

466 23102 J. H. Kelly.

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"Minor Poems"

S. K. F. R. K.

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Susan Anne Fallon 1850.

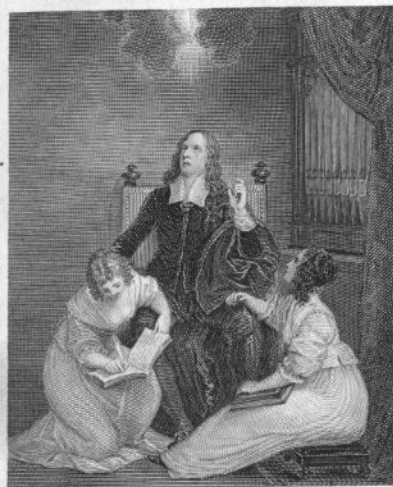
daughter of J. Kelly (Mrs Fallon) who later  
predicated her Mother.

PARADISE LOST

A POEM

THE AUTHOR

JOHN MILTON.



J. Stothard R.A. pinx.

A. Raimbach sc.

*Milton composing Paradise Lost.*

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN SHARPE, PICCADILLY.

1826.

# PARADISE LOST.

A Poem,

IN TWELVE BOOKS.

THE AUTHOR,

JOHN MILTON.



LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR JOHN SHARPE,  
PICCADILLY;  
BY C. WHITTINGHAM, CHISWICK.

MDCCCXXI.



## LIFE OF MILTON.

JOHN MILTON was born in Bread-street, London, on the 9th of December, 1608. He was descended from a respectable family long resident at Milton, in Oxfordshire. His father, John Milton, the celebrated composer, was disinherited in consequence of his embracing the Protestant religion, and was compelled to abandon the prosecution of his studies at Oxford, to seek the means of subsistence in London, where he adopted the profession of a scrivener. The son owed much to the early advantages which he enjoyed in the assiduous cares of his parent, and he has recorded his filial obligations in the elegant Latin poem *AD PATREM*. His father, as Milton himself informs us, very early destined him to the study of elegant literature; and so eagerly did he engage in it, that he seldom quitted his studies for his bed till the middle of the night: this excessive application injured his eyes, and laid the foundation of his subsequent blindness; but nothing could restrain his ardour for learning; and his father, correctly appreciating these indications of future eminence, spared no expense in providing for his education.

After passing some time under the superintendence of the Rev. Thomas Young, and subsequently at St. Paul's school, he was entered a pensioner at Christ's College, Cambridge, on the 12th of February, 1624-5, being already, although only in his seventeenth year, an accomplished scholar. He took his bachelor's degree in January, 1628-9, and that of master of arts three years after. He then retired to his father's house at Horton, in Buckinghamshire, leaving behind him a moral character untarnished, and a memory cherished with affection and respect by the fellows of his college. His religious and political opinions had however subjected him to the disapprobation and even the enmity of some of his superiors in the university, an enmity which pursued him with detraction when he was placed beyond the limits of authority.

Milton, it is said, when only ten years old, discovered a talent for versification; but the earliest specimen of his genius extant, is his translation of the cxxxvth Psalm, which evinces his progress in poetical expression at the age of fifteen. During the five happy years of romantic leisure that he passed in Buckinghamshire under his father's roof, he composed the *Comus* in 1634, the *Lycidas* in 1637, and probably about the same period, the *Arcades*, *L'Allegro*, and *Il Penseroso*. There

is no doubt that the landscape, in the last two poems, is from nature: it has all the vividness of reality, and all the redolence of genuine feeling.

In 1638, having recently lost his mother, Milton resolved on visiting the Continent. He was received at Paris with distinction by Lord Scudamore, the ambassador from England, by whom he was introduced to the celebrated Grotius. From thence he proceeded to Genoa, to Florence, and to Rome, attended by the applauses and the compliments of the literati of Italy. At Naples he became the inmate of the venerable Manso, Marquis of Villa, the friend and biographer of Tasso and of Marino: an epistle to this distinguished nobleman is among his Latin poems. As he was preparing to pass from Naples into Sicily and Greece, the intelligence from England of the civil war recalled him to his native country, "for he esteemed it," as he himself expresses it, "dishonourable for him to be lingering abroad, even for the improvement of his mind, while his fellow citizens were contending for their liberty at home."

On his arrival in England, Milton resided in St. Bride Church Yard, where he undertook the education of his two nephews, Edward and John Philips, and the children of some other friends; but he soon afterwards removed to Aldersgate-street; at this time, while occupied with the fatiguing duties of an instructor of boys, he commenced the career of his public life as a polemic writer, in a controversy concerning episcopal government, with Bishop Hall and Archbishop Usher.

In 1643, he married Mary, the daughter of Mr. Richard Powell, a zealous royalist, of Forest Hill, near Shotover, in Oxfordshire. Her desertion of him, soon after he brought her home to London, under the pretence of revisiting her family, was the occasion of his publications on the "Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce," which drew down upon him the indignation of the Presbyterian clergy, regardless of whose opposition he proceeded to prefer his addresses to a beautiful and accomplished young lady, the daughter of a Doctor Davis. Before however he had engaged her affections so far as to gain her consent to the marriage treaty, while visiting at the house of a relation, he found his wife prostrate before him, imploring his forgiveness;

Soon his heart relented  
Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,  
Now at his feet submissive in distress,  
*Paradise Lost, Book X.*

nor did his renovated love alone content itself with this single triumph over his resentment: he extended both his protection

and support to her parents and to their numerous family at the very crisis of their ruin, in consequence of the battle of Naseby, so fatal to the royal cause. In this year also he published his "Treatise on Education," and his "Areopagitica," in defence of the freedom of the press. In 1647 he lost his father, who expired in his arms.

In 1649, he was appointed Latin Secretary by the Council of State, at whose instigation he undertook to counteract the apprehended effects of the "ICON BASILIKE," by his "ICONOCLASTES;" and in 1651, he produced his celebrated "Defence of the People of England," which made its author the subject of conversation both at home and abroad. His total loss of sight, of which he had been forewarned by his physicians, succeeded these exertions in 1652. Early in the same year his wife died in childbed of his third daughter, Deborah. It is not exactly ascertained when he married his second wife, Catharine, the daughter of Captain Woodcock, of Hackney, who also died in childbed, within the first year of their marriage; but it was in 1662 that he married his third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, the daughter of a gentleman of Cheshire.

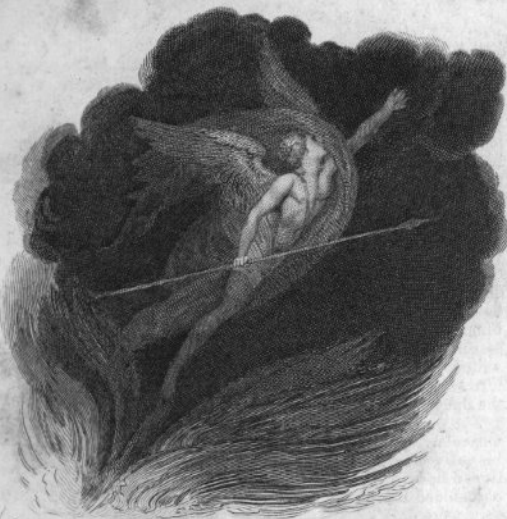
While engaged in the above controversies, three great works engaged his attention at intervals, and formed that change of literary exercise in which he delighted. These were, a History of England, a Thesaurus of the Latin language, and an Epic Poem. In 1667, the first edition of *PARADISE LOST* was given to the world. If any thing could enhance the surpassing merits of this noblest achievement of poetry, it would be the circumstances under which its execution was completed: blind, reduced in his fortunes, "encompassed with dangers as well as with darkness," his mind had lost none of its energy; the spirit of the man and the Christian was unbroken by the annihilation of the patriot's hopes: in the night which enveloped his visual sense, the heaven of intellect was revealed with the more distinctness to that gaze which was thenceforward to be fixed on the realities of eternity.

In the progress of his studies, the blindness of Milton was assisted by the recitations of his two youngest daughters, who, extraordinary as the fact may appear, were taught to read at least six different languages, without understanding any of them; a circumstance which, placed in connexion with the composition of *Paradise Lost*, has recently employed the pencils of several of our painters. Their father, however, dispensed with their assistance, on their complaining of the irksomeness of the occupation, and dismissed them to tasks better adapted to their inclinations and their sex.

"Paradise Regained" was composed during his temporary residence at Chalfont St. Giles's, in Buckinghamshire, at the time that the plague was raging in the capital. It was not published till 1670, when it appeared with "Samson Agonistes." A few subsequent publications in English and Latin prose, closed his literary labours. An attack of the gout, a disease which had for many years afflicted him, terminated his life on the 8th of November, 1674. His body was deposited by the side of that of his father, in the upper part of the chancel of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, where a marble bust by Bacon has recently been erected to his memory.

By his first wife he left three daughters, of whom (but more certainly of the elder two) it is painful to record, that their conduct was the reverse of that of filial love and duty; to them he left their mother's portion, which had never been paid to him: his other property, amounting, notwithstanding his heavy losses, to about fifteen hundred pounds, he bequeathed to his widow; but from the unfortunate omission of some material forms in the will, which was only nuncupative or declaratory, the daughters were enabled successfully to contest its validity.

The person of Milton was of the middle height, compact and muscular. "His harmonical and ingenuous soul," says one of his early biographers, "dwelt in a beautiful and well-proportioned body." At Cambridge, the fineness of his complexion occasioned him to be called "the lady of Christ's College;" his eyes were dark grey, and retained, even after the total extinction of vision, a peculiar vividness; his light brown hair, parted at the top, fell "clustering" upon his shoulders. His voice was delicately sweet and harmonious, and his ear excellent. In his habits he was remarkably frugal and regular, rising in summer at four, and in winter at five. A chapter of the Hebrew Scriptures being read to him as soon as he was up, he passed the subsequent interval till seven, in private meditation; after which study, exercise, and the recreation of music, of which he was particularly fond, divided the day till six, when he admitted the visits of his friends; he took his abstemious supper at eight, and at nine he retired. His manners were affable and graceful; his temper grave without melancholy; his affections ardent. Such was John Milton, in whom were combined all the rarer qualities which dignify our nature, and of whom it constitutes the noblest panegyric, that his works are not less the just expression of his character, than the monuments of his genius.



Then with expanded wings he steers his flight  
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air. L. 213

## PARADISE LOST.

### BOOK I.

# PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK I.

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The 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 hastens into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his Angels now falling 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, fittest called Chaos: Here Satan with his Angels lying on the burning lake, thunderstruck 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.

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OF Man's first disobedience, and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man



Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,  
 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  
 Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd  
 Fast by the oracle of God; I thence  
 Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,  
 That with no middle flight intends to soar  
 Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues  
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.  
 And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer  
 Before all temples the upright heart and pure,  
 Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first  
 Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread  
 Dovelike satst brooding on the vast abyss,  
 And madest 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,  
 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  
 Moved our grand Parents, in that happy state,  
 Favour'd of Heaven so highly, to fall off  
 From their Creator, and transgress his will  
 For one restraint, lords of the world besides?  
 Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?  
 The infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,

Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceived  
 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 above his peers,  
 He trusted to have equal'd the Most High,  
 If he opposed; and, with ambitious aim  
 Against the throne and monarchy of God,  
 Raised impious war in Heaven, and battle proud,  
 With vain attempt: Him the Almighty Power  
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,  
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down  
 To bottomless perdition; there to dwell  
 In adamant chains and penal fire,  
 Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.  
 Nine times the space that measures day and night  
 To mortal men, he with his horrid crew  
 Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,  
 Confounded, though immortal: But his doom  
 Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought  
 Both of lost happiness, and lasting pain,  
 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:  
 A dungeon horrible on all sides round,  
 As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames  
 No light; but rather darkness visible  
 Served only to discover sights of woe,



Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace  
 And rest can never dwell; hope never comes  
 That comes to all; but torture without end  
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed  
 With everburning sulphur unconsumed:  
 Such place Eternal Justice had prepared  
 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 the utmost pole.  
 O, how unlike the place from whence they fell!  
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd  
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,  
 He soon discerns; and weltering by his side  
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,  
 Long after known in Palestine, and named  
 Beëlzebub. To whom the Arch-Enemy,  
 And thence in Heaven call'd Satan, with bold words  
 Breaking the horrid silence, thus began.

If thou beest he; but O, how fallen! how changed  
 From him, who, in the happy realms of light,  
 Clothed with transcendent 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  
 In equal ruin! Into what pit thou seest,  
 From what height fallen; so much the stronger proved  
 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  
 Can else inflict, do I repent or change,  
 Though changed in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,  
 And high disdain from sense of injured merit,  
 That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,  
 And to the fierce contention brought along  
 Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd,  
 That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,  
 His utmost power with adverse power opposed  
 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,  
 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  
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace  
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power,  
 Who from the terror of this arm so late  
 Doubted his empire; that were low indeed,  
 That were an ignominy, and shame beneath  
 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 advanced,  
 We may with more successful hope resolve  
 To wage, by force or guile, eternal war,  
 Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,  
 Who now triumphs, and, in the excess of joy  
 Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of Heaven.

So spake the apostate Angel, though in pain,  
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 the embattled Seraphim to war  
Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds  
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,  
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 vigour soon returns,  
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  
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,  
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?  
Whereto with speedy words the Arch-Fiend replied.

Fallen Cherub! to be weak is miserable  
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,  
To do aught good never will be our task,  
But ever to do ill our sole delight,  
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;  
Which oftentimes may succeed, so as perhaps  
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb  
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.  
But see! the angry Victor hath recall'd  
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit  
Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail,  
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid  
The fiery surge, that from the precipice  
Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,  
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,  
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now  
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.  
Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn,  
Or satiate fury, yield it from our Foe.  
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,  
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;  
 And, reassembling 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;  
 If not, what resolution from despair.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest mate  
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes  
 That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides  
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large,  
 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;  
 Briarëos or Typhon, whom the den  
 By ancient Tarsus held; or that seabeast  
 Leviathan, which God of all his works  
 Created hugest that swim the ocean stream:  
 Him, haply, slumbering on the Norway foam  
 The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff  
 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,  
 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  
 Had risen, or heaved 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  
 Evil to others; and, enraged, might see  
 How all his malice served but to bring forth  
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shown  
 On Man by him seduced; but on himself  
 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance, pour'd.  
 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' the midst a horrid vale.  
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight  
 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  
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill  
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side  
 Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible  
 And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,  
 Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,  
 And leave a singed bottom all involved  
 With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole  
 Of unblest'd feet. Him follow'd his next mate:  
 Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian flood  
 As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength,  
 Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,  
 Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat  
 That we must change for Heaven; this mournful gloom

For that celestial light? Be it so! since he,  
 Who now is Sov'reign, can dispose and bid  
 What shall be right: furthest from him is best,  
 Whom reason hath equal'd, force hath made supreme  
 Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,  
 Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,  
 Infernal world! And thou, profoundest Hell,  
 Receive thy new possessor! one who brings  
 A mind not to be changed by place or time:  
 The mind is its own place, and in itself  
 Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.  
 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; the Almighty hath not built  
 Here for his envy; will not drive us hence:  
 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,  
 The associates and copartners of our loss,  
 Lie thus astonish'd on the 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?

So Satan spake; and him Beëlzebub  
 Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,  
 Which but the Omnipotent none could have foil'd!  
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge

Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft  
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge  
 Of battle when it raged, in all assaults  
 Their surest signal, they will soon resume  
 New courage and revive; though now they lie  
 Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,  
 As we erewhile, astounded and amazed;  
 No wonder, fallen such a pernicious height.

He scarce had ceased, when the superior Fiend  
 Was moving toward the shore: his ponderous shield,  
 Etherial temper, massy, large, and round,  
 Behind him cast; the broad circumference  
 Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb  
 Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views  
 At Evening from the top of Fesolè,  
 Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,  
 Rivers, or mountains, in 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  
 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 endured, till on the beach  
 Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd  
 His legions, Angel forms, who lay entranced  
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
 In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades,  
 High overarch'd, imbower; or scatter'd sedge



Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd  
 Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew  
 Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,  
 While with perfidious hatred they pursued  
 The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld  
 From the safe shore their floating carcasses  
 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,  
 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  
 To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?  
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn  
 To adore the Conqueror? who now beholds  
 Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood,  
 With scatter'd arms and ensigns; till anon  
 His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern  
 The 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!

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  
 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,  
 Waved round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud  
 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  
 Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,  
 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;  
 Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear  
 Of their great Sultan waving to direct  
 Their course, in even balance down they light  
 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;  
 A multitude, like which the populous North  
 Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass  
 Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons  
 Came like a deluge on the South, and spread  
 Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.  
 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  
 Be no memorial; blotted out and rased  
 By their rebellion from the books of life.  
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve



Got them new names; till, wandering 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 the invisible  
 Glory of him that made them to transform  
 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.  
 Say, Muse, their names then known; who first, who last,  
 Roused 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.  
 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 adored  
 Among the nations round; and durst abide  
 Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned  
 Between the Cherubim; yea, often placed  
 Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,  
 Abominations; and with cursed things  
 His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned,  
 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 through fire  
 To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite  
 Worship'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  
 Of Solomon he led by fraud to build  
 His temple right against the temple of God  
 On that opprobrious hill; and made his grove  
 The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence  
 And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell.  
 Next, Chemos, the obscene dread of Moab's sons,  
 From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild  
 Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon  
 And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond  
 The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines;  
 And Eleälé to the Asphaltic pool.  
 Peor his other name, when he enticed  
 Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,  
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.  
 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged  
 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 bordering flood  
 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts  
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names  
 Of Baälim 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;  
 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 condensed, bright or obscure,  
 Can execute their airy purposes,  
 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  
 Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear  
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop  
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd  
 Astarté, queen of Heaven, with crescent horns;  
 To whose bright image nightly by the moon  
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;  
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood  
 Her temple on the offensive mountain, built  
 By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,  
 Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell  
 To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,  
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured  
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate  
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day;  
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock  
 Ran purple to the sea, supposed 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,  
 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,  
 Where he fell flat, and shamed 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,  
 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:  
 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 offerings, and adore the Gods  
 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 abused  
 Fanatic Egypt, and her priests, to seek  
 Their wandering Gods disguised in brutish forms  
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape  
 The infection, when their borrow'd gold composed  
 The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king

Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,  
 Likening his Maker to the grazed ox;  
 Jehovah, who in one night, when he pass'd  
 From Egypt marching, equal'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 smoked: 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 reigns,  
 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 Belial, flown with insolence and wine.  
 Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night  
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door  
 Exposed 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,  
 The 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 seized  
 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 ruled 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 the 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 Chief  
 Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost  
 In loss itself: which on his countenance cast  
 Like double hue: but he, his wonted pride  
 Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore  
 Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised  
 Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears.  
 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  
 The imperial ensign; which, full high advanced,  
 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:  
 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  
 With orient colours waving: with them rose  
 A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms  
 Appear'd, and serried shields in thick array  
 Of depth immeasurable: Anon they move  
 In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood  
 Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised  
 To height of noblest temper heroes old  
 Arming to battle; and instead of rage  
 Deliberate valour breathed, firm and unmoved  
 With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;  
 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,  
 Moved on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd  
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil: and now  
 Advanced in view they stand; a horrid front  
 Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise  
 Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield;  
 Awaiting what command their mighty Chief  
 Had to impose: He through the armed files  
 Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse  
 The whole battalion views; their order due;  
 Their visages and stature as of Gods;  
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart  
 Distends with pride, and hardening in his strength  
 Glories: for never, since created man,  
 Met such imbodied force, as named with these

Could merit more than that small infantry  
 Warr'd on by cranes; though all the giant brood  
 Of Phlegra with the heroic race were join'd  
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side  
 Mix'd with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds  
 In fable or romance of Uther's son  
 Begirt with British and Armoric knights;  
 And all who since, baptized or infidel,  
 Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,  
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond,  
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,  
 When Charlemain with all his peerage fell  
 By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond  
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed  
 Their dread Commander: he, above the rest  
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent,  
 Stood like a tower: his form had yet not lost  
 All her original brightness; nor appear'd  
 Less than Arch-Angel ruin'd, and the excess  
 Of glory obscured: as when the sun, new risen,  
 Looks through the horizontal misty air  
 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 the Arch-Angel: but his face  
 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  
 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 amerced  
 Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung  
 For his revolt; yet faithful how they stood,  
 Their glory wither'd: as when Heaven's fire  
 Hath scathed the forest oaks, or mountain pines,  
 With singed top their stately growth, though bare,  
 Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared  
 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  
 Words, interwove with sighs, found out their way.

O Myriads of immortal Spirits! O Powers  
 Matchless, but with the Almighty! and that strife  
 Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,  
 As this place testifies, and this dire change  
 hateful to utter: but what power of mind,  
 Foreseeing 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?  
 For who can yet believe, though after loss,  
 That all these puissant legions, whose exile  
 Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to reascend  
 Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?

For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,  
 If counsels different, or dangers 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  
 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, provoked: our better part remains  
 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 ripe  
 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  
 Our first eruption; thither or elsewhere:  
 For this infernal pit shall never hold  
 Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor the abyss  
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts  
 Full counsel must mature: Peace is despair'd;  
 For who can think submission? War then, War,  
 Open or understood, must be resolved.

He spake: and, to confirm his words, out-flew  
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs



Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze  
Far round illumined Hell: Highly they raged  
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  
Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire  
Shone with a glossy scurf; undoubted sign  
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,  
The work of sulphur. Thither, wing'd with speed,  
A numerous brigad hasten'd: as when bands  
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 [thoughts  
From Heaven; for e'en in Heaven his looks and  
Were always downward bent, admiring more  
The riches of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,  
Than aught, divine or holy, else enjoy'd  
In vision beatific: by him first  
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,  
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  
That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best  
Deserve the precious bane. And here let those,  
Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell  
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,

Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,  
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 prepared,  
That underneath had veins of liquid fire  
Sluiced 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  
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 soundboard breathes.  
Anon, out of the earth, a fabric huge  
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  
Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures graven:  
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,  
Nor great Alcaïro, such magnificence  
Equal'd in all their glories, to enshrine  
Belus or Sérapis, their Gods; or seat  
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove  
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile  
Stood fix'd her stately highth: and straight the doors,  
Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide

Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth  
 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  
 Admiring enter'd; and the work some praise,  
 And some the architect: his hand was known  
 In Heaven by many a tower'd structure high,  
 Where sceptred Angels held their residence,  
 And sat as princes; whom the supreme King  
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,  
 Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.  
 Nor was his name unheard, or unadored,  
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land  
 Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell  
 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,  
 On Lemnos the Ægean isle: thus they relate,  
 Erring; for he with this rebellious rout  
 Fell long before; nor aught avail'd him now  
 To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he scape  
 By all his engines, but was headlong sent  
 With his industrious crew to build in Hell.

Mean while the winged heralds, by command  
 Of sov'reign power, with awful ceremony  
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim

A solemn council, forthwith to be held  
 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  
 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  
 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  
 In clusters: they among fresh dews and flowers  
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,  
 The suburb of their strawbuilt citadel,  
 New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer  
 Their state affairs. So thick the airy crowd  
 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  
 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 overhead the moon

Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth  
 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  
 Reduced 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 Seraphic 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.



Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,  
 Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess arm'd.  
 Out of thy head I sprung:

L. 796.

## PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK II.

## PARADISE LOST.

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The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be 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.

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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 raised  
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.

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  
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 counsel or in fight,  
Hath been achieved 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  
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  
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  
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 assured us; and, by what best way,  
Whether of open war, or covert guile,  
We now debate: Who can advise, may speak.

He ceased; and next him Moloch, sceptred king,  
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit  
That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair:  
His trust was with the 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;  
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  
The signal to ascend, sit lingering 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,  
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  
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  
 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  
 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 pursued us through the deep,  
 With what compulsion and laborious flight  
 We sunk thus low? The ascent is easy then;  
 The 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  
 Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemn'd  
 In this abhorred deep to utter woe;  
 Where pain of unextinguishable fire  
 Must exercise us without hope of end,  
 The vassals of his anger, when the scourge  
 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 enraged,  
 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  
 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.

He ended frowning, and his look denounced  
 Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous  
 To less than Gods. On the other side arose  
 Belial, in act more graceful and humane:  
 A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seem'd  
 For dignity composed, 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;  
 To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds  
 Timorous and slothful: yet he pleased the ear,  
 And with persuasive accent thus began.

I should be much for open war, O Peers,  
 As not behind in hate; if what was urged  
 Main reason to persuade immediate war,  
 Did not dissuade 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,  
 Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair  
 And utter dissolution, as the scope  
 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  
 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  
 With blackest insurrection, to confound  
 Heaven's purest light; yet our great Enemy,  
 All incorruptible, would on his throne  
 Sit unpolluted; and the ethereal mould,  
 Incapable of stain, would soon expel  
 Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,  
 Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope  
 Is flat despair: We must exasperate  
 The Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,  
 And that must end us; that must be our cure,  
 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,  
 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,  
 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,  
 Reserved, and destined to eternal woe;  
 Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,  
 What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,  
 Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?  
 What! when we fled amain, pursued, 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? That sure was worse.  
 What if the breath, that kindled those grim fires,  
 Awaked, 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  
 Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,  
 Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall  
 One day upon our heads; while we perhaps,  
 Designing or exhorting glorious war,  
 Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurl'd  
 Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey  
 Of wracking whirlwinds; or for ever sunk  
 Under yon boiling ocean, wrapp'd in chains;  
 There to converse with everlasting groans,  
 Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,  
 Ages of hopeless end? This would be worse.  
 War therefore, open or conceal'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 highth  
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  
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  
That so ordains: This was at first resolved,  
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 venturous, if that fail them, shrink and fear  
What yet they know must follow, to endure  
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  
His anger; and perhaps, thus far removed,  
Not mind us not offending, satisfied  
With what is punish'd; whence these raging fires  
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.  
Our purer essence then will overcome  
Their noxious vapour; or, inured, not feel;  
Or changed 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;  
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 woe.

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

Either to disenthroned the King of Heaven  
We war, if war be best, or to regain  
Our own right lost: Him to unthroned 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 [preme  
Within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord su-  
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  
Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne  
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing  
Forced Hallelujahs: while he lordly sits  
Our envied Sov'reign, and his altar breathes  
Ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers,  
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  
 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  
 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 soe'er  
 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 unobscured,  
 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  
 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  
 As soft as now severe, our temper changed  
 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  
 Compose our present evils, with regard  
 Of what we are, and where; dismissing quite  
 All thoughts of war: Ye have what I advise.  
 He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd  
 The assembly, as when hollow rocks retain  
 The sound of blustering winds, which all night long  
 Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull  
 Seafaring men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance,  
 Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay  
 After the tempest: Such applause was heard  
 As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased,  
 Advising peace: for such another field  
 They dreaded worse than Hell: So much the fear  
 Of thunder and the sword of Michaël  
 Wrought still within them; and no less desire  
 To found this nether empire, which might rise  
 By policy, and long process of time,  
 In emulation opposite to Heaven.  
 Which when Beëlzebub perceived, than whom  
 Satan except, none higher sat, with grave  
 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  
 With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear  
 The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look



Drew audience and attention still as night  
 Or summer's noontide air, while thus he spake.  
 Thrones and Imperial Powers, Offspring of Heaven,  
 Etherial Virtues! or these titles now  
 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,  
 And know not 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  
 In strictest bondage, though thus far removed  
 Under the inevitable curb, reserved  
 His captive multitude: For he, be sure,  
 In highth or depth, still first and last will reign  
 Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part  
 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  
 Irreparable; terms of peace yet none  
 Vouchsafed or sought; for what peace will be given  
 To us enslaved, but custody severe,  
 And stripes, and arbitrary punishment  
 Inflicted? and what peace can we return,  
 But to our power hostility and hate,

Untamed 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?  
 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 enterprise? There is a place  
 (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  
 Of Him who rules above; so was his will  
 Pronounced 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,  
 Or substance, how endued, and what their power,  
 And where their weakness, how attempted best,  
 By force or subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,  
 And Heaven's high Arbitrator sit secure  
 In his own strength, this place may lie exposed,  
 The utmost border of his kingdom, left  
 To their defence who hold it: Here perhaps  
 Some advantageous act may be achieved  
 By sudden onset; either with Hell fire  
 To waste his whole creation, or possess  
 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  
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,  
Faded so soon. Advise, if this be worth  
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here  
Hatching vain empires. Thus Beëlzebub  
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devised  
By Satan, and in part proposed: For whence,  
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 Hell  
To mingle and involve, done all to spite  
The great Creator? But their spite still serves  
His glory to augment. The bold design  
Pleased 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 judged, well ended long debate,  
Synod of Gods! and, like to what ye are,  
Great things resolved, which, from the lowest deep,  
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,  
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view [arms  
Of those bright confines, whence, with neighbouring  
And opportune excursion, we may chance

Reenter Heaven; or else in some mild zone  
Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,  
Secure; and at the brightening orient beam  
Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air,  
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,  
Shall breathe her balm. But first whom shall we send  
In search of this new world? whom shall we find  
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet  
The dark unbottom'd infinite abyss,  
And through the palpable obscure find out  
His uncouth way, or spread his airy flight  
Upborne with undefatigable wings  
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive  
The happy isle? What strength, what art, can then  
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe  
Through the strict senteries 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,  
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,  
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,  
Alone, the dreadful voyage; till at last

Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised  
Above his fellows, with monarchial pride,  
Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake.

O Progeny of Heaven, empyreal Thrones!  
With reason hath deep silence and demur  
Seized 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  
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  
Threatens him, plunged 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,  
And this imperial sov'reignty, adorn'd  
With splendour, arm'd with power, if aught proposed  
And judg'd of public moment, in the shape  
Of difficulty, or danger, could deter  
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume  
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  
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  
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  
None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose  
The Monarch, and prevented all reply;  
Prudent, lest, from his resolution raised,  
Others among the chief might offer now  
(Certain to be refused) what erst they fear'd;  
And, so refused, might in opinion stand  
His rivals; winning cheap the high repute,  
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they  
Dreaded not more the adventure than his voice  
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose:  
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 praised,  
That for the general safety he despised  
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.  
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'erspread  
 Heaven's cheerful face, the lowering element  
 Scowls o'er the darken'd landskip snow, or shower;  
 If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet  
 Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,  
 The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds  
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.  
 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,  
 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 enough besides,  
 That, day and night, for his destruction wait.

The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth  
 In order came the grand infernal Peers:  
 Midst came their mighty Paramount, and seem'd  
 Alone the Antagonist of Heaven, nor less  
 Than Hell's dread Emperor, with pomp supreme,  
 And Godlike imitated state: him round  
 A globe of fiery Seraphim enclosed  
 With bright emblazonry, and horrid arms.  
 Then of their session ended they bid cry  
 With trumpets regal sound the great result:  
 Towards the four winds four speedy Cherubim

Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy,  
 By herald's voice explain'd; the hollow abyss  
 Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell  
 With deafening shout return'd them loud acclaim.  
 Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat raised  
 By false presumptuous hope, the ranged Powers  
 Disband; and, wandering, each his several way  
 Pursues; as inclination or sad choice  
 Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find  
 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 the Olympian games or Pythian fields;  
 Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal  
 With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form.  
 As when, to warn proud cities, war appears  
 Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush  
 To battle in the clouds, before each van  
 Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears  
 Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms  
 From either end of Heaven the welkin burns.  
 Others, with vast Typhoean rage more fell,  
 Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air  
 In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar.  
 As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd  
 With conquest, felt the envenom'd robe, and tore  
 Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,  
 And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw  
 Into the 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  
 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),  
 Others apart sat on a hill retired,  
 In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high  
 Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate;  
 Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute;  
 And found no end, in wandering 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!  
 Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm  
 Pain for a while or anguish, and excite  
 Fallacious hope, or arm the obdured breast  
 With stubborn patience, as with triple steel.  
 Another part, in squadrons and gross bands,  
 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  
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams;

Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;  
 Sad Acheron, of sorrow, black and deep;  
 Cocytus, named of lamentation loud  
 Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon,  
 Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.  
 Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,  
 Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls  
 Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks,  
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets,  
 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  
 Of ancient pile; or else deep snow and ice,  
 A gulf profound, as that Serbonian bog  
 Betwixt Damiata and mount Casius old,  
 Where armies whole have sunk: The parching air  
 Burns freer, and cold performs the effect of fire.  
 Thither by harpy-footed furies haled,  
 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  
 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,  
 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 the attempt  
 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 confused march forlorn, the adventurous bands,  
 With shuddering 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,  
 Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of  
 A universe of death: which God by curse [death,  
 Created evil, for evil only good,  
 Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,  
 Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,  
 Abominable, inutterable, and worse  
 Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceived,  
 Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.

Meanwhile, the Adversary of God and Man,  
 Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design,  
 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 conclave towering high.  
 As when far off at sea a fleet descried

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,  
 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,  
 Three iron, three of adamantine rock  
 Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,  
 Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat  
 On either side a formidable shape;  
 The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair;  
 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 Hellhounds never ceasing bark'd  
 With wide Cerberian mouths full loud, and rung  
 A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,  
 If aught 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  
 Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:  
 Nor uglier follow the night hag, when, call'd  
 In secret, riding through the air she comes,  
 Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance  
 With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon  
 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,  
 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  
 With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.  
 The undaunted Fiend what this might be admired;  
 Admired, not fear'd; God and his Son except,  
 Created thing nought valued he, nor shunn'd;  
 And with disdainful look thus first began.

Whence and what art thou, execrable shape!  
 That darest, though grim and terrible, advance  
 Thy miscreated front athwart my way  
 To yonder gates? through them I mean to pass,  
 That be assured, without leave ask'd of thee:  
 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 replied.  
 Art thou that Traitor-Angel, art thou He,  
 Who first broke peace in Heaven, and faith, till then  
 Unbroken; and in proud rebellious arms  
 Drew after him the third part of Heaven's sons  
 Conjur'd against the Highest; for which both thou  
 And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd  
 To waste eternal days in woe and pain?  
 And reckon'st thou thyself with Spirits of Heaven,

Hell-doom'd! and breathest 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;  
 Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue  
 Thy lingering; 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 threatening, grew tenfold  
 More dreadful and deform. On the other side,  
 Incensed with indignation, Satan stood  
 Unterrified, and like a comet burn'd,  
 That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge  
 In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair  
 Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head  
 Level'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands  
 No second stroke intend; and such a frown  
 Each cast at the other, as when two black clouds,  
 With Heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on  
 Over the Caspian, then stand front to front,  
 Hovering 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  
 To meet so great a Foe: And now great deeds  
 Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,  
 Had not the snaky Sorceress that sat  
 Fast by Hell-gate, and kept the fatal key,  
 Risen, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O Father! what intends thy hand, she cried,  
Against thy only Son? What fury, O Son!  
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart  
Against thy Father's head? and know'st for whom;  
For him who sits above, and laughs the while  
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  
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,  
What thing thou art, thus double-form'd; and why,  
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st  
Me Father, and that phantasm call'st my Son:  
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now  
Sight more detestable than him and thee.

To whom thus the Portress of Hell-gate replied.  
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem  
Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair  
In Heaven, when at the assembly, and in sight  
Of all the Seraphim with thee combined  
In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King,  
All on a sudden miserable pain  
Surprised thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum  
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast  
Threw forth; till, on the left side opening wide,  
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,

Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess arm'd,  
Out of thy head I sprung; Amazement seized  
All the host of Heaven; back they recoil'd afraid  
At first, and call'd me *Sin*, and for a sign  
Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,  
I pleased, and with attractive graces won  
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft  
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing  
Becamest enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st  
With me in secret, that my womb conceived  
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,  
Through all the empyréan: 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  
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.  
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  
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart



Made to destroy! I fled, and cried out *Death!*  
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd  
 From all her caves, and back resounded *Death!*  
 I fled; but he pursued (though more, it seems,  
 Inflamed with lust than rage), and, swifter far,  
 Me overtook, his mother, all dismay'd;  
 And, in embraces forcible and foul  
 Ingendering with me, of that rape begot  
 These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry  
 Surround me, as thou saw'st; hourly conceived  
 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  
 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  
 For want of other prey, but that he knows  
 His end with mine involved; and knows that I  
 Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,  
 Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounced.  
 But thou, O Father! I forewarn thee, shun  
 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  
 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, through dire change  
 Befallen us, unforeseen, unthought of) know,  
 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,  
 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  
 The unfounded deep, and through the void immense  
 To search with wandering quest a place foretold  
 Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now  
 Created vast and round, a place of bliss  
 In the purlieus of Heaven, and therein placed  
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply  
 Perhaps our vacant room; though more removed,  
 Lest Heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,  
 Might hap to move new broils. Be this or aught  
 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  
 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 ceased, for both seem'd highly pleased; and Death  
 Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear

His famine should be fill'd; and bless'd his maw  
Destined to that good hour: No less rejoiced  
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire.

The key of this infernal pit by due,  
And by command of Heaven's all-powerful King,  
I keep; by him forbidden to unlock  
These adamant gates; against all force  
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,  
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might.  
But what owe I 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 confined,  
Inhabitant of Heaven, and heavenly born,  
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 gavest me; whom should I obey  
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.

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,  
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;  
And, towards the gate rolling her bestial train,  
Forthwith the huge portcullis high updrew,  
Which but herself, not all the Stygian Powers  
Could once have moved; then in the keyhole turns

The 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  
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate  
Harsh thunder, that the lowest 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,  
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  
The secrets of the hoary deep; a dark  
Illimitable ocean, without bound, [highth,  
Without dimension; where length, breadth, and  
And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night  
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold  
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise  
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.  
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,  
Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring  
Their embryon atoms; they around the flag  
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  
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,

To whom Satan turning boldly, thus: Ye Powers  
 And Spirits of this nethermost abyss,  
 Chaos and ancient Night! I come no spy,  
 With purpose to explore or to disturb  
 The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint  
 Wandering this darksome desert, as my way  
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light,  
 Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek  
 What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds  
 Confine with Heaven; or if some other place,  
 From your dominion won, the etherial King  
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive  
 I travel this profound; direct my course;  
 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  
 Erect the standard there of ancient Night;  
 Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge!

Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,  
 With faltering speech and visage incomposed,  
 Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art,  
 That mighty leading Angel, who of late  
 Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown.  
 I saw and heard; for such a numerous host  
 Fled not in silence through the frighted deep,  
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,  
 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,  
 Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils  
 Weakening 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  
 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 ceased; and Satan staid not to reply;  
 But, glad that now his 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  
 Environ'd, wins his way; harder beset  
 And more endanger'd, than when Argo pass'd  
 Through Bosphorus, betwixt the justling rocks:  
 Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd  
 Charybdis, and by the other whirlpool steer'd.  
 So he with difficulty and labour hard  
 Moved on: with difficulty and labour he;  
 But, he once pass'd, soon after, when man fell,  
 Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain  
 Following his track, such was the will of Heaven,  
 Paved after him a broad and beaten way  
 Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf  
 Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length,

From Hell continued, reaching the utmost orb  
 Of this frail world; by which the Spirits perverse  
 With easy intercourse pass to and fro  
 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  
 Shoots far into the bosom of dim night  
 A glimmering dawn; Here Nature first begins  
 Her furthest verge, and Chaos to retire  
 As from her outmost works a broken foe  
 With tumult less, and with less hostile din;  
 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,  
 Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold  
 Far off the empyreal Heaven, extended wide  
 In circuit, undetermined square or round,  
 With opal towers and battlements adorn'd  
 Of living sapphire, once his native seat;  
 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,  
 Accursed, and in a cursed hour, he hies.



Brightest Seraph, tell  
 In which of all these shining orbs hath man  
 His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none.  
 L. 667.

## PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK III.



## PARADISE LOST.

### BOOK III.

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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 quire, 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 here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed: Alights first on mount Niphates.

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HAIL, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born,  
Or of the Eternal coeternal beam  
May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,  
And never but in unapproached light

Dwelt from eternity; dwelt then in thee,  
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate!  
 Or hear'st 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  
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,  
 Won from the void and formless infinite.  
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,  
 Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detain'd  
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight  
 Through utter and through middle darkness borne,  
 With other notes than to the Orphéan lyre,  
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;  
 Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down  
 The dark descent, and up to reascend,  
 Though hard and rare: Thee I revisit safe,  
 And feel thy sov'reign 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,  
 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,  
 That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,  
 Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget  
 Those other two equal'd with me in fate,  
 So were I equal'd with them in renown,

Blind Thamyris, and blind Mæonides;  
 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  
 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 everduring dark  
 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 expunged and rased,  
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.  
 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.

Now had the Almighty Father from above,  
 From the pure empyrean where he sits  
 High throned above all highth, bent down his eye  
 His own works and their works at once to view:  
 About him all the Sanctities of Heaven  
 Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received  
 Beatitude past utterance; on his right  
 The radiant image of his glory sat,  
 His only Son; on earth he first beheld

Our two first parents, yet the only two  
 Of mankind in the happy garden placed,  
 Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,  
 Uninterrupted joy, unrival'd love,  
 In blissful solitude; he then survey'd  
 Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there  
 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,  
 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  
 Transports our Adversary? whom no bounds  
 Prescribed, 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  
 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 placed, with purpose to assay  
 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  
 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 the ethereal Powers  
 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,  
 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 served necessity,  
 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 overruled  
 Their will disposed by absolute decree  
 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 proved certain unforeknown.  
 So without least impulse or shadow of fate,  
 Or aught 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  
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd  
 Their freedom; they themselves ordain'd their fall.  
 The first sort by their own suggestion fell,  
 Self-tempted, self-depraved: Man falls, deceived  
 By the 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  
 Sense of new joy ineffable diffused.

Beyond compare the Son of God was seen  
 Most glorious; in him all his Father shone  
 Substantially express'd; and in his face  
 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 closed  
 Thy sov'reign sentence, that Man should find grace;  
 For which both Heaven and Earth shall high extol  
 Thy praises, with the innumerable sound  
 Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne  
 Encompass'd shall resound thee ever bless'd.  
 For should Man finally be lost? should Man,  
 Thy creature late so loved, 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:  
 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  
 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  
 Be question'd and blasphemed 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,  
 All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all  
 As my eternal purpose hath decreed;  
 Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will;  
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me  
 Freely vouchsafed; once more I will renew  
 His lapsed powers, though forfeit, and enthral'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  
 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  
 Their sinful state, and to appease betimes  
 The incensed 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.  
 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,  
 Light after light, well used, 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 be blinded more,  
 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,  
 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  
 Some other able, and as willing, pay  
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.  
 Say, heavenly Powers, where shall we find such love?  
 Which of you will be mortal, to redeem

Man's mortal crime, and just the unjust to save?  
 Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?

He ask'd, but all the heavenly quire 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  
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.  
 And now without redemption all mankind  
 Must have been lost, adjudged to Death and Hell  
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,  
 In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,  
 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  
 Comes unprevented, unimplored, 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;  
 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  
 Well pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage;  
 Under his gloomy power I shall not long  
 Lie vanquish'd; thou hast given me to possess  
 Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,

Though now to Death I yield, and am his due  
 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  
 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  
 The Powers of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight  
 Pleased, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,  
 While, by thee raised, I ruin all my foes,  
 Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave;  
 Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd,  
 Shall enter Heaven, long absent, and return,  
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud  
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assured  
 And reconciliation; wrath shall be no more  
 Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.

His words here ended, but his meek aspect  
 Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love  
 To mortal men, above which only shone  
 Filial obedience: As a sacrifice  
 Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will  
 Of his great Father. Admiration seized  
 All Heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend,  
 Wondering; but soon the Almighty thus replied.  
 O thou in Heaven and Earth the only peace

Found out for mankind under wrath! O thou  
 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 losing thee awhile, the whole race lost.  
 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  
 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 restored  
 As many as are restored, without thee none.  
 His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit,  
 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 judged and die,  
 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 hellish hate  
 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 throned in highest bliss  
 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,  
 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  
 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, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions, I reduce:  
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide  
 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 Arch-Angels to proclaim  
 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  
 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,  
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,  
 With joy and peace triumphing, and fair truth.  
 Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,  
 For regal sceptre then no more shall need,  
 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 the Almighty ceased, but all  
 The multitude of Angels, with a shout  
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet  
 As from bless'd voices, uttering joy, Heaven rung  
 With jubilee, and loud Hosannas fill'd  
 The eternal regions: Lowly reverent  
 Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground  
 With solemn adoration down they cast  
 Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold;  
 Immortal amarant, a flower which once  
 In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,  
 Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence  
 To Heaven removed, where first it grew, there grows,  
 And flowers aloft shading the fount of life,  
 And where the river of bliss through midst of Heaven  
 Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream;  
 With these that never fade the Spirits elect  
 Bind their resplendent locks inwreathed with beams;  
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright  
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,  
 Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.

Then, crown'd again, their golden harps they took,  
 Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side  
 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  
 Melodious part, such concord is in Heaven.

Thee, Father, first they sung Omnipotent,  
 Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,  
 Eternal King; the Author of all being,  
 Fountain of light, thyself invisible  
 Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sit'st  
 Throned inaccessible, but when thou shadest  
 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,  
 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 countenance, without cloud  
 Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,  
 Whom else no creature can behold; on thee  
 Impress'd the effulgence of his glory abides,  
 Transfused on thee his ample Spirit rests.  
 He Heaven of Heavens and all the Powers therein  
 By thee created; and by thee threw down  
 The aspiring Dominations: Thou that day  
 Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,  
 Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook

Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks  
 Thou drovest of warring Angels disarray'd.  
 Back from pursuit thy Powers with loud acclaim  
 Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,  
 To execute fierce vengeance on his foes,  
 Not so on Man: Him through their malice fallen,  
 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 purposed not to doom frail Man  
 So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,  
 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,  
 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 heart thy praise  
 Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.

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, enclosed  
 From Chaos, and the 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 Night



Starless exposed, and ever-threatening storms  
 Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;  
 Save on that side which from 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.  
 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 toward the springs  
 Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;  
 But in the way lights on the barren plains  
 Of Sericana, where Chinese drive  
 With sails and wind their cany waggons light:  
 So, on this windy sea of land, the Fiend  
 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 aëreal vapours flew  
 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 the other life;  
 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, empy as their deeds;

All the unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand,  
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,  
 Dissolved on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,  
 Till final dissolution, wander here;  
 Not in the neighbouring moon as some have dream'd;  
 Those argent fields more likely habitants,  
 Translated Saints, or middle Spirits hold  
 Betwixt the angelical and humankind.  
 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  
 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 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 gray, 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 disguised;  
 They pass the planets seven, and pass the fix'd,  
 And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs  
 The trepidation talk'd, and that first moved;  
 And now Saint Peter at Heaven's wicket seems

To wait them with his keys, and now at foot  
 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  
 Cows, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, toss'd  
 And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,  
 Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,  
 The sport of winds: All these, upwhirl'd aloft,  
 Fly o'er the backside of the world far off  
 Into a Limbo large and broad, since call'd  
 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 thitherward in haste  
 His travel'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,  
 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  
 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.*  
 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 arrived  
 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:  
 Direct against which open'd from beneath,  
 Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,  
 A passage down to the Earth, a passage wide,  
 Wider by far than that of aftertimes  
 Over mount Sion, and, though that were large,  
 Over the Promised 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,  
 To Beërsaba where the Holy Land  
 Borders on Egypt and the 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,  
 That scaled 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  
 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 glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd,  
 Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:  
 Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,  
 The Spirit malign, but much more envy seized,  
 At sight of all this world beheld so fair.  
 Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood  
 So high above the circling canopy  
 Of night's extended shade), from eastern point  
 Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears  
 Andromeda far off Atlantic seas  
 Beyond the horizon; then from pole to pole  
 He views in breadth, and without longer pause  
 Down right into the world's first region throws  
 His sight precipitant, and winds with ease  
 Through the pure marble air his oblique way  
 Amongst innumerable stars, that shone  
 Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;  
 Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,  
 Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,  
 Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,  
 Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt happy there  
 He staid not to inquire: Above them all  
 The golden sun, in splendour likest Heaven,  
 Allured his eye; thither his course he bends  
 Through the calm firmament (but up or down,

By centre, or eccentric, hard to tell,  
 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  
 Days, months, and years, towards 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,  
 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 glazed optic tube yet never saw.  
 The place he found beyond expression bright,  
 Compared with aught on earth, metal or stone;  
 Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd  
 With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;  
 If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear;  
 If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,  
 Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone  
 In Aaron's breastplate, and a stone besides  
 Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen,  
 That stone, or like to that which here below  
 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.  
 What wonder then if fields and regions here  
 Breathe forth Elixir pure, and rivers run  
 Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch  
 The arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,  
 Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd,  
 Here in the dark so many precious things  
 Of colour glorious, and effect so rare?  
 Here matter now to gaze the Devil met  
 Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands;  
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,  
 But all sunshine, as when his beams at noon  
 Culminate from the equator, as they now  
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round  
 Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air,  
 No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray  
 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  
 Circled his head, nor less his locks behind  
 Illustrious on his shoulders sledge 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  
 To find who might direct his wandering flight  
 To Paradise, the happy seat of Man,  
 His journey's end and our beginning woe.  
 But first he casts to change his proper shape,

Which else might work him danger or delay:  
 And now a stripling Cherub he appears,  
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face  
 Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb  
 Suitable grace diffused, so well he feign'd:  
 Under a coronet his flowing hair  
 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,  
 Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,  
 Admonish'd by his ear, and straight was known  
 The Arch-Angel Uriel, one of the seven  
 Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,  
 Stand ready at command, and are his eyes  
 That run through all the Heavens, or down to the 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,  
 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  
 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,  
 Hath brought me from the quires of Cherubim  
 Alone thus wandering. 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;  
 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,  
 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.

So spake the false dissembler unperceived;  
 For neither Man nor Angel can discern  
 Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks  
 Invisible, except to God alone,  
 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 beguiled  
 Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held  
 The sharpest-sighted Spirit of all in Heaven;  
 Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,  
 In his uprightness, answer thus return'd.

Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends to know

The works of God, thereby to glorify  
 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,  
 Contented with report, hear only in Heaven:  
 For wonderful indeed are all his works,  
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all  
 Had in remembrance always with delight;  
 But what created mind can comprehend  
 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  
 Stood ruled, stood vast infinitude confined;  
 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;  
 And this ethereal quintessence of Heaven  
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,  
 That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars  
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;  
 Each had his place appointed, each his course;  
 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 the other hemisphere,  
 Night would invade; but there the neighbouring 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  
 Hence fills and empties to enlighten the Earth,  
 And in her pale dominion checks the night.  
 That spot, to which I point, is Paradise,  
 Adam's abode; those lofty shades, his bower.  
 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 toward the coast of earth beneath,  
 Down from the ecliptic, sped with hoped success,  
 Throws his steep flight in many an acry wheel;  
 Nor staid, till on Niphates' top he lights.



Why satt'st thou like an enemy in wait,  
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep?  
 L. 823.

## PARADISE LOST.

## BOOK IV.

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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 thereon intends to found his temptation by seducing them to transgress: Then leaves them awhile to know further of their state by some other means. Meanwhile Uriel descending on a sunbeam 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 rounds 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.

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O, FOR that warning voice, which he, who saw  
The Apocalypse, heard cry in Heaven aloud,  
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,  
Came furious down to be revenged on men,

*Woe to the inhabitants on earth!* that now,  
 While time was, our first parents had been warn'd  
 The coming of their secret foe, and scaped,  
 Haply so scaped his mortal snare: For now  
 Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,  
 The tempter ere the accuser of mankind,  
 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  
 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  
 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  
 Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.  
 Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view  
 Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;  
 Sometimes towards Heaven, and the full-blazing sun,  
 Which now sat high in his meridian tower:  
 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,  
 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  
 Warring in Heaven against Heaven's matchless King:  
 Ah, wherefore! he deserved 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.  
 What could be less than to afford him praise,  
 The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,  
 How due! yet all his good proved ill in me,  
 And wrought but malice; lifted up so high  
 I sdein'd subjection, and thought one step higher  
 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 received,  
 And understood not that a grateful mind  
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once  
 Indebted and discharged; what burden then?  
 O, had his powerful destiny ordain'd  
 Me some inferior Angel, I had stood  
 Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised  
 Ambition! Yet why not? some other Power  
 As great might have aspired, and me, though 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.  
 Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?  
 Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,  
 But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?  
 Be then his love accursed, since love or hate,  
 To me alike, it deals eternal woe.  
 Nay, cursed 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;  
 And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep  
 Still threatening 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?  
 None left but by submission; and that word  
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame  
 Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduced  
 With other promises and other vaunts  
 Than to submit, boasting I could subdue  
 The Omnipotent. Ah 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 advanced,  
 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

Would highth recall 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 pierced so deep:  
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse  
 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, in stead  
 Of us outcast, exiled, 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  
 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 changed with pale, ire, envy, and despair;  
 Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd  
 Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.  
 For heavenly minds from such distempers foul  
 Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,  
 Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm,  
 Artificer of fraud; and was the first  
 That practised falsehood under saintly show,  
 Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:  
 Yet not enough had practised to deceive

Uriel once warn'd; whose eye pursued him down  
 The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount  
 Saw him disfigured, more than could befall  
 Spirit of happy sort: His gestures fierce  
 He mark'd and mad demeanour, then alone,  
 As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.  
 So on he fares, and to the border comes  
 Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,  
 Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,  
 As with a rural mound, the champain head  
 Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides  
 With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,  
 Access denied; and overhead up grew  
 Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,  
 Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,  
 A silvan scene; and, as the ranks ascend  
 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 neighbouring round.  
 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,  
 When God hath shower'd the earth; so lovely seem'd  
 That landskip: And of pure now purer air  
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires

Vernal delight and joy, able to drive  
 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 pass'd  
 Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow  
 Sabeian odours from the spicy shore  
 Of Araby the bless'd; with such delay [league  
 Well pleased they slack their course, and many a  
 Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles:  
 So entertain'd those odorous sweets the Fiend,  
 Who came their bane; though with them better  
 Than Asmodæus with the fishy fume [pleased  
 That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse  
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent  
 From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.

Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill  
 Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow;  
 But further way found none, so thick entwined,  
 As one continued brake, the undergrowth  
 Of shrubs 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 the other side: which when the arch-felon saw,  
 Due entrance he disdain'd; and, in contempt,  
 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,  
 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,  
 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,  
 Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life  
 Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death  
 To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought  
 Of that lifegiving plant, but only used  
 For prospect, what well used had been the pledge  
 Of immortality. So little knows  
 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,  
 To all delight of human sense exposed,  
 In narrow room, Nature's whole wealth, yea more,  
 A Heaven on Earth: For blissful Paradise  
 Of God the garden was, by him in the east  
 Of Eden planted; Eden stretch'd her line  
 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;  
 Out of the fertile ground he caused 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,  
 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 changed his course, but through the shaggy hill  
 Pass'd underneath ingulf'd; for God had thrown  
 That mountain as his garden-mound high raised  
 Upon the rapid current, which, through veins  
 Of porous earth with kindly thirst updrawn,  
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill  
 Water'd the garden; thence united fell  
 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, wandering many a famous realm  
 And country, whereof here needs no account;  
 But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,  
 How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,  
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,  
 With mazy error under pendant shades  
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed  
 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 unpierced shade  
 Imbrown'd the noontide bowers: Thus was this place  
 A happy rural seat of various view;  
 Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,  
 Others whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,  
 Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,  
 If true, here only, and of delicious taste:  
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks  
 Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,  
 Or palmy hillock; or the flowery lap  
 Of some irriguous valley spread her store,  
 Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose:  
 Another side, umbrageous grots and caves  
 Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine  
 Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps  
 Luxuriant; meanwhile murmuring waters fall  
 Down the slope hills, dispersed, or in a lake,  
 That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd  
 Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.  
 The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,  
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune  
 The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,  
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,  
 Led on the eternal Spring. Not that fair field  
 Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,  
 Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis  
 Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain  
 To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove  
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and the inspired  
 Castalian spring, might with this Paradise

Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle  
 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,  
 Mount Amara, though this by some supposed  
 True Paradise under the Ethiop line  
 By Nilus' head, enclosed with shining rock,  
 A whole day's journey high, but wide remote  
 From this Assyrian garden, where the Fiend  
 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:  
 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 placed),  
 Whence true authority in men; though both  
 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 declared  
 Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks  
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung  
 Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:  
 She, as a veil, down to the slender waist



Her unadorned golden tresses wore  
 Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets waved  
 As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied  
 Subjection, but required with gentle sway,  
 And by her yielded, by him best received,  
 Yielded with coy submission, modest pride,  
 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  
 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:  
 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  
 Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain side  
 They sat them down; and, after no more toil  
 Of their sweet gardening labour than sufficed  
 To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease  
 More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite  
 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,  
 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  
 All beasts of the 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,  
 Gamboll'd before them; the unwieldy elephant,  
 To make them mirth, used 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  
 Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing sat,  
 Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,  
 Declined, was hasting now with prone career  
 To the ocean isles, and in the ascending scale  
 Of Heaven the stars that usher evening rose:  
 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 advanced  
 Creatures of other mould, earthborn perhaps,  
 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.  
 Ah! gentle pair, ye little think how nigh  
 Your change approaches, when all these delights  
 Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe;  
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy;  
 Happy, but for so happy ill secured  
 Long to continue, and this high seat your Heaven  
 Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out such a foe  
 As now is enter'd; yet no purposed foe  
 To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,  
 Though I unpitied: League with you I seek,  
 And mutual amity, so straight, 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,  
 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,  
 Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge  
 On you who wrong 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 enlarged,  
 By conquering 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, excused his devilish deeds.

Then from his lofty stand on that high tree  
 Down he alights among the sportful herd  
 Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,  
 Now other, as their shape served best his end  
 Nearer to view his prey, and, unespied,  
 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,  
 Straight couches close, then, rising, changes oft  
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,  
 Whence rushing, he might surest seize them both,  
 Griped 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.

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;  
 That raised us from the dust, and placed us here  
 In all this happiness, who at his hand  
 Have nothing merited, nor can perform  
 Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires  
 From us no other service than to keep  
 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,  
 Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou know'st  
 God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree,  
 The only sign of our obedience left,  
 Among so many signs of power and rule  
 Conferr'd upon us, and dominion given  
 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:  
 But let us ever praise him, and extol  
 His bounty, following our 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  
 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  
 So far the happier lot, enjoying thee  
 Preeminent by so much odds, while thou  
 Like consort to thyself canst no where find.  
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep  
 I first awaked, and found myself reposed  
 Under a shade on flowers, much wondering where  
 And what I was, whence thither brought and how.  
 Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound  
 Of waters issued from a cave, and spread

Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved  
 Pure as the expanse of Heaven; I thither went  
 With unexperienced 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  
 A shape within the watery 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  
 Mine eyes till now, and pined 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  
 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,  
 But follow straight, invisibly thus led?  
 Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall,  
 Under a plantain; yet methought less fair,  
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,  
 Than that smooth watery image: Back I turn'd;  
 Thou following criest 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  
Henceforth an individual solace dear;  
Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim  
My other half:" With that thy gentle hand  
Seized mine: I yielded; and from that time see  
How beauty is excell'd by manly grace,  
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.

So spake our general mother, and with eyes  
Of conjugal attraction unproved,  
And meek surrender, half-embracing lean'd  
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,  
Smiled with superior love, as Jupiter  
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds  
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,  
Imparadised in one another's arms,  
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,  
Among our other torments not the least,  
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  
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?  
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  
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  
Some wandering Spirit of Heaven by fountain side,  
Or in thick shade retired, 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!

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,  
But with sly circumspection, and began [roam.  
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his  
Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where Heaven  
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun  
Slowly descended, and with right aspect  
Against the eastern gate of Paradise  
Level'd his evening rays: It was a rock  
Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,  
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent



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 the angelic guards, awaiting night;  
 About him exercised heroic games  
 The unarmed youth of Heaven, but nigh at hand  
 Celestial armory, shields, helms, and spears,  
 Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.  
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even  
 On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star  
 In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fired  
 Impress the air, and shows the mariner  
 From what point of his compass to beware  
 Impetuous winds: He thus began in haste.

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 highth of noon came to my sphere  
 A Spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know  
 More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly Man,  
 God's latest image: I described his way  
 Bent on all speed, and mark'd his aery gait;  
 But in the mount that lies from Eden north,  
 Where he first lighted soon discern'd his looks  
 Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscured:  
 Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade  
 Lost sight of him: One of the banish'd crew,  
 I fear, hath ventured from the deep, to raise  
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find.

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 placed, but such as come  
 Well known from Heaven; and since meridian hour  
 No creature thence: If Spirit of other sort,  
 So minded, have o'erleap'd these earthly bounds  
 On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude  
 Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.  
 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 promised he; and Uriel to his charge  
 Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now raised  
 Bore him slope downward to the sun now fallen  
 Beneath the Azores; whether the prime orb,  
 Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd  
 Diurnal; on this less volúbil earth,  
 By shorter flight to the east, had left him there  
 Arraying with reflected purple and gold  
 The clouds that on his western throne attend.  
 Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray  
 Had in her sober livery all things clad;  
 Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,  
 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 pleased: Now glow'd the firmament  
 With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led  
 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, the hour  
Of night, and all things now retired to rest,  
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 slumbrous weight, inclines  
Our eyelids: Other creatures all day long  
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;  
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  
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,  
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 bidd'st  
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.  
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,  
Glistering with dew; fragrant the fertile earth  
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  
With charm of earliest birds: nor rising sun  
On this delightful land: nor herb, fruit, flower,  
Glistering with dew; nor fragrance after showers;  
Nor grateful Evening mild; nor silent Night,  
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,  
Or glittering star-light, 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,  
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 prepared, they set and rise;  
Lest total Darkness should by night regain  
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  
 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,  
 Shine not in vain; nor think, though 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  
 Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard  
 Celestial voices to the midnight air,  
 Sole, or responsive each to other's note,  
 Singing their great Creator? oft in bands  
 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  
 Chosen by the sov'reign Planter, when he framed  
 All things to Man's delightful use: the roof  
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade  
 Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew  
 Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side  
 Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,

Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,  
 Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine,  
 Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and  
 Mosaic; underfoot the violet, [wrought  
 Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay  
 Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone  
 Of costliest emblem: Other creature here,  
 Bird, beast, insect, or worm, durst enter none,  
 Such was their awe of Man. In shadier bower  
 More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,  
 Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph  
 Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,  
 With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,  
 Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed;  
 And heavenly quires the hymenæan sung,  
 What day the genial Angel to our sire  
 Brought her in naked beauty more adorn'd,  
 More lovely, than Pandora, whom the Gods  
 Endow'd with all their gifts, and O! too like  
 In sad event, when to the unwiser son  
 Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared  
 Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged  
 On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus, at their shady lodge arrived, both stood,  
 Both turn'd, and under open sky adored  
 The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven,  
 Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,  
 And starry pole: Thou also madest the night,  
 Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day,  
 Which we, in our appointed work employ'd,

Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help  
 And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss  
 Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place  
 For us too large, where thy abundance wants  
 Partakers, and uncropp'd falls to the ground.  
 But thou hast promised from us two a race  
 To fill the earth, who shall with us extol  
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,  
 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.

This said unanimous, and other rites  
 Observing none, but adoration pure  
 Which God likes best, into their inmost bower  
 Handed they went; and, eased the putting off  
 These troublesome disguises which we wear,  
 Straight side by side were laid; nor turn'd, I ween,  
 Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites  
 Mysterious of connubial love refused:  
 Whatever hypocrites austere talk  
 Of purity, and place, and innocence,  
 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  
 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,  
 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 unbefitting holiest place,  
 Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,  
 Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,  
 Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs used.  
 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,  
 Casual fruition; nor in court amours,  
 Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,  
 Or serenate, which the starved lover sings  
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.  
 These, lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept,  
 And on their naked limbs the flowery roof  
 Shower'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on,  
 Bless'd pair; and O! yet happiest, if ye seek  
 No happier state, and know to know no more.

Now had night measured with her shadowy cone  
 Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,  
 And from their ivory port the Cherubim,  
 Forth issuing at the accustom'd hour, stood arm'd  
 To their night watches in warlike parade;  
 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.  
 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 through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook;  
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge,  
 Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.  
 This evening from the sun's decline arrived,  
 Who tells of some infernal Spirit seen  
 Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escaped  
 The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt:  
 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,  
 Assaying by his devilish art to reach  
 The organs of her fancy, and with them forge  
 Illusions, as he list, phantasms and dreams;  
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint  
 The animal spirits that from pure blood arise  
 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 ingendering pride.  
 Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear  
 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 surprised. As when a spark  
 Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid  
 Fit for the tun some magazine to store  
 Against a rumour'd war, the smutty grain,  
 With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air;

So started up in his own shape the Fiend.  
 Back stepp'd those two fair Angels, half amazed  
 So sudden to behold the grisly king;  
 Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon.  
 Which of those rebel Spirits adjudged to Hell  
 Comest thou, escaped thy prison? and, transform'd,  
 Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait,  
 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,  
 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,  
 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.  
 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  
 Invincible: Abash'd the Devil stood,  
 And felt how awful goodness is, and saw  
 Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pined

His loss; but chiefly to find here observed  
 His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd  
 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  
 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  
 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.

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

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.

To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.  
 Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed

To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge  
 Of others, who approve not to transgress  
 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 the esteem of wise,  
 And such I held thee; but this question ask'd  
 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  
 And boldly venture to whatever place [doubt,  
 Furthest from pain, where thou mightst 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,  
 But evil hast not tried: and wilt object  
 His will who bounds 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;  
 But that implies not violence or harm.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel moved,  
 Disdainfully half smiling, thus replied.  
 O loss of one in Heaven to judge of wise  
 Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,  
 And now returns him from his prison scaped,  
 Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise  
 Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither

Unlicensed from his bounds in Hell prescribed;  
 So wise he judges it to fly from pain  
 However, and to scape his punishment!  
 So judge thou still, presumptuous! till the wrath,  
 Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight  
 Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,  
 Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain  
 Can equal anger infinite provoked.  
 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?  
 The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alleged  
 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,  
 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,  
 Argue thy inexperience what behoves  
 From hard assays and ill successes pass'd  
 A faithful leader, not to hazard all  
 Through ways of danger by himself untried:  
 I, therefore, I alone first undertook  
 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;  
 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 practised distances to cringe, not fight.

To whom the warrior Angel soon replied.  
 To say and straight unsay, pretending first  
 Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,  
 Argues no leader but a liar traced,  
 Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name,  
 O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!  
 Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?  
 Army of Fiends, fit body to fit head.  
 Was this your discipline and faith engaged,  
 Your military obedience, to dissolve  
 Allegiance to the acknowledged Power supreme?  
 And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem  
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou  
 Once fawn'd, and cringed, and servilely adored  
 Heaven's awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope  
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?  
 But mark what I arreed thee now, Avaunt;  
 Fly thither whence thou fledst! If from this hour  
 Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,  
 Back to the' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd,  
 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,  
Proud liminary Cherub! but ere then  
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel  
From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King  
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,  
Used to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels  
In progress through the road of Heaven star-paved.

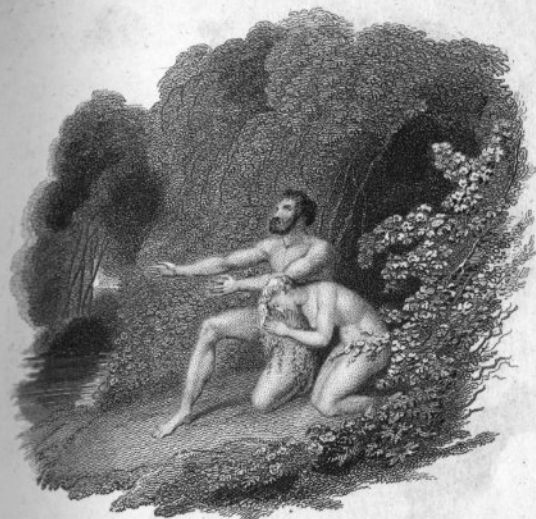
While thus he spake, the angelic squadron bright  
Turn'd fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns  
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round  
With ported spears, as thick as when a field  
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends  
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind  
Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,  
Lest on the threshingfloor his hopeless sheaves  
Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan, alarm'd,  
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,  
Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:

His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest  
Sat Horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp  
What seem'd both spear and shield: Now dreadful  
Might have ensued, nor only Paradise [deeds  
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  
The 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 balanced air  
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.

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, though doubled now  
To trample thee as mire: For proof look up,  
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign; [weak,  
Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how  
If thou resist. The Fiend look'd up, and knew  
His mounted scale aloft: Nor more; but fled  
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.





Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began  
 Their orisons, each morning duly paid  
 In various stile: \_\_\_\_\_ L. 144.

## PARADISE LOST.

BOOK V.

DRAWN BY RICHARD WESTALL R.A. ENGRAVED BY CHARLES HEATH:  
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## PARADISE LOST.

### BOOK V.

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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.

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Now Morn, her rosy steps in the' eastern clime  
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,  
When Adam waked, so custom'd; for his sleep  
Was aery-light, from pure digestion bred,  
And temperate vapours bland, which the only sound  
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,  
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song  
Of birds on every bough; so much the more  
His wonder was to find unawaken'd Eve

With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek,  
 As through unquiet rest: He, on his side  
 Leaning half raised, 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  
 Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,  
 Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus. Awake,  
 My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,  
 Heaven's last best gift, my ever new delight!  
 Awake: The morning shines, and the fresh field  
 Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring  
 Our tender 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.

Such whispering waked 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  
 (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,  
 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  
 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?  
 In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment  
 Attracted by thy 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  
 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 wondering look'd, beside it stood  
 One shaped and wing'd like one of those from Heaven  
 By us oft seen; his dewy locks distill'd  
 Ambrosia; on that tree he also gazed;  
 And, "O fair plant," said he, "with fruit surcharged,  
 Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,  
 Nor God, nor Man? Is knowledge so despised?  
 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 paused not, but with venturous arm  
 He pluck'd, he tasted; me damp horror chill'd  
 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 cropp'd,  
 Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit

For Gods, yet able to make Gods of Men:  
 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,  
 Happier thou mayst be, worthier canst not be:  
 Taste this, and be henceforth among the Gods  
 Thyself a Goddess, not to earth confined,  
 But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes  
 Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine, and see  
 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,  
 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: Wondering at my flight and change  
 To this high exaltation; suddenly  
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,  
 And fell asleep; but O, how glad I waked  
 To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her night  
 Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad.

Best image of myself, and dearer half,  
 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  
 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, aery shapes,  
 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  
 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,  
 But with addition strange; yet be not sad.  
 Evil into the mind of God or Man  
 May come and go, so unproved, and leave  
 No spot or blame behind: Which gives me hope  
 That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,  
 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  
 Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers  
 That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,  
 Reserved 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  
 From either eye, and wiped 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.

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 dayspring, and the sun, who, scarce uprisen,  
 With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean-brim,  
 Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,  
 Discovering 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  
 In various style; for neither various style  
 Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise  
 Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung  
 Unmeditated: such prompt eloquence  
 Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse,  
 More tuneable than needed lute or harp,  
 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  
 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,  
 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.  
 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.  
 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,  
 With the fix'd Stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;  
 And ye, five other wandering 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  
 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  
 From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,  
 Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,  
 In honour to the world's great Author rise;  
 Whether to deck with clouds the uncolour'd sky,

Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,  
 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,  
 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  
 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  
 To give us only good; and if the night  
 Have gather'd aught 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.  
 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  
 To wed her elm; she, spoused, about him twines  
 Her marriageable arms, and with him brings  
 Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn  
 His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld

With pity Heaven's high King, and to him call'd  
 Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that deign'd  
 To travel with Tobias, and secured  
 His marriage with the seven-times wedded maid.  
 Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on Earth  
 Satan, from Hell scaped through the darksome gulf,  
 Hath raised in Paradise; and how disturb'd  
 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  
 Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retired,  
 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,  
 Left to his own free will, his will though free,  
 Yet mutable; whence warn to him beware  
 He swerve not, too secure: Tell him withal  
 His danger, and from whom; what enemy,  
 Late fallen himself from Heaven, is plotting now  
 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, unforewarn'd.  
 So spake the Eternal Father, and fulfill'd  
 All justice: Nor delay'd the winged Saint  
 After his charge received; but from among  
 Thousand celestial Ardours, where he stood

Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, upspringing light,  
 Flew through the midst of Heaven; the angelic quires,  
 On each hand parting, to his speed gave way  
 Through all the empyreal road; till, at the gate  
 Of Heaven arrived, the gate self-open'd wide  
 On golden hinges turning, as by work  
 Divine the sov'reign Architect had framed.  
 From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,  
 Star interposed, however small, he sees,  
 Not unconform'd to other shining globes,  
 Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crown'd  
 Above all hills. As when by night the glass  
 Of Galileo, less assured, observes  
 Imagined lands and regions in the moon:  
 Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades  
 Delos or Samos first appearing, kens  
 A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight  
 He speeds, and through the vast etherial 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  
 Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems  
 A phenix, gazed by all as that sole bird,  
 When, to enshrine his reliques in the Sun's  
 Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.  
 At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise  
 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  
 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-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood,  
 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;  
 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 wilderness of sweets; for Nature here  
 Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will  
 Her virgin fancies pouring forth more sweet,  
 Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss.  
 Him through the spiey forest onward come  
 Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat  
 Of his cool bower, while now the mounted sun  
 Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm  
 Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs:  
 And Eve within, due at her hour prepared  
 For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please  
 True appetite, and not disrelish thirst  
 Of nectarous 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  
 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  
 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 disburdening grows  
 More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.

To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's hallow'd mould,  
 Of God inspired! 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:  
 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 dispensed his bounties as in Heaven.

So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste  
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent  
 What choice to choose for delicacy best,  
 What order, so contrived as not to mix  
 Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring  
 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  
 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 meaths  
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels press'd  
 She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold  
 Wants her fit vessels pure; then strows the ground  
 With rose and odours from the shrub unfumed.

Meanwhile our primitive great sire, to meet  
 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  
 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 submiss approach and reverence meek,  
 As to a superior nature bowing low,  
 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 a while  
 To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us  
 Two only, who yet by sov'reign gift possess  
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bowers  
 To rest; and what the garden choicest bears



To sit and taste, till this meridian heat  
Be over, and the sun more cool decline.

Whom thus the 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  
O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,  
I have at will. So to the silvan lodge  
They came, that like Pomona's harbour smiled,  
With flowerets deck'd, and fragrant smells; but Eve,  
Undeck'd save with herself, more lovely fair  
Than Woodnymph, 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*  
Bestow'd, the holy salutation used  
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  
Have heap'd this table!—Raised of grassy turf  
Their table was, and mossy seats had round,  
And on her ample square from side to side  
All autumn piled, though spring and autumn here  
Danced hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;  
No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began  
Our author. Heavenly stranger, please to taste

These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom  
All perfect good, unmeasured out, descends,  
To us for food and for delight hath caused  
The 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  
Spiritual, may of purest Spirits be found  
No ingrateful food: And food alike those pure  
Intelligential substances require,  
As doth your rational; and both contain  
Within them every lower faculty  
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  
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,  
Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires  
Etherial, and as lowest first the moon;  
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged  
Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd.  
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 alimential recompense  
In humid exhalations, and at even  
Supps with the ocean. Though in Heaven the trees  
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines

Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn  
 We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground  
 Cover'd with pearly grain: Yet God hath here  
 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  
 Of Theologians; but with keen dispatch  
 Of real hunger, and concoctive heat  
 To transubstantiate: What redounds, transpires  
 Through Spirits with ease; nor wonder; if by fire  
 Of sooty coal the empiric alchemist  
 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  
 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 injured lover's hell.

Thus when with meats and drinks they had sufficed,  
 Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose  
 In Adam, not to let the occasion pass  
 Given him by this great conference to know  
 Of things above his world, and of their being  
 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 the empyreal minister he framed.

Inhabitant with God, now know I well  
 Thy favour, in this honour done to Man;  
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed  
 To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,  
 Food not of Angels, yet accepted so,  
 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,  
 If not depraved 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 refined, more spiritous, and pure,  
 As nearer to him placed, 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  
 Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves  
 More aery, last the bright consummate flower  
 Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,  
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,  
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,  
 To intellectual; give both life and sense,  
 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.  
 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;  
 And from these corporal nutriments perhaps  
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,  
 Improved by tract of time, and, wing'd, ascend  
 Etherial, as we; or may, at choice,  
 Here or in heavenly Paradises dwell;  
 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.

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,  
 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,

Who form'd us from the dust and placed 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;  
 That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,  
 That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.  
 This was that caution given thee; be advised.  
 God made thee perfect, not immutable;  
 And good he made thee, but to persevere  
 He left it in thy power; ordain'd thy will  
 By nature free, not overruled by fate  
 Inextricable, or strict necessity:  
 Our voluntary service he requires,  
 Not our necessitated; such with him  
 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 the angelic host, that stand  
 In sight of God, enthroned, 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:  
 And some are fallen, to disobedience fallen,  
 And so from Heaven to deepest Hell; O fall  
 From what high state of bliss, into what woe!  
 To whom our great progenitor. Thy words

Attentive, and with more delighted ear,  
 Divine instructor, I have heard, than when  
 Cherubic songs by night from neighbouring hills  
 Aereal music send: Nor knew I not  
 To be both will and deed created free;  
 Yet that we never shall forget to love  
 Our Maker, and obey him whose command  
 Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts  
 Assured me, and still assure: Though what thou tell'st  
 Hath pass'd in Heaven, some doubt within me move,  
 But more desire to hear, if thou consent,  
 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.

Thus Adam made request; and Raphaël,  
 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 the invisible exploits  
 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  
 This is dispensed; and what surmounts the reach  
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,  
 By likening spiritual to corporeal forms,

As may express them best; though what if Earth  
 Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein  
 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  
 Upon her centre poised; when on a day [now rests  
 (For time, though in eternity, applied  
 To motion, measures all things durable  
 By present, past, and future), on such day  
 As Heaven's great year brings forth, the empyreal host  
 Of Angels, by imperial summons call'd,  
 Innumerable before the Almighty's throne  
 Forthwith, from all the ends of Heaven, appear'd  
 Under their Hierarchs in orders bright:  
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,  
 Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear  
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve  
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;  
 Or in their glittering tissues bear imblazed  
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love  
 Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs  
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood,  
 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,  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;  
 Hear my decree, which unrevoked 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  
 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,  
 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.

So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words  
 All seem'd well pleased; 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  
 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  
 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  
 Desirous; all in circles as they stood,  
 Tables are set, and on a sudden piled  
 With Angels' food, and rubied nectar flows

In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,  
 Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.  
 On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowrets 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.  
 Now when ambrosial night, with clouds exhaled  
 From that high mount of God, whence light and shade  
 Spring both, the face of brightest Heaven had changed  
 To grateful twilight (for night comes not there  
 In darker veil), and roseate dews disposed  
 All but the 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), the angelic throng,  
 Dispersed 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 [course,  
 Fann'd with cool winds; save those, who, in their  
 Melodious hymns about the sov'reign throne  
 Alternate all night long: but not so waked  
 Satan; so call him now, his former name  
 Is heard no more in Heaven; he of the first,  
 If not the first Arch-Angel, great in power,  
 In favour and preeminence, 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  
Through 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 resolved  
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave  
Unworship'd, unobey'd, the throne supreme,  
Contemptuous; and his next subordinate  
Awakening, thus to him in secret spake.

Sleep'st thou, companion dear? What sleep can [close  
Thy eyelids? and remember'st what decree  
Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips  
Of Heaven's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts  
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;  
Both waking we were one; how then can now  
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;  
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise  
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 dim night  
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,  
The great Messiah, and his new commands,  
Who speedily through all the hierarchies  
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.

So spake the false Arch-Angel, and infused  
Bad influence into the unwary breast  
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 disencumber'd Heaven,  
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  
Of their great Potentate; for great indeed  
His name, and high was his degree in Heaven;  
His countenance, as the morning-star that guides  
The starry flock, allured them, and with lies  
Drew after him the third part of Heaven's host.  
Meanwhile the 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  
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,  
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  
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  
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  
Justly hast 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  
Know whether I be dexterous to subdue  
Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven.

So spake the Son; but Satan, with his Powers,  
Far was advanced on winged speed; an host  
Innumerable as the stars of night,  
Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun  
Impearls 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  
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  
They came; and Satan to his royal seat  
High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount  
Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers  
From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold;  
The palace of great Lucifer (so call  
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 declared in sight of Heaven,  
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  
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;  
If these magnific titles yet remain  
Not merely titular, since by decree  
Another now hath to himself engross'd  
All power, and us eclipsed under the name  
Of King anointed, for whom all this haste  
Of midnight-march, and hurried meeting here,  
This only to consult how we may best,  
With what may be devised of honours new,  
Receive him coming to receive from us  
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile!  
Too much to one! but double how endured,

To one, and to his image now proclaim'd?  
 But what if better counsels might erect  
 Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?  
 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  
 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  
 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 the abuse  
 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 adored  
 The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,  
 Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe  
 The current of his fury thus opposed.

O argument blasphemous, false, and proud!  
 Words which no ear ever to hear in Heaven  
 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, pronounced and sworn,  
 That to his only Son, by right endued  
 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,  
 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 pleased, and circumscribed their being?  
 Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,  
 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  
 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,  
 As by his Word, the Mighty Father made  
 All things, e'en thee; and all the Spirits of Heaven  
 By him created in their bright degrees,  
 Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory named  
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,  
 Essential Powers; nor by his reign obscured,  
 But more illustrious made; since he the head  
 One of our number thus reduced 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  
The incensed Father, and the incensed Son,  
While pardon may be found in time besought.

So spake the fervent Angel: but his zeal  
None seconded, as out of season judged,  
Or singular and rash: Whereat rejoiced  
The 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  
When this creation was? remember'st thou [saw  
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-raised  
By our own quickening 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  
Who is our equal: Then thou shalt behold  
Whether by supplication we intend  
Address, and to begirt the almighty throne  
Beseeching or besieging. This report,  
These tidings carry to the anointed King;  
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.

He said; and, as the sound of waters deep,  
Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause

Through the infinite host; nor less for that  
The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone  
Encompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold.

O alienate from God, O Spirit accursed,  
Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall  
Determined, and thy hapless crew involved  
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread  
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 vouchsafed; other decrees  
Against thee are gone forth without recall;  
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  
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.

So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found  
Among the faithless, faithful only he;  
Among innumerable false, unmoved,  
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,  
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;  
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,

904—907.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK V.

Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd  
Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught;  
And, with retorted scorn, his back he turn'd  
On those proud towers to swift destruction doom'd.



\_\_\_\_\_ in his right hand  
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent  
Before him, \_\_\_\_\_

L. 835.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VI.

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## BOOK VI.

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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.

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ALL night the dreadless Angel, unpursued, [Morn,  
Through Heaven's wide champaign held his way; till  
Waked 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,  
Where light and darkness in perpetual round  
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through  
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night; [Heaven  
Light issues forth, and at the other door  
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour

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  
 Empyrean; from before her vanish'd Night,  
 Shot through with orient beams; when all the plain  
 Cover'd with thick embattled squadrons bright,  
 Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,  
 Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:  
 War he perceived, war in procinct; and found  
 Already known what he for news had thought  
 To have reported: Gladly then he mix'd  
 Among those friendly Powers, who him received  
 With joy and acclamations loud, that one,  
 That of so many myriads fallen, yet one  
 Return'd not lost. On to the sacred hill  
 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  
 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  
 To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds  
 Judged thee perverse: The easier conquest now  
 Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,  
 Back on thy foes more glorious to return  
 Than scorn'd thou didst depart; and to subdue

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,  
 Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons  
 Invincible; lead forth my armed Saints,  
 By thousands and by millions, ranged for fight,  
 Equal in number to that Godless crew  
 Rebellious: Them with fire and hostile arms  
 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.

So spake the Sov'reign 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:  
 At which command the Powers militant,  
 That stood for Heaven, in mighty quadrate join'd  
 Of union irresistible, moved on  
 In silence their bright legions, to the sound  
 Of instrumental harmony, that breathed  
 Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds  
 Under their Godlike leaders, in the cause  
 Of God and his Messiah. On they move  
 Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,  
 Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream divides



Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground  
 Their march was, and the passive air upbore  
 Their nimble tread; as when the total kind  
 Of birds, in orderly array on wing,  
 Came summon'd over Eden to receive  
 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 the horizon to the north appear'd  
 From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd  
 In battailous aspect, and nearer view  
 Bristled with upright beams innumerable  
 Of rigid spears, and helmets thron'd, and shields  
 Various, with boastful argument portray'd,  
 The banded Powers of Satan hasting on  
 With furious expedition; for they ween'd  
 That selfsame 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 proved fond and vain  
 In the mid way: 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 festivals of joy and love  
 Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,  
 Hymning the Eternal Father: But the shout  
 Of battle now began, and rushing sound  
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.  
 High in the midst, exalted as a god,  
 The Apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,

Idol of majesty divine, enclosed  
 With flaming Cherubim, and golden shields;  
 Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now  
 Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,  
 A dreadful interval, and front to front  
 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 advanced,  
 Came towering, arm'd in adamant and gold;  
 Abdiel that sight endured 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  
 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 the Almighty's aid,  
 I mean to try, whose reason I have tried  
 Unsound and false; nor is it aught 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  
 Most reason is that reason overcome.

So pondering, and from his armed peers  
 Forth stepping opposite, half way he met  
 His daring foe, at this prevention more  
 Incensed, and thus securely him defied.

Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd  
 The highth of thy aspiring unopposed,  
 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  
 Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms;  
 Who out of smallest things could, without end,  
 Have raised incessant armies to defeat  
 Thy folly; or with solitary hand  
 Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow,  
 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  
 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  
 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 provoked, since first that tongue,  
 Inspired with contradiction, durst oppose  
 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 comest  
 Before thy fellows, ambitious to win

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  
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,  
 Ministering Spirits, train'd up in feast and song!  
 Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of Heaven,  
 Servility with freedom to contend,  
 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 depravest it with the name  
 Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,  
 Or Nature: God and Nature bid the same,  
 When he who rules is worthiest, and excels  
 Them whom he governs. This is servitude,  
 To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebell'd  
 Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,  
 Thyself not free, but to thyself enthral'd;  
 Yet lewdly darest our ministering 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;  
 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 stroke he lifted high,  
 Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell

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 upstaid; as if on earth  
 Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,  
 Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat,  
 Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seized  
 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  
 Of battle: Whereat Michaël bid sound  
 The Arch-Angel trumpet; through the vast of Heaven  
 It sounded, and the faithful armies rung  
 Hosanna to the Highest: Nor stood at gaze  
 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  
 Of brazen chariots rag'd; dire was the noise  
 Of conflict; overhead the dismal hiss  
 Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,  
 And flying vaulted either host with fire,  
 So under fiery cope together rush'd  
 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 encountering Angels fought

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 combustion warring, and disturb,  
 Though not destroy, their happy native seat;  
 Had not the Eternal King Omnipotent,  
 From his strong hold of Heaven, high overruled  
 And limited their might; though number'd such  
 As each divided legion might have seem'd  
 A numerous host; in strength each armed 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  
 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  
 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  
 Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale  
 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 confused, at length  
 Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd

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 opposed the rocky orb  
 Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,  
 A vast circumference. At his approach  
 The great Arch-Angel from his warlike toil  
 Surceased, and glad as hoping here to end  
 Intestine war in Heaven, the arch-foe subdued  
 Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown  
 And visage all inflamed first thus began.

Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,  
 Unnamed in Heaven, now plenteous as thou seest  
 These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,  
 Though heaviest by just measure on thyself,  
 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 instill'd  
 Thy malice into thousands, once upright  
 And faithful, now proved 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,  
 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.

So spake the Prince of Angels; to whom thus  
 The Adversary. Nor think thou with wind  
 Of aery 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  
 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,  
 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 named Almighty to thy aid,  
 I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.

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 highth  
 Of Godlike power? for likest Gods they seem'd,  
 Stood they or moved, in stature, motion, arms,  
 Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.  
 Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air  
 Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields  
 Blazed opposite, while Expectation stood  
 In horror: From each hand with speed retired,  
 Where erst was thickest fight, the angelic throng,  
 And left large field, unsafe within the wind  
 Of such commotion; such as, to set forth



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 to almighty arm  
 Uplifted imminent, 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  
 Of Michael from the armory 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 staid,  
 But with swift wheel reverse, deep entering, shared  
 All his right side: Then Satan first knew pain,  
 And writhed him to and fro convolved; so sore  
 The griding sword with discontinuous wound  
 Pass'd through him: But the ethereal substance closed,  
 Not long divisible; and from the gash  
 A stream of nectarous humour issuing flow'd  
 Sanguine, such as celestial Spirits may bleed,  
 And all his armour stain'd, erewhile so bright.  
 Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run  
 By Angels many and strong, who interposed  
 Defence, while others bore him on their shields  
 Back to his chariot, where it stood retired  
 From off the files of war: There they him laid  
 Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame,

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  
 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,  
 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 deserved  
 Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,  
 And with fierce ensigns pierced the deep array  
 Of Moloch, 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  
 Down cloven to the waist, with shatter'd arms  
 And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing  
 Uriel, and Raphaël, his vaunting foe,  
 Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,  
 Vanquish'd Adramelech, and Asmadai,  
 Two potent Thrones, that to be less than Gods  
 Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,  
 Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.  
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy  
 The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow

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,  
 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.  
 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.

And now, their mightiest quell'd, the battle swerved,  
 With many an inroad gored; 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,  
 And fiery-foaming steeds; what stood recoil'd  
 O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanic host  
 Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surprised,  
 Then first with fear surprised and sense of pain,  
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought  
 By sin of disobedience; till that hour  
 Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.  
 Far otherwise the inviolable Saints,  
 In cubic phalanx firm, advanced entire,  
 Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd;

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  
 By wound, though from their place by violence moved.

Now night her course began, and, over Heaven  
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce imposed,  
 And silence on the odious din of war:  
 Under her cloudy covert both retired,  
 Victor and vanquish'd: On the foughten field  
 Michaël and his Angels prevalent  
 Encamping, placed in guard their watches round,  
 Cherubic waving fires: On the other part,  
 Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,  
 Far in the dark dislodged; and, void of rest,  
 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,  
 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 Heaven's Lord had powerfulest to send  
 Against us from about his throne, and judged  
 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,

Some disadvantage we endured and pain,  
 Till now not known, but, known, as soon condemn'd;  
 Since now we find this our empyreal form  
 Incapable of mortal injury,  
 Imperishable, and, though pierced with wound,  
 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,  
 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.

He sat; and in the assembly next upstood  
 Nisroch, of Principalities the prime;  
 As one he stood escaped from cruel fight,  
 Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havoc hewn,  
 And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake.

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 unpay'd, impassive; from which evil  
 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,

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  
 Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm  
 Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves  
 No less than for deliverance what we owe.

Whereto with look composed Satan replied.  
 Not uninvented that, which thou might  
 Believe'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  
 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?  
 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 the other bore with touch of fire  
 Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth  
 From far, with thundering 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

The Thunderer 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.

He ended, and his words their drooping cheer  
 Enlighten'd, and their languish'd hope revived.  
 The invention all admired, and each, how he  
 To be the inventor miss'd; so easy it seem'd  
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have  
 Impossible: Yet, haply, of thy race [thought  
 In future days, if malice should abound,  
 Some one intent on mischief, or inspired  
 With devilish machination, might devise  
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men  
 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  
 The originals of nature in their crude  
 Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam  
 They found, they mingled, and, with subtle art,  
 Concocted and adusted, they reduced  
 To blackest grain, and into store convey'd:  
 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.

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  
 The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood  
 Of golden panoply, refulgent host,  
 Soon banded; others from the dawning hills  
 Look round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,  
 Each quarter to descry the distant foe,  
 Where lodged, 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,  
 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  
 Sad resolution, and secure: Let each  
 His adamantine coat gird well, and each  
 Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orbed shield,  
 Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,  
 If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,  
 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 moved embattled: When behold!



Not distant far with heavy pace the foe  
 Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube  
 Training his devilish enginery, impaled  
 On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,  
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood  
 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  
 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,  
 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 retired:  
 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 lopp'd, in wood or mountain fell'd),  
 Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths  
 With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,  
 Portending hollow truce: At each behind  
 A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed  
 Stood waving tipp'd with fire: while we, suspense,

Collected stood within our thoughts amused,  
 Not long; for sudden all at once their reeds  
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied  
 With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,  
 But soon obscured 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  
 Level'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  
 Have easily, as Spirits, evaded swift  
 By quick contraction or remove; but now  
 Foul dissipation follow'd, and forced rout;  
 Nor served it to relax their serried files.  
 What should they do? if on they rush'd, repulse  
 Repeated, and indecent overthrow  
 Doubled, would render them yet more despised,  
 And to their foes a laughter; for in view  
 Stood rank'd of Seraphim another row,  
 In posture to displode their second tire  
 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,

To entertain them fair with open front  
 And breast, (what could we more?) propounded terms  
 Of composition, straight they changed their minds,  
 Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,  
 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.  
 Leader! the terms we sent were terms of weight,  
 Of hard contents, and full of force urged home;  
 Such as we might perceive amused them all,  
 And stumbled many: Who receives them right,  
 Had need from head to foot well understand;  
 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  
 To match with their inventions they presumed  
 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 to oppose.  
 Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,  
 Which God hath in his mighty Angels placed!)  
 Their arms away they threw, and to the hills  
 (For Earth hath this variety from Heaven

Of pleasure situate in hill and dale),  
 Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew;  
 From their foundations loosening to and fro,  
 They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,  
 Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops  
 Uplifting bore them in their hands: Amaze,  
 Be sure, and terror, seized 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  
 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  
 Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd;  
 Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruised  
 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.  
 The rest, in imitation, to like arms  
 Betook them, and the neighbouring hills uptore:  
 So hills amid the air encounter'd hills,  
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire;  
 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  
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread;

Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits  
 Shrined in his sanctuary of Heaven secure,  
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen  
 This tumult, and permitted all, advised:  
 That his great purpose he might so fulfil,  
 To honour his anointed Son avenged  
 Upon his enemies, and to declare  
 All power on him transferr'd: Whence to his Son,  
 The Assessor of his throne, he thus began.

Effulgence of my glory, Son beloved,  
 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 pass'd,  
 Two days, as we compute the days of Heaven,  
 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,  
 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,  
 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

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 transfused, that all may know  
 In Heaven and Hell thy power above compare;  
 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 deserved right.  
 Go then, Thou Mightiest, in thy Father's might;  
 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  
 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  
 Ineffably into his face received;  
 And thus the Filial Godhead answering spake.

O Father, O Supreme of heavenly Thrones,  
 First, Highest, Holiest, Best; thou always seek'st  
 To glorify thy Son, I always thee,  
 As is most just: This I my glory account,  
 My exaltation, and my whole delight,  
 That thou, in me well pleased, declarest thy will  
 Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.  
 Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume,

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 lovest:  
 But whom thou hatest, I hate, and can put on  
 Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,  
 Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,  
 Arm'd with thy might, rid Heaven of these rebell'd;  
 To their prepared ill mansion driven down,  
 To chains of darkness, and the undying worm;  
 That from thy just obedience could revolt,  
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.  
 Then shall thy Saints unmix'd, and from the 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  
 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-  
 The chariot of Paternal Deity, [wind sound  
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,  
 Itself instinct with Spirit, but convoy'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;  
 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

Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,  
 Ascended; at his right hand Victory  
 Sat eagle-winged; beside him hung his bow  
 And quiver with three-bolted thunder stored;  
 And from about him fierce effusion roll'd  
 Of smoke, and bickering flame, 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;  
 He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime  
 On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned,  
 Illustrious far and wide; but by his own  
 First seen; Them unexpected joy surprised,  
 When the great ensign of Messiah blazed  
 Aloft by Angels borne, his sign in Heaven;  
 Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced  
 His army, circumfused on either wing,  
 Under their Head embodied all in one.  
 Before him Power Divine his way prepared;  
 At his command the uprooted hills retired  
 Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went  
 Obsequious; Heaven his wonted face renew'd,  
 And with fresh flowrets hill and valley smiled.  
 This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdured,  
 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 the obdurate to relent?



They, harden'd more by what might most reclaim,  
 Grieving to see his glory, at the sight  
 Took envy; and, aspiring to his highth,  
 Stood reembattled fierce, by force or fraud  
 Weening to prosper, and at length prevail  
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall  
 In universal ruin last; and now  
 To final battle drew, disdainning flight,  
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God  
 To all his host on either hand thus spake.

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 received, so have ye done,  
 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  
 God's indignation on these godless pour'd  
 By me; not you, but me, they have despised,  
 Yet envied; against me is all their rage,  
 Because the Father, to whom in Heaven supreme  
 Kingdom, and power, and glory appertains,  
 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

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 changed  
 His countenance too severe to be beheld,  
 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.  
 He on his impious foes right onward drove,  
 Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels  
 The steadfast empyréan shook throughout,  
 All but the throne itself of God. Full soon  
 Among them he arrived; in his right hand  
 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 helmets, and helmed heads he rode  
 Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,  
 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-visaged Four  
 Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels  
 Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;  
 One Spirit in them ruled; and every eye  
 Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire

Among the accursed, that wither'd all their strength,  
 And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd,  
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen.  
 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:  
 The overthrown he raised, and as a herd  
 Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd,  
 Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued  
 With terrors, and with furies, to the bounds  
 And crystal wall of Heaven; which, opening wide,  
 Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclosed  
 Into the wasteful deep: The monstrous sight  
 Struck them with horror backward, but far worse  
 Urged them behind: Headlong themselves they threw  
 Down from the verge of Heaven; eternal wrath  
 Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

Hell heard the 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.  
 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 received them whole, and on them closed;  
 Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire  
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.  
 Disburden'd Heaven rejoiced, and soon repair'd

Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.  
 Sole victor, from the expulsion of his foes,  
 Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd:  
 To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood  
 Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,  
 With jubilee advanced; and, as they went,  
 Shaded with branching palm, each Order bright  
 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 throned  
 On high; who into glory him received,  
 Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

Thus, measuring things in Heaven by things on  
 At thy request, and that thou mayst beware [Earth,  
 By what is pass'd, to thee I have reveal'd  
 What might have else to human race been hid;  
 The discord which befell, 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,  
 Who now is plotting how he may seduce  
 Thee also from obedience, that, with him  
 Bereaved of happiness, thou mayst partake  
 His punishment, eternal misery;  
 Which would be all his solace and revenge,  
 As a despite done against the Most High,  
 Thee once to gain companion of his woe.

But listen not to his temptations, warn  
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard,  
By terrible example, the reward  
Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,  
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress.

