out of this infernal pit
 Abominable, accurs'd, the house of wo, 465
 And dungeon of our tyrant : now possess,
 As lords, a spacious world, to our native heaven
 Little inferior, by my adventure hard
 With peril great achiev'd. Long were to tell 469
 What I have done, what suffer'd, with what pain
 Voyag'd the unreal, vast, unbounded deep
 Of horrible confusion, over which,
 By Sin and Death, a broad way now is pav'd
 To expedite your glorious march ; but I
 Toil'd out my uncouth passage, forc'd to ride 475
 Th' untractable abyss, plung'd in the womb
 Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild,
 That jealous of their secrets fiercely oppos'd
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
 Protesting Fate supreme ; thence how I found 480
 The new-created world, which fame in heaven
 Long had foreto!d, a fabric wonderful,
 Of absolute perfection ! therein man,
 Plac'd in a Paradise, by our exile
 Made happy. Him by fraud I have seduc'd 485
 From his Creator, and, the more to increase
 Your wonder, with an apple ! he thereat
 Offended, worth your laughter, hath given up
 Both his beloved man, and all his world,
 To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us, 490
 Without our hazard, labour, or alarm,
 To range in, and to dwell, and over man
 To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.
 True is, me also he hath judg'd, or rather
 Me not, but the brute serpent, in whose shape 495
 Man I deceiv'd : that which to me belongs
 Is enmity, which he will put between
 Me and mankind ; I am to bruise his heel ;
 His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head.
 A world who would not purchase with a bruise, 500
 Or much more grievous pain ? Ye have th' account
 Of my performance : what remains, ye gods,—
 But up and enter now into full bliss !"

So having said, awhile he stood expecting
 Their universal shout and high applause 505
 To fill his ear ; when, contrary, he hears
 On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
 A dismal universal hiss, the sound
 Of public scorn ; he wonder'd, but not long
 Had leisure, wond'ring at himself now more ; 510
 His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
 His arms clung to his ribs ; his legs intertwining
 Each other, still supplanted, down he fell
 A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
 Reluctant, but in vain ; a greater power 515
 Now rul'd him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd
 According to his doom. He would have spoke,
 But hiss for hiss return'd with forked tongue
 To forked tongue, for now were all transform'd
 Alike, to serpents all, as accessories 520
 To his bold riot ; dreadful was the din
 Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
 With complicated monsters head and tail,
 Scorpion, and asp, and amphispæna dire,
 Cerastes horn'd, hydrus, and elops drear, 525
 And dipsas, (not so thick swarm'd once the soil
 Bedropp'd with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
 Ophiusa ;) but still greatest, he the midst,
 Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
 Engender'd in the Pythian vale on slime, 530
 Huge Python, and his power no less he seem'd
 Above the rest still to retain. They all
 Him follow'd, issuing forth to th' open field,
 Where all yet left of that revolted rout,
 Heaven-fallen, in station stood or just array, 535
 Sublime with expectation when to see
 In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief.
 They saw, but other sight instead, a crowd
 Of ugly serpents : horror on them fell,
 And horrid sympathy ; for what they saw 540
 They felt themselves now changing ; down their arms,
 Down fell both spear and shield, down they as fast,
 And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form,
 Catch'd by contagion, like in punishment,
 As in their crime. Thus was th' applause they meant
 Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame, 546
 Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There
 stood

A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,
 His will who reigns above, to aggravate
 Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that 550
 Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
 Us'd by the tempter : on that prospect strange
 Their earnest eyes they fix'd, imagining
 For one forbidden tree a multitude
 Now risen, to work them further wo or shame ; 555
 Yet parch'd with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
 Though to delude them sent, could not abstain,
 But on they roll'd in heaps, and up the trees
 Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks
 That curl'd Magæra : greedily they pluck'd 560
 The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
 Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flam'd :
 This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
 Deceiv'd ; they fondly thinking to allay
 Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit 565
 Chew'd bitter ashes, which th' offended taste
 With spattering noise rejected : oft they assay'd,
 Hunger and thirst constraining, drugg'd as oft,
 With hatefullest disrelish writh'd their jaws
 With soot and cinders fill'd ; so oft they fell 570
 Into the same illusion, not as man
 Whom they triumph'd once laps'd. Thus were they
 plagu'd
 And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,
 Till their lost shape, permitted, they resum'd,
 Yearly enjoy'd, some say, to undergo 575
 This annual humbling certain number'd days
 To dash their pride, and joy for man seduc'd.
 However some tradition they dispers'd
 Among the heathen of their purchase got,
 And fabled how the serpent, whom they call'd 580
 Ophion, with Eurynome, the wide
 Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
 Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driven,
 And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.

Meanwhile in Paradise the hellish pair 585
 Too soon arriv'd, Sin there in power before,
 Once actual, now in body, and to dwell
 Habitual habitant ; behind her Death
 Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
 On his pale horse : to whom Sin thus began : 590

“Second of Satan sprung, all conqu’ring Death!
 What think’st thou of our empire now, tho’ earn’d
 With travel difficult, not better far
 Than still at hell’s dark threshold to have sat watch,
 Unnam’d, undreaded, and thyself half-starv’d?” 595

Whom thus the Sin-born monster answer’d soon :
 “To me, who with eternal famine pine,
 Alike is hell, or Paradise, or heaven,
 There best where most with ravine I may meet ;
 Which here tho’ plenteous all too little seems 600
 To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corpse.”

To whom th’ incestuous mother thus replied :
 “Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and
 flowers,
 Feed first, on each beast next, and fish, and fowl,
 No homely morsels ; and whatever thing 605
 The scythe of Time mows down, devour unspar’d ;
 Till I in man residing through the race,
 His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect,
 And season him thy last and sweetest prey.”

This said, they both betook them several ways,
 Both to destroy, or unimmortal make 611
 All kinds, and for destruction to mature
 Sooner or later ; which th’ Almighty seeing,
 From his transcendent seat the saints among,
 To those bright orders utter’d thus his voice : 615

“See with what heat these dogs of hell advance
 To waste and havoc yonder world, which I
 So fair and good created, and had still
 Kept in that state, had not the folly of man
 Let in these wasteful furies, who impute 620
 Folly to me, so doth the prince of hell
 And his adherents, that with so much ease
 I suffer them to enter and possess
 A place so heavenly, and conniving seem
 To gratify my scornful enemies, 625
 That laugh, as if transported with some fit
 Of passion, I to them had quitted all,
 At random yielded up to their misrule
 And knew not that I call’d and drew them thither,
 My hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth 630

Which man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
On what was pure, till cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh
burst

With suck'd and glutted offal, at one sling
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son, 634
Both sin and death, and yawning grave, at last,
Through Chaos hurl'd obstruct the mouth of hell
For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.
Then heaven and earth renew'd shall be made pure
To sanctity that shall receive no stain : 639
Till then the curse pronounc'd on both precedes."

He ended, and the heavenly audience loud
Sung hallelujah, as the sound of seas,
Through multitude that sung: "Just are thy ways,
Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;
Who can extenuate thee?" Next to the Son, 645
"Destin'd restorer of mankind, by whom
New heaven and earth shall to the ages rise,
Or down from heaven descend." Such was their song,
While the Creator, calling forth by name
His mighty angels, gave them several charge, 650
As sorted best with present things. The sun
Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
As might affect the earth with cold and heat
Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call
Decrepit winter, from the south to bring 655
Solstitial summer's heat. To the blank moon
Her office they prescrib'd, to th' other five
Their planetary motions and aspects
In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite
Of noxious efficacy, and when to join 660
In synod unbenign; and taught the fix'd
Their influence malignant when to shower,
Which of them rising with the sun, or falling,
Should prove tempestuous: to the winds they set
Their corners, when with bluster to confound 665
Sea, air, and shore, the thunder when to roll
With terror through the dark aerial hall.
Some say he bid his angels turn askance
The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
From the sun's axle; they with labour push'd 670
Oblique the centric globe: some say the sun
Was bid turn reins from th' equinoctial road
Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven

Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins
 Up to the Tropic Crab ; thence down amain 675
 By Leo and the Virgin and the Scales,
 As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change
 Of seasons to each clime ; else had the spring
 Perpetual smil'd on earth with verdant flowers,
 Equal in days and nights, except to those 680
 Beyond the polar circles ; to them day
 Had unbenighted shone, with the low sun,
 To recompense his distance, in their sight
 Had rounded still th' horizon, and not known
 Or east or west, which had forbid the snow 685
 From cold Estotiland, and south as far
 Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit
 The sun, as from Thyestean banquet, turn'd
 His course intended ; else how had the world
 Inhabited, though sinless, more than now, 690
 Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat ?
 These changes in the heavens, though slow, produc'd
 Like change on sea and land, sidereal blast,
 Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,
 Corrupt and pestilent. Now from the north 695
 Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,
 Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice,
 And snow and hail, and stormy gust and flaw
 Boreas and Cæcias, and Argestes loud,
 And Thrasias, rend the woods and seas upturn ; 700
 With adverse blast upturn them from the south
 Notus and Afer, black with thund'rous clouds
 From Serrationa ; thwart of these as fierce
 Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,
 Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise, 705
 Sirocco and Libecchio. Thus began
 Outrage from lifeless things ; but Discord first,
 Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational,
 Death introduc'd through fierce antipathy : 709
 Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
 And fish with fish ; to graze the herb all leaving,
 Devour'd each other : nor stood much in awe
 Of man, but fled him, or with count'nance grim
 Glar'd on him passing. These were from without.
 The growing miseries which Adam saw 715
 Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
 To sorrow abandon'd, but worse felt within,

And in a troubled sea of passion toss'd,
Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint :

“O miserable of happy ! is this the end 720
Of this new glorious world, and me so late
The glory of that glory, who now become
Accurs'd of blessed, hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my height
Of happiness ! yet well, if here would end 725
The misery ; I deserv'd it, and would bear
My own deservings ; but this will not serve
All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice once heard
Delightfully, ‘Increase and multiply,’ 730
Now death to hear ! for what can I increase
Or multiply, but curses on my head ?
Who of all ages to succeed, but feeling
The evil on him brought by me, will curse
My head ? Ill fare our ancestor impure, 735
For this we may thank Adam ; but his thanks
Shall be the execration ; so besides
Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me redound,
On me, as on their natural centre, light 740
Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes !
Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me man ? Did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me, or here place 745
In this delicious garden ? As my will
Concurr'd not to my being, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust,
Desirous to resign and render back
All I receiv'd, unable to perform 750
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes ? Inexplicable
Thy justice seems ; yet to say truth, too late, 755
I thus contest ; then should have been refus'd
Those terms whatever, when they were propos'd :
Thou didst accept them ; wilt thou enjoy the good,
Then cavil the conditions ? And thou God
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son 760
Prove disobedient, and reprov'd, retort,

Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not:
 Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
 That proud excuse? Yet him not thy election,
 But natural necessity begot, 765
 God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
 To serve him; thy reward was of his grace,
 Thy punishment then justly is at his will.
 Be it so, for I submit; his doom is fair,
 That dust I am, and shall to dust return: 770
 O welcome hour whenever! Why delays
 His hand to execute what his decree
 Fix'd on this day? Why do I overlive?
 Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out
 To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet 775
 Mortality my sentence, and be earth
 Insensible! How glad would lay me down
 As in my mother's lap! There I should rest
 And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more
 Would thunder in my ears, no fear of worse 780
 To me and to my offspring would torment me
 With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
 Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die,
 Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of man
 Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish 785
 With this corporeal clod; then in the grave,
 Or in some other dismal place, who knows
 But I shall die a living death? O thought
 Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath
 Of life that sinn'd: what dies but what had life 790
 And sin? The body properly hath neither.
 All of me then shall die: let this appease
 The doubt, since human reach no further knows
 For though the Lord of all be infinite,
 Is his wrath also? Be it, man is not so, 795
 But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise
 Wrath without end on man whom death must end?
 Can he make deathless death? that were to make
 Strange contradiction, which to God himself
 Impossible is held, as argument 800
 Of weakness, not of power. Will he draw out
 For anger's sake, finite to infinite
 In punish'd man, to satisfy his rigour
 Satisfied never? That were to extend
 His sentence beyond dust and Nature's law, 805
 By which all causes else according still

To the reception of their matter act,
 Not to th' extent of their own sphere. But say
 That death be not one stroke, as I suppos'd,
 Bereaving sense, but endless misery 810
 From this day onward, which I feel begun
 Both in me, and without me, and so last
 To perpetuity; ay me, that fear
 Comes thund'ring back with dreadful revolution
 On my defenceless head; both Death and I 815
 Am found eternal, and incorporate both;
 Nor I on my part single, in me all
 Posterity stands curs'd: fair patrimony
 That I must leave ye, sons; O were I able
 To waste it all myself, and leave ye none! 820
 So disinherited how would ye bless
 Me, now your curse! Ah! why should all mankind
 For one man's fault thus guiltless be condemn'd,
 If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
 But all corrupt, both mind and will deprav'd, 825
 Not to do only, but to will the same
 With me? How can they then acquitted stand
 In sight of God? Him after all disputes
 Forc'd I absolve: all my evasions vain,
 And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still
 But to my own conviction: first and last 831
 On me, me only, as the source and spring
 Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;
 So might the wrath. Fond wish! couldst thou sup-
 port
 That burden, heavier than the earth to bear, 835
 Than all the world much heavier, though divided
 With that bad woman? Thus what thou desir'st,
 And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
 Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
 Beyond all past example and future, 840
 To Satan only like both crime and doom.
 O conscience, into what abyss of fears
 And horrors hast thou driven me; out of which
 I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!"

Thus Adam to himself lamented loud 845
 Through the still night, not now, as ere man fell,
 Wholesome and cool, and mild, but with black air
 Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom,
 Which to his evil conscience represented

All things with double terror : on the ground 850
 Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
 Curs'd his creation, death as oft accus'd
 Of tardy execution, since denounc'd
 The day of his offence. "Why comes not death,"
 Said he, "with one thrice-acceptable stroke 855
 To end me? Shall truth fail to keep her word,
 Justice divine not hasten to be just?
 But death comes not at all, justice divine
 Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.
 O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers
 With other echo late I taught your shades 861
 To answer, and resound far other song."
 Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
 Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
 Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd ; 865
 But her with stern regard he thus repell'd :

"Out of my sight, thou serpent ; that name best
 Befits thee with him leagu'd, thyself as false
 And hateful ; nothing wants, but that thy shape,
 Like his, and colour serpentine, may show 870
 Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee
 Henceforth ; lest that too heavenly form pretended
 To hellish falsehood, snare them. But for thee
 I had persisted happy, had not thy pride
 And wand'ring vanity, when least was safe, 875
 Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd
 Not to be trusted, longing to be seen,
 Though by the Devil himself, him overweening
 To over-reach, but with the serpent meeting
 Fool'd and beguil'd, by him thou, I by thee, 880
 To trust thee from my side, imagin'd wise,
 Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,
 And understood not all was but a show
 Rather than solid virtue, all but a rib
 Crook'd by nature, bent, as now appears, 885
 More to the part sinister, from me drawn,
 Well if thrown out as supernumerary
 To my just number found. O why did God,
 Creator wise, that peopled highest heaven
 With spirits masculine, create at last 890
 This novelty on earth, this fair defect
 Of nature, and not fill the world at once
 With men as angels without feminine,

Or find some other way to generate
 Mankind? This mischief had not then befallen, 895
 And more that shall befall, innumerable
 Disturbances on earth through female snares,
 And strait conjunction with this sex: for either
 He never shall find out fit mate, but such
 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake; 900
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
 Through her perverseness, but shall see her gain'd
 By a far worse, or if she love, withheld
 By parents; or his happiest choice too late
 Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock-bound 905
 To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
 Which infinite calamity shall cause
 To human life, and household peace confound."

He added not, and from her turn'd: but Eve,
 Not so repuls'd, with tears that ceas'd not flowing,
 And tresses all disorder'd, at his feet 911
 Fell humble, and embracing them, besought
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint:

"Forsake me not thus, Adam; witness heaven
 What love sincere, and reverence in my heart 915
 I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
 Unhappily deceiv'd: thy suppliant
 I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
 Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
 Thy counsel in this uttermost distress, 920
 My only strength and stay: forlorn of thee,
 Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
 While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
 Between us two let there be peace, both joining,
 As join'd in injuries, one enmity 925
 Against a foe by doom express assign'd us,
 That cruel serpent. On me exercise not
 Thy hatred for this misery befallen,
 On me already lost, me than thyself
 More miserable; both have sinn'd, but thou, 930
 Against God only, I against God and thee,
 And to the place of judgment will return,
 There with my cries importune heaven, that all
 The sentence from thy head remov'd may light
 On me, sole cause to thee of all this wo 935
 Me, me only, just object of his ire."

She ended weeping, and her lowly plight,
 Immoveable till peace obtain'd from fault
 Acknowledg'd and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
 Commiseration ; soon his heart relented 940
 Tow'rds her, his life so late and sole delight,
 Now at his feet submissive in distress,
 Creature so fair his reconciliation seeking,
 His counsel whom she had displeas'd, his aid :
 As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost, 945
 And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon :

“ Unwary, and too desirous, as before,
 So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st
 The punishment all on thyself ; alas !
 Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain 950
 His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
 And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If prayers
 Could alter high decrees, I to that place
 Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
 That on my head all might be visited, 955
 Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,
 To me committed and by me expos'd.
 But rise, let us no more contend, nor blame
 Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere, but strive,
 In offices of love, how we may lighten 960
 Each other's burden, in our share of wo ;
 Since this day's death denounc'd, if ought I see
 Will prove no sudden, but a slow-pac'd evil,
 A long day's dying to augment our pain,
 And to our seed (O hapless seed !) deriv'd.” 965

To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied :
 “ Adam, by sad experiment I know
 How little weight my words with thee can find,
 Found so erroneous, thence by just event
 Found so unfortunate ; nevertheless, 970
 Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place
 Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
 Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart,
 Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
 What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen, 975
 Tending to some relief of our extremes,
 Or end, though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
 As in our evils, and of easier choice.
 If care of our descent perplex us most,

Which must be born to certain wo, devour'd 980
 By death at last ; and miserable it is
 To be to others cause of misery.
 Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
 Into this cursed world a woful race,
 That after wretched life must be at last 985
 Food for so foul a monster ; in thy power
 It lies, yet ere conception to prevent
 The race unblest'd, to being yet unbegot.
 Childless thou art, childless remain : so Death
 Shall be deceiv'd his glut, and with us two 990
 Be forc'd to satisfy his ravenous maw.
 But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
 Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
 From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet,
 And with desire to languish without hope, 995
 Before the present object languishing
 With like desire, which would be misery
 And torment less than none of what we dread ;
 Then, both ourselves and seed at once to free
 From what we fear for both, let us make short, 1000
 Let us seek Death, or he not found, supply
 With our own hands his office on ourselves.
 Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
 That show no end but death, and have the power,
 Of many ways to die the shortest choosing, 1005
 Destruction with destruction to destroy ?”

She ended here, or vehement despair
 Broke off the rest ; so much of death her thoughts
 Had entertain'd, as dy'd her cheeks with pale.
 But Adam, with such counsel nothing sway'd, 1010
 To better hopes his more attentive mind
 Lab'ring had rais'd, and thus to Eve replied :

“ Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
 To argue in thee something more sublime
 And exceedent than what thy mind contemns : 1015
 But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
 That excellence thought in thee, and implies,
 Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
 For loss of life and pleasure overlov'd.
 Or if thou covet death, as utmost end 1020
 Of misery, so thinking to evade
 The penalty pronounc'd, doubt not but God

Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire than so
 'To be forestall'd : much more I fear lest death
 So snatch'd will not exempt us from the pain 1025
 We are by doom to pay ; rather such acts
 Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
 To make death in us live. Then let us seek
 Some safer resolution, which methinks
 I have in view, calling to mind with heed 1030
 Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
 The serpent's head ; piteous amends, unless
 Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe
 Satan, who in the serpent hath contriv'd
 Against us this deceit : to crush his head 1035
 Would be revenge indeed ; which will be lost
 By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
 Resolv'd as thou propos'est ; so our foe
 Shall scape his punishment ordain'd, and we
 Instead shall double ours upon our heads. 1040
 No more be mention'd then of violence
 Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness,
 That cuts us off from hope, and savours only
 Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
 Reluctance against God and his just yoke 1045
 Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
 And gracious temper he both heard and judg'd,
 Without wrath or reviling ; we expected
 Immediate dissolution, which we thought
 Was meant by death that day, when lo, to thee
 Pains only in child-bearing were foretold, 1051
 And bringing forth, soon recompens'd with joy,
 Fruit of thy womb : on me the curse aslope
 Glanc'd on the ground ; with labour I must earn
 My bread ; what harm ? Idleness had been worse,
 My labour will sustain me ; and lest cold 1056
 Or heat should injure us, his timely care
 Hath unbesought provided, and his hands
 Cloth'd us unworthy, pitying while he judg'd ;
 How much more, if we pray him, will his ear 1060
 Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
 And teach us further by what means to shun
 Th' inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow ?
 Which now the sky with various face begins
 To show us in this mountain, while the winds 1065
 Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks
 Of these fair spreading trees ; which bids us seek

Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish
 Our limbs benumb'd, ere this diurnal star
 Leave cold the night, how we, his gather'd beams'
 Reflected, may with matter sere foment, 1071
 Or by collision of two bodies grind
 The air attrite to fire, as late the clouds
 Justling or push'd with winds rude in their shock
 Tine the slant lightning, whose thwart flame, driven
 down, 1075

Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine,
 And sends a comfortable heat from far,
 Which might supply the sun: such fire to use,
 And what may else be remedy or cure
 To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought, 1080
 He will instruct us praying, and of grace
 Beseeching him, so as we need not fear
 To pass commodiously this life, sustain'd
 By him with many comforts, till we end
 In dust, our final rest and native home. 1085
 What better can we do, than to the place
 Repairing where he judg'd us prostrate fall
 Before him reverent, and there confess
 Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
 Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign 1091
 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?
 Undoubtedly he will relent and turn
 From his displeasure; in whose look serene,
 When angry most he seem'd and most severe, 1095
 What else but favour, grace, and mercy shone?"

So spake our father penitent, nor Eve
 Felt less remorse: they forthwith to the place
 Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell
 Before him reverent, and both confess'd 1100
 Humbly their faults, and pardon begg'd with tears
 Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Son of God presents to his Father the prayers of our first parents now repenting, and intercedes for them. God accepts them, but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise: sends Michael with a band of Cherubim to dispossess them; but first to reveal to Adam future things. Michael's coming down. Adam shows to Eve certain ominous signs; he discerns Michael's approach, goes out to meet him: the Angel denounces their departure. Eve's lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits. The Angel leads him up to a high hill, sets before him in vision what shall happen till the flood.

THUS they in lowliest plight repentant stood
Praying, for from the mercy-seat above
Prevenient grace descending had remov'd
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breath'd 5
Unutterable, which the spirit of prayer
Inspir'd, and wing'd for heaven with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory: yet their port
Not of mean suitors, nor important less
Seem'd their petition, than when th' ancient pair 10
In fables old, less ancient yet than these,
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
The race of mankind drown'd, before the shrine
Of Themis stood devout. To heaven their prayers
Flew up, nor miss'd the way by envious winds 15
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they pass'd

Dimensionless through heavenly doors ; then clad
 With incense, where the golden altar fum'd,
 By their great intercessor, came in sight
 Before the Father's throne : them the glad Son 20
 Presenting, thus to intercede began :

“ See, Father, what first fruits on earth are sprung
 From thy implanted grace in man, these sighs
 And prayers, which in this golden censer, mix'd
 With incense, I, thy priest, before thee bring, 25
 Fruits of more pleasing savour from thy seed
 Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
 Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees
 Of Paradise could have produc'd, ere fallen
 From innocence. Now, therefore, bend thine ear 30
 To supplication, hear his sighs though mute ;
 Unskilful with what words to pray, let me
 Interpret for him, me his advocate
 And propitiation ; all his works on me,
 Good or not good, ingraft, my merit those 35
 Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.
 Accept me, and in me from these receive
 The smell of peace tow'rd mankind ; let him live
 Before thee reconcil'd, at least his days
 Number'd, though sad, till death, his doom, (which
 To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse) 40
 To better life shall yield him, where with me
 All my redeem'd may dwell in joy and bliss,
 Made one with me, as I with thee am one.”

To whom the Father, without cloud, serene : 45
 “ All thy request for man, accepted Son,
 Obtain ; all thy request was my decree
 But longer in that Paradise to dwell,
 The law I gave to nature him forbids :
 Those pure immortal elements that know 50
 No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
 Eject him tainted now and purge him off
 As a distemper, gross to air as gross,
 And mortal food, as may dispose him best
 For dissolution wrought by sin, that first 55
 Distemper'd all things, and of incorrupt
 Corrupted. I at first, with two fair gifts,
 Created him endow'd, with happiness
 And immortality : that fondly lost,

This other serv'd but to eternize wo ; 60
 Till I provided death ; so death becomes
 His final remedy, and after life
 Tried in sharp tribulation, and refin'd
 By faith and faithful works, to second life,
 Wak'd in the renovation of the just, 65
 Resigns him up with heaven and earth renew'd.
 But let us call to synod all the bless'd
 Through heaven's wide bounds ; from them I will
 not hide
 My judgments, how with mankind I proceed,
 As how with peccant angels late they saw, 70
 And in their state, though firm, stood more confirm'd."

He ended, and the Son gave signal high
 To the bright minister that watch'd ; he blew
 His trumpet, hezrd in Oreb since perhaps
 When God descended, and perhaps once more 75
 To sound at general doom. Th' angelic blast
 Fill'd all the regions ; from their blissful bowers
 Of amaranthine shade, fountain or spring,
 By the waters of life, where'er they sat
 In fellowships of joy, the sons of light 80
 Hasted, resorting to the summons high,
 And took their seats ; till from his throne supreme
 Th' Almighty thus pronounc'd his sov'reign will :

"O sons, like one of us man is become
 To know both good and evil, since his taste 85
 Of that defended fruit ; but let him boast
 His knowledge of good lost, and evil got ;
 Happier had it suffic'd him to have known
 Good by itself, and evil not at all.
 He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite, 90
 My motions in him ; longer than they move,
 His heart I know, how variable and vain
 Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand
 Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,
 And live for ever, dream at least to live 95
 For ever, to remove him I decree,
 And send him from the garden forth to till
 The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.

"Michael, this my behest have thou in charge ;
 Take to thee from among the cherubim 100

Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the fiend,
 Or in behalf of man, or to invade
 Vacant possession, some new trouble raise :
 Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God,
 Without remorse drive out the sinful pair, 105
 From hallow'd ground th' unholy, and denounce
 To them and to their progeny from thence
 Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint
 At the sad sentence rigorously urg'd,
 For I behold them soften'd and with tears 110
 Bewailing their excess, all terror hide.
 If patiently thy bidding they obey,
 Dismiss them not disconsolate ; reveal
 To Adam what shall come in future days,
 As I shall thee enlighten ; intermix 115
 My covenant in the woman's seed renew'd ;
 So send them forth, tho' sorrowing, yet in peace :
 And on the east side of the garden place,
 Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
 Cherubic watch, and of a sword the flame 120
 Wide waving, all approach far off to fright,
 And guard all passage to the tree of life :
 Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
 To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey, 124
 With whose stolen fruit man once more to delude."

He ceas'd ; and th' archangelic power prepar'd
 For swift descent, with him the cohort bright
 Of watchful cherubim ; four faces each
 Had, like a double Janus, all their shape 130
 Spangled with eyes, more numerous than those
 Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,
 Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the past'ral reed
 Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile,
 To re-salute the world with sacred light,
 Leucothea wak'd and with fresh dews embalm'd 135
 The earth, when Adam and first matron Eve
 Had ended now their orisons, and found
 Strength added from above, new hope to spring
 Out of despair, joy, but with fear yet link'd ;
 Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew'd : 140

"Eve, easily may faith admit that all
 The good which we enjoy from heaven descends ;
 But that from us ought should ascend to heaven

So prevalent as to concern the mind
 Of God high-bless'd, or to incline his will 145
 Hard to belief may seem ; yet this will prayer,
 Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
 Even to the seat of God. For since I sought
 By prayer th' offended Deity t' appease,
 Kneel'd, and before him humbled all my heart, 150
 Methought I saw him placable and mild,
 Bending his ear ; persuasion in me grew
 That I was heard with favour ; peace return'd
 Home to my breast and to my memory
 His promise, that thy ' seed shall bruise our foe ;' 155
 Which then not minded in dismay, yet now
 Assures me that the bitterness of death
 Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,
 Eve rightly call'd, mother of all mankind,
 Mother of all things living, since by thee, 160
 Man is to live, and all things live for man."

To whom thus Eve with sad demeanour meek.
 "Ill worthy I such title should belong
 To me transgressor, who, for thee ordain'd
 A help, became thy snare ; to me reproach 165
 Rather belongs, distrust and all dispraise :
 But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
 That I, who first brought death on all, am grac'd
 The source of life ; next favourable thou,
 Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st, 170
 Far other name deserving. But the field
 To labour calls us now, with sweat impos'd
 Though after sleepless night ; for see the morn,
 All unconcern'd with our unrest, begins
 Her rosy progress smiling ; let us forth, 175
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
 Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoind
 Laborious, till day droop ; while here we dwell,
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks ?
 Here let us live, though in fallen state, content." 180

So spake, so wish'd much humbled Eve, but fate
 Subscrib'd not ; Nature first gave signs, impress'd
 On bird, beast, air, air suddenly eclips'd
 After short blush of morn ; nigh in her sight
 The bird of Jove, stoop'd from his airy tour, 185
 Two birds of gayest plume before him drove

Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
 First hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace,
 Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind ;
 Direct to th' eastern gate was bent their flight. 190
 Adam observ'd, and with his eye the chase
 Pursuing, not unmov'd, to Eve thus spake :

“ O Eve! some further change awaits us nigh,
 Which heaven by these mute signs in nature shows,
 Forerunners of his purpose, or to warn 195
 Us, haply too secure, of our discharge
 From penalty, because from death releas'd
 Some days; how long, and what till then our life,
 Who knows? Or more than this, that we are dust,
 And thither must return and be no more? 200
 Why else this double object in our sight
 If flight pursu'd in th' air, and o'er the ground,
 One way the self-same hour? Why in the east
 Darkness ere day's mid-course, and morning light
 More orient in yon western cloud, that draws 205
 O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
 And slow descends, with something heavenly fraught?”

He err'd not, for by this the heavenly bands
 Down from a sky of jasper lighted now
 In Paradise, and on a hill made halt ; 210
 A glorious apparition, had not doubt
 And carnal fear, that day dimm'd Adam's eye.
 Not that more glorious, when the angels met
 Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw
 The field pavilion'd with his guardians bright ; 215
 Nor that which on the flaming mount appear'd
 In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire,
 Against the Syrian king, who to surprise
 One man, assassin like, that levied war,
 War unproclaim'd. The princely hierarch 220
 In their bright stand there left his powers to seize
 Possession of the garden ; he alone,
 To find where Adam shelter'd, took his way,
 Not unperceiv'd of Adam, who to Eve,
 While the great visitant approach'd, thus spake : 225

“ Eve! now expect great tidings, which perhaps
 Of us will soon determine, or impose
 New laws to be observ'd ; for I descry

From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
 One of the heavenly host, and by his gait 230
 None of the meanest, some great potentate,
 Or of the thrones above; such majesty
 Invests him coming; yet not terrible,
 That I should fear, nor sociably mild,
 As Raphael, that I should much confide, 235
 But solemn and sublime, whom not to offend,
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire."

He ended; and the archangel soon drew nigh,
 Not in his shape celestial, but as man
 Clad to meet man; over his lucid arms 240
 A military vest of purple flow'd,
 Livelier than Melibœan, or the grain
 Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old
 In time of truce; Iris had dipp'd the woof;
 His starry helm unbuckled show'd him prime 245
 In manhood, where youth ended; by his side,
 As in a glist'ring zodiac, hung the sword,
 Satan's dire dread, and in his hand the spear.
 Adam bow'd low; he kingly, from his state
 Inclined not, but his coming thus deciar'd: 250

"Adam! heaven's high behest no preface needs:
 Sufficient that thy prayers are heard, and death,
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
 Defeated of his seizure, many days
 Given thee of grace, wherein thou may'st repent, 255
 And one bad act with many deeds well done
 May'st cover: well may then thy Lord, pleas'd,
 Redeem thee quite from death's rapacious claim;
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell
 Permits not; to remove thee I am come, 260
 And send thee from the garden forth, to till
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.

He added not, for Adam at the news
 Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,
 That all his senses bound; Eve, who unseen, 265
 Yet all had heard, with audible lament
 Discover'd soon the place of her retire.

"O unexpected stroke, worse than of death!
 Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave

Thee, native soil ! these happy walks and shades, 270
 Fit haunt of gods ? where I had hope to spend,
 Quiet, though sad, the respite of that day
 That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,
 That never will in other climate grow,
 My early visitation, and my last 275
 At even, which I bred up with tender hand
 From the first op'ning bud, and gave ye names,
 Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
 Your tribes, and water from th' ambrosial fount
 Thee lastly, nuptial bower, by me adorn'd 280
 With what to sight or smell was sweet, from thee
 How shall I part, and whither wander down
 Into a lower world, to this obscure
 And wild ? How shall we breathe in other air
 Less pure, accustom'd to immortal fruits ?" 285

Whom thus the angel interrupted mild :
 " Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign
 What justly thou hast lost ; nor set thy heart,
 Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine :
 Thy going is not lonely ; with thee goes 290
 Thy husband ; him to follow thou art bound ;
 Where he abides, think there thy native soil."

Adam by this from the cold sudden damp
 Recov'ring, and his scatter'd spirits return'd,
 To Michael thus his humble words address'd : 295

" Celestial ! whether among the thrones, or nam'd
 Of them the highest, for such of shape may seem
 Prince above princes, gently hast thou told
 Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
 And in performing end us ; what besides 300
 Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair,
 Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,
 Departure from this happy place, our sweet
 Recess, and only consolation left
 Familiar to our eyes, all places else 305
 Inhospitable appear, and desolate ;
 Nor knowing us, nor known : and if by prayer
 Incessant I could hope to change the will
 Of him who all things can, I would not cease
 To weary him with my assiduous cries : 310
 But prayer against his absolute decree

No more avails than breath against the wind,
 Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth ·
 Therefore to his great bidding I submit.
 This most afflicts me, that departing hence, 315
 As from his face I shall be hid, depriv'd
 His 'blessed count'nance; here I could frequent
 With worship, place by place, where he vouchsaf'd
 Presence divine, and to my sons relate,
 ' On this mount he appear'd, under this tree 320
 Stood visible, among these pines his voice
 I heard, here with him at this fountain talk'd :'
 So many grateful altars I would rear
 Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
 Of lustre from the brook, in memory. 325
 Or monument to ages, and thereon
 Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers.
 In yonder nether world where shall I seek
 His bright appearances, or footstep trace ?
 For though I fled him angry, yet, recall'd 330
 To life prolong'd and promis'd race, I now
 Gladly behold, though but his utmost skirts,
 Of glory, and far off his steps adore."

To whom thus Michael with regard benign :
 " Adam. thou know'st heaven his, and all the earth,
 Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills 336
 Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
 Fomented by his virtual power and warm'd .
 All th' earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
 No despicable gift; surmise not then 340
 His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd
 Of Paradise or Eden: this had been
 Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
 All generations, and had hither come,
 From all the ends of th' earth, to celebrate 345
 And reverence thee their great progenitor.
 But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down,
 To dwell on even ground now with thy sons :
 Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain
 God is as here, and will be found alike 350
 Present, and of his presence many a sign
 Still following thee, still compassing thee round
 With goodness and paternal love, his face
 Express, and of his steps the track divine.
 Whicn that thou may'st believe, and be confirm'd. 355

Ere thou from hence depart ; know, I am sent
 To show thee what shall come in future days
 To thee, and to thy offspring ; good with bad
 Expect to hear, supernal grace contending
 With sinfulness of men ; thereby to learn 363
 True patience, and to temper joy with fear
 And pious sorrow, equally inur'd
 By moderation either state to bear,
 Prosperous or adverse : so shalt thou lead
 Safest thy life, and best prepar'd endure 365
 Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
 This hill ; let Eve (for I have drench'd her eyes)
 Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wak'st ;
 As once thou slept'st, while she to life was form'd.

To whom thus Adam gratefully replied : 370
 " Ascend, I follow thee, safe guide ! the path
 Thou lead'st me, and to the hand of heaven submit,
 However chast'ning, to the evil turn
 My obvious breast, arming to overcome
 By suffering, and earn rest from labour won, 375
 If so I may attain." So both ascend
 In the visions of God. It was a hill,
 Of Paradise the highest, from whose top
 The hemisphere of earth in clearest ken 379
 Stretch'd out to th' amplest reach of prospect lay.
 Not higher that hill, or wider looking round,
 Whereon, for diff'rent cause, the tempter set
 Our second Adam in the wilderness,
 To show him all earth's kingdoms and their glory.
 His eye might there command wherever stood 385
 City of old or modern fame, the seat
 Of mightiest empire, from the destin'd walls
 Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,
 And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
 To Paquin, of Sinæan kings, and thence 390
 To Agra, and Lahor, of great Mogul,
 Down to the golden Chersonese, or where
 The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
 In Hispahan, or where the Russian Czar
 In Moscow, or the Sultan in Bizance, 395
 Turchestan-born ; nor could his eye not ken
 Th' empire of Negus, to his utmost port
 Ercoco, and the less maratime kings,
 Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,

And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm 400
 Of Congo, and Angola farthest south ;
 Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount,
 The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez, and Sus,
 Morocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen ;
 On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway 405
 The world : in spirit perhaps he also saw
 Rich Mexico the seat of Montezume,
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
 Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoil'd
 Guiana, whose great city Geryen's sons 410
 Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film remov'd,
 Which that false fruit that promis'd clearer sight
 Had bred ; then purg'd with euphrasy and rue
 The visual nerve, for he had much to see ; 415
 And from the well of life three drops instill'd,
 So deep the power of these ingredients pierc'd,
 Even to the inmost seat of mental sight,
 That Adam, now enforc'd to close his eyes, 419
 Sunk down, and all his spirits became entranc'd ;
 But him the gentle angel by the hand
 Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd :

"Adam! now ope thine eyes, and first behold
 Th' effects which thy original crime hath wrought
 In some to spring from thee, who never touch'd 425
 Th' excepted tree, nor with the snake conspir'd,
 Nor sinn'd thy sin, yet from that sin derive
 Corruption to bring forth more violent deeds."

His eyes he open'd, and beheld a field,
 Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves 430
 New reap'd, the other part sheep-walks and folds ;
 'T' th' midst an altar as the land-mark stood,
 Rustic, of grassy sod ; thither anon
 A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
 First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sneaf, 435
 Uncull'd, as came to hand ; a shepherd next,
 More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock
 Choicest and best ; then sacrificing, laid
 The inwards and their fat, with incense strow'd
 On the cleft wood, and all due rites perform'd. 440
 His offering soon propitious fire from heaven
 Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful steam :

The other's not, for his was not sincere ;
 Whereat he inly rag'd, and as they talk'd,
 Smote him into the midriff with a stone 445
 That beat out life ; he fell, and deadly pale
 Groan'd out his soul with gushing blood effus'd.
 Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
 Dismay'd, and thus in haste to th' angel cried :

“O teacher, some great mischief hath befall'n 450
 To that meek man, who well had sacrific'd ;
 Is piety thus and pure devotion paid ?”

T' whom Michael thus, he also mov'd, replied :
 “These two are brethren, Adam, and to come
 Out of thy loins ; th' unjust the just hath slain, 455
 For envy that his brother's offering found
 From heaven acceptance : but the bloody fact
 Will be aveng'd, and th' other's faith approv'd
 Lose no reward, though here thou see him die,
 Rolling in dust and gore.” To which our sire : 460

“Alas, both for the deed and for the cause !
 But have I now seen Death ? Is this the way
 I must return to native dust ? O sight
 Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
 Horrid to think, how horrible to feel !” 465

To whom thus Michael : “Death thou hast seen
 In his first shape on man ; but many shapes
 Of death, and many are the ways that lead
 To his grim cave, all dismal ; yet to sense
 More terrible at th' entrance than within. 470
 Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die,
 By fire, flood, famine ; by intemp'rance more
 In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
 Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
 Before thee shall appear ; that thou may'st know 475
 What misery th' inabstinence of Eve
 Shall bring on men.” Immediately a place
 Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark,
 A lazarus-house it seem'd, wherein were laid
 Numbers of all diseas'd, all maladies 480
 Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
 Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
 Convulsions epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,

Intestine stone and ulcer, cholic pangs,
 Demoniac phrenzy, moping melancholy, 485
 And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
 Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
 Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
 Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
 Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch; 490
 And over them triumphant Death his dart
 Shook, but delay'd to strike, though oft invoc'd
 With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
 Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
 Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept, 495
 Though not of woman born; compassion quell'd
 His best of man, and gave him up to tears
 A space, till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess;
 And scarce recovering words, his plaint renew'd :

“O miserable mankind, to what fall 500
 Degraded, to what wretched state reserv'd!
 Better end here unborn. Why is life given
 To be thus wrested from us? Rather why
 Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
 What we receive, would either not accept 505
 Life offer'd, or soon beg to lay it down,
 Glad to be so dismiss'd in peace. Can thus
 Th' image of God in man, created once
 So goodly and erect, though faulty since
 To such unsightly sufferings be debas'd 510
 Under inhuman pains? Why should not man,
 Retaining still divine similitude
 In part, from such deformities be free,
 And for his Maker's image sake exempt?” 514

“Their Maker's image,” answer'd Michael, “then
 Forsook them, when themselves they vilified
 To serve ungovern'd appetite, and took
 His image whom they serv'd, a brutish vice,
 Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.
 Therefore so abject is their punishment, 520
 Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own,
 Or if his likeness, by themselves defac'd,
 While they pervert pure nature's healthful rules
 To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they
 God's image did not reverence in themselves. 525

‘ I yield it just,” said Adam, “ and submit.
 But is there yet no other way, besides
 These painful passages, how we may come
 To death, and mix with our connatural dust ?” 429

“ There is,” said Michael, “ if thou well observe
 The rule of not too much, by temp’rance taught,
 In what thou eat’st and drink’st, seeking from thence
 Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
 Till many years over thy head return :
 So may’st thou live, till like ripe fruit thou drop
 Into thy mother’s lap, or be with ease 536
 Gather’d, not harshly pluck’d, for death mature :
 This is old age ; but then thou must outlive
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will
 change
 To wither’d, weak, and gray ; thy senses then 540
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,
 To what thou hast ; and for the air of youth,
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
 A melancholy damp of cold and dry,
 To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume 545
 The balm of life.” To whom our ancestor

“ Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
 Life much ; bent rather how I may be quit
 Fairest and easiest of this cumb’rous charge,
 Which I must keep till my appointed day 550
 Of rend’ring up, and patiently attend
 My dissolution.” Michael replied :

“ Nor love thy life, nor hate ; but what thou liv’st
 Live well, how long or short permit to heaven :
 And now prepare thee for another sight.” 555

He look’d, and saw a spacious plain, whereon
 Were tents of various hue ; by some were herds
 Of cattle grazing ; others, whence the sound
 Of instruments that made melodious chime
 Was heard, of harp and organ ; and who mov’d 560
 Their stops and chords where seen ; his volant touch
 Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
 Fled and pursu’d transverse the resonant fugue.
 In other part stood one who at the forge,
 Lab’ring, two massy cloads of iron and brass 565

Had melted, (whether found where casual fir
 Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,
 Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot
 To some cave's mouth, or whether wash'd by stream
 From underground,) the liquid ore he drain'd 570
 Into fit moulds prepar'd; from which he form'd
 First his own tools; then, what might else be
 wrought

Fusil or grav'n in metal. After these,
 But on the hither side, a different sort 574
 From the high neighb'ring hills, which was their seat,
 Down to the plain descended: by their guise
 Just men they seem'd, and all their study bent
 To worship God aright, and know his works
 Not hid, nor those things last which might preserve
 Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain 580
 Long had not walk'd, when from the tents behold
 A bevy of fair women, richly gay
 In gems and wanton dress; to th' harp they sung
 Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on.

The men, tho' grave, eyed them, and let their eyes
 Rove without rein, till in the amorous net 586
 Fast caught, they lik'd, and each his liking chose;
 And now of love they treat, till th' evening star,
 Love's harbinger, appear'd; then all in heat
 They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke 590
 Hymen, then first to marriage-rites invok'd:
 With feast and music all the tents resound.
 Such happy interview and fair event
 Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flowers,
 And charming symphonies, attach'd the heart 595
 Of Adam, soon inclin'd t' admit delight,
 The bent of nature; which he thus express'd:

“ True opener of mine eyes, prime angel bless'd
 Much better seems this vision, and more hope
 Of peaceful days portends, than those two past; 600
 Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse;
 Here nature seems fulfill'd in all her ends.”

To whom thus Michael: “ Judge not what is best
 By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,
 Created, as thou art, to nobler end, 605
 Holy and pure, conformity divine.
 Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents

Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
 Who slew his brother; studious they appear
 Of arts that polish life, inventors rare, 610
 Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
 Taught them, but they his gifts acknowledg'd none.
 Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;
 For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd
 Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay, 615
 Yet empty of all good, wherein consists
 Woman's domestic honour and chief praise;
 Bred only and completed to the taste
 Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,
 To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye. 620
 To these, that sober race of men, whose lives
 Religious titled them the sons of God,
 Shall yield' up all their virtue, all their fame,
 -gnobly, to the trains and to the smiles
 Of these fair atheists, and now swim in joy, 625
 Ere long to swim at large; and laugh, for which
 The world ere long a world of tears must weep."

To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft:
 "O pity and shame! that they who to live well
 Enter'd so fair, should turn aside to tread 630
 Paths indirect, or in the midway faint!
 But still I see the tenor of man's wo
 Holds on the same, from woman to begin."

"From man's effeminate slackness it begins,"
 Said th' angel, "who should better hold his place
 By wisdom, and superior gifts receiv'd. 635
 But now prepare thee for another scene."

He look'd, and saw wide territory spread
 Before him, towns, and rural works between,
 Cities of men with lofty gates and towers; 640
 Concourse in arms, fierce faces threat'ning war,
 Giants of mighty bone, and bold emprise;
 Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
 Single, or in array of battle rang'd,
 Both horse and foot, nor idly must'ring stood: 645
 One way a band select from forage drives
 A herd of beeves, fair oxen, and fair kine,
 From a fat meadow-ground; or fleecy flock,
 Ewes and their bleating lambs, over the plain.

Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
 Of human glory, and for glory done
 Of triumph, to be styl'd great conquerors, 695
 Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods,
 Destroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.
 Thus fame shall be achiev'd, renown on earth,
 And what most merits fame in silence hid.
 But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheld'st
 The only righteous in a world perverse, 701
 And therefore hated, therefore so beset
 With foes, for daring single to be just,
 And utter odious truth, that God would come
 To judge them with his saints: him the Most High,
 Wrapp'd in a balmy cloud, with winged steeds 706
 Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God
 High in salvation and the climes of bliss,
 Exempt from death; to show thee what reward
 Awaits the good, the rest what punishment; 710
 Which now direct thine eyes, and soon behold."

He look'd, and saw the face of things quite chang'd;
 The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar;
 All now was turn'd to jollity and game,
 To luxury and riot, feast and dance; 715
 Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
 Rape or adultery, where passing fair
 Allur'd them; thence from cups to civil broils.
 At length a reverend sire among them came,
 And of their doings great dislike declar'd, 720
 And testified against their ways; he oft
 Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
 Triumphs or festivals, and to them preach'd
 Conversion and repentance, as to souls
 In prison under judgments imminent; 725
 But all in vain; which when he saw, he ceas'd
 Contending; and remov'd his tents far off;
 Then from the mountain hewing timber tall,
 Began to build a vessel of huge bulk; 729
 Measur'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and height,
 Smear'd round with pitch, and in the side a door
 Contriv'd; and of provisions laid in large
 For man and beast. when lo, a wonder strange!
 Of every beast, and bird, and insect small 734
 Came sevens, and pairs, and enter'd in, as taught;
 Their order; last the sire, and his three sous.

When violence was ceas'd, and war on earth, 784
 All would have then gone well, peace would have
 crown'd,

With length of happy days, the race of man:
 But I was far deceiv'd; for now I see
 Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
 How comes it thus? unfold, celestial guide, 785
 And whether here the race of man will end."

To whom thus Michael: "Those whom last thou
 saw'st

In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
 First seen in acts of prowess eminent,
 And great exploits, but of true virtue void; 790

Who having spilt much blood, and done much waste,
 Subduing nations, and achiev'd thereby
 Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey,
 Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth.
 Surfeit, and lust, till wantonness and pride 795

Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
 The conquer'd also, and enslav'd by war,
 Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose,
 And fear of God, from whom their piety feign'd,
 In sharp contest of battle found no aid 800

Against invaders; therefore cool'd in zeal,
 Thenceforth shall practice how to live secure,
 Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords
 Shall leave them to enjoy; for th' earth shall bear
 More than enough, that temp'rance may be tried:
 So all shall turn degenerate, all deprav'd; 806

Justice and temp'rance, truth and faith forgot;
 One man except, the only son of light
 In a dark age, against example good,
 Against allurements, custom, and a world 810

Offended; fearless of reproach and scorn,
 Or violence, he of their wicked ways
 Shall them admonish, and before them set
 The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,
 And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come 815

On their impenitence; and shall return
 Of them derided, but of God observ'd
 The one just man alive; by his command
 Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheld'st,
 To save himself and household from amidst 820
 A world devote to universal wrack.

No sooner he, with them of man and beast
 Select for life, shall in the ark be lodg'd,
 And shelter'd round, but all the cataracts
 Of heaven, set open on the earth, shall pour 825
 Rain, day and night; all fountains of the deep
 Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
 Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise
 Above the highest hills; then shall this mount
 Of Paradise by might of waves be mov'd 830
 Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,
 With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,
 Down the great river to the opening gulf,
 And there take root, an island salt and bare,
 The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea-mews' clang:
 To teach thee that God attributes to place 836
 No sanctity, if none be thither brought
 By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
 And now what further shall ensue, behold."

He look'd, and saw the ark hull on the flood, 840
 Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,
 Driven by a keen north wind, that blowing dry
 Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decay'd;
 And the clear sun on his wide wat'ry glass
 Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew, 845
 As after thirst, which made their flowing shrink
 From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
 With soft foot tow'ards the deep, who now had stopp'd
 His sluices, as the heaven his windows shut. 849
 The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground,
 Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd,
 And now the tops of hills as rocks appear,
 With clamour thence the rapid currents drive
 Tow'ards the retreating sea their furious tide.
 Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies, 855
 And after him, the surer messenger,
 A dove, sent forth once and again to spy
 Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light:
 The second time returning, in his bill
 An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign: 860
 Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
 The ancient sire descends with all his train:
 Then with uplifted hands and eyes devout,
 Grateful to heaven, over his head beholds
 A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow,

Conspicuous with three listed colours gay,
 Betokening peace from God, and cov'nant new.
 Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
 Greatly rejoic'd, and thus his joy broke forth:

“ O thou who future things canst represent 870
 As present, heavenly instructor I revive,
 At this last sight, assur'd that man shall live
 With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
 Far less I now lament for one whole world
 Of wicked sons destroy'd, than I rejoice 875
 For one man found so perfect and so just,
 That God vouchsafes to raise another world
 From him, and all his anger to forget.
 But say, what mean those colour'd streaks in heaven,
 Distended as the brow of God appears'd, 880
 Or serve they as a flowery verge to bind
 The fluid skirts of that same wat'ry cloud,
 Lest it again dissolve and shower the earth?”

To whom th' archangel: “ Dext'rously thou aim'st ;
 So willingly doth God remit his ire, 885
 Though late repenting him of man deprav'd,
 Griev'd at his heart, when looking down he saw
 The whole earth fill'd with violence, and all flesh
 Corrupting each their way ; yet those remov'd,
 Such grace shall one just man find in his sight, 890
 That he relents, not to blot out mankind,
 And makes a covenant never to destroy
 The earth again by flood, nor let the sea
 Surpass his bounds, nor rain to drown the world
 With man therein or beast ; but when he brings
 Over the earth a cloud, will therein set 895
 His triple-colour'd bow, whereon to look,
 And call to mind his cov'nant : day and night,
 Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost, 899
 Shall hold their course, till fire purge all things new,
 Both heaven and earth, wherein the just shall dwell.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The angel Michael continues from the flood to relate what shall succeed; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain who that seed of the woman shall be which was promised Adam and Eve in the fall. His incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension; the state of the church till his second coming. Adam, greatly satisfied and recomforted by these relations and promises, ascends the hill with Michael; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams composed to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery sword waving behind them, and the Cherubim taking their stations to guard the place.

As one who in his journey baits at noon,
Tho' bent on speed; so here the archangel paus'd
Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd,
If Adam ought perhaps might interpose;
'Then with transition sweet new speech resumes. 5

'Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end;
And man as from a second stock proceed.
Much thou hast yet to see, but I perceive
Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine
Must needs impair and weary human sense. 10
Henceforth what is to come I will relate,
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.

" This second source of men, while yet but few
 And while the dread of judgment past remains
 Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity, 15
 With some regard to what is just and right,
 Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace,
 Lab'ring the soil and reaping plenteous crop,
 Corn, wine, and oil; and, from the herd or flock,
 Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid, 20
 With large wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred feast,
 Shall spend their days in joy unblam'd, and dwell
 Long time in peace, by families and tribes,
 Under paternal rule: till one shall rise
 Of proud ambitious heart, who, not content 25
 With fair equality, fraternal state,
 Will arrogate dominion undeserv'd
 Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
 Concord and law of nature from the earth,
 Hunting (and men, not beasts, shall be his game) 30
 With war and hostile snare such as refuse
 Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
 A mighty hunter thence he shall be styl'd
 Before the Lord, as in despite of heaven,
 Or from heaven claiming second sov'reignty 35
 And from rebellion shall derive his name,
 Though of rebellion others he accuse.
 He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
 With him or under him to tyrannize,
 Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find 40
 The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge,
 Boils out from under ground, the mouth of hell:
 Of brick, and of that stuff they cast to build
 A city and tower, whose top may reach to heaven;
 And get themselves a name, lest, far dispers'd 45
 In foreign lands, their memory be lost,
 Regardless whether good or evil fame.
 But God, who oft descends to visit men
 Unseen, and through their habitations walks
 To mark their doings, them beholding soon, 50
 Comes down to see their city, ere the tower
 Obstruct heaven-towers, and in derision sets
 Upon their tongues a various spirit, to raze
 Quite out their native language, and instead
 To sow a jangling noise of words unknown. 55
 Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
 Among the builders; each to other calls

Not understood, till hoarse, and all in rage,
 As mock'd, they storm : great laughter was in heaven,
 And looking down, to see the hubbub strange 60
 And hear the din ; thus was the building left
 Ridiculous, and the work Confusion nam'd."

Whereto thus Adam fatherly displeas'd :

" O execrable son, so to aspire
 Above his brethren, to himself assuming 65
 Authority usurp'd, from God not given :
 He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
 Dominion absolute ; that right we hold
 By his donation ; but man over men
 He made not lord : such title to himself 70
 Reserving, human left from human free.
 But this usurper his encroachment proud
 Stays not on man ; to God his tower intends
 Siege and defiance. Wretched man ! what food
 Will he convey up thither to sustain 75
 Himself and his rash army, where thin air
 Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,
 And furnish him of breath, if not of bread ?"

To whom thus Michael : " Justly thou abhorr'st

That son, who on the quiet state of men 80
 Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
 Rational liberty ; yet know withal,
 Since thy original lapse, true liberty
 Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
 Twin'd, and from her hath no dividual being. 85
 Reason in man obscur'd, or not obey'd,
 Immediately inordinate desires
 And upstart passions catch the government
 From reason, and to servitude reduce
 Man till then free. Therefore since he permits 90
 Within himself unworthy powers to reign
 Over free reason, God in judgment just
 Subjects him from without to violent lords ;
 Who oft as undeservedly intral
 His outward freedom : tyranny must be, 95
 Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse,
 Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
 From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
 But justice, and some fatal curse annex'd,
 Deprives them of their outward liberty, 100

Their inward lost. Witness th' irreverent son
 Of him who built the ark, who for the shame
 Done to his father heard his heavy curse,
 'Servant of servants,' on his vicious race.
 Thus will this latter, as the former world, 105
 Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last,
 Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
 His presence from among them, and avert
 His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth
 To leave them to their own polluted ways; 110
 And one peculiar nation to select
 From all the rest, of whom to be invoc'd,
 A nation from one faithful man to spring:
 Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
 Bred up in idol-worship. O that men 115
 (Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
 While yet the patriarch liv'd, who scap'd the flood,
 As to forsake the living God, and fall
 To worship their own work in wood and stone
 For gods! Yet him God the Most High vouchsafes
 To call by vision from his father's house, 121
 His kindred and false gods, into a land
 Which he will show him, and from him will raise
 A mighty nation, and upon him shower
 His benediction so, that in his seed 125
 All nations shall be bless'd; he straight obeys,
 Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes.
 I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
 He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil
 Ur of Chaldea, passing now the ford 130
 To Haran, after him a cumbrous train
 Of herds, and flocks, and numerous servitude;
 Not wand'ring poor, but trusting all his wealth
 With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.
 Canaan he now attains; I see his tents 135
 Pitch'd about Shechem, and the neighb'ring plain
 Of Moreh; there by promise he receives
 Gift to his progeny of all that land,
 From Hamath northward to the desert south, 139
 (Things by their names I call, though yet unnam'd)
 From Hermon east to the great western sea;
 Mount Hermon, yonder sea, each place behold
 In prospect, as I point them; on the shore
 Mount Carmel; here the double-founted stream
 Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons 145

Shall dwell to Seir, that long ridge of hills
 This ponder, that all nations of the earth
 Shall in his seed be blessed; by that seed
 Is meant the great Deliverer, who shall bruise
 The serpent's head; whereof to thee anon 150
 Plainlier shall be reveal'd. This patriarch bless'd,
 Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call
 A son, and of his son a grandchild leaves,
 Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown;
 The grandchild with twelve sons increas'd departs
 From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd 155
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile;
 See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths
 Into the sea: to sojourn in that land,
 He comes invited by a younger son 160
 In time of dearth; a son whose worthy deeds
 Raise him to be the second in that realm
 Of Pharaoh: there he dies, and leaves his race
 Growing into a nation; and now grown,
 Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks 165
 To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
 Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them
 slaves
 Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:
 Till by two brethren (those two brethren call
 Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim 170
 His people from intralment, they return
 With glory and spoil back to their promis'd land.
 But first the lawless tyrant, who denies
 To know their God, or message to regard,
 Must be compell'd by signs and judgments dire; 175
 To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd;
 Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill
 With loath'd intrusion, and fill all the land,
 His cattle must of rot and murrain die;
 Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss, 180
 And all his people; thunder mix'd with hail,
 Hail mix'd with fire, must rend th' Egyptian sky,
 And wheel on th' earth, devouring where it rolls;
 What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
 A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down 185
 Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
 Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
 Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;
 Last with one midnight stroke all the first born

Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds
 The river-dragon tam'd at length submits 191
 To let his sojourners depart, and oft
 Humbles his stubborn heart, but still as ice
 More harden'd after thaw, till in his rage
 Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea 195
 Swallows him with his host, but them lets pass
 As on dry land between two crystal walls,
 Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand
 Divided, till his rescued gain their shore.
 Such wondrous power God to his saint will lend,
 Though present in his angel, who shall go 201
 Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire,
 By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire,
 To guide them in their journey, and remove
 Behind them, while th' obdurate king pursues. 205
 All night he will pursue, but his approach
 Darkness defends between till morning watch ;
 Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud
 God, looking forth, will trouble all his host,
 And craze their chariot-wheels : when by command,
 Moses once more his potent rod extends 211
 Over the sea ; the sea his rod obeys ;
 On their embattled ranks the waves return,
 And overwhelm their war : the race elect,
 Safe towards Canaan, from the shore advance 215
 Through the wild desert, not the readiest way,
 Lest ent'ring on the Canaanite alarm'd
 War terrify'd them inexpert, and fear
 Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
 Inglorious life with servitude ; for life 220
 To noble and ignoble is more sweet
 Untrain'd in arms, where rashness leads not on.
 This also shall they gain by their delay
 In the wide wilderness, there they shall found
 Their government, and their great senate choose 225
 Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordain'd
 God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top
 Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
 In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets sound,
 Ordain them laws ; part such as appertain 230
 To civil justice, part religious rites
 Of sacrifice, informing them, by types
 And shadows, of that destin'd Seed to bruise
 The serpent, by what means he shall achieve

Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God 235
 To mortal ear is dreadful; they beseech
 That Moses might report to them his will,
 And terror cease; he grants what they besought,
 Instructed that to God is no access
 Without mediator, whose high office now 240
 Moses in figure bears, to introduce
 One greater, of whose day he shall foretell,
 And all the prophets in their age, the times
 Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites
 Establish'd, such delight hath God in men, 245
 Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
 Among them to set up his tabernacle,
 The Holy One with mortal men to dwell:
 By his prescript a sanctuary is fram'd
 Of cedar, overlaid with gold, therein 250
 An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
 The records of his covenant, over these
 A mercy-seat of gold between the wings
 Of two bright cherubim; before him burn
 Seven lamps, as in a zodiac representing 255
 The heavenly fires; over the tent a cloud
 Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,
 Save when they journey, and at length they come,
 Conducted by his angel, to the land
 Promis'd to Abraham and his seed. The rest 260
 Were long to tell, how many battles fought,
 How many kings destroy'd and kingdoms won,
 Or how the sun shall in mid-heaven stand still
 A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
 Man's voice commanding, 'Sun in Gibeon stand, 265
 And thou moon in the vale of Ajalon,
 Till Israel overcome;' so call the third
 From Abraham, son of Isaac, and from him
 His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win."

Here Adam interpos'd: "O sent from heaven, 270
 Enlight'ner of my darkness! gracious things
 Thou hast reveal'd, those chiefly which concern
 Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find
 Mine eyes true opening, and my heart much eas'd.
 Erewhile perplex'd with thoughts what would become
 Of me and all mankind; but now I see 276
 His day, in whom all nations shall be bless'd
 Favour unmerited by me, who sought

Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
 Yet this I apprehend not, why to those 280
 Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth,
 So many and so various laws are given ;
 So many laws argue so many sins
 Among them ; how can God with such reside ?” 284

To whom thus Michael : “ Doubt not but that sin
 Will reign among them as of thee begot ;
 And, therefore, was law given them to evince
 Their natural pravity, by stirring up
 Sin against law to fight ; that when they see
 Law can discover sin, but not remove, 290
 Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
 The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
 Some blood more precious must be paid for man,
 Just for unjust, that in such righteousness,
 To them by faith imputed, they may find 295
 Justification towards God, and peace
 Of conscience, which the law by ceremonies
 Cannot appease, nor man the moral part
 Perform, and, not performing, cannot live.
 So law appears imperfect, and but given 300
 With purpose to resign them in full time
 Up to a better covenant, disciplin'd
 From shadowy types to truth, from flesh to spirit,
 From imposition of strict laws to free
 Acceptance of large grace, from servile fear 305
 To filial, works of law to works of faith.
 And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
 Highly belov'd, being but the minister
 Of law, his people into Canaan lead ;
 But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call, 310
 His name and office bearing, who shall quell
 The adversary serpent, and bring back,
 Through the world's wilderness, long wander'd man
 Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
 Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan plac'd, 315
 Long time shall dwell and prosper ; but when sins
 National interrupt their public peace,
 Provoking God to raise them enemies ;
 From whom as oft he saves them penitent,
 By judges first, then under kings ; of whom 320
 The second, both for piety renown'd,
 And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive

Irrevocable, that his regal throne
 For ever shall endure ; the like shall sing
 All prophecy, that of the royal stock 325
 Of David (so I name this king) shall rise
 A Son, the woman's seed to thee foretold,
 Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
 All nations, and to king's foretold, of kings
 The last, for of his reign shall be no end. 330
 But first a long succession must ensue,
 And his next son, for wealth and wisdom fam'd,
 The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
 Wand'ring, shall in a glorious temple inshrine.
 Such follow him as shall be register'd 335
 Part good, part bad ; of bad the longer scroll,
 Whose foul idolatries, and other faults,
 Heap'd to the popular sum, will so incense
 God, as to leave them, and expose their land
 Their city, his temple, and his holy ark, 340
 With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
 To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st
 Left in confusion, Babylon thence call'd.
 There in captivity he lets them dwell
 The space of seventy years, then brings them back,
 Rememb'ring mercy, and his covenant sworn 346
 To David, stablish'd as the days of heaven.
 Return'd from Babylon, by leave of kings,
 Their lords, whom God dispos'd, the house of God
 They first re-edify, and for a while 350
 In mean estate live moderate, till grown
 In wealth and multitude, factious they grow ;
 But first among the priests dissention springs,
 Men who attend the altar, and should most
 Endeavour peace : their strife pollution brings 355
 Upon the temple itself ; at last they seize
 The sceptre, and regard not David's sons.
 Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
 Anointed king Messiah might be born
 Barr'd of his right : yet at his birth a star, 360
 Unseen before in heaven, proclaims him come
 And guides the eastern sages, who inquire
 His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold.
 His place of birth a solemn angel tells
 To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night ; 365
 They gladly thither haste, and by a choir
 Of squadron'd angels hear his carol sung

' A Virgin is his mother, but his sire
 The power of the Most High ; he shall ascend
 The throne hereditary, and bound his reign 370
 With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the
 heavens.' ”

He ceas'd, discerning Adam with such joy
 Surcharg'd as had, like grief, been dew'd in tears,
 Without the vent of words which these he breath'd .

“ O prophet of glad tidings, finisher 375
 Of utmost hope ! now clear I understand
 What oft my steadiest thoughts have search'd in vain ,
 Why our great expectation should be call'd
 The Seed of Woman. Virgin Mother, hail !
 High in the love of Heaven, yet from my loins 380
 Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
 Of God Most High ; so God with man unites :
 Needs must the serpent now his capital bruise
 Expect with mortal pain : say where and when 384
 Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel ? ”

To whom thus Michael : “ Dream not of their fight
 As of a duel, or the local wounds
 Of head or heel : not therefore joins the Son
 Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil
 Thy enemy ; Nor so is overcome 390
 Satan, whose fall from heaven, a deadlier bruise,
 Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound :
 Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,
 Not by destroying Satan, but his works
 In thee and in thy seed. Nor can this be, 395
 But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
 Obedience to the law of God, impos'd
 On penalty of death, and suffering death,
 The penalty to thy transgression due,
 And due to theirs which out of thine will grow : 400
 So only can high justice rest appaid.
 The law of God exact he shall fulfil
 Both by obedience and by love, though love
 Alone fulfil the law ; thy punishment
 He shall endure by coming in the flesh 405
 To a reproachful life and cursed death,
 Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
 In his redemption, and that his obedience
 Imputed becomes theirs by faith, his merits

To save them, not their own, though legal works.
For this he shall live hated, be blasphem'd, 411
Seiz'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemn'd
A shameful and accurs'd, nail'd to the cross
By his own nation, slain for bringing life;
But to the cross he nails thy enemies, 415
The law that is against thee, and the sins
Of all mankind, with him there crucified,
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
In this his satisfaction; so he dies,
But soon revives; death over him no power 420
Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light
Thy ransom paid, which man from death redeems,
His death for man, as many as offer'd life 425
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
By faith not void of works. This godlike act
Annuls thy doom, the death, thou shouldst have died,
In sin for ever lost from life; this act 429
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength.
Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms,
And fix far deeper in his head their stings
Than temp'ral death shall bruise the victor's heel,
Or theirs whom he redeems, a death-like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal life. 435
Nor after resurrection shall he stay
Longer on earth than certain times t' appear
To his disciples, men who in his life
Still follow'd him; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learn'd 440
And his salvation, them who shall believe
Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befall,
For death, like that which the Redeemer died. 445
All nations they shall teach; for from that day
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
Salvation shall be preach'd, but to the sons
Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;
So in his seed all nations shall be bless'd. 450
Then to the heaven of heavens shall he ascend
With victory, triumphing through the air
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
The serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains

Through all his realm, and there confounded leave ;
 Then enter into glory, and resume 456
 His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
 Above all names in heaven ; and thence shall come,
 When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
 With glory and power to judge both quick and
 dead, 460
 To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward
 His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
 Whether in heaven or earth, for then the earth
 Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
 Than this of Eden, and far happier days." 465

So spake the archangel Michael, then paus'd,
 As at the world's great period ; and our sire,
 Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied :

" O goodness infinite ! goodness immense !
 That all this good of evil shall produce, 470
 And evil turn to good ; more wonderful
 Than that which by creation first brought forth
 Light out of darkness ! Full of doubt I stand,
 Whether I should repent me now of sin
 By me done and occasion'd, or rejoice 475
 Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring,
 To God more glory, more good-will to men
 From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.
 But say, if our Deliverer up to heaven
 Must re-ascend, what will betide the few 480
 His faithful, left among th' unfaithful herd,
 The enemies of truth ? who then shall guide
 His people, who defend ? will they not deal
 Worse with his followers than with him they dealt ?"

" Be sure they will," said th' angel ; " but from
 heaven 485
 He to his own a Comforter will send,
 The promise of the Father, who shall a well
 His Spirit within them, and the law of faith,
 Working, through love, upon their hearts shall write,
 To guide them in all truth, and also arm 490
 With spiritual armour, able to resist
 Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts ;
 What man can do against them, not afraid,
 Though to the death, against such cruelties

With inward consolations recompens'd, 495
 And oft supported so as shall amaze
 Their proudest persecutors: for the Spirit
 Pour'd first on his Apostles, whom he sends
 T' evangelize the nations, then on all
 Baptiz'd, shall them with wondrous gifts endue 500
 To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
 As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
 Great numbers of each nation to receive
 With joy the tidings brought from heaven: at length,
 Their ministry perform'd, and race well run, 505
 Their doctrine and their story written left,
 They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,
 Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
 Who all the sacred mysteries of heaven
 To their own vile advantages shall turn 510
 Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
 With superstitions and traditions taint,
 Left only in those written records pure,
 Though not but by the Spirit understood.
 Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,
 Places, and titles, and with these to join 516
 Secular power, though feigning still to act
 By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
 The Spirit of God, promis'd alike and given
 To all believers; and from that pretence, 520
 Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force
 On every conscience; laws which none shall find
 Left them enroll'd, or what the Spirit within
 Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
 But force the Spirit of grace itself, and bind 525
 His consort Liberty? What, but unbuild
 His living temples, built by faith to stand,
 Their own faith not another's? for on earth
 Who against faith and conscience can be heard
 Infallible? Yet many will presume: 530
 Whence heavy persecution shall arise
 On all who in the worship persevere
 Of spirit and truth; the rest far greater part,
 Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
 Religion satisfied; truth shall retire 535
 Bestruck with sland'rous darts, and works of faith
 Rarely be found: so shall the world go on,
 To good malignant, to bad men benign,
 Under her own weight groaning, till the day

Appear of reparation to the just 540
 And vengeance to the wicked, at return
 Of him so lately promis'd to thy aid,
 The Woman's Seed, obscurely then foretold,
 Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord;
 Last in the clouds from heaven to be reveal'd 545
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve
 Satan with his perverted world, then raise
 From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,
 New heavens, new earth, ages of endless date,
 Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love, 550
 To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss."

He ended; and thus Adam last replied;
 ' How soon hath thy prediction, seer bless'd!
 Measur'd this transient world, the race of time,
 Till time stand fix'd? beyond is all abyss, 555
 Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
 Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
 Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
 Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain
 Beyond which was my folly to aspire. 560
 Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
 And love with fear the only God, to walk
 As in his presence, ever to observe
 His providence, and on him sole depend,
 Merciful over all his works, with good 565
 Stills overcoming evil, and by small
 Accomplishing great things, by things deem'd weak
 Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
 By simply meek: that suffering for truth's sake
 Is fortitude to highest victory, 570
 And, to the faithful, death the gate of life;
 Taught this by his example, whom I now
 Acknowledge my Redeemer ever bless'd."

To whom thus also th' angel last replied
 " This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd the sum 575
 Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars:
 Thou knew'st by name, and all th' ethereal powers,
 All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,
 Or works of God in heaven, air, earth, or sea
 And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst, 580
 And all the rule, one empire; only add
 Deeds to thy knowledge answerable add faith,

Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love,
 By name to come call'd charity, the soul
 Of all the rest : then wilt thou not be loath 585
 To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
 A Paradise within thee, happier far.
 Let us descend now, therefore, from this top
 Of speculation ; for the hour precise
 Exacts our parting hence ; and see the guards, 590
 By me encamp'd on yonder hill, expect
 Their motion, at whose front a flaming sword,
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round :
 We may no longer stay. Go, waken Eve ;
 Her also I with gentle dreams have calm'd, 595
 Portending good, and all her spirits compos'd
 To meek submission : thou at season fit
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard,
 Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,
 The great deliverance by her seed to come, 600
 (For by the Woman's Seed) on all mankind ;
 That ye may live, which may be many days,
 Both in one faith unanimous though sad,
 With cause, for evils past, yet much more cheer'd
 With meditation on the happy end." 605

He ended, and they both descend the hill ;
 Descended, Adam to the bower where Eve
 Lay sleeping ran before, but found her wak'd :
 And thus with words not sad she him receiv'd :

" Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st I
 know ; 610
 For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
 Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
 Wearied I fell asleep : but now lead on ;
 In me is no delay ; with thee to go 615
 Is to stay here ; without thee here to stay,
 Is to go hence unwilling ; *taciturne* to me
 Art all things under heaven, all places thou,
 Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence.
 This further consolation yet secure 620
 I carry hence ; though all by me is lost,
 Such favour I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,
 By me the promis'd Seed shall all restore."

So spake our mother Eve, and Adam heard
 Well pleas'd but answer'd not ; for now too nigh 625
 Th' archangel stood, and from the other hill
 To their fix'd station, all in bright array,
 The cherubim descended ; on the ground
 Gliding meteorous, as evening mist
 Risen from a river o'er the marish glides, 630
 And gathers ground fast at the lab'rer's heel
 Homeward returning. High in front advanc'd
 The brandish'd sword of God before them blaz'd
 Fierce as a comet ; which with torrid heat,
 And vapour as the Libyan air adust, 635
 Began to parch that temp'rate clime ; whereat
 In either hand the hast'ning angel caught
 Our lingering parents, and to th' eastern gate
 Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
 To the subjected plain ; then disappear'd. 640
 They, looking back, all th' eastern side beheld
 Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
 Wav'd over by that flaming brand, the gate
 With dreadful faces throng'd and fiery arms :
 Some natural tears they dropp'd, but wip'd them
 soon. 645
 The world was all before them, where to choose
 Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.
 They, hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow
 Through Eden took their solitary way.

THE END.

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TO

PARADISE LOST.

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