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PARADISE LOST

A

POEM

IN

TWELVE BOOKS.

BY

JOHN MILTON.

WITH A

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL

Account of the AUTHOR and his WRITINGS.

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THE

LIFE

OF

JOHN MILTON.

FROM a family and town of his name in Oxfordſhire our Author derived his deſcent; but he was born at London in the year 1608. The publiſher * of his works in proſe, (on whoſe veracity ſome part of this narrative muſt entirely depend,) dates his birth two years earlier than this: but contradicting himſelf afterwards in his own computation, I reduce it to the time that Monſieur Bayle hath aſſigned; and for the ſame reaſon which prevailed with him to aſſign it. His father John Milton, by profeſſion a ſcrivener, lived in a reputable manner on a competent eſtate, entirely his own acquiſition, having been early diſinherited by his parents for renouncing the communion of the church of Rome, to which they were zealouſly devoted. By

* Mr. Toland.

his wife Sarah Caſton he had likewiſe one daughter, named Anna, and another ſon, Chriſtopher, whom he trained to the practice of the common law, who in the great rebellion adhered to the royal cauſe; and in the reign of King James II. by too eaſy a compliance with the doctrines of the court, both religious and civil, he attained to the dignity of being made a judge of the common pleas; of which he died diveſted not long after the Revolution.

But John, the ſubject of the preſent eſſay, was the favourite of his father's hopes, who, to cultivate the great genius which early diſplayed itſelf, was at the expence of a domeſtic tutor; whoſe care and capacity his pupil hath gratefully celebrated in an excellent Latin elegy *. At his initiation he is ſaid to have applied himſelf to letters with ſuch indefatigable induſtry, that he rarely was prevailed with to quit his ſtudies before midnight; which not only made him frequently ſubject to ſevere pains in his head, but likewiſe occaſioned that weakneſs in his eyes, which terminated in a total privation of ſight. From a domeſtic education he was removed to St. Paul's ſchool, to complete his acquaintance with the claſſics under the care of Dr. Gill; and after a ſhort ſtay there, was tranſplanted to Chriſt's college in Cambridge, where he diſtinguiſhed himſelf in all kinds of academical exerciſes. Of this ſociety he continued a member till he commenced maſter of arts; and then, leaving the univerſity, he returned to his father, who had quitted the town, and lived at Horton in Buckinghamſhire, where he purſued his ſtudies with unparalleled aſſiduity and ſucceſs.

An. ætat. 12.

An. ætat. 15.

An. ætat. 23.

After ſome months ſpent in this ſtudious retirement his mother died, and then he prevailed with his father to gratify an inclination he had long entertained of

* See the fourth in his collection of poems.

seeing foreign countries. Sir Henry Wotton, at that time provost of Eaton college, gave him a letter of advice for the direction of his travels; but not observing an excellent maxim in it *, he incurred great danger, by disputing against the superstition of the church of Rome, within the verge of the vatican. Having employed his curiosity about two years † in France and Italy, on the news of a civil war breaking out in England, he returned, without taking a survey of Greece and Sicily, as at his setting out the scheme was projected. At Paris ‡ the Lord Viscount Scudamore, ambassador from King Charles I. at the court of France, introduced him to the acquaintance of Grotius, who at that time was honoured with the same character there by Christina queen of Sweden. In Rome, Genoa, Florence, and other cities of Italy, he contracted a familiarity with those who were of highest reputation for wit and learning, several of whom gave him very obliging testimonies of their friendship and esteem, which are printed before his Latin poems. The first of them was written by Manso marquis of Villa, a great patron of Tasso, by whom he is celebrated in his poem on the conquest of Jerusalem §. It is highly probable that to his conversation with this noble Neopolitan we owe the first design which Milton conceived, of writing an epic poem; and it appears by some Latin verses addressed to the Marquis, with the title of *Manso*, that

* *I pensieri stretti, ed il viso sciolto,*

† *Et jam bis viridi surgebat culmus arista,*
Et totidem flavas numerabant horrea messes.——
Nec dum aderat Thryfis; *pastorem scilicet illum*
Dulcis amor Musæ Thusca *ritinebat in urbe,*
Epitaph, Dam.

‡ *Defensio secunda.* Page 96. *fol.*

§ *Fra Cavalier, magnanimi, e cortesi,*
Resplende il Manso.——

he intended to fix on King Arthur for his hero; but Arthur was reserved for another destiny!

An. ætat. 32. Returning from his travels he found England on the point of being involved in blood and confusion. It seems wonderful that one of so warm and daring a spirit, as his certainly was, should be restrained from the camp in those unnatural commotions. I suppose we may impute it wholly to the great deference he paid to paternal authority, that he retired to lodgings provided for him in the city; which being commodious for the reception of his sister's sons, and some other young gentlemen, he undertook their education, and is said to have formed them on the same plan which he afterwards published, in a short tractate, inscribed to his friend Mr. Hartlib.

An. ætat. 35. In this philosophical course he continued without a wife till the year 1643; when he married Mary, the daughter of Richard Powell of Forest-hill in Oxfordshire, a gentleman of estate and reputation in that country, and of principles so very opposite to his son-in-law, that the marriage is more to be wondered at than the separation which ensued, in little more than a month after she had cohabited with him in London. Her desertion provoked him both to write several treatises concerning the doctrine and discipline of divorce, and also to make his addresses to a young lady of great wit and beauty; but before he had engaged her affections to conclude the marriage treaty, in a visit at one of his relations he found his wife prostrate before him, imploring forgiveness and reconciliation. It is not to be doubted but an interview of that nature, so little expected, must wonderfully affect him; and perhaps the impressions it made on his imagination contributed much to the printing of that pathetic scene in *Paradise Lost* *, in which Eve addresseth herself to Adam for

* Book X. L. 909.

pardon and peace. At the interceſſion of his friends who were preſent, after a ſhort reluctance, he generouſly ſacrificed all his reſentment to her tears:

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

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

Mr. MILTON was now grown famous by his polemical writings of various kinds, and held in great favour and eſteem by thoſe who had power to diſpoſe of all preferments in the ſtate. It is in vain to diſſemble, and far be it from me to defend his engaging with a party combined in the deſtruction of our church and monarchy. Yet, leaving the juſtification of a miſguided ſincerity to be debated in the ſchools, may I preſume to obſerve in his favour, that his zeal, diſtempered and furious as it was, does not appear to have been inſpirited by ſelf-intereſted views. For it is affirmed, that though he lived always in a frugal retirement, and before his death had diſpoſed of his library, (which we may ſuppoſe to have been a valuable collection), he left not more than fifteen hundred pounds behind him for the ſupport of his family; and whoever conſiders the poſts to which he was advanced, and the times in which he enjoyed them, will, I believe, confeſs he might have accumulated a much more plentiful fortune. In a diſpaſſionate mind it will not require any extraordinary meaſure of candour to conclude, that though he

An. ætat. 41.

abode in the heritage of oppreſſors, and the ſpoils of his country lay at his feet, neither his conſcience nor his honour could ſtoop to gather them.

An. ætat. 42. A commiſſion to conſtitute him adjutant-general to Sir William Waller was promiſed, but ſoon ſuperceded by Waller's being laid aſide, when his maſters thought it proper to new-model their army. However, the keenneſs of his pen had ſo effectually recommended him to Cromwell's eſteem, that when he took the reins of government into his own hand, he advanced him to be Latin ſecretary, both to himſelf and the parliament; the former of theſe preferments he enjoyed both under the uſurper and his ſon, the other till King Charles II. was reſtored. For ſome time he had an apartment for his family at Whitehall; but his health requiring a freer acceſſion of air, he was obliged to remove from thence to lodgings which opened into St. James's park. Not long after his ſettlement there his wife died in child-bed, and much about the time of her death, a gutta ſerena, which had for ſeveral years been gradually increaſing, totally extinguiſhed his ſight. In this melancholic condition he was eaſily prevailed with to think of taking another wife, who was Catherine, the daughter of Captain Woodcock of Hackney, and ſhe too, in leſs than a year after their marriage, died in the ſame unfortunate manner as the former had done; and in his twenty-third ſonnet he does honour to her memory.

An. ætat. 52. Theſe private calamities were much heightened by the different figure he was likely to make in the new ſcene of affairs which was going to be acted in the ſtate. For all things now conſpiring to promote the king's reſtoration, he was too conſcious of his own inactivity during the uſurpation to expect any favour from the crown, and therefore he prudently abſconded till the act of oblivion was publiſhed, by which he was only rendered incapable of bearing any office in the nation. Ma-

ty had a very juſt eſteem of his admirable parts and learning who deteſted his principles, by whoſe interceſſion his pardon paſſed the ſeals; and I wiſh the laws of civil hiſtory could have extended the benefit of that oblivion to the memory of his guilt, which was indulged to his perſon; *ne tanti facinoris immanitas extitiſſe, aut non vindicato fuiſſe, videatur.*

Having thus gained a full protection from the government, (which was in truth more than he could have reaſonably hoped, he appeared as much in public as he formerly uſed to do, and employing his friend Dr. Paget to make choice of a third conſort, on his recommendation he married Elizabeth, the daughter of Mr. Minſhul, a Cheſhire gentleman, by whom he had no iſſue. Three daughters by his firſt wife were then living, the two elder of whom are ſaid to have been very ſerviceable to him in his ſtudies: for having been inſtructed to pronounce not only the modern, but alſo the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, they read in their reſpective originals whatever authors he wanted to conſult, though they underſtood none but their mother tongue. This employment, however, was too unpleaſant to be continued for any long proceſs of time, and therefore he diſmiſſed them to receive an education more agreeable to their ſex and temper.

We come now to take a ſurvey of him in that point of view, in which he will be looked upon by all ſucceeding ages with equal delight and admiration. An interval of about twenty years had elapſed ſince he wrote the Maſk of Comus *, L'Allegro, Il Penſeroſo, and Lycidas †, all in ſuch an exquiſite ſtrain, that though he had left no other monument of his genius behind him, his name had been immortal; but neither the infirmities of age and conſtitution, nor the viciſſitudes of fortune, could depreſs the vigour of his mind, or divert it from executing a deſign he had long conceived of writing an heroic

* 26. *An. ætat.* † 29.

poem *. The fall of man was a ſubject that he had ſome years before fixed on for a tragedy which he intended to form by the models of antiquity; and ſome, not without probability, ſay, the play opened with that ſpeech in the fourth book of *Paradiſe Loſt*, L. 32. which is addreſſed by Satan to the ſun. Were it material, I believe I could produce other paſſages which more plainly appear to have been originally intended for the ſcene: but whatever truth there may be in this report, it is certain that he did not begin to mould his ſubject in the form which it bears now, before he had concluded his controverſy with Salmaſius and More, when he had wholly loſt the uſe of his eyes, and was forced to employ in the office of an amanuenſis any friend who accidentally paid him a viſit. Yet, under all theſe diſcouragements, and various interruptions, in the year 1669 †, he publiſhed his *An. ætat.* 61. *Paradiſe Loſt*, the nobleſt poem (next to thoſe of Homer and Virgil) that ever the wit of man produced in any age or nation. Need I mention any other evidence of its ineſtimable worth, than the fineſt geniuſes who have ſucceeded him, have ever eſteemed it a merit to reliſh and illuſtrate its beauties? whilſt the critic who gazed, with ſo much wanton malice, on the nakedneſs of Shakeſpeare when he ſlept, after having formally declared war againſt it ‡, wanted courage to make his attack; flushed though he was with conqueſts over Julius Cæſar, and the Moor, which inſolence his muſe, like the other aſſaſſins of Cæſar, ſeverely revenged on herſelf §; and not long after her triumph became her own executioner. Nor is it unworthy our obſervation, that though perhaps not one of our Engliſh poets have ex-

* Paradiſe Loſt, Book IX. L. 26.

† Milton's contract with his bookſeller, S. Simmons, for the copy, bears date April 27, 1667.

‡ The tragedies of the laſt age conſidered, page 145.

§ *Vide* Edgar.

cited so many admirers to imitate his manner, yet I think never any was known to aspire to emulation; even the late ingenious Mr. Philips, who, in the colours of style, came the nearest of all the copiers to resemble the great original, made his distant advances with a filial reverence, and restrained ambition within the same bounds which Lucretius prescribed to his own imitation.

Non ita certandi cupidus, quam propter amorem
Quod TE imitari aveo: quid enim contendat hirundo
Cycnis?——

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

About two years after *, together with *Samson Agonistes*, (a tragedy not unworthy the Grecian stage when Athens was in her glory) he published *Paradise Regained;* but, *Oh! what a falling off was there!*——of which I will say no more, than that there is scarcely a more remarkable instance of the frailty of human reason than our author gave, in preferring this poem to *Paradise Lost*, nor a more instructive caution to the best writers, to be very diffident in deciding the merit of their own productions.

An. ætat 63.

And thus having attended him to the sixty-sixth year of his age, as closely as such imperfect lights as men of letters and retirement usually leave to guide our inquiry would allow, it now only remains to be

* They were licensed July 2, 1670, but not printed before the year ensuing.

recorded, that in the year 1674, the 66. gout put a period to his life, at Bun-
An. ætat. hill near London; from whence his 67. body was conveyed to St. Giles' church by Cripple-gate, where it lies interred in the Chancel; but neither has nor wants a monument to perpetuate his memory.

In his youth he is said to have been extremely handsome; the colour of his hair was a light brown, the symmetry of his features exact, enlivened with an agreeable air, and a beautiful mixture of fair and ruddy; which occasioned the Marquis of Villa to give his epigram the same turn of thought *, which Gregory archdeacon of Rome had employed about a thousand years before, in praising the amiable complexions of some English youths, before their conversion to christianity. His stature † (as we find it measured by himself) did not exceed the middle size, neither too lean, nor corpulent; his limbs well proportioned, nervous, and active, serviceable in all respects to his exercising the sword, in which he much delighted; and wanted neither skill, nor courage, to resent an affront from men of the most athletic constitutions. In his diet he was abstemious; not delicate in the choice of his dishes; and strong liquors of all kinds were his aversion. Being too sadly convinced how much his health had suffered by night-studies in his younger years, he used to go early (seldom later than nine) to rest, and rose commonly before five in the morning. It is reported, (and there is a passage in one of his Latin elegies to countenance the tradition), that his fancy made the happiest flights in the spring: but one of his nephews used to deliver it as MILTON's own observation, that his invention was in its highest perfection from September to the vernal equinox: however

* *Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, mos, si pietas sic,*
Non Anglus, *verum hercle angelus ipse fores.*

† *Defensio secunda*, p. 87. *fol.*

it was, the great inequalities to be found in his compoſures are inconteſtable proofs, that in ſome ſeaſons he was but one of the people. When blindneſs reſtrained him from other exerciſes, he had a machine to ſwing in for the preſervation of his health, and diverted himſelf in his chamber with playing on an organ. His deportment was erect, open, affable; his converſation eaſy, chearful, inſtructive; his wit on all occaſions at command, facetious, grave, or ſatirical, as the ſubject required. His judgment, when diſengaged from religious and political ſpeculations, was juſt and penetrating; his apprehenſion quick, his memory tenacious of what he read, his reading only not ſo extenſive as his genius, for this was univerſal. And having treaſured up ſuch immenſe ſtore of ſcience, perhaps the faculties of his ſoul grew more vigorous after he was deprived of ſight; and his imagination, (naturally ſublime and enlarged by reading romances*, of which he was much enamoured in his youth), when it was wholly abſtracted from material objects, was more at liberty to make ſuch amazing excurſions into the ideal world, when in compoſing his divine work he was tempted to range

Beyond the viſible diurnal ſphere.

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

ELIJAH FENTON.

* His apology for *Smectymnuus*, p. 177. *fol.*

IN

PARADISUM AMISSAM

SUMMI POETAE

JOANNIS MILTONI.

QUI legis Ammissam Paradisum, grandia magni
Carmina Miltoni, quid nisi cuncta legis?
Res cunctas, et cunctarum primordia rerum,
Et fata, et fines continet iste liber.
Intima panduntur magni penetralia mundi,
Scribitur et toto quicquid in orbe latet:
Terræque, tractusque maris, cælumque profundum,
Sulphuremque Erebi, flammivomusque specus:
Quæque colunt terras, pontumque, et Tartara cæca,
Quæque colunt summi lucida regna poli:
Et quodcunque ullis concluſum est finibus usquam,
Et sine fine Chaos, et sine fine Deus:
Et sine fine magis, si quid magis est sine fine,
In Christo ergo homines conciliatus amor.
Hæc qui speraret quis crederet esse futura?
Et tamen hæc hodie terra Britanno legit.
O quantos in bella duces: quæ protulit arma!
Quæ canit, et quanta prelia dira tuba!
Cœlestis acies! atque in certamine cœlum!
Et que cœlestes pugnæ deceret agros!
Quantus in æthereis tollit se Lucifer armis!
Atque ipso graditur vix Michaele minor!

Quantis, et quàm funeſtis concurritur iris,
Dum ferus hic ſtellas protegit, ille rapit!
Dum vulſos montes ceu tela reciproca torquent,
Et non mortali deſuper igne pluunt:
Stat dubius cui ſe parti concedat Olympus,
Et metuit pugnæ non ſuperaſſe ſuæ.
At ſimul in cœlis Messiæ inſignia fulgent,
Et currus animes, armaque digna Deo,
Horrendumque rotæ ſtrident, et ſæva rotarum
Erumpunt torvis fulgura luminibus,
Et flammæ vibrant, et vera tonitura rauco
Admiſtis flammis inſonuere polo:
Excidit attonis mens omnis, et impetus omnis,
Et caſſis dextris irrita tela cadunt;
At pœnas fugiunt, et ceu ſeret Orcus aſylum,
Infernis certant condere ſe tenebris.
Cedite Romani ſcriptoris, cedit Graii,
Et quos Fama recens vel celebravit annus.
Hæc quicunque legit tantum ceciniſſe putabit
Mœonidem ranas, Virgilium culices.

SAMUEL BARROW, M. D.

ON

PARADISE LOST.

WHEN I beheld the Poet blind, yet bold,
In ſlender book his vaſt deſign unfold;
Meſſiah crown'd, God's reconcil'd decree,
Rebelling angels, the forbidden tree,
Heav'n, hell, earth, chaos, all; the argument
Held me a while miſdoubting his intent,
That he would ruin (for I ſaw him ſtrong)
The ſacred truths to fable and old ſong;
(So Samſon grop'd the temple's poſt in ſpight,
The world o'erwhelming to revenge his ſight.)
Yet as I read, ſoon growing leſs ſevere,
I lik'd his project, the ſucceſs did fear;
Through that wide field how he his way ſhould find,
O'er which lame Faith leads Underſtanding blind;
Leſt he perplex'd the things he would explain,
And what was eaſy he ſhould render vain.
Or, if a work ſo infinite he ſpann'd,
Jealous I was that ſome leſs ſkilful hand
(Such as diſquiet always what is well,
And by ill imitating would excel),
Might hence preſume the whole creation's day
To change in ſcenes, and ſhew it in a play.
Pardon me, mighty Poet, nor deſpiſe
My cauſeleſs, yet not impious ſurmiſe.
But I am now convinc'd, and none will dare
Within thy labours to pretend a ſhare.
Thou haſt not miſs'd one thought that could be fit,
And all that was improper doſt omit:
So that no room is here for writers leſt,
But to detect their ignorance or theft.

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

Where could'st thou words of such a compass find?
Whence furnish such a vast expance of mind?
Just Heav'n thee, like Tiresias, to requite,
Rewards with prophecy thy loss of sight.

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

ANDREW MARVEL.

THE VERSE.

THE meaſure is Engliſh heroic verſe without rhyme, as that of Homer in Greek, and of Virgil in Latin; rhyme being no neceſſary adjunct or true ornament of poem or good verſe, in longer works eſpecially, but the invention of a barbarous age, to ſet off wretched matter and metre; graced indeed ſince by the uſe of ſome famous modern poets, carried away by cuſtom; but much to their own vexation, hinderance, and conſtraint, to expreſs many things otherwiſe, and, for the moſt part, worſe than elſe they would have expreſſed them. Not without cauſe, therefore, ſome, both Italian and Spaniſh poets, of prime note, have rejected rhyme, both in longer and ſhorter works, as have alſo long ſince our beſt Engliſh tragedies, as a thing of itſelf, to all judicious ears, trivial, and of no true muſical delight; which conſiſts only in apt numbers, fit quantity of ſyllables, and the ſenſe variouſly drawn out from one verſe into another; not in the jingling ſound of like endings, a fault avoided by the learned Ancients both in poetry and all good oratory. This neglect then of rhyme ſo little is to be taken for a defect, though it may ſeem ſo perhaps to vulgar readers, that it rather is to be eſteemed an example ſet, the firſt in Engliſh, of ancient liberty recovered to heroic poem, from the troubleſome and modern bondage of rhyming.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

The ARGUMENT.

This first book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise wherein he was placed: Then touches the prime cause of his fall, the Serpent, or rather Satan in the Serpent; who revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of Angels, was by the command of God driven out of heaven with all his crew into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastes into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his angels now fallen into hell, described here, not in the center (for Heaven and Earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed), but in a place of utter darkness, fitliest called Chaos: Here Satan with his Angels lying on the burning lake, thunder-struck and astonished, after a certain space recovers, as from confusion, calls up him who next in order and dignity lay by him: they confer of their miserable fall. Satan awakes 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 a new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in heaven; for that Angels were long before this visible creation was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the palace of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the deep: the infernal peers there sit in council.

OF man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,

With loſs of Eden, till one greater Man
Reſtore us and regain the bliſsful ſeat,
Sing, heav'nly 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 advent'rous 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 Sp'rit, that doſt prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Inſtruct me, for thou know'ſt; thou from the firſt
Waſt preſent, and with mighty wings outſpread,
Dove-like, ſatt'ſt brooding on the vaſt abyſs,
And mad'ſt it pregnant: what in me is dark,
Illumine: what is loſt, raiſe and ſupport;
That to the height of this great argument
I may aſſert eternal providence,
And juſtify the ways of God to man.
Say firſt, for heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of hell: ſay firſt what cauſe
Mov'd our grand parents in that happy ſtate,
Favour'd of heav'n ſo highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and tranſgreſs his will,
For one reſtraint, lords of the world beſides?
Who firſt ſeduc'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal ſerpent; he it was, whoſe guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had caſt him out from heav'n, with all his hoſt
Of rebel-angels; by whoſe aid aſpiring
To ſet himſelf in glory 'bove his peers,
He truſted to have equall'd the Moſt High,
If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim
Againſt the throne and monarchy of God

Rais'd impious war in heav'n, and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine 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
Reserv'd 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 stedfast 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 flam'd, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd:
Such place eternal justice had prepar'd
For those rebellious, here their pris'n ordain'd
In utter darkness, and their portion set
As far remov'd from God and light of heav'n,
As from the center thrice to th' 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 welt'ring by his side
One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd
Beelzebub. To whom th' arch-enemy,

And thence in heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence thus began.
If thou beest he; but, O how fall'n! how chang'd
From him, who in the happy realms of light
Cloth'd 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 fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd
He with his thunder: and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
Nor what the potent victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend;
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,
His utmost pow'r with adverse pow'r oppos'd
In dubious battle on the plains of heaven
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost; th' 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 his empyreal substance cannot fail;
Since through experience of this great event
In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,
We may with more successful hope resolve

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 th' 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 th' embattel'd ſeraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeps
Fearleſs, endanger'd heav'n'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 heav'n, and all this mighty hoſt
In horrible deſtruction laid thus low,
As far as gods and heav'nly eſſences
Can periſh: for the mind and ſpirit remain,
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 conqu'ror (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 ſp'rit 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 th' arch-fiend reply'd.
Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miſerable
Doing or ſuffering: but of this be ſure,
To do ought good never will be our taſk,

But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As bei'ng 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 oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of heaven: sulphurous hail
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice
Of heav'n receiv'd 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 th' 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 blaz'd, 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,

Briareos or Typhon whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream:
Him haply slumb'ring on the Norway foam
The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scally 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 even thence
Had ris'n, or heav'd his head, but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs;
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others; and enrag'd might see
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn
On man by him seduc'd; 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
Driv'n backward slope their pointing spears, and roll'd
In billows, leave i' th' 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 thund'ring Ætna, whose combustible
And fuel'd intrails thence conceiving fire,
Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole

Of unbleſs'd feet. Him follow'd his next mate,
Both glorying to have 'ſcap'd the Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recover'd ſtrength,
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 heav'n, 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: fartheſt from him is beſt,
Whom reas'on hath equall'd, force hath made ſupreme
Above his equals. Farewel 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 chang'd by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itſelf
Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heav'n.
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 laſt
We ſhall be free; th' 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,
Th' 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 heav'n, or what more loſt in hell?

So Satan ſpake, and him Beelzebub
Thus anſwer'd. Leader of thoſe armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
If once they hear that voice, their livelieſt pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard ſo oft
In worſt extremes, and on the perilous edge

Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults,
Their fureſt 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 amaz'd,
No wonder, fall'n ſuch a pernicious height.
He ſcarce had ceas'd when the ſuperior fiend
Was moving tow'ard the ſhore; his pond'rous ſhield,
Ethereal 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 Feſolé,
Or in Valdarno, to deſcry new lands,
Rivers or mountains in her ſpotty globe.
His ſpear, to equal which the taleſt 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 endur'd, till on the beach
Of that inflamed ſea he ſtood, and call'd
His legions, angel-forms, who lay intranc'd
Thick as autumnal leaves that ſtrow the brooks
In Vallombroſa, where th' Etrurian ſhades
High over-arch'd imbow'r; 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 purſu'd
The ſojourners of Goſhen, who beheld
From the ſafe ſhore their floating carcaſes
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 flow'r of heav'n, once yours, now loſt,
If ſuch aſtoniſhment as this can ſeize
Eternal ſp'rits; or have ye chos'n 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 heav'n?
Or in this abject poſture have ye ſworn
T' adore the conqueror? who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With ſcatter'd arms and enſigns, till anon
His ſwift purſuers from heav'n-gates diſcern
Th' advantage, and deſcending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
Tranſfix us to the bottom of this gulph.
Awake, ariſe, or be for ever fall'n.

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,
Wav'd 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 giv'n, th' 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
Rhone or the Danaw, when her barbarous ſons
Came like a deluge on the ſouth, and ſpread

Beneath Gibralter to the libyan ſands.
Forthwith from ev'ry ſquadron and each band
The heads and leaders thither haſte where ſtood
Their great commander; godlike ſhapes and forms
Excelling human, princely dignities,
And pow'rs that reſt in heaven ſat on thrones;
Though of their names in heav'nly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and raz'd
By their rebellion from the books of life.
Nor had they yet among the ſons of Eve
Got them new names; till wand'ring o'er the earth,
Through God's high ſuff'rance for the trial of man,
By falſities and lies the greateſt part
Of mankind they corrupted to forſake
God their Creator, and th' inviſible
Glory of him that made them to transform
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,
Rous'd from the ſlumber, on that fiery couch,
At their great emp'ror'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 ador'd
Among the nations round, and durſt abide
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd
Within his ſanctuary itſelf their ſhrines,
Abominations; and with curſed things
His holy rites and ſolemn feaſts profan'd,
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 drum and timbrels loud
Their childrens cries unheard, that paſs'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worſhipp'd in Rabba and her wat'ry 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, th' obſcene, dread of Moab's ſons,
From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
Of ſouthmoſt Abarim; in Heſebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flow'ry dale of Sibma, clad with vines,
And Elealé, to th' Aſphaltic pool.
Peor his other name, when he entic'd
Iſrael in Shittim, on their march from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which coſt them woe.
Yet thence his luſtful orgies he enlarg'd
Ev'n to that hill of ſcandal, by the grove
Of Moloch homicide; luſt hard by hate;
Till good Joſiah drove them thence to hell.
With theſe came they, who from the bord'ring flood
Of old Euphrates, to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baalim and Aſhtaroth; thoſe male,
Theſe feminine. For ſpirits when they pleaſe
Can either ſex aſſume, or both; ſo ſoft
And uncompounded is their eſſence pure;
Not ty'd or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle ſtrength of bones,
Like cumbrous fleſh; but in what ſhape they chuſe
Dilated or condens'd, 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
Aſtarte, queen of heav'n, with creſcent horns;
To which bright image nightly by the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and ſongs;
In Sion alſo not unſung, where ſtood
Her temple on th' offenſive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whoſe heart, though large,
Beguil'd by fair idolatreſſes, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whoſe annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
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, ſuppos'd with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat;
Whoſe wanton paſſions in the ſacred porch
Ezekiel ſaw, when, by the viſion led,
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 lopt off
In his own temple, on the grunſel edge,
Where he fell flat, and ſham'd his worſhippers:
Dagon his name, ſea-monſter, upward man
And downward fiſh: yet had his temple high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coaſt
Of Paleſtine, in Gath, and Aſcalon,
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 conqu'ror, 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 ſoreeries abus'd
Fanatic Egypt, and her prieſts, to ſeek
Their wand'ring gods diſguis'd in brutiſh forms,
Rather than human. Nor did Iſrael 'ſcape
Th' infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
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, equall'd with one ſtroke
Both her firſt-born and all her bleating gods.
Belial eame laſt, than whom a ſp'rit more lewd
Fell not from heaven, or more groſs to love
Vice for itſelf: to him no temple ſtood
Or altar ſmok'd; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the prieſt
Turns atheiſt, as did Eli's ſons, who fill'd
With luſt and violenee the houſe of God?
In courts and palaces he alſo reigns,
And in luxurious eities, where the noiſe
Of riot aſcends above the loftieſt tow'rs,
And injury and outrage: and when night
Darkens the ſtreets, then wander forth the ſons
Of Belial, flown with inſolenee and wine.
Witneſs the ſtreets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hoſpitable door
Expos'd a matron, to avoid worſe rape.

Theſe were the prime in order and in might:
The reſt were long to tell, though far renown'd,
Th' Ionian gods, of Javan's iſſue held
Gods, yet confeſs'd later than Heav'n and Earth,
Their boaſted parents: Titan, Heav'n's firſt-born,

With his enormous brood, and birthright seiz'd
By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found,
So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete
And Ida known; thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,
Their highest heav'n; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old
Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.

All these and more came flocking; but with looks
Down-cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy, t' have found their chief
Not in despair, t' have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast
Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears.
Then strait 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
Th' imperial ensign, which, full high advanc'd,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich imblaz'd,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host upsent
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 rais'd
To height of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle; and instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;
Nor wanting pow'r to mitigate and 'swage,
With solemn touches, troubled thoughts, and chase
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sor'row, and pain,
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they
Breathing united force, with fixed thought
Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil: and now
Advanc'd in view, they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty chief
Had to impose. He through the arm'd files
Darts his experienc'd 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 hard'ning in his strength
Glories: for never since created man
Met such imbodied force, as nam'd with these
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warr'd on by cranes, though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with th' 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, baptiz'd 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 observ'd

Their dread commander: he, above the reſt
In ſhape and geſture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tow'r; his form had yet not loſt
All her original brightneſs, nor appear'd
Leſs than arch-angel ruin'd, and th' exceſs
Of glory obſcur'd: as when the ſun new ris'n
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 th' arch-angel: but his face
Deep ſcars of thunder had entrench'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 amerc'd
Of heav'n, and from eternal ſplendours flung
For his revolt; yet faithful how they ſtood,
Their glory wither'd: as when heav'n's fire
Hath ſcath'd the foreſt-oaks, or mountain-pines,
With ſinged top their ſtately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blaſted heath. He now prepar'd
To ſpeak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half incloſe him round
With all his peers: attention held him mute.
Thrice he eſſay'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 ſp'rits, O powers
Matchleſs, but with th' Almighty; and that ſtriſe
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place teſtifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter: but what pow'r 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 heav'n, shall fail to reascend,
Self-rais'd, and repossess their native seat?
For me be witness all the host of heav'n,
If counsels different, or danger shunn'd
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
Monarch in heav'n, 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, provok'd; 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 rife
There went a fame in heav'n, 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 sp'rits in bondage, nor th' 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 resolv'd.

He spake: and to confirm his words, out flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumin'd hell: highly they rag'd

Againſt the High'eſt, and fierce with graſped arms
Claſh'd on their ſounding ſhields the din of war,
Hurling defiance tow'ard the vault of heav'n.
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 brigade haſten'd: as when bands
Of pioneers with ſpade and pickax arm'd
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or caſt a rampart. Mammon led them on;
Mammon, the leaſt erected ſp'rit that fell
From heav'n; for ev'n in heav'n his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
Than ought divine or holy elſe enjoy'd
In viſion beatific: by him firſt
Men alſo, and by his ſuggeſtion taught,
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 wond'ring 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 prepar'd,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluc'd from the lake, a ſecond multitude
With wond'rous 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 ſound-board 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 Alcairo ſuch magnificence
Equall'd in all their glories, to inſhrine
Belus or Serapis their gods, or ſeat
Their kings, when Egypt with Aſſyrian ſtrove
In wealth and luxury. Th' aſcending pile
Stood fix'd her ſtately height; and ſtrait 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 heav'n by many a tow'red ſtructure high,
Where ſeepter'd angels held their reſidence,
And ſat as princes; whom the ſupreme King
Exalted to ſuch pow'r, and gave to rule,
Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
Nor was his name unheard, or unador'd,
In ancient Greece; and in Auſonian land
Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell
From heav'n, 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

Dropt from the zenith like a falling ſtar,
On Lemnos th' Ægean iſle: thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before: nor ought avail'd him now
T' have built in heav'n high tow'rs; nor did he 'ſcape
By all his engines, but was headlong ſent
With all his induſtrious crew to build in hell.
Mean-while the winged heralds by command
Of ſov'reign pow'r with awful ceremony
And trumpets 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
Defy'd 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 ruſling 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 ſtraw-built citadel,
New rubb'd with balm, expatiate, and confer
New ſtate-affairs. So thick the airy crowd
Swarm'd and were ſtraiten'd; till the ſignal giv'n,
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 ſp'rits to ſmalleſt forms
Reduc'd their ſhapes immenſe, and were at large,
Though without number ſtill, amidſt the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimenſions like themſelves,
The great 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.

The End of the First Book.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

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 discovered to him the great gulf between hell and heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the power of that place, to the sight of this new world which he sought.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd
To that bad eminence; and from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high; insatiate to pursue

Vain war with heav'n; and, by ſucceſs untaught,
His proud imaginations thus diſplay'd.
Pow'rs and dominions, deities of heaven;
For ſince no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigour, though oppreſs'd and fall'n,
I give not heav'n 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 council or in fight,
Hath been atchiev'd of merit; yet this loſs
Thus far at leaſt recovered, hath much more
Eſtabliſh'd in a ſafe unenvied throne,
Yielded with full conſent. The happier ſtate
In heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior: but who here
Will envy whom the higheſt place expoſes
Foremoſt to ſtand againſt the Thund'rer'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 heav'n, we now return
To claim our juſt inheritance of old,
Surer to proſper than proſperity
Could have aſſur'd us; and by what beſt way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate: who can adviſe, may ſpeak.
He ceas'd; and next him Moloch, ſcepter'd king,
Stood up, the ſtrongeſt and the fierceſt ſpirit
That fought in heav'n, now fiercer by deſpair.
His truſt was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in ſtrength; and rather than be leſs,
Car'd 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: then 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 long wait
The signal to ascend, sit ling'ring here
Heav'n'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 heav'n's high tow'rs 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 Tartarian 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 pursu'd us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? The ascent is easy then;
Th' event is fear'd; should we again provoke
Our stonger, 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, driv'n 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 enrag'd,
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 pow'r sufficient to disturb his heav'n,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
Which if not victory, is yet revenge.

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd
Desp'rate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than gods. On th' other side uprose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane:
A fairer person lost not heav'n; he seem'd
For dignity compos'd, and high exploit:
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropt 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 pleas'd 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 urg'd
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 act 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 tow'rs of Heav'n are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access
Impregnable: oft on the bord'ring deep
Incamp 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
Heav'n's purest light; yet our great enemy,
All uncorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted; and th' ethereal mold,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope
Is flat despair; we must exasperate
Th' almighty victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us; that must be our cure,
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, swallowed 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,
Reserv'd, and destin'd 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, pursu'd, and struck
With heav'n'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,
Awak'd, ſhould blow them into ſev'nfold 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, threat'ning hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps
Deſigning or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempeſt ſhall be hurl'd
Each on his rock transfix'd, the ſport and play
Of wracking whirlwinds; or for ever ſunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
There to converſe with everlaſting groans,
Unreſpited, unpitied, unrepriev'd,
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 heav'n's height
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 reſolv'd,
If we were wiſe againſt ſo great a foe
Contending, and ſo doubtful what might fall.
I laugh, when thoſe who at the ſpear are bold
And vent'rous, if that fail them, ſhrink, and fear,
What yet they know muſt follow, to endure
Exile or ignominy', or bonds, or pain,
The ſentence of their conqu'ror: 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 remov'd,
Not mind us not offending, satisfy'd
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 inur'd, not feel;
Or chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
In temper, and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light;
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 cloth'd in reason's garb
Counsell'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.
Either to disenthrone the King of heaven
We war, if war be best, or to regain
Our own right lost; him to unthrone we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
The former vain to hope, argues as vain
The latter: for what place can be for us
Within heav'n's bounds, unless heav'n's Lord supreme
We overpow'r? 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 impos'd, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his godhead sing
Forc'd Halleluiahs; 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

Of whom we hate! Let us not then purſue,
By force impoſſible, by leave obtain'd,
Unacceptable, though in heav'n, 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, proſp'rous of adverſe,
We can create; and in what place ſoe'er
Thrive under ev'il, 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 Heav'n's all-ruling Sire
Chooſe to reſide, his glory unobſcur'd,
And with the majeſty of darkneſs round
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar,
Muſt'ring their rage, and heav'n 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 heav'n ſhow more?
Our torments alſo may in length of time
Become our elements; theſe piercing fires
As ſoft as now ſevere, our temper chang'd
Into their temper; which muſt needs remove
The ſenſibil'ty 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
Th' aſſembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The ſound of bluſt'ring winds, which all night long
Had rous'd 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 pleas'd,
Adviſing peace; for ſuch another field
They dreaded worſe than hell: ſo much the fear
Of thunder and the ſword of Michael
Wrought ſtill within them; and no leſs deſire
To found this nether empire, which might riſe,
By policy, and long proceſs of time,
In emulation oppoſite to Heav'n.
Which when Beelzebub perceiv'd, 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 ingraven
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 noon-tide air, while thus he ſpake.

Thrones and imperial pow'rs, offſpring of heaven,
Ethereal 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 heav'n hath doom'd
This place our dungeon; not our ſafe retreat
Beyond his potent arm to live exempt
From heav'n's high juriſdiction, in new league
Banded againſt his throne; but to remain,
In ſtricteſt bondage, though thus far remov'd,
Under th' inevitable curb, reſerv'd
His captive multitude: for he, be ſure,
In height or depth, ſtill firſt and laſt will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom loſe no part
By our revolt; but over hell extend
His empire, and with iron ſceptre rule
Us here, as with his golden thoſe in heaven.

What fit we then projecting, peace and war?
War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsaf'd or sought; for what peace will be giv'n
To us inslav'd, but custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
But, to our pow'r, hostility, and hate,
Untam'd reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the conqu'ror 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 dang'rous expedition to invade
Heav'n, 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 pow'r and excellence, but favour'd more
Of him who rules above; so was his will
Pronounc'd among the gods, and by an oath,
That shook heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
What creatures there inhabit, of what mould
Or substance, how endu'd, and what their power,
And where their weakness, how attempted best,
By force or subtlety. Though heaven be shut,
And heav'n's high arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie expos'd.
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it: here perhaps
Some advantageous act may be atchiev'd
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 inhabitants; 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 Beelzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd
By Satan, and in part propos'd: 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
Pleas'd highly those infernal states, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes; with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.
Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate,
Synod of gods, and, like to what ye are,
Great things resolv'd, which from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines whence, with neighb'ring arms
And opportune excursions, we may chance
Re-enter heav'n; or else in some mild zone
Dwell not unvisited of heav'n's fair light,
Secure and at the bright'ning 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 wand'ring 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,
Pond'ring the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In other's count'nance read his own diſmay,
Aſtoniſh'd. None among the choice and prime
Of thoſe heav'n-warring champions could be found
So hardy, as to proffer, or accept
Alone the dreadful voyage; till at laſt
Satan, whom now tranſcendent glory rais'd
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,
Conſcious of higheſt worth, unmov'd thus ſpake.
O progeny of heav'n, empyrial thrones,
With reaſon hath deep ſilence and demur
Seiz'd us, though undiſmay'd: long is the way
And hard, that out of hell leads up to light:
Our priſon ſtrong; this huge convex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round
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, plung'd in that abortive gulf,
If thence he 'ſcape into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him leſs
Than unknown dangers, and as hard eſcape?
But I ſhould ill become this throne, O peers,
And this imperial ſov'reignty, adorn'd
With ſplendour, arm'd with pow'r, if ought propos'd
And judg'd of public moment, in the ſhape

Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do' I assume
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 heav'n, though fall'n; 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
Deliv'rance for us all: this enterprise
None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose
The monarch, and prevented all reply;
Prudent, lest, from his resolution rais'd,
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refus'd) what erst they fear'd;
And so refus'd, might in opinion stand
His rivals; winning cheap the high repute,
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more th' adventure, than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose:
Their rising all at once was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Tow'ards him they bend
With awful reverence prone; and as a god
Extol him equal to the Highest in heav'n;
Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd,
That for the general safety he despis'd
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
Heav'n's chearful face, the louring element
Scowls o'er the darken'd landskip snow, or shower;
If chance the radiant sun with farewel sweet
Extends 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 to devil damn'd
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heav'nly 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 enow besides,
That, day and night, for his destruction wait.
The Stygian council thus dissolv'd; and forth
In order came the grand infernal peers:
'Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
Alone th' antagonist of heaven, nor less
Than hell's dread emperor, with pomp supreme,
And God-like imitated state; him round
A globe of fiery Seraphim inclos'd.
With bright imblazonry, and horrent arms,
Then of their session ended they bid cry
With trumpets regal sound the great result;
Tow'ards 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 deaf'ning shout return'd them loud acclaim.
Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers
Disband, and wand'ring, each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him perplex'd, where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,

Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields;
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.
As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds, before each van
Prick forth the aery knights and couch their spears
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
From either end of heav'n the welkin burns.
Others, with vast Typhœan 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 th' invenom'd robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines;
And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw
Into th' Euboic sea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds and hapless fall
By doom of battle; and complain that fate
Free virtue should enthrall to force or chance.
Their songs were partial; but the harmony
(What could it less when sp'rits 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 retir'd,
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 wand'ring mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argu'd 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 th' 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, nam'd 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 wat'ry labyrinth; whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former ſtate and be'ing 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; all 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 frore, and cold performs th' effect of fire.
Thither by harpy-footed furies hal'd,
At certain revolutions, all the damn'd
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce;
From beds of raging fire to ſtarve in ice
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 th' 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 confus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands
With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,
View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death; which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
Gorgons, and hydras, and chimæras, dire.
Mean while th' adversary of God and man,
Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of high'est design,
Puts on swift wings, and tow'ards the gates of hell
Explores his solitary flight: sometimes
He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left;
Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave tow'ring high.
As when far off at sea a fleet descry'd,
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape
Ply, stemming nightly tow'ards 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
Impenitrable, impal'd with circling fire,
Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat

On either side a formidable shape:
The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair;
But ended foul in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast; a serpent arm'd
With mortal sting: about her middle round
A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
If ought disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still bark'd and howl'd,
Within unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
Vex'd Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore;
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when call'd
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lur'd with the smell of infant-blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon
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.
Th' undaunted fiend what this might be admir'd;
Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valu'd he, nor shunn'd;
And with disdainful look thus first began.

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

To whom the goblin full of wrath reply'd.
Art thou that traitor-angel, art thou he,
Who firſt broke peace in heav'n, and faith, till then
Unbroken; and in proud rebellious arms
Drew after him the third part of heav'n's ſons,
Conjur'd againſt the High'eſt; 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 ſp'rits of heaven,
Hell-doom'd, and breath'ſt defiance here and ſcorn,
Where I reign king; and, to enrage thee more,
Thy king and lord? Back to thy puniſhment,
Falſe fugitive, and to thy ſpeed add wings;
Leſt with a whip of ſcorpions I purſue
Thy ling'ring, or with one ſtroke of this dart
Strange horror ſeize thee', and pangs unfelt before.
So ſpake the griſly terror, and in ſhape,
So ſpeaking and ſo threat'ning, grew tenfold
More dreadful and deform. On th' other ſide
Incens'd with indignation Satan ſtood
Unterrify'd; and like a comet burn'd
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In th' arctic ſky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes peſtilence and war. Each at the head
Levell'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
No ſecond ſtroke intend; and ſuch a frown
Each caſt at th' other, as when two black clouds,
With heav'n's artillery fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caſpian, then ſtand front to front,
Hovering a-pace, 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 atchiev'd, whereof all hell had rung,
Had not the ſnaky ſorcereſs that ſat
Faſt by hell-gate, and kept the fatal key,
Ris'n, and with hideous outcry ruſh'd between.

O father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,
'Gainst 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 as 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.
T' whom thus the portress of hell gate reply'd.
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
In heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd
In bold conspiracy against heav'n's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swam
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth; till on the left side op'ning wide,
Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
Then shining heav'nly fair, a goddess arm'd,
Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seiz'd
All th' host of heav'n; back they recoil'd, afraid
At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a sign
Portentous held me; but familiar grown,
I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won.
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd

A growing burden. Mean while war arose,
And fields were fought in heav'n; 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,
Driv'n headlong from the pitch of heaven, down
Into this deep; and in the general fall
I also; at which time this pow'rful key
Into my hand was giv'n, 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 issu'd, brandishing his fatal dart
Made to destroy: I fled, and cry'd out, Death;
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back resounded, Death.
I fled; but he pursu'd, (though more it seems,
Inflam'd with lust than rage,) and, swifter far,
Me overtook, his mother, all dismay'd,
And in embraces forcible and foul
Ingend'ring with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me; for when they list, into the womb
That bred them they return, and howl, and gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth
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 set them on,
And me his parent would full soon devour
For want of other prey, but that he knows

His end with mine involv'd; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounc'd.
But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
Though temper'd heav'nly; 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 heav'n, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, though dire change
Befall'n 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 heav'nly host
Of sp'rits, 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
Th' unfounded deep, and through the void immense
To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created, vast and round; a place of birth
In the purlieus of heav'n, and therein plac'd
A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room; though more removed,
Lest heav'n surcharg'd with potent multitude
Might hap to move new broils. Be this, or ought
Than this more secret, now design'd, I haste
To know; and this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom air, imbalm'd
With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.
He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear

His famine ſhould be fill'd; and bleſs'd his maw
Deſtin'd to that good hour: no leſs rejoic'd
His mother bad, and thus beſpake her ſire.
The key of this infernal pit by due,
And by command of heav'n's all-pow'rful King,
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
Theſe adamantine gates; againſt all force
Death ready ſtands to interpoſe his dart,
Fearleſs to be o'ermatch'd by living might.
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 confin'd,
Inhabitant of heav'n, and heav'nly 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 gav'ſt 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 tow'ards the gate rolling her beſtial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up drew;
Which but herſelf, not all the Stygian powers
Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of maſſy ir'on or ſolid rock with eaſe
Unfaſtens; on a ſudden open fly,
With impetuous recoil and jarring ſound,
Th' 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 pow'r; 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,
Without dimenſion, where length, breadth, and height,
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 maſt'ry, 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,
He rules a moment: Chaos umpire ſits,
And by deciſion more embroils the fray,
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into his wild abyſs,
The womb of nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither ſea, nor ſhore, nor air, nor fire,
But all theſe in their pregnant cauſes mix'd
Confus'dly, and which thus muſt ever fight,
Unleſs th' Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds;
Into this wild abyſs the wary fiend
Stood on the brink of hell, and look'd a while,
Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to croſs. Nor was his ear leſs peal'd
With noiſes loud and ruinous, (to compare
Great things with ſmall), than when Bellona ſtorms,
With all her batt'ring engines bent to raiſe
Some capital city'; or leſs than if this frame
Of heav'n were falling, and theſe elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn.

The ſtedfaſt earth. At laſt his ſail-broad vans
He ſpreads for flight, and in the ſurging ſmoke
Uplifted ſpurns the ground; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, aſcending rides
Audacious; but that ſeat ſoon failing, meets
A vaſt vacuity: all unawares
Flutt'ring his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thouſand fathom deep; and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
The ſtrong rebuff of ſome tumultuous cloud,
Inſtinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft: that fury ſtay'd,
Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither ſea,
Nor good dry land: nigh founder'd, on he fares,
Treading the crude conſiſtence, half on foot,
Half fly'ing; behoves him now both oar and ſail.
As when a gryphon, through the wilderneſs
With winged courſe, o'er hill or moory dale,
Purſues the Arimaſpian, who by ſtealth
Had from his wakeful cuſtody purloin'd
The guarded gold: ſo eagerly the fiend
O'er bog, or ſteep, through ſtrait, rough, denſe, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, purſues his way;
And ſwims, or ſinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.
At length a univerſal hubbub wild
Of ſtunning ſounds, and voices all confus'd,
Borne through the hollow dark, aſſaults his ear,
With loudeſt vehemence: thither he plies,
Undaunted to meet there whatever power
Or ſpirit of the nethermoſt abyſs
Might in that noiſe reſide, of whom to aſk
Which way the neareſt coaſt of darkneſs lies
Bord'ring on light; when ſtrait behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion ſpread
Wide on the waſteful deep; with him enthron'd
Sat ſable-veſted Night, eldeſt of things,
The conſort of his reign; and by them ſtood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon; Rumor next, and Chance

And Tumult, and Confuſion all embroil'd,
And diſcord with a thouſand various mouths.
To whom Satan turning boldly, thus. Ye pow'rs
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
Wand'ring this darkſome deſart, 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 heav'n; or if ſome other place,
From your dominion won, th' ethereal 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 th' advantage all, mine the revenge.
Thus Satan; and him thus the anarch old,
With falt'ring ſpeech and viſage uncompos'd,
Anſwer'd. I know thee, ſtranger, who thou art,
That mighty leading angel, who of late
Made head againſt heav'n'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 heav'n-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
Weak'ning the ſceptre of old Night; firſt hell,
Your dungeon, ſtretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately heav'n and earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain,

To that side heav'n, from whence your legions fell:
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger; go, and speed;
Havock, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain.
He ceas'd; and Satan stay'd 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 expance; and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environ'd, wins his way; harder beset
And more indanger'd, than when Argo pass'd
Through Bosporus, betwixt the justling rocks:
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steer'd.
So he with difficulty and labour hard
Mov'd on; with difficulty and labour he;
But he once pass'd, soon after, when man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain
Following his tract, such was the will of Heav'n,
Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endur'd a bridge of wondrous length,
From hell continu'd, reaching th' utmost orb
Of this frail world; by which th' sp'rits perverse
With easy intercourse 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 farthest verge, and Chaos to retire,
As from her utmost 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 th' empyreal heav'n, extended wide
In circuit, undetermin'd ſquare or round,
With opal tow'rs, and battlements adorn'd
Of living ſaphir, 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,
Accurs'd, and in a curſed hour he hies.

The End of the Second Book.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

The ARGUMENT.

God sitting on his throne sees Satan flying towards this world, then newly created; shews 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 him: 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. Mean while 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.

HAIL, holy light, offspring of heav'n firſt-born,
Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam!
May I expreſs thee' unblam'd? 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 heav'ns 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,
Eſcap'd 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 th' Orphean lyre,
I ſung of Chaos and eternal Night;
Taught by the heav'nly Muſe to venture down
The dark deſcent, and up to re-aſcend,
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 flow'ry brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
So were I equall'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris, and blind Mæonides;
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 ev'n or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expung'd and raz'd,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
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 th' almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean where he sits
High thron'd above all height, bent down his eye,
His own works and their works at once to view:
About him all the sanctities of heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
Beatitude past utterance: on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son. On earth he first beheld
Our two first parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,

In blissful solitude. He then survey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
Coasting the wall of heav'n 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
Prescrib'd, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss
Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
Not far off heav'n, in the precincts of light,
Directly tow'ards the new-created world,
And man there plac'd, with purpose to essay
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 th' 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 giv'n 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 (reas'n also is choice)

Uſeleſs and vain, of freedom both deſpoil'd,
Made paſſive both, had ſerv'd 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 over-rul'd
Their will, diſpos'd 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 prov'd certain unforeknown.
So without leaſt impulſe or ſhadow' of fate,
Or ought by me immutably foreſeen,
They treſpaſs, authors to themſelves in all,
Both what they judge, and what they chuſe; for ſo
I form'd them free: and free they muſt remain,
Till they inthrall 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-deprav'd: man falls, deceiv'd
By th' other firſt: man therefore ſhall find grace,
The other none: in mercy' and juſtice both,
Through heav'n and earth, ſo ſhall my glory' exeel;
But mercy, firſt and laſt, ſhall brighteſt ſhine.
Thus while God ſpake, ambroſial fragrance fill'd
All heav'n, and in the bleſſed ſp'rits elect
Senſe of new joy ineffable diffus'd.
Beyond compare the Son of God was ſeen
Moſt glorious; in him all the Father ſhone
Subſtantially expreſs'd: and in his face
Divine compaſſion viſible appear'd,
Love without end, and without meaſure grace,
Which uttering, thus he to his Father ſpake.
O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd
Thy ſov'reign ſentence, that man ſhould find grace;
For which both heav'n and earth ſhall high extol
Thy praiſes, with th' innumerable ſound
Of hymns and ſacred ſongs, wherewith thy throne

Incompass'd shall resound thee ever bless'd.
For should man finally be lost? should man,
Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
With his own folly? that be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right.
Or shall the adversary thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught,
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to hell
Drawn 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 blasphem'd without defence.
To whom the Great Creator thus reply'd.
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 sav'd who will;
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsaf'd: once more I will renew
His lapsed pow'rs, though forfeit, and inthrall'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 fall'n condition is, and to me owe
All his deliv'rance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear my call, and oft be warn'd
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' 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 pray'r, 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 us'd, they ſhall attain,
And to the end perſiſting, ſafe arrive.
This my long ſufferance, and my day of grace,
They who neglect and ſcorn, ſhall never taſte;
But hard be harden'd; blind 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 naught 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, heav'nly pow'rs, where ſhall we find ſuch love?
Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and juſt th' unjuſt to ſave?
Dwells in all heaven charity ſo dear?
He aſk'd; but all the heav'nly quire ſtood mute,
And ſilence was in heav'n: 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, adjudg'd 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 paſt, 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, unimplor'd, unſought?
Happy for man, ſo coming: he her aid
Can never ſeek, once dead in ſins, and loſt;
Atonement for himſelf, or offering meet,
Indebted and undone, hath none to bring.
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 his glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him laſtly die
Well pleas'd: on me let Death wreak all his rage:
Under his gloomy pow'r I ſhall not long
Lie vanquiſh'd; thou haſt giv'n 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 ſhew
The pow'rs of darkneſs bound. Thou at the ſight
Pleas'd, out of heaven ſhalt look down, and ſmile;
While, by thee rais'd, I ruin all my foes,
Death laſt, and with his carcaſe glut the grave;
Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd
Shall enter heav'n, long abſent, and return,
Father, to ſee thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger ſhall remain, but peace aſſur'd,
And reconcilement; wrath ſhall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy preſence joy entire.

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will
Of his great father. Admiration seiz'd
All heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend
Wond'ring; but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd.
O thou in heaven and earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath! O thou
My soul 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 a while, 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, 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 restor'd
As many as are restor'd, 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 judg'd, and die,
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
So heav'nly 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 thron'd in highest bliss,

Equal to God and equally enjoying
God-like 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, pow'rs, dominions, I reduce:
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In heav'n, or earth, or under earth in hell.
When thou attended gloriously from heaven
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
The summoning archangels to proclaim
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. Mean while
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New heav'n and earth, wherein the just shall dwell;
And after all their tribulations long,
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
For regal sceptre then no more shall need,
God shall be all in all. But all ye gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this, dies;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me.

No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
The multitude of Angels, with a shout

Loud as from numbers without number, sweet,
As from blest voices, uttering joy, heav'n rung
With jubilee, and loud hosanna's fill'd
Th' eternal regions. Lowly reverent,
Tow'ards either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast
Their crowns, inwove with amarant, and gold;
Immortal amarant, a flow'r which once
In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
To heav'n remov'd, where first it grew, there grows,
And flow'rs aloft shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of heav'n
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream:
With these that never fade, the sp'rits elect
Bind their resplendent locks, inwreath'd with beams;
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses smil'd.
Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took;
Harps ever tun'd, that glittering by their side
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; thee, author of all being,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitt'st
Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear;
Yet dazzle heaven, that brightest Seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee next they sang of all creation first,
Begotten Son, divine similitude,
In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud

Made visible, th' almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold; on thee
Impress'd th' effulgence of his glory' abides,
Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests.
He heav'n of heav'ns, and all the pow'rs therein,
By thee created; and by thee threw down
Th' aspiring domination: thou that day
Thy father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook
Heav'n's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drov'st of warring angels disarray'd.
Back from pursuit thy pow'rs 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 fall'n,
Father of mercy' and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd:
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd:
He to appease thy wrath, and end thy 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 harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.
Thus they in heav'n above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Mean while upon the firm opacous globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs, inclos'd
From Chaos, and th' inroad of darkness old,
Satan alighted walks. A Globe far off
It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of night
Starless expos'd, and ever-threat'ning storms

Of Chaos bluſt'ring 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 yeaniing kids,
On hills where flocks are fed, flies tow'ard the ſprings
Of Ganges or Hydaſpes, Indian ſtreams;
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineſes 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 aerial 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 th' other life;
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful ſuperſtition and blind zeal,
Naught ſeeking but the praiſe of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds;
All th' unaccompliſh'd works of Nature's hand,
Abortive, monſtrous, or unkindly mix'd,
Diſſolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain
Till final diſſolution, wander here;
Not in the neighb'ring moon, as ſome have dream'd;
Thoſe argent fields, more likely habitants,
Tranſlated ſaints, or middle ſpirits, hold
Betwixt th' angelical and human kind;
Hither of ill-join'd ſons and daughters born
Firſt from the ancient world thoſe giants came
With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd:

The builders next of Babel on the plain
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 Etna flames,
Empedocles; and he who to enjoy
Plato's Elyſium, leap'd into the ſea,
Cleombrotus; and many more too long,
Embryo's, and idiots, eremits, 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 diſguis'd;
They paſs the planets ſeven, and paſs the fix'd,
And that cryſtalline ſphere whoſe balance weighs
The trepidation talk'd, and that firſt mov'd:
And now Saint Peter at heav'n's wicket ſeems
To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
Of heav'n's aſcent they lift their feet, when lo
A violent croſs wind from either coaſt
Blows them tranſverſe, ten thouſand leagues awry
Into the devious air: then might ye ſee
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, toſt,
And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
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 travell'd ſteps; far diſtant he deſcries,
Aſcending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of heav'n, 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 cry'd, This is the gate of heav'n.
Each ſtair myſteriouſly was meant, nor ſtood
There always, but drawn up to heav'n ſometimes
Viewleſs; and underneath a bright ſea flow'd
Of jaſper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, failing arriv'd
Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery ſteeds.
The ſtairs were then let down, whether to dare
Th' 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 blifsful ſeat of Paradiſe,
A paſſage down to th' earth, a paſſage wide,
Wider by far than that of after-times
Over mount Sion, and, though that were large
Over the promis'd land to God ſo dear;
By which, to viſit oft thoſe happy tribes,
On high beheſts his angels to and fro
Paſs'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
From Paneas, the ſount of Jordan's flood,
To Beerſaba, where the holy land
Borders on Egypt and th' Arabian ſhore;
So wide the opening ſeem'd, where bounds were ſet
To darkneſs, ſuch as bound the ocean-wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower ſtair,
That ſcal'd by ſteps of gold to heaven-gate,
Looks down with wonder at the ſudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a ſcout
Through dark and deſert ways with peril gone
All night, at laſt by break of chearful 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 glist'ring spires and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:
Such wonder seiz'd, though after heaven seen,
The sp'rit malign, but much more envy seiz'd,
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood
So nigh 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 th' horizon; then from pole to pole
He views in breadth; and without longer pause
Down right into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way,
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old.
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales;
Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt happy there
He stay'd not to enquire. Above them all
The golden sun, in splendour likest heaven,
Allur'd his eye; thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament, (but up or down,
By center, 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, tow'ards his all-chearing lamp
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The univerie, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen,

Shoots inviſible virtue ev'n to the deep;
So wond'rouſly was ſet his ſtation bright.
There lands the fiend, a ſpot like which perhaps
Aſtronomer in the ſun's lucent orb
Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never ſaw.
The place he found beyond expreſſion bright,
Compar'd with ought on earth, metal or ſtone;
Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
With radiant light, as glowing ir'on with fire:
If metal, part ſeem'd gold, part ſilver clear;
If ſtone, carbuncle moſt or eryſolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that ſhone
In Aaron's breaſtplate, and a ſtone beſides
Imagin'd 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 pow'rful 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 elixer pure, and rivers run
Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
Th' arch-chemic ſun, ſo far from us remote,
Produces, with terreſtrial humour mix'd,
Here in the dark ſo many precious things
Of colour glorious, and effect ſo rare?
Here matter new to gaze the devil met
Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands;
For ſight no obſtacle found here, nor ſhade,
But all ſun-ſhine, as when his beams at noon
Culminate from th' equator, as they now
Shot upward ſtill direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body' opaque can fall; and th' air,
No where ſo clear, ſharpen'd his viſual ray
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 fledge 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 wand'ring 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 smil'd celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffus'd, 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 strait was known
Th' archangel Uriel, one of the seven
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
That run through all the heav'ns, or down to th' earth
Bear his swift errands, over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts.
Uriel, for thou of those sev'n sp'rits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
The first are 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 wand'ring. Brighteſt ſeraph, tell
In which of all theſe ſhining orbs hath man
His fixed ſeat, or fixed ſeat hath none,
But all theſe ſhining orbs his choice to dwell;
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 driv'n 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 unperceiv'd;
For neither man nor angel can diſcern
Hypocriſy, the only evil that walks
Inviſible, except to God alone,
By his permiſſive will, through heav'n and earth:
And oft though wiſdom wake, ſuſpicion ſleeps
At wiſdom's gates, and to Simplicity
Reſigns her charge, while goodneſs thinks no ill
Where no ill ſeems: which now for once beguil'd
Uriel, though regent of the ſun, and held
The ſharpeſt-ſighted ſpirit of all in heav'n;
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 imperial manſion thus alone,
To witneſs with thine eyes what ſome perhaps,
Contented with report, hear only in heav'n:
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 rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd;
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
Swift to their several quarters hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire,
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 wall this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side,
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines;
That place is earth, the seat of man; that light
His day, which else, as th' other hemisphere,
Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
Timely' interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid heav'n,
With borrow'd light her countenance triform
Hence fills, and empties, to enlighten th' earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adam's abode, 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 sp'rits is wont in heaven
Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and tow'ard the coast of earth beneath,
Down from the ecliptic, sped with hop'd success,
Throws his steep flight in many an airy wheel;
Nor stay'd, till on Niphates' top he lights.

The End of the Third Book.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions, fear, envy and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil, journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described, overleaps the bounds, sits in the shape of a cormorant on the tree of life, as highest in the garden, to look about him. The garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state; but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse, thence gathers that the tree of knowledge was forbidden them to eat of, under penalty of death; and thereon intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress: then leaves them a while, to know further of their state by some other means. Mean while Uriel descending on a sun-beam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escaped the deep, and passed at noon by his sphere in the shape of a good angel down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel

promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there doing harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers; prepares resistance, but hindered by a sign from heaven, flies out of Paradise.

O For that warning voice, which he who saw
The Apocalyps heard cry in heav'n aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,
Woe to th' inhabitants on earth! that now,
While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scap'd,
Haply so 'scap'd his mortal snare: for now
Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
The tempter ere th' accuser of mankind,
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, not 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 tow'ards Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad;

Sometimes tow'ard heav'n 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 that state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride, and worse ambition, threw me down,
Warring in heav'n against heav'n's matchless King.
Ah wherefore! he deserv'd no such return
From me, whom he created what I was,
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be less, than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
I 'sdeind subjection, and thought one step higher
Would set me high'est, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd;
And understood not that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharg'd; what burden then?
O had his pow'rful destiny ordain'd
Me some inferior angel, I had stood
Then happy; no unbounded hope had rais'd
Ambition. Yet, why not? some other power
As great might have aspir'd, and me though mean
Drawn to his part; but other pow'rs as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.
Hadst thou the same free will and pow'r to stand?
Thou hadst. Whom hast thou then, or what t' accuse,
But heav'n's free love, dealt equally all?

Be then his love accurs'd, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.
Nay, curs'd be thou; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell;
And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep
Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heav'n.
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 sp'rits beneath, whom I seduced
With other promises, and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
Th' omnipotent. Ay me, they little know
How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
Under what torments inwardly I groan,
While they adore me on the throne of hell,
With diadem and sceptre high advanc'd,
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 height 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 reconcilement grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd 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 instead
Of us outcast, exil'd, his new delight,
Mankind created, and for him this world.
So farewel hope, and with hope farewel fear,

Farewel remorſe: all good to me is loſt;
Evil be thou my good: by thee at leaſt
Divided empire with heav'n's King I hold,
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
As man ere long, and this new world, ſhall know.
Thus while he ſpake, each paſſion dimm'd his face
Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy, and deſpair;
Which marr'd his borrow'd viſage, and betray'd
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.
For heav'nly 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 practis'd falſehood under ſaintly ſhow,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge.
Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
Uriel once warn'd; whoſe eye purſu'd him down
The way he went, and on th' Aſſyrian mount
Saw him diſfigur'd more than could befal
Spirit of happy ſort: his geſtures fierce
He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he ſuppos'd, all unobſerv'd, unſeen
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradiſe,
Now nearer, crowns with her incloſure green,
As with a rural mound, the champain head
Of a ſteep wilderneſs, whoſe hairy ſides
With thicket overgrown, grotteſque and wild,
Acceſs deny'd; and over head up grew
Inſuperable height of loftieſt ſhade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A ſylvan ſcene; and as the ranks aſcend
Shade above ſhade, a woody theatre
Of ſtatelieſt view. Yet higher than their tops
The verd'rous wall of Paradiſe up ſprung:
Which to our general ſire gave proſpect large
Into his nether empire neighb'ring 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 enamell'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 show'r'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 past
Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
Sabean odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the Blest; with such delay
Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league
Chear'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles:
So entertain'd those odorous sweets the fiend,
Who came their bane; though with them better pleas'd
Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume
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 th' ascent of that steep savage hill
Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow;
But further way found none, so thick intwin'd,
As one continu'd 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 th' other side: which when th' 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,
When hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve
In hurled 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 clamb 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 sad devising death
To them who liv'd; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd
For prospect, what well-us'd had been the pledge
Of immortality. So little knows
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 expos'd,
In narrow room, nature's whole wealth, yea, more,
A heav'n on earth: for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in th' 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 all the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the tree of life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold: and next to life,
Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by;
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
Pass'd underneath ingulf'd; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden-mould high rais'd
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up-drawn,

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, wand'ring many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
How from that saphir fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flow'rs, worthy' of Paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning-sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade
Imbrown'd the noontide-bow'rs. 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 interpos'd,
Or palmy hillock, or the flow'ry lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
Flow'rs 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: mean while murm'ring waters fall
Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their 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 th' eternal spring. Not that fair field

Of Enna, where Proſerpine gathering flowers,
Herſelf a fairer flow'r, 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 th' inſpir'd
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 love,
Hid Amalthea, and her florid ſon
Young Bacchus, from his ſtepdame Rhea's eyes;
Nor where Abaſſin kings their iſſue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by ſome ſuppos'd
True Paradiſe under the Ethiop line
By Nilus head, inclos'd 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 plac'd),
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 declar'd
Abſolute rule; and hyacinthin locks
Round from his parted forelock many hung
Cluſt'ring, but not beneath his ſhoulders broad:
She, as a veil, down to the ſlender waiſt
Her unadorned golden treſſes wore
Diſhevel'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd,
As the vine curls her tendrils, which imply'd
Subjection, but requir'd with gentle ſway,

And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
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 angels; 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 turf of shade that on a green
Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain-side
They sat them down; and after no more toil
Of their sweet gard'ning labour than suffic'd
To recommend cool zephyr, and made ease
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
More grateful, to their supper-fruits they fell,
Nectarine fruits which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, side-long 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 gently 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 th' earth, since wild, and of all chase
In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
Dandled the kid; bears, tygers, ounces, pards,
Gambol'd before them; th' unwieldy elephant,
To make them mirth, us'd all his might, and wreath'd
His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly
Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine

His braided train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass
Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing sat,
Or bedward ruminating; for the sun
Declin'd was hasting now with prone career
To th' ocean-isles, and in th' ascending scale
Of heav'n the stars that usher evening rose:
When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd, said.
O hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,
Not spirits, yet to heav'nly 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-secur'd
Long to continue, and this high seat your heav'n
Ill fenc'd for heaven to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd; yet no purpos'd foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied. League with you I seek
And mutual amity, so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth: my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
Accept your Maker's works; 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

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Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarg'd
By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.
So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
Then from his lofty stand on that high tree
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end
Nearer to view his prey, and unspy'd
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 tyger, who by chance hath spy'd
In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Strait couches close, then rising changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,
Grip'd in each paw: when Adam, first of men,
To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech,
Turn'd him, all ear to hear new utterance flow.
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 rais'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Ought whereof he hath need; he who requires
From us no other service than to keep
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, that 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 pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left,

Among so many signs of pow'r 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 reply'd. 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
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd
Under a shade on flow'rs, much wond'ring where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence a murm'ring sound
Of waters issu'd from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd
Pure as th' expanse of heav'n; I thither went
With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite
A shape within the wat'ry gleam appear'd,
Bending to look on me: I started back,
It started back; but pleas'd I soon return'd,
Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answ'ring looks
Of sympathy and love, there I had fix'd
Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warn'd me, What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;

With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays
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 strait, invisibly thus led?
Till I espy'd thee, fair indeed and tall,
Under a platan; yet methought less fair,
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
Than that smooth wat'ry image: back I turn'd:
Thou following, cry'd aloud, Return, fair Eve,
Whom fly'st thou? whom thou fly'st, of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone; to give thee be'ing 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
Seiz'd 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 unreprov'd
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,
Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds
That shed May flow'rs, and press'd her matron lip
With kisses pure. Aside the devil turn'd
For envy; yet with jealous leer malign
Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd.

Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two,
Imparadis'd 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 unspy'd;
A chance but chance may lead where I may meet
Some wand'ring sp'rits of heav'n, by fountain-side,
Or in thick shade retir'd from him to draw
What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.
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
Mean while 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
Levell'd his evening-rays: it was a rock
Of alabaster, pil'd 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 the rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
Chief of th' angelic guards, awaiting night;
About him exercis'd heroic games
Th' unarmed youth of heav'n, but nigh at hand
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high, with diamonds flaming, and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting star
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fir'd
Impress'd the air, and shews 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 height of noon came to my sphere
A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know
More of th' Almighty's works, and chiefly man,
God's latest image: I describ'd his way,
Bent all on speed, and mark'd his airy gait;
But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks
Alien from heaven, with passions foul obscur'd:
Mine eye pursu'd him still, but under shade
Lost sight of him: one of the banish'd crew,
I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep to raise,
New troubles; him thy care must be to find.

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd.
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sitt'st,
See far and wide: in at this gate none pass
The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come
Well known from heav'n; and since meridian hour
No creature thence: if sp'rit of other sort,
So minded, hath o'erleap'd these earthy 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 promis'd he; and Uriel to his charge
Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd
Bore him slope downward to the sun now fall'n
Beneath th' Azores; whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
Diurnal, or this less volubile earth,
By shorter flight to th' 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 pleas'd; now glow'd the firmament
With living saphirs: Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon
Rising in cloudy majesty, at length
Apparent queen unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.
When Adam thus to Eve. Fair consort, th' hour
Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest,
Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep
Now falling with soft slumb'rous weight, inclines
Our eye-lids: 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 heav'n, 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 present labour, to reform
Yon flow'ry arbour, 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;
Mean while, as Nature wills, night bids us rest.
To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty' adorn'd.
My author and disposer, what thou bidst
Unargu'd 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,
Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft show'rs; 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 heav'n, 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,
Glist'ring with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night,
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glitt'ring 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 reply'd.
Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve,
These have their course to finish round the earth,
By morrow ev'ning, and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Minist'ring light prepar'd, they set and rise;
Lest total darkness should by night regain
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 heav'n 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 others note,
Singing their great Creator? oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds
In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heav'n.
Thus talking, hand in hand along they pass'd
On to their blissful bow'r: it was a place
Chos'n by the sov'reign planter, when he fram'd
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,
Fenc'd up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; under foot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem: other creature here,
Beast, bird, 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 heav'nly 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 th' unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she insnar'd
Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.
Thus at their shady lodge arriv'd both stood,
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
The god that made both sky, air, earth, and heav'n,
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: Thou also mad'st 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 uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promis'd 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 eas'd the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear,
Strait side by side were laid; nor turn'd, I ween,
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refus'd:
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence.
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 adult'rous luſt was driv'n 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 ſhame,
Or think thee unbefitting holieſt place,
Perpetual fountain of domeſtic ſweets,
Whoſe bed is undefil'd and chaſte pronounc'd,
Preſent, or paſt, as ſaints and patriarchs us'd.
Here Love his golden ſhafts employs, here lights
His conſtant lamp, and waves his purple wings.
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought ſmile
Of harlots, loveleſs, joyleſs, unendear'd,
Caſual fruition; nor in court-amours,
Mix'd dance, or wanton maſk, or midnight-ball,
Or ſerenade, which the ſtarv'd lover ſings
To his proud fair, beſt quitted with diſdain.
Theſe lull'd by nightingales, embracing ſleep;
And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof
Show'r'd roſes, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on,
Bleſs'd pair; and, O yet happieſt, if ye ſeek
No happier ſtate, and know no more.

Now had night meaſur'd with her ſhadowy cone
Half way up hill this vaſt ſublunar vault,
And from their ivory port the Cherubim
Forth iſſuing at th' accuſtom'd hour, ſtood arm'd
To their night watches in warlike parade;
When Gabriel to his next in pow'r 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 ſubtile ſp'rits 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 arriv'd,
Who tells of ſome infernal ſpirit ſeen
Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) eſcap'd
The bars of hell, on errand bad no doubt:
Such where ye find, ſeize faſt, and hither bring.
So ſaying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon: theſe to the bow'r direct,
In ſearch of whom they ſought: him there they found
Squat like a toad, cloſe at the ear of Eve,
Eſſaying by his deviliſh art to reach
Th' organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illuſions as he liſt, phantaſms and dreams;
Or if, inſpiring venom, he might taint
Th' 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 ingend'ring 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 ſurpris'd. 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 diffus'd, inflames the air;
So ſtarted up in his own ſhape the fiend.
Back ſtept thoſe two fair angels, half amaz'd
So ſudden to behold the griſly king;
Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accoſt him ſoon.
Which of thoſe rebel ſp'rits adjudg'd to hell
Com'ſt thou, eſcap'd thy priſon? and transform'd,
Why ſatt'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 knew,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain?
To whom thus Zephon, answ'ring scorn with scorn.
Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same
Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,
As when thou stood'st in heav'n upright and pure;
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee; and thou resembl'st 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 pin'd
His loss; but chiefly to find here observ'd
His lustre visibly impar'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 the wicked, and thence weak.
The fiend reply'd 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, nor 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 ſplendor wan; who by his gait
And fierce demeanor 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 preſcrib'd
To thy tranſgreſſions, and diſturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to tranſgreſs
By thy example, but have pow'r and right
To queſtion thy bold entrance on this place;
Employ'd, it ſeems, to violate ſleep, and thoſe
Whoſe dwellings God hath planted here in bliſs?
To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow,
Gabriel, thou hadſt in heav'n th' 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,
Tho' thither doom'd? Thou wouldſt thyſelf, no doubt,
And boldly venture to whatever place
Fartheſt from pain, where thou might'ſt hope to change
Torment with eaſe, and ſooneſt recompenſe
Dole with delight, which in this place I ſought;
To thee no reaſon, who know'ſt only good,
But evil haſt not try'd: and wilt object
His will who bound us? let him ſurer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our ſtay
In that dark durance: thus much what was aſk'd.
The reſt is true, they found me where they ſay;
But that implies not violence or harm.
Thus he in ſcorn. The warlike angel mov'd,
Diſdainfully half ſmiling, thus reply'd.
O loſs of one in heav'n to judge of wiſe,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,
And now returns him from his priſon 'ſcap'd,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wiſe

Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicenc'd from his bounds in hell prescrib'd;
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
Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
Can equal anger infinite provok'd.
But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
Come 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 alledg'd
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.
To which the fiend thus answer'd, frowning stern.
Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,
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 unexperience what behoves
From hard essays and ill successes past
A faithful leader not to hazard all
Through ways of danger by himself untry'd:
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 heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practic'd distances to cringe, not fight.
To whom the warrior angel soon reply'd.
To say and straît unsay, pretending first

Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader, but a liar trac'd,
Satan, and could thou faithful add? O name,
O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!
Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
Was this your discipline, and faith engag'd
Your military obedience, to dissolve,
Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd pow'r supreme?
And thou, sly hypocrite, who now would'st seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servily ador'd
Heav'n's awful monarch? wherefore, but in hope
To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
But mark what I arreed thee now, Avant;
Fly thither whence thou fledst: if from this hour
Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
Back to th' infernal pit, I drag thee chain'd,
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, reply'd.
Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,
Proud limitary Cherub, but ere then
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
From my prevailing arm, though heav'n's king
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
Us'd to the yoke, draws his triumphant wheels
In progress through the road of heav'n star-pav'd.
While thus he spake, th' angelic squadron bright
Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported spears, as thick as when a field
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
Her bearded groves of ears, which way the wind
Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,
Lest on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff. On th' other side, Satan alarm'd
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Teneriff or Atlas unremov'd:

His ſtature reach'd the ſky, and on his creſt
Sat horror plum'd; nor wanted in his graſp
What ſeem'd both ſpear and ſhield. Now dreadful deeds
Might have enſu'd, not only Paradiſe
In this commotion, but the ſtarry cope
Of heav'n perhaps, or all the elements,
At leaſt had gone to wrack, diſturb'd and torn
With violence of this conflict, had not ſoon
Th' Eternal, to prevent ſuch horrid fray,
Hung forth in heav'n his golden ſcales, yet ſeen
Betwixt Aſtrea and the Scorpion ſign,
Wherein all things created firſt he weigh'd,
The pendulous round earth with balanc'd air
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 beſpoke the fiend.
Satan, I know thy ſtrength, and thou know'ſt mine,
Neither our own, but giv'n: what folly then
To boaſt what arms can do? ſince thine no more
Than heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubled now
To trample thee as mire: for proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celeſtial ſign,
Where thou art weigh'd, and ſhown how light, how weak,
If thou reſiſt. The fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted ſcale aloft: no more; but fled
Murm'ring, and with him fled the ſhades of night.

The End of the Fourth Book.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK V.

The ARGUMENT.

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

NOW morn, her roſy ſteps in th' eaſtern clime
Advancing, ſow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam wak'd; ſo cuſtom'd; for his ſleep

Was airy light from pure digeſtion bred,
And temp'rate vapours bland, which th' only ſound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly diſpers'd, and the ſhrill matin ſong
Of birds on every bough; ſo much the more
His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
With treſſes diſcompos'd, and glowing cheek,
As through unquiet reſt: he, on his ſide
Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which whether waking or aſleep
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand ſoft touching, whiſper'd thus. Awake,
My faireſt, my eſpous'd, my lateſt found,
Heav'n'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 tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the mirrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid ſweet.
Such whiſp'ring wak'd her, but with ſtartled eye
On Adam; whom embracing, thus ſhe ſpake.
O ſole in whom my thoughts find all repoſe,
My glory, my perfection, glad I ſee
Thy face, and morn return'd: for I this night
(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: heav'n 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 wond'ring look'd, beside it stood
One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from heav'n
By us oft seen; his dewy locks distill'd
Ambrosia; on that tree he also gaz'd;
And, O fair plant, said he, with fruit surcharg'd,
Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
Nor God, nor man? Is knowledge so despis'd?
Or envy', or what reserve forbids to taste?
Forbid who will, none shall from me with-hold
Longer thy offer'd good; why else set here?
This said, he paus'd not, but with vent'rous arm
He pluck'd, he tasted: me damp horror chill'd
At such bold words vouch'd with a deed so bold.
But he thus overjoy'd, O fruit divine,
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,
Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
For gods, yet able to make gods of men:
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 may'st be, worthier canst not be:
Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
Thyself a goddess, not to earth confin'd,
But sometimes in the air, as we; sometimes
Ascend to heav'n, by merit thine, and see
What life the gods live there, and such live thou.
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Ev'n 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: wond'ring 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 wak'd,
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, airy 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 unapprov'd, 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 chearful 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,
Reſerv'd from night and kept for thee in ſtore.
So chear'd he his fair ſpouſe, and ſhe was chear'd;
But ſilently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair;
Two other precious drops that ready ſtood,
Each in their cryſtal ſluice, he ere they fell
Kiſs'd, as the gracious ſigns of ſweet remorſe:
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended.
So all was clear'd, and to the field they haſte.
But firſt, from under ſhady arb'rous roof
Soon as they forth were come to open ſight
Of day-ſpring, and the ſun who ſcarce up riſen,
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean-brim,
Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
Diſcovering in wide landſkip 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 pronounc'd 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 heav'ns,
To us inviſible, or dimly ſeen
In theſe thy loweſt works; yet theſe declare
Thy goodneſs beyond thought, and pow'r divine.
Speak ye who beſt can tell, ye ſons of light,
Angels; for ye behold him, and with ſong,
And choral ſymphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in heav'n,

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 fly'st
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;
And ye five other wand'ring fires that move
In mystic dance not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
Air and ye elements, the eldest birth
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 fleecing skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's great Author rise,
Whether to deck with clouds th' uncolour'd sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,
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 numbers, warbling tune his praise.
Join voices all ye living souls; ye birds,
That singing up to heav'n-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 ought of evil, or conceal'd,
Diſperſe it, as now light diſpels the dark.
So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
Firm peace recover'd ſoon, and wonted calm.
On to their morning's rural work they haſte,
Among ſweet dews and flow'rs; 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 'ſpous'd about him twines
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
Her dow'r, th' adopted cluſters, to adorn
His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld
With pity heav'n's high King, and to him call'd
Raphael, the ſociable ſp'rit, that deign'd
To travel with Tobias, and ſecur'd
His marriage with the ſev'ntimes-wedded maid.
Raphael, ſaid he, thou hear'ſt what ſtir on earth
Satan, from hell 'ſcap'd through the darkſome gulf,
Hath rais'd in Paradiſe, and how diſturb'd
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 bow'r or ſhade
Thou find'ſt him from the heat of noon retir'd,
To reſpite his day-labour with repaſt,
Or with repoſe; and ſuch diſcourſe bring on,
As may adviſe him of his happy ſtate,
Happineſs in his pow'r left free to will,
Left to his own free will; his will though free,
Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware
He ſwerve not too ſecure. Tell him withal
His danger, and from whom; what enemy,
Late fall'n himſelf from heav'n, 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,

Left wilfully transgressing he pretend
Surprizal, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd.
So spake the eternal Father, and fulfill'd
All justice: nor delay'd the winged saint
After his charge receiv'd; but from among
Thousand celestial Ardors, where he stood
Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up springing light
Flew through the midst of heav'n; th' angelic quires,
On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
Through all th' empyreal road; till at the gate
Of heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide,
On golden hinges turning, as by work
Divine the sov'reign Architect had fram'd.
From hence, no cloud, or to obstruct his sight,
Star interpos'd, however small, he sees
Not unconform to other shining globes,
Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crown'd
Above all hills. As when by night the glass
Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes
Imagin'd land 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 ethereal sky
Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing
Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
Winnows the buxom air; till within soar
Of tow'ring eagles, t' all the fowls he seems
A phenix, gaz'd by all, as that sole bird,
When to inshrine his reliques in the sun's
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
At once on th' eastern cliff of Paradise
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 dipt in heav'n; the third his feet

Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood,
And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide. Strait 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 glitt'ring tents he pass'd, and now is come
Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flow'ring 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 spicy forest onward come
Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bow'r, 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, prepar'd
For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nect'rous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape: to whom thus Adam call'd.

Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another morn
Ris'n on mid-noon; some great behest from heav'n
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 pow'r
Abundance, fit to honour and receive
Our heav'nly stranger: well we may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
From large bestow'd, where Nature multiplies
Her fertile growth, and by disburd'ning grows
More fruitful which instructs us not to spare.

To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's hallow'd mould,
Of God inspir'd, small store will serve, where store,
All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;

Save what by frugal ſtoring firmneſs gains
To nouriſh, and ſuperfluous moiſt conſumes;
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 diſpens'd his bounties as in heav'n.
So ſaying, with diſpatchful looks in haſte
She turns, on hoſpitable thoughts intent,
What choice to chuſe for delicacy beſt
What order, ſo contriv'd as not to mix
Taſtes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring
Taſte after taſte upheld with kindlieſt change;
Beſtirs her then, and from each tender ſtalk
Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother, yields
In India Eaſt and Weſt, or middle ſhore,
In Pontus, or the Punic coaſt, or where
Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough or ſmooth rin'd, 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 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 unſum'd.
Mean while our primitive great ſire, to meet
His god-like 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 aw'd,
Yet with ſubmiſs approach and reverence meek,
As t' a ſuperior nature, bowing low,
Thus ſaid. Native of heav'n, for other place
None can than heav'n 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 gifts poſſeſs
This ſpacious ground, in yonder ſhady bower
To reſt, and what the garden choiceſt bears
To ſit and taſte, till this meridian heat
Be over, and the ſun more cool decline.
Whom thus th' angelic Virtue anſwer'd mild.
Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou ſuch
Created, or ſuch place haſt here to dwell,
As may not oft invite, though ſp'rits of heav'n
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 ſylvan lodge
They came, that like Pomona's arbour ſmil'd,
With flow'rets deck'd, and fragrant ſmells; but Eve
Undeck'd ſave with herſelf, more lovely fair
Than wood-nymph, or the faireſt goddeſs feign'd
Of three that in mount Ida naked ſtrove,
Stood t' entertain her gueſt from heav'n; no veil
She needed, virtue proof; no thought infirm
Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel Hail
Beſtow'd, the holy ſalutation us'd
Long after to bleſs'd Mary, ſecond Eve.
Hail mother of mankind, whoſe fruitful womb
Shall fill the world more numerous with thy ſons,
Than with theſe various fruits the trees of God
Have heap'd this table. Rais'd of graſſy turf
Their table was, and moſſy ſeats had round;
And on her ample ſquare from ſide to ſide
All autumn pil'd, though ſpring and autumn here
Danc'd hand in hand. A while diſcourſe they hold
No fear leſt dinner cool; when thus began
Our author. Heav'nly ſtranger, pleaſe to taſte
Theſe bounties, which our nouriſher, from whom
All perfect good, unmeaſur'd out, deſcends,
To us for food and for delight hath caus'd
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 sp'rits 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 sea feed air, the air those fires
Ethereal, and as lowest, first the moon;
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd
Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd;
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 alimental recompense,
In humid exhalations, and at ev'n
Sups with the ocean. Though in heav'n 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 heav'n; 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 sp'rits with ease; nor wonder; if by fire
Of sooty coal th' empiric alchemist
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
As from the mine. Mean while 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 t' have been
Enamour'd at that sight; but in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injur'd lover's hell.
Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd
Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass
Giv'n him by this great conference, to know
Of things above this world, and of their be'ing
Who dwell in heav'n, whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,
Divine effulgence, whose high pow'r so far
Exceeded human: and his wary speech
Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd.
Inhabitant with God, now know I well
Thy favour, in this honour done to man;
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
Food not of angels, yet accepted so,
As the more willingly thou couldst not seem
At heav'n's high feasts t' have fed; yet what compare?
To whom the winged Hierarch reply'd.
O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return,
If not deprav'd from good; created all
Such to perfection one first matter all,
Endu'd with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin'd, more spirit'ous, and pure,
As near to him plac'd, no 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 airy, last the bright consummate flow'r
Spirits odorous breathes: flow'rs, and their fruits,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,

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 oftest 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 spirits,
Improv'd by tract of time, and wing'd ascend
Ethereal, as we, or may at choice
Here or in heav'nly Paradises dwell;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,
Whose progeny you are. Mean while enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more.
To whom the patriarch of mankind reply'd.
O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
From center 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 plac'd us here
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?
To whom the angel. Son of heav'n and earth,
Attend. That thou art happy, owe to God;
That thou continu'st such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
This was that caution giv'n thee; be advis'd.

God made thee perfect, not immutable;
And good he made thee, but to persevere
He left it in thy pow'r; ordain'd thy will
By nature free, nor over-rul'd 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 try'd whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other chuse?
Myself and all th' angelic host, that stand
In sight of God enthron'd, our happy state
Holds, 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 fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,
And so from heav'n 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, that when
Cherubic songs by night from neighb'ring 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
Assur'd me', and still assure: though what thou tell'st
Hath pass'd in heav'n, 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 heav'n.
Thus Adam made request: and Raphael,
After short pause assenting, thus began.

High matter thou injoin'ſt me', O prime of men,
Sad taſk, and hard: for how ſhall I relate
To human ſenſe th' 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 diſpens'd; and what ſurmounts the reach
Of human ſenſe, I ſhall delineate ſo,
By likening ſpiritual to corporal forms,
As may expreſs them beſt; though what if earth
Be but the ſhadow' of heav'n, and things therein
Each t' other like, more than on earth is thought?
As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild [reſts
Reign'd where theſe heav'ns now roll, where earth now
Upon her centre pois'd; when on a day
(For time, though in eternity apply'd
To motion, meaſures all things durable
By preſent, paſt, and future) on ſuch day
As heav'n's great year brings forth, th' empyreal hoſt
Of angels, by imperial ſummons call'd,
Innumerable before th' Almighty's throne
Forthwith, from all the ends of heav'n, appear'd
Under their hierarchs in orders bright:
Ten thouſand thouſand enſigns high advanc'd,
Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
Stream in the air, and for diſtinction ſerve
Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
Or in their glitt'ring tiſſues bear imblaz'd
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, pow'rs,
Hear my decree, which unrevok'd ſhall ſtand.

This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
At my right hand; your Head I him appoint;
And by myself have sworn, to him shall bow
All knees in heav'n, 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 th' Omnipotent, and with his words
All seem'd well pleas'd; all seem'd, but were not all.
That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance about the sacred hill;
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
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. Ev'ning now approach'd
(For we have also' our ev'ning 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 pil'd
With angels' food, and rubied nectar flows,
In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold;
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of heav'n.
On flow'rs repos'd, and with fresh flow'rets crown'd,
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy, secure
Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
Excess, before th' all-bounteous King, who show'r'd
With copious hands, rejoicing in their joy.
Now when ambrosial night, with clouds exhal'd

From that high mount of God, whence light and ſhade
Spring both, the face of brighteſt heav'n and chang'd
To grateful twilight, (for night comes not there
In darker veil), and roſeate dews diſpos'd
All but th' unſleeping eyes of God to reſt;
Wide over all the plain, and wider far
Than all this globous earth in plain outſpread,
(Such are the courts of God), th' angelic throng,
Diſpers'd in bands and files, their camp extend
By living ſtreams among the trees of life,
Pavilions numberleſs, and ſudden rear'd,
Celeſtial tabernacles, where they ſlept
Fann'd with cool winds; ſave thoſe who, in their courſe,
Melodious hymns about the ſov'reign throne
Alternate all night long. But not ſo wak'd
Satan; ſo call him now, his former name
Is heard no more in heav'n; he of the firſt,
If not the firſt Arch-angel, great in pow'r,
In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
With envy 'gainſt 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 reſolv'd
With all his legions to diſlodge, and leave
Unworſhipp'd, unobey'd, the throne ſupreme,
Contemptuous; and his next ſubordinate
Awak'ning, thus to him in ſecret ſpake.

Sleep'ſt thou, companion dear, what ſleep can cloſe
Thy eye-lids? and remember'ſt what decree
Of yeſterday, ſo late hath paſs'd the lips
Of heav'n's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts
Wa't wont, I mine to thee was wont t' impart;
Both waking we were one; how then can now
Thy ſleep diſſent? New laws thou ſeeſt impos'd;
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raiſe
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 these 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 infus'd
Bad influence into th' 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 disincumber'd heav'n,
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 heav'n;
His count'nance, as the morning-star that guides
The starry flock, allur'd them, and with lies
Drew after him the third part of heav'n's host.
Mean while th' eternal eye, whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw, without their light,
Rebellion rising; saw in whom how spread
Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose high his 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 t' erect his throne
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
In battle, what our pow'r 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 pow'r
Giv'n me to quell their pride, and in event
Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
Thy rebels, or be found the worst in heav'n.
So spake the Son; but Satan, with his pow'rs,
Far was advanc'd 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
Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and tow'rs
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 declar'd in ſight of heav'n,
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, pow'rs,
If theſe magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular, ſince by decree
Another now hath to himſelf ingroſs'd
All pow'r, and us eclips'd 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 deviſ'd of honours new,
Receive him, coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, proſtration vile,
Too much to one, but double how endur'd,
To one and to his image now proclaim'd?
But what if better counſels might erect
Our minds, and teach us to caſt off this yoke?
Will you ſubmit your necks, and chuſe to bend
The ſupple knee? Ye will not, if I truſt
To know ye right, or if ye know yourſelves
Natives and ſons of heav'n 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 pow'r and ſplendor leſs,
In freedom equal? or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not? much leſs for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration, to th' abuſe
Of thoſe imperial titles, which aſſert
Our being ordain'd to govern, not to ſerve.

Thus far his bold discourse without control
Had audience; when among the Seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd
The Deity', and divine commands obey'd,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
The current of his fury thus oppos'd.
O argument blasphemous, false and proud!
Words which no ear ever to hear in heav'n
Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounc'd and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right endu'd
With regal sceptre, every soul in heav'n
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 pow'rs of heav'n
Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd 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
Unite. 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, ev'n thee; and all the sp'rits of heav'n
By him created in their bright degrees,
Crown'd them with glory', and to their glory nam'd
Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, pow'rs,
Essential pow'rs; nor by his reign obscur'd,
But more illustrious made; since he the head

One of our number thus reduc'd becomes;
His laws our laws; all honour to him done
Returns our own. Ceaſe then this impious rage,
And tempt not theſe; but haſten to appeaſe
Th' incenſed Father, and th' incenſed Son,
While pardon may be found in time beſought.
So ſpake the fervent Angel; but his zeal
None ſeconded, as out of ſeaſon judg'd,
Or ſingular and raſh: whereat rejoic'd
Th' apoſtate, and more haughty thus reply'd.
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-rais'd
By our own quick'ning pow'r, when fatal courſe
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native heav'n, 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 th' almighty throne
Beſeeching or beſieging. This report,
Theſe tidings carry to th' 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
Incompaſs'd round with foes, thus anſwer'd bold.
O alienate from God, O ſp'rit accurs'd,
Forſaken of all good; I ſee thy fall
Determin'd, and thy hapleſs crew involv'd
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 vouchſaf'd; other decrees
Againſt thee are gone forth without recal;
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, unmov'd,
Unſhaken, unſeduc'd, unterrify'd,
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,
Long way through hoſtile ſcorn, which he ſuſtain'd
Superior, nor violence fear'd ought;
And with retorted ſcorn his back he turn'd
On thoſe proud tow'rs to ſwift deſtruction doom'd.

THE END OF THE FIFTH BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

ALL night the dreadleſs angel, unpurſu'd,
Through heav'n's wide champain held his way; till morn,
Wak'd by the circling hours, with roſy hand

Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through
Graceful vicissitude, like day and night; [heav'n
Light issues forth, and at the other door
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour
To veil the heav'n, though darkness there might well
Seem twilight here: and now went forth the morn
Such as in highest heav'n array'd in gold
Empyreal; 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 perceiv'd, war in procinct; and found
Already known what he for news had thought
To have reported; gladly then he mix'd
Among those friendly pow'rs, who him receiv'd
With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
That of so many myriads fall'n, 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 has borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence: for this was all thy care,
To stand approv'd in sight of God, though worlds
Judg'd thee perverse. The easier conquest now
Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to return,
Than scorn'd thou did'st 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, rang'd for fight,
Equal in number to that godleſs crew
Rebellious: them with fire and hoſtile arms
Fearleſs aſſault; and to the brow of heav'n
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 pow'rs militant,
That ſtood for heav'n, in mighty quadrate join'd
Of union irreſiſtible, mov'd on
In ſilence their bright legions, to the ſound
Of inſtrumental harmony, that breath'd
Heroic ardour to advent'rous deeds,
Under their god-like leaders, in the cauſe
Of God and his Meſſiah. On they move
Indiſſolubly firm: nor obvious hill,
Nor ſtrait'ning vale nor wood, nor ſtream divides
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 heav'n they march'd, and many a province wide,
Tenfold the length of this terrene: at laſt
Far in th' horizon to the north appear'd
From ſkirt to ſkirt a fiery region, ſtretch'd
In battalious aſpect, and nearer view
Briſtled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid ſpears, and helmets throng'd, and ſhields

Various, with boaſtful argument portray'd,
The banded pow'rs of Satan haſting on
With furious expedition; for they ween'd
That ſelf-ſame day, by fight, or by ſurpriſe,
To win the mount of God, and on his throne
To ſet the envier of his ſtate, the proud
Aſpirer; but their thoughts prov'd fond and vain
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 th' 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
Th' apoſtate in his ſun bright chariot ſat,
Idol of majeſty divine, incloſ'd
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 advanc'd
Came tow'ring arm'd in adamant and gold:
Abdiel that fight endur'd not, where he ſtood
Among the mightieſt, bent on higheſt deeds,
And thus his own undaunted heart explores.

O heav'n! 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 fight unconquerable?
His puiſſance, truſting in th' Almighty's aid,
I mean to try, whoſe reaſon I have try'd
Unſound and falſe; nor is it ought but juſt,
That he who in debate of truth hath won,
Should win in arms, in both diſputes alike

Victor; though brutish that contest, and foul
When reason hath to deal with force, yet so
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
Incens'd, and thus securely him defy'd.
Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd
The height 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 th' Omnipotent to rise in arms;
Who out of smallest things could, without end,
Have rais'd incessant armies to defeat
Thy folly; or with solitary hand
Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow,
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 essay
Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue,
Inspir'd 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 com'st
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 heav'n
To heav'nly souls had been all one; but now
I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
Minist'ring sp'rits, train'd up in feast and song;
Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of heav'n,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compar'd this day shall prove.

To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern reply'd.
Apostate, still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou deprav'st 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 th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
Thyself not free, but to thyself inthrall'd
Yet lewdly dar'st our minist'ring upbraid.
Reign thou in hell, thy kingdom; let me serve
In heav'n God ever blest, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd;
Yet chains in hell, not realms, expect: mean while
From me return'd, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious crest receive.

So say'ing, 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 upstay'd; as if on earth
Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
Side-long had push'd a mountain from his seat,
Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seiz'd
The rebel thrones, but greater rage, to see
Thus foil'd their mightiest; ours joy fill'd, and shout,
Presage of victory, and fierce desire
Of battle: whereat Michael bid sound
Th' Arch-angel trumpet; through the vast of heav'n

It founded, and the faithful armies rung
Hosanna to the high'est: 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 heav'n 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; over head and dismal hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming vollies 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 heav'n
Resounded; and had earth been then, all earth
Had to her center shook. What wonder? when
Millions of fierce encount'ring 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 pow'r
Army' against army numberless to raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,
Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
Had not th' eternal King omnipotent,
From his strong hold of heav'n, high over-rul'd
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 argu'd fear; each on himself rely'd,
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 pow'r had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting Seraphim confus'd, at length
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway
Brandish'd aloft, the horrid edge came down
Wide wasting; such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and oppos'd the rocky orb
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
A vast circumference. At his approach
The great Arch-angel from his warlike toil
Surceas'd, and glad, as hoping here to end
Intestine war in heav'n, th' arch-foe subdu'd
Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown
And visage all inflam'd first thus began.

Author of ev'il, unknown till thy revolt,
Unnam'd in heav'n, 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
Heav'n'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 prov'd false? But think not here
To trouble holy rest; heav'n casts thee out
From all her confines. Heav'n, 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 the wind
Of airy threats to awe whom yet with deeds

Thou canſt not. Haſt thou turn'd the leaſt of theſe
To flight, or if to fall, but that they riſe
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 heav'n itſelf into the hell
Thou fableſt; here however to dwell free,
If not to reign: mean while thy utmoſt force,
And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,
I fly not, but have ſought thee far and nigh.

They ended parle, and both addreſs for fight
Unſpeakable; for who, though with the tongue
Of Angels, can relate, or to what things
Liken on earth conſpicuous, that may lift
Human imagination to ſuch height
Of Godlike pow'r? for likeſt gods they ſeem'd,
Stood they or mov'd, in ſtature, motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great Heav'n.
Now wav'd their fiery ſwords, and in the air
Made horrid circles; two broad ſuns their ſhields
Blaz'd oppoſite, while Expectation ſtood
In horror: from each hand with ſpeed retir'd,
Where erſt was thickeſt fight, th' angelic throng,
And left large 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 t' Almighty arm
Uplifted imminent, one ſtroke they aim'd
That might determine, and not need repeat,
As not of pow'r at once; nor odds appear'd
In might or ſwift prevention; but the ſword
Of Michael from the armoury of God
Was giv'n him temper'd ſo, that neither keen
Nor ſolid might reſiſt that edge: it met

The ſword of Satan, with ſteep force to ſmite
Deſcending, and in half cut ſheer; nor ſtay'd,
But with ſwift wheel reverſe, deep ent'ring, ſhar'd
All his right ſide; then Satan firſt knew pain,
And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd; ſo ſore
The griding ſword with diſcontinuous wound
Paſs'd through him: but th' ethereal ſubſtance clos'd
Not long diviſible; and from the gaſh
A ſtream of nect'rous humour iſſuing flow'd
Sanguine, ſuch as celeſtial ſp'rits may bleed,
And all his armour ſtain'd, ere while ſo bright.
Forthwith on all ſides to his aid was run
By Angels many and ſtrong, who interpos'd
Defence; while others bore him on their ſhields
Back to his chariot, where it ſtood retir'd
From off the files of war; there they him laid
Gnaſhing for anguiſh, and deſpite, and ſhame,
To find himſelf not matchleſs, and his pride
Humbled by ſuch rebuke, ſo far beneath
His confidence to equal God in pow'r.
Yet ſoon he heal'd; for ſp'rits that live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man
In intrails, 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 like them beſt, condenſe or rare.
Mean while in other parts like deeds deſerv'd
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,
And with fierce enſigns pierc'd the deep array
Of Moloch, furious king; who him defy'd,
And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound
Threaten'd, not from the Holy One of heav'n
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 Raphael, 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 athiest 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 heav'n,
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 heav'n and sacred memory,
Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.
For strength from truth divided, and from just,
Illaudable, naught 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 swerv'd
With many an inroad gor'd; deformed rout
Enter'd, and foul disorder; all the ground
With shiver'd armour strown, and on a heap
Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd,
And fiery foaming steeds; what stood, recoil'd
O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanic host
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpris'd,
Then first with fear surpris'd, and sense of pain,
Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
By sin of disobedience, till that hour
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
Far otherwise th' inviolable saints,
In cubic phalanx firm, advanc'd 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 mov'd.
Now night her course began, and over heav'n
Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,
And silence on the odious din of war:
Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,
Victor and vanquish'd. On the foughten field
Michael and his Angels prevalent
Incamping, plac'd in guard their watches round,
Cherubic waving fires; on th' other part,
Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,
Far in the dark dislodg'd; and void of rest,
His potentates to council call'd by night;
And in the midst thus undismay'd began.
O now in danger try'd, now known in arms
Not to be over-pow'r'd, companions dear,
Found worthy not of liberty alone
Too mean pretence, but what we more effect,
Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight,
(And if one day, why not eternal days?)
What heav'n's Lord had powerfullest to send
Against us from about his throne, and judg'd
Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
Of future we may deem him, though till now
Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm'd,
Some disadvantage we endur'd, and pain,
Till now not known, but known as soon contemn'd;
Since now we find this our empyreal form
Incapable of mortal injury,
Imperishable, and though pierc'd with 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 preserv

Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,
Due search and consultation will disclose.
He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood
Nisroch, of principalities the prime;
As one he stood escap'd from cruel fight,
Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havock hewn,
And cloudy in aspect thus answ'ring 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 unpain'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 compos'd Satan reply'd.
Not uninvented that, which thou aright
Believ'st so main to our success, I bring.
Which of us who beholds the bright surface
Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,
This continent of spacious heav'n, adorn'd,
With plant, fruit, flow'r, 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 spirit'ous and fiery spume, till touch'd
With heav'n's ray, and temper'd, they shoot forth
So beauteous, op'ning to the ambient light?
These in the dark nativity the deep
Shall yield us pregnant with infernal flame;

Which into hollow engines, long and round,
Thick-ramm'd, at th' other bore with touch of fire
Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
From far, with thund'ring noise, among our foes
Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands
Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarm'd
The Thund'rer of his only dreaded bolt.
Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn,
Effect shall end our wish. Mean while 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 reviv'd.
Th' invention all admir'd, and each, how he
To be th' inventor miss'd; so easy' it seem'd
Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought
Impossible. Yet haply if thy race
In future days, if malice should abound,
Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd
With devilish machinations, might devise
Like instruments 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
Th' original of nature in their crude
Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam
They found, they mingled, and with subtle art,
Concocted and adusted they reduc'd
To blackest grain, and into store convey'd;
Part hidden veins digg'd up (nor hath this earth
Intrails 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 unespy'd.

Now when fair morn orient in heav'n 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'd round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
Each quarter, to descry the distant foe,
Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for flight,
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 fly'ing, and in mid air aloud thus cry'd.

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 orbid shield,
Borne ev'n or high; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture ought, no drizzling show'r,
But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire.

So warn'd he them, aware themselves, and soon
In order, quit of all impediment;
Instant without disturb they took alarm
And onward move embattled: when behold
Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
Training his devilish enginery, impal'd
On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood
A-while; 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,

Heav'n 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 retir'd:
Which to our eyes diſcover'd, new and ſtrange,
A triple mounted row of pillars laid
On wheels (for like to pillars moſt they ſeem'd,
Or hollow'd bodies made of oak or fir,
With branches lopt, in wood or mountain fell'd)
Braſs, iron, ſtony mold, had not their mouths
With hideous orifice gap'd on us wide,
Portending hollow truce: at each behind
A Seraph ſtood, and in his hand a reed
Stood waving tipt with fire; while we ſuſpenſe
Collected ſtood within our thoughts amus'd
Not long; for ſudden all at once their reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent apply'd
With niceſt touch. Immediate in a flame
But ſoon obſcur'd with ſmoke, all heav'n appear'd,
From thoſe deep-throated engines belch'd, whoſe roar
Imbowell'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
Levell'd, with ſuch impetuous fury ſmote,
That whom they hit, none on their feet might ſtand,
Though ſtanding elſe as rocks, but down they fell
By thouſands. Angel on Arch-angel roll'd;
The ſooner for their arms; unarm'd they might
Have eaſily, as ſp'rits evaded ſwift
By quick contraction or remove; but now
Foul diſſipation follow'd, and forc'd rout;
Nor ſerv'd it to relax their ſerried files.
What ſhould they do? if on they ruſh'd, repulſe
Repeated, and indecent overthrow
Doubled, would render them yet more deſpis'd,
And to their foes a laughter; for in view

Stood rank'd of Seraphim another row,
In posture to displode their second tire
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, strait they chang'd 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 urg'd home,
Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
And stumbled many: who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand;
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 presum'd
So easy', and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
A while in trouble: but they stood not long;
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit t' oppose.
Forthwith (behold the excellence, the pow'r,
Which God hath in his mighty Angels plac'd!)
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
(For Earth hath this variety from Heav'n
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale)
Light as the light'ning glimpse they ran, they flew;
From their foundations loos'ning to and fro,

They pluck'd the ſeated hills, with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the ſhaggy tops
Up-lifting bore them in their hands. Amaze,
Be ſure, and terror, ſeiz'd the rebel hoſt,
When coming towards them ſo dread they ſaw
The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd;
Till on thoſe curſed engines triple-row
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 bruis'd
Into their ſubſtance pent, which wrought them pain
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,
Long ſtruggling underneath, ere they could wind
Out of ſuch pris'on, though ſp'rits of pureſt light,
Pureſt at firſt, now groſs by ſinning grown.
The reſt, in imitation, to like arms
Betook them, and the neighb'ring hills uptore:
So hills amid the air encounter'd hills
Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire,
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 heav'n
Had gone to wrack, with ruin overſpread,
Had not th' almighty Father, where he ſits
Shrin'd in his ſanctuary of heav'n ſecure,
Conſulting on the ſum of things, foreſeen
This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd:
That his great purpoſe he might ſo fulfil,
To honour his anointed Son aveng'd
Upon his enemies, and to declare
All pow'r on him transferr'd: whence to his Son,
Th' aſſeſſor of his throne, he thus began.
Effulgence of my glory, Son belov'd,
Son in whoſe face inviſible is held
Viſibly, what by deity I am,
And in whoſe hand what by decree I do,

Second Omnipotence, two days are past,
Two days, as we compute the days of heav'n,
Since Michael and his pow'rs 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 heav'n, and dang'rous to the main.
Two days are therefore past, 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 transfus'd, that all may know
In heav'n and hell thy pow'r 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 thy chariot, guide the rapid wheels
That shake heav'n'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 heav'n'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 receiv'd;
And thus the Filial Godhead answ'ring spake.

O Father, O Supreme of heav'nly 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 pleas'd, declar'ſt thy will
Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliſs.
Sceptre and pow'r, 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 lov'ſt:
But whom thou hat'ſt, 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 heav'n of theſe rebell'd,
To their prepar'd ill manſion driven down,
To chains of darkneſs, and th' undying worm,
That from thy juſt obedience could revolt,
Whom to obey is happineſs entire.
Then ſhall thy ſaints unmix'd, and from th' impure
Far ſeparate, circling thy holy mount,
Unfeigned Halleluiahs 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, [ſound
Dawning through heav'n. Forth ruſh'd with whirlwind
The chariot of Paternal Deity,
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 ſaphir throne, inlaid with pure
Amber, and colours of the ſhow'ry arch,
He in celeſtial panoply arm'd
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
Aſcended; at his right hand victory

Sat eagle-wing'd; beſide him hung his bow,
And quiver with three-bolted thunder ſtor'd;
And from about him fierce effuſion roll'd
Of ſmoke, and bick'ring 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 cryſtaline ſky, in ſaphir thron'd,
Illuſtrious far and wide; but by his own
First ſeen: them unexpected joy ſurpriz'd,
When the great enſign of Meſſiah blaz'd
Aloft by Angels borne, his ſign in heav'n;
Under whoſe conduct Michael ſoon reduc'd
His army, circumfus'd on either wing,
Under their head imbodied all in one.
Before him pow'r divine his way prepar'd;
At his command th' uprooted hills retir'd
Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went
Obſequious; Heav'n his wonted face renew'd,
And with freſh flow'rets hill and valley ſmil'd.
This ſaw his hapleſs foes, but ſtood obdur'd,
And to rebellious fight rallied their powers,
Inſenſate, hope conceiving from deſpair.
In heav'nly ſp'rits could ſuch perverſeneſs dwell,
But to convince the proud what ſigns avail,
Or wonders move th' 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 height,
Stood reimbattled fierce, by force or fraud
Weening to proſper, and at length prevail
Againſt God and Meſſiah, or to fall
In univerſal ruin loſt; now
To final battle drew, diſdaining 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 receiv'd, 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 despis'd;
Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
Because the Father, t' whom in heav'n supreme
Kingdom, and pow'r, 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 chang'd
His count'nance 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 stedfast empyrean shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arriv'd, in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their soul infix'd
Plagues: they astonish'd all resistance lost,
All courage; down their idle weapons dropt:
O'er shields, and helms, 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-visag'd Four
Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
One spirit in them rul'd, and every eye
Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
Among the accurs'd, that wither'd all their strength,
And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd,
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid volley; for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of heaven;
The overthrown he rais'd, and as a herd
Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd,
Drove them before him thunder-struck, pursu'd
With terrors and with furies to the bounds
And crystal wall of heav'n; which op'ning wide,
Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclos'd
Into the wasteful deep: the monstrous sight
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urg'd them behind: headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of heav'n; eternal wrath
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.
Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, hell saw
Heav'n running from Heav'n, and would have fled
Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast too deep
Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound.
Nine days they fell: confound Chaos roar'd,
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
Through his anarchy, so huge a rout
Incumber'd him with ruin: Hell at last
Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd;
Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
Disburden'd heav'n rejoic'd, 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 advane'd: and as they went,
Shaded with branching palm, each order bright,
Sung triumph, and him ſung victorious King,
Son, Heir, and Lord, to whom dominion giv'n,
Worthieſt to reign: he celebrated rode
Triumphant through mid heav'n, into the courts
And temple of his mighty Father thron'd
On high; who into glory him receiv'd,
Where now he ſits at the right hand of bliſs.

Thus meaſuring things in heav'n by things on earth,
At thy requeſt, and that thou may'ſt beware
By what is paſt, to thee I have reveal'd
What might have elſe to human race been hid;
The diſcord which befel, and war in heav'n
Among th' angelic pow'rs, 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
Bereav'd of happineſs thou may'ſt 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 t' have heard
By terrible example the reward
Of diſobedience; firm they might have ſtood,
Yet fell; remember, and fear to tranſgreſs.

THE END OF THE SIXTH BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VII.

The ARGUMENT.

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

DESCEND from Heav'n, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing.
The meaning, not the name, I call: for thou
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but heav'nly born,

Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of th' almighty Father, pleas'd
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee,
Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns I have presum'd,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy temp'ring; with like safety guided down,
Return me to my native element:
Lest from this flying unrein'd (as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime),
Dismounted, on th' Aleian field I fall,
Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn.
Half yet remains unsung, but narrow bound
Within the visible diurnal sphere;
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing with moral voice, unchang'd
To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days,
On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues;
In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east: still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:
For thou art heav'nly, she an empty dream.
Say, goddess, what ensued when Raphael,
The affable Arch-angel, had forwarn'd
Adam by dire example to beware
Apostasy, by what befel in Heav'n
To those apostates, lest the like befal
In Paradise to Adam, or his race,
Charg'd not to touch the interdicted tree,
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,

So eaſily obey'd, amid the choice
Of all taſtes elſe to pleaſe their appetite,
Though wand'ring. He with his conſorted Eve
The ſtory heard attentive, and was fill'd
With admiration and deep muſe to hear
Of things ſo high and ſtrange, things to their thought
So unimaginable as hate in Heav'n,
And war ſo near the peace of God in bliſs,
With ſuch confuſion: but the evil ſoon
Driv'n back rebounded as a flood on thoſe
From whom it ſpring, impoſſible to mix
With bleſſedneſs. Whence Adam ſoon repeal'd
The doubts that in his heart aroſe: and now
Led on, yet ſinleſs, with deſire to know
What nearer might concern him, how this world
Of Heav'n and Earth conſpicuous firſt began,
When, and whereof created, for what cauſe,
What within Eden, or without was done
Before his memory, as one whoſe drouth
Yet ſcarce allay'd ſtill eyes the current ſtream,
Whoſe liquid murmur heard, new thirſt excites,
Proceeded thus to aſk his heav'nly gueſt.
Great things, and full of wonder in our ears,
Far diff'ring from this world thou haſt reveal'd,
Divine interpreter, by favour ſent
Down from the empyrean to forwarn
Us timely of what might elſe have been our loſs,
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach:
For which to th' infinitely good we owe
Immortal thanks, and his admoniſhment
Receive with ſolemn purpoſe to obſerve
Immutably his ſov'reign will, the end
Of what we are. But ſince thou haſt vouchſaf'd
Gently for our inſtruction to impart
Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd
Our knowing, as to higheſt wiſdom ſeem'd,
Deign to deſcend now lower, and relate
What may no leſs perhaps avail us known,
How firſt began this Heav'n, which we behold
Diſtant ſo high, with moving fires adorn'd

Innumerable; and this which yields or fills
All ſpace, the ambient air wide interfus'd
Embracing round this florid earth; what cauſe
Mov'd the Creator, in his holy reſt
Through all eternity, ſo late to build
In Chaos; and the work begun, how ſoon
Abſolv'd; if unforbid thou may'ſt unfold
What we not to explore the ſecrets aſk
Of his eternal empire, but the more
To magnify his works, the more we know.
And the great light of day yet wants to run
Much of his race though ſteep; ſuſpence in Heav'n
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears,
And longer will delay to hear thee tell
His generation, and the riſing birth
Of nature from the unapparent deep:
Or if the ſtar of evening and the moon
Haſte to thy audience, night with her will bring
Silence, and ſleep liſt'ning to thee will watch;
Or we can bid his abſence, till thy ſong
End, and diſmiſs thee ere the morning ſhine.
Thus Adam his illuſtrious gueſt beſought;
And thus the Godlike Angel anſwer'd mild.
This alſo thy requeſt with caution aſk'd
Obtain: though to recount almighty works
What words or tongue of Seraph can ſuffice,
Or heart of man ſuffice to comprehend?
Yet what thou canſt attain, which beſt may ſerve
To glorify the Maker, and infer
Thee alſo happier, ſhall not be with-held
Thy hearing; ſuch commiſſion from above
I have receiv'd, to anſwer thy deſire
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abſtain
To aſk, nor let thine own inventions hope
Things not reveal'd, which th' inviſible King,
Only omniſcient, hath ſuppreſs'd in night,
To none communicate in Earth or Heav'n:
Enough is left beſides to ſearch and know.
But knowledge is as food, and needs no leſs
Her temp'rance over appetite, to know

In measure what the mind may well contain;
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
Wisdom to folly', as nourishment to wind.
Know then, that after Lucifer from Heav'n
(So call him, brighter once amidst the host
Of Angels, than that star the stars among)
Fell with his flaming legions through the deep
Into his place, and the great Son return'd
Victorious with his saints, th' Omnipotent
Eternal Father from his throne beheld
Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake.
At last our envious foe hath fail'd, who thought
All like himself rebellious, by whose aid
This inaccessible high strength, the seat
Of Deity supreme, us dispossess'd,
He trusted to have seiz'd, and into fraud
Drew many, whom their place knows here no more:
Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,
Their station, Heav'n yet populous retains
Number sufficient to possess her realms
Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
With ministeries due and solemn rites;
But lest his heart exalt him in the harm
Already done, to have dispeopled heav'n,
My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
That detriment, if such it be, to lose
Self-lost; and in a moment will create
Another world, out of one man a race
Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
Not here; till by degrees of merit rais'd,
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither, under long obedience try'd;
And earth be chang'd to Heav'n, and Heav'n to Earth
One kingdom, joy and union without end.
Mean while inhabit lax, ye Pow'rs of Heav'n;
And thou my word, begotten Son, by thee
This I perform: speak thou, and be it done;
My overshadowing Sp'rit and might with thee
I send along; ride forth, and bid the deep
Within appointed bounds be Heav'n and Earth,

Boundleſs the deep, becauſe I am who fill
In infinitude, nor vacuous the ſpace.
Though I uncircumſcrib'd myſelf retire,
And put not forth my goodneſs, which is free
To act or not, neceſſity and chance
Approach not me, and what I will is fate.
So ſpake th' Almighty, and to what he ſpake
His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect.
Immediate are the acts of God, more ſwift
Than time or motion; but to human ears
Cannot without proceſs of ſpeech be told,
So told as earthly motion can receive.
Great triumph and rejoicing was in heav'n,
When ſuch was heard declar'd th' Almighty's will:
Glory they ſung to the moſt High, good will
To future men, and in their dwelling peace;
Glory to him, whoſe juſt avenging ire
Had driv'n out th' ungodly from his ſight,
And th' habitations of the juſt; to him
Glory and praiſe, whoſe wiſdom had ordain'd
Good out of evil to create, inſtead
Of ſp'rits malign a better race to bring
Into the vacant room, and thence diffuſe
His good to worlds and ages infinite.
So ſang the Hierarchies. Mean while the Son
On his great expedition now appear'd,
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
Of majeſty divine; ſapience and love
Immenſe, and all his Father in him ſhone.
About his chariot numberleſs were pour'd
Cherub and Seraph, Potentates and Thrones,
And Virtues, wing'd ſp'rits, and Chariots wing'd
From the armoury of God; where ſtand of old
Myriads between two brazen mountains lodg'd
Againſt a ſolemn day, harneſs'd at hand,
Celeſtial equipage; and now came forth
Spontaneous, for within them ſpirit liv'd,
Attendant on their Lord: heav'n open'd wide
Her ever-during gates, harmonious ſound
On golden hinges moving, to let forth

The King of Glory in his pow'rful Word
And Spirit coming to create new worlds.
On heav'nly ground they ſtood, and from the ſhore
They view'd the vaſt immeaſurable abyſs,
Outrageous as a ſea, dark, waſteful, wild,
Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds,
And furging-waves, as mountains, to aſſault
Heav'n's height, and with the centre mix the pole.

Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep, peace,
Said then th' omnific Word, your diſcord end:
Nor ſtay'd; but on the wings of Cherubim
Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
Far into Chaos, and the world unborn;
For Chaos heard his voice: him all his train
Follow'd in bright proceſſion, to behold
Creation and the wonders of his might.
Then ſtay'd the fervid wheels, and in his hand
He took the golden compaſſes, prepar'd
In God's eternal ſtore, to circumſcribe
This univerſe, and all created things;
One foot he center'd, and the other turn'd
Round through the vaſt profundity obſcure,
And ſaid, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This be thy juſt circumference, O world.

Thus God the Heav'n created, thus the Earth
Matter unform'd and void; darkneſs profound
Cover'd th' abyſs; but on the wat'ry calm
His brooding wings the ſp'rit of God outſpread,
And vital virtue infus'd, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid maſs; but downward purg'd
The black, tartareous, cold, infernal dregs,
Adverſe to life: then founded, then conglob'd
Like things to like, the reſt to ſeveral place
Diſparted, and between ſpun out the air,
And Earth ſelf-balanc'd on her centre hung.

Let there be light, ſaid God; and forthwith light
Ethereal, firſt of things, quinteſſence pure,
Sprung from the deep, and from her native eaſt
To journey through the airy gloom began,
Spher'd in a radiant cloud; for yet the ſun

Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good;
And light from darkness by the hemisphere
Divided: light the day, and darkness night
He nam'd. Thus was the first day ev'n and morn:
Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
By the celestial quires, when orient light
Exhaling first from darkness they beheld;
Birth-day of heav'n and earth; with joy and shout,
The hollow universal orb they fill'd,
And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd
God and his works; Creator him they sung,
Both when first ev'ning was, and when first morn.
Again, God said, Let there be firmament
Amid the waters, and let it divide
The waters from the waters: and God made
The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
Transparent, elemental air, diffus'd
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round: partition firm and sure,
The waters underneath from those above
Dividing; for as earth, so he the world
Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide
Crystalline ocean, and the loud misrule
Of Chaos far remov'd, lest fierce extremes
Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:
And heav'n he nam'd the firmament: so ev'n
And morning chorus sung the second day.
The earth was form'd, but in the womb as yet
Of waters, embryon immature involv'd,
Appear'd not: over all the face of earth
Main ocean flow'd; not idle, but with warm
Prolific humour soft'ning all her globe,
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Satiate with genial moisture; when God said,
Be gather'd now ye waters under Heav'n
Into one place, and let dry land appear.
Immediately the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky:

So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom, broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters: thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry;
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste; such flight the great command impress'd
On the swift floods: as armies at the call
Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
Troop to their standard, so the wat'ry throng,
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
Soft ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill,
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With serpent-error wand'ring found their way,
And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks, where rivers now
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
The dry land, earth, and the great receptacle
Of congregated waters he call'd seas;
And saw that it was good; and said, Let th' earth
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth.
He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
Her universal face with pleasant green;
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flow'r'd
Opening their various colours, and made gay
Her bosom swelling sweet: and these scarce blown,
Forth flourish'd thick th' clust'ring vine, forth crept
The smelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
Imbattled in her field; and th' humble shrub,
And bush with frizzled hair implicit: last
Rose as in dance the stately trees, and spread
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd,
The blossoms: with high woods the hills were crown'd
With tufts the valleys, and each fountain side,

With borders 'long the rivers: that earth now
Seem'd like to heav'n, a seat where gods might dwell,
Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
Her sacred shades; though God had yet not rain'd
Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
None was; but from the earth a dewy mist
Went up and water'd all the ground and each
Plant of the field, which, ere it was on th' earth
God made, and every herb, before it grew
On the green stem; God saw that it was good:
So ev'n and morn recorded the third day.
Again th' Almighty spake, Let there be lights
High in th' expanse of Heaven, to divide
The day from night; and let them be for signs,
For seasons, and for days, and circling years;
And let them be for lights as I ordain
Their office in the firmament of Heav'n,
To give light on the Earth; and it was so.
And God made two great lights, great for their use
To man, the greater to have rule by day,
The less by night altern; and made the stars,
And set them in the firmament of Heav'n,
T' illuminate the Earth; and rule the day
In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
Surveying his great work, that it was good:
For of celestial bodies first the sun
A mighty sphere he fram'd, unlightsome first,
Though of ethereal mould: then form'd the moon
Globose, and every magnitude of stars,
And sow'd with stars the Heav'n thick as a field:
Of light by far the greater part he took,
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd
In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light.
Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,
And hence the morning-planet gilds her horn;
By tincture or reflexion they augment

Their ſmall peculiar, though from human ſight
So far remote, with diminution ſeen.
Firſt in the eaſt his glorious lamp was ſeen,
Regent of day, and all th' horizon round
Inveſted with bright rays, jocund to run
His longitude through Heav'n's high road; the gray
Dawn, and the Pleiades before him dane'd,
Shedding ſweet influence; leſs bright the moon,
But oppoſite in levell'd weſt was ſet
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
From him; for other light ſhe needed none
In that aſpect; and ſtill that diſtance keeps
Till night, then in the eaſt her turn ſhe ſhines,
Revolv'd on Heav'n's great axle, and her reign
With thouſand leſſer lights dividual holds,
With thouſand thouſand ſtars, that then appear'd
Spangling the hemiſphere: then firſt adorn'd
With their bright luminaries, that ſet and roſe,
Glad ev'ning and glad morn crown'd the fourth day.
And God ſaid, Let the waters generate
Reptile with ſpawn abundant, living ſoul;
And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
Diſplay'd on th' open firmament of heav'n.
And God created the great whales, and each
Soul living, each crept, which plenteouſly
The waters generated by their kinds,
And every bird of wing after his kind,
And ſaw that it was good, and bleſs'd them, ſaying,
Be fruitful, multiply, and in the ſeas,
And lakes, and running ſtreams, the waters fill;
And let the fowl be multiply'd on th' earth.
Forthwith the ſounds and ſeas, each creek and bay,
With fry innumerable ſwarm, and ſhoals
Of fiſh, that with their fins and ſhining ſcales
Glide under the green wave, in ſculls that oft
Bank the mid ſea: part ſingle or with mate
Graze the ſea-weed their paſture, and through groves
Of coral ſtray; or ſporting with quick glance,
Show to the ſun their wav'd coats dropt with gold;
Or in their pearly ſhells at eaſe, attend

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

With fish repleniſh'd, and the air with fowl,
Ev'ning and morn ſolemniz'd the fifth day.
The ſixth, and of creation laſt, aroſe
With ev'ning harps and matin; when God ſaid,
Let th' earth bring forth ſoul living in her kind,
Cattle, and creeping things, and beaſt of th' earth,
Each in their kind. The earth obey'd, and ſtraight
Op'ning her fertile womb, teem'd at a birth
Innumerous living creatures, perfect forms,
Limb'd and full grown; out of the ground up roſe,
As from his lair, the wild beaſt where he wons
In foreſt wild, in thicket, brake, or den;
Among the trees in pairs they roſe, they walk'd;
The cattle in the fields and meadows green:
Thoſe rare and ſolitary, theſe in flocks
Paſturing at once, and in broad herds unſprung.
The graſſy clods now calv'd, now half appear'd
The tawny lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts, then ſprings as broke from bonds
And rampant ſhakes his brinded mane: the ounce,
The libbard, and the tyger, as the mole
Riſing, the crumbl'd earth above them threw
In hillocks: the ſwift ſtag from under ground
Bore up his branching head: ſcarce from his mould
Behemoth, biggeſt born of earth, upheav'd
His vaſtneſs: fleec'd the flocks and bleating roſe,
As plants: ambiguous between ſea and land
The river-horſe and ſcaly crocodile.
At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,
Inſect or worm: thoſe wav'd their limber fans
For wings and ſmalleſt lineaments exact
In all the liveries deck'd of ſummer's pride,
With ſpots of gold and purple', azure and green:
Theſe as a line their long dimenſion drew,
Streaking the ground with ſinuous trace; not all
Minims of nature; ſome of ſerpent-kind,
Wondrous in length and corpulence, involv'd
Their ſnaky folds, and added wings. Firſt crept
The parſimonious emmet, provident
Of future, in ſmall room large heart inclos'd,

Pattern of just equality perhaps
Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes
Of commonal'ty: swarming next appear'd
The female bee, that feeds her husband drone
Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
With honey stor'd: the rest are numberless
And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names
Needless to thee repeated; nor unknown
The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field,
Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.
Now heav'n in all her glory shone, and roll'd
Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand
First wheel'd their course; earth in her rich attire
Consummate lovely smil'd; air, water, earth,
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walk'd
Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remain'd:
There wanted yet the master-work, the end
Of all yet done; a creature, who not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endu'd
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature and upright with front serene
Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence
Magnanimous to correspond with heav'n,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends, thither with heart, and voice, and eyes
Directed in devotion, to adore
And worship God supreme, who made him chief
Of all his works: therefore th' Omnipotent
Eternal Father (for where is not he
Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake.
Let us make now man in our image, man
In our similitude, and let them rule
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.
This said, he form'd thee, Adam, thee, O Man,
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath'd
The breath of life; in his own image he

Created thee, in the image of God
Expreſs, and thou becam'ſt a living ſoul.
Male he created thee, but thy conſort
Female for race; then bleſs'd mankind, and ſaid,
Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth,
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
Over fiſh of the ſea, and fowl of the air,
And every living thing that moves on th' earth.
Where-ever thus created, for no place
Is yet diſtinct by name, thence, as thou know'ſt,
He brought thee into this delicious grove,
This garden, planted with the trees of God,
Delectable both to behold and taſte;
And freely all their pleaſant fruit for food
Gave thee; all ſorts are here that all th' earth yields,
Variety without end; but of the tree,
Which taſted works knowledge of good and evil,
Thou may'ſt not; in the day thou eat'ſt, thou dy'ſt;
Death is the penalty impos'd; beware,
And govern well thy appetite, leſt Sin
Surpriſe thee, and her black attendant Death.
Here finiſh'd he, and all that he had made
View'd, and behold all was entirely good;
So ev'n and morn accompliſh'd the ſixth day;
Yet not till the Creator from his work
Deſiſting, though unwearied, up return'd,
Up to the Heav'n of Heav'ns, his high abode,
Thence to behold this new created world,
Th' addition of his empire, how it ſhow'd
In proſpect from his throne, how good, how fair,
Anſwering his great idea. Up he rode,
Follow'd with acclamation, and the ſound
Symphonious of ten thouſand harps that tun'd
Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air
Reſounded, (thou remember'ſt, for thou heard'ſt),
The heav'ns and all the conſtellations rung,
The planets in their ſtation liſt'ning ſtood,
While the bright pomp aſcended jubilant.
Open, ye everlaſting gates, they ſung,
Open, ye heav'ns, your living doors; let in

The great Creator from his work return'd
Magnificent, his six days work, a world;
Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
To visit oft the dwellings of just men,
Delighted, and with frequent intercourse
Thither will send his winged messengers
On errands of supernal grace. So sung
The glorious train ascending. He through heav'n,
That open'd wide her blazing portals, led
To God's eternal house direct the way;
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way;
Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest
Powder'd with stars. And now on earth the seventh
Ev'ning arose in Eden; for the sun
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
Forerunning night: when at the holy mount
Of Heav'n's high-seated top, th' imperial throne
Of Godhead, fix'd for ever firm and sure,
The Filial Pow'r arriv'd, and sat him down
With his great Father; for he also went
Invisible, yet stay'd (such privilege
Hath Omnipresence), and the work ordain'd,
Author and end of all things; and from work
Now resting, bless'd and hallow'd the sev'nth day,
As resting on that day from all his work:
But not in silence holy kept; the harp
Had work, and rested not; the solemn pipe
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire
Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice
Choral or unison; of incense clouds,
Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount.
Creation and the six days acts they sung,
Great are thy works, Jehovah, infinite
Thy pow'r; what thought can measure thee, or tongue
Relate thee? greater now in thy return
Than from the giant-angels: thee that day
Thy thunders magnify'd; but to create

Is greater than created to deſtroy.
Who can impair thee, mighty King, or bound
Thy empire? Eaſily the proud attempt
Of ſp'rits apoſtate, and their counſels vain,
Thou haſt repell'd, while impiouſly they thought
Thee to diminiſh, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worſhippers. Who ſeeks
To leſſen thee, againſt his purpoſe ſerves
To manifeſt the more thy might: his evil
Thou uſeſt, and from thence creat'ſt, more good.
Witneſs this new-made world, another heav'n,
From heaven-gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline, the glaſſy ſea;
Of amplitude almoſt immenſe, with ſtars
Numerous, and every ſtar perhaps a world
Of deſtin'd habitation; but thou know'ſt
Their ſeaſons: among theſe the ſeat of men,
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfus'd,
Their preſent dwelling-place. Thrice happy men,
And ſons of men, whom God hath thus advanc'd,
Created in his image, there to dwell,
And worſhip him; and in reward to rule
Over his works, on earth, in ſea, or air;
And multiply a race of worſhippers,
Holy and juſt: thrice happy, if they know
Their happineſs, and perſevere upright.
So ſung they, and the empyrean rung,
With Halleluiahs: Thus was ſabbath kept.
And thy requeſt think now fulfill'd, that aſk'd
How firſt this world and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done
From the beginning, that poſterity,
Inform'd by thee, might know; if elſe thou ſeek'ſt
Ought, not ſurpaſſing human meaſure, ſay.

The End of the Seventh Book.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

THE Angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he a while
Thought him ſtill ſpeaking, ſtill ſtood fix'd to hear:
Then, as new wak'd, thus gratefully reply'd.
What thanks ſufficient, or what recompenſe
Equal have I to render thee, divine
Hiſtorian, who thus largely haſt allay'd

The thirſt I had of knowledge, and vouchſaf'd
This friendly converſation to relate
Things elſe by me unſearchable, now heard
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator? Something yet of doubt remains,
Which only thy ſolution can reſolve.
When I behold this goodly frame, this world,
Of Heav'n and Earth conſiſting, and compute
Their magnitudes, this earth a ſpot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compar'd,
And all her number'd ſtars, that ſeem to roll
Spaces incomprehenſible, (for ſuch
Their diſtance argues, and their ſwift return
Diurnal) merely to officiate light
Round this opacous earth, this punctual ſpot,
One day and night, in all their vaſt ſurvey
Uſeleſs beſides; reaſoning I oft admire,
How nature wiſe and frugal could commit
Such diſproportions, with ſuperfluous hand
So many noble bodies to create,
Greater ſo manifold, to this one uſe,
For ought appears, and on their orbs impoſe
Such reſtleſs revolution day by day
Repeated, while the ſedentary earth,
That better might with far leſs compaſs move,
Serv'd by more noble than herſelf, attains
Her end without leaſt motion, and receives,
As tribute, ſuch a ſumleſs journey brought
Of incorporeal ſpeed, her warmth and light;
Speed, to deſcribe whoſe ſwiftneſs number fails.
So ſpake our ſire, and by his count'nance ſeem'd
Ent'ring on ſtudious thoughts abſtruſe; which Eve
Perceiving, where ſhe ſat retir'd in ſight,
With lowlineſs majeſtic from her ſeat,
And grace that won who ſaw to wiſh her ſtay,
Roſe, and went forth among her fruits and flow'rs,
To viſit how they proſper'd, bud and bloom,
Her nurſery; they at her coming ſprung,
And touch'd by her fair tendance gladlier grew.

Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her ear
Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv'd,
Adam relating, she sole auditress;
Her husband the relator she preferr'd
Before the Angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
With conjugal caresses; from his lip
Not words alone pleas'd her. O when meet now
Such pairs, in love and mutual honour join'd?
With goddess-like demeanour forth she went;
Not unattended; for on her, as a queen,
A pomp of winning graces waited still,
And from about her shot darts of desire
Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.
And Raphael now to Adam's doubt propos'd
Benevolent and facile thus reply'd.

To ask or search I blame thee not; for Heav'n
Is as the book of God before thee set,
Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years.
This to attain, whether Heav'n move, or Earth,
Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest
From Man or Angel the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
Rather admire; or if they list to try
Conjecture, he his fabric of the heav'ns
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
Hereafter, when they come to model Heav'n,
And calculate the stars, how they will yield
The mighty frame, how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances, how gird the sphere
With centric and eccentric scribled o'er
Cycle and epycicle, orb in orb.
Already by thy reasoning this I guess,
Who art to lead thy offspring, and suppos'st
That bodies bright and greater should not serve

The leſs not bright, nor heav'n ſuch journeys run,
Earth ſitting ſtill, when ſhe alone receives
The benefit. Conſider firſt, that great
Or bright infers not excellence: the earth
Though in compariſon of heav'n, ſo ſmall,
Nor gliſt'ring, may of ſolid good contain
More plenty than the ſun that barren ſhines,
Whoſe virtue on itſelf works no effect,
But in the fruitful earth; there firſt receiv'd
His beams unactive elſe, their vigour find.
Yet not on earth are thoſe bright luminaries
Officious, but to thee, earth's habitant.
And for the Heav'n's wide circuit let it ſpeak
The Maker's high magnificence, who built
So ſpacious, and his line ſtretch'd out ſo far;
That Man may know he dwells not in his own;
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodg'd in a ſmall partition, and the reſt
Ordain'd for uſes to his Lord beſt known.
The ſwiftneſs of thoſe circles attribute,
Though numberleſs, to his omnipotence,
That to corporeal ſubſtances could add
Speed almoſt ſpiritual: me thou think'ſt not ſlow,
Who ſince the morning-hour ſet out from Heav'n,
Where God reſides, and ere mid-day arriv'd
In Eden; diſtance inexpreſſible
By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
Admitting motion in the heav'ns, to ſhow
Invalid that which thee to doubt it mov'd;
Not that I ſo affirm, though ſo it ſeem
To thee who haſt thy dwelling here on earth.
God, to remove his ways from human ſenſe,
Plac'd Heav'n from Earth ſo far, that earthly ſight,
If it preſume, might err in things too high,
And no advantage gain. What if the ſun
Be center to the world, and other ſtars
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds;
Their wand'ring courſe now high, now low, then hid,
Progreſſive, retrogade, or ſtanding ſtill,

In fix thou ſeeſt; and what if ſev'nth to theſe
The planet earth, ſo ſtedfaſt though ſhe ſeem,
Inſenſibly three different motions move?
Which elſe to ſeveral ſpheres thou muſt aſcribe,
Mov'd contrary with thwart obliquities;
Or ſave the ſun his labour, and that ſwift
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb ſuppos'd,
Inviſible elſe above all ſtars, the wheel
Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,
If earth induſtrious of herſelf fetch day
Travelling eaſt, and with her part averſe
From the ſun's beams meet night, her other part
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light
Sent from her through the wide tranſpicuous air,
To the terreſtrial moon be as a ſtar
Enlight'ning her by day, as ſhe by night
This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,
Fields and inhabitants: her ſpots thou ſeeſt
As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
Fruits in her ſoften'd ſoil, for ſome to eat
Allotted there; and other ſuns perhaps,
With their attendant moons, thou wilt deſcry
Communicating male and female light;
Which two great ſexes animate the world,
Stor'd in each orb perhaps with ſome that live.
For ſuch vaſt room in nature unpoſſeſs'd
By living ſoul, deſert and deſolate,
Only to ſhine, yet ſcarce to contribute
Each orb a glimpſe of light, convey'd ſo far
Down to this habitable, which returns
Light back to them, is obvious to diſpute.
But whether thus theſe things, or whether not;
Whether the ſun predominant in heav'n
Riſe on the earth, or earth riſe on the ſun;
He from the eaſt his flaming road begin,
Or ſhe from weſt her ſilent courſe advance
With inoffenſive peace, that ſpinning ſleeps
On her ſoft axle, while ſhe paces even,
And bears thee ſoft with the ſmooth air along;
Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;

Leave them to God above, him serve and fear;
Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
Where-ever plac'd, let him dispose: joy thou
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise,
And thy fair Eve; Heav'n is for thee too high
To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
Live, in what state, condition, or degree,
Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd,
Not of earth only, but of highest Heav'n.

To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, reply'd.
How fully hast thou satisfy'd me, pure
Intelligence of heav'n, Angel serene.
And freed from intricacies, taught to live,
The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts
To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
And not molest us, unless we ourselves
Seek them with wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain.
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end;
Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn,
That not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom: what is more, is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
And render us, in things that most concern,
Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.
Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
Useful, whence haply mention may arise
Of something not unseasonable to ask,
By sufferance and thy wonted favour deign'd.

Thee I have heard relating what was done
Ere my remembrance: now hear me relate
My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard;
And day is yet not spent; till then thou seest
How subtly to detain thee I devise,

Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply:
For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heav'n,
And sweeter thy discourse is to mine ear
Than fruits of palm-tree, pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labour at th' hour
Of sweet repast: they satiate, and soon fill,
Though pleasant; but thy words with grace divine
Imbu'd, bring to their sweetness no satiety.
To whom thus Raphael answer'd heav'nly meek,
Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men,
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd,
Inward and outward both, his image fair:
Speaking or mute, all comeliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms;
Nor less think we in Heav'n of thee on Earth
Than of our fellow servant, and inquire
Gladly into the ways of God with Man:
For God we see hath honour'd thee, and set
On man his equal love. Say therefore on;
For I that day was absent, as befel,
Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,
Far on excursion tow'rd the gates of hell;
Squar'd in full legion (such in command we had),
To see that none thence issu'd forth a spy,
Or enemy, while God was in his work;
Lest he incens'd at such eruption bold,
Destruction with creation might have mix'd.
Not that they durst without his leave attempt;
But as he sends upon his high behests
For state, as Sov'reign King; and to inure
Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut
The dismal gates, and barricado'd strong;
But long ere our approaching, heard within
Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
Glad we return'd up to the coasts of light
Ere Sabbath-ev'ning: so we had in charge.

But thy relation now; for I attend,
Pleas'd with thy words no less than thou with mine.
So spake the godlike Pow'r, and thus our fire,
For man to tell how human life began
Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
Desire with thee still longer to converse
Induc'd me. As new wak'd from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid
In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun
Soon dry'd, and on the reaking moisture fed.
Strait toward Heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
And gaz'd a while the ample sky, till rais'd,
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavouring, and upright
Stood on my feet: about me round I saw
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murm'ring streams; by these,
Creatures that liv'd, and mov'd, and walk'd, or flew,
Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd,
With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflow'd
Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb
Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
But who I was, or where, or from what cause
Knew not; to speak I try'd, and forthwith spake;
My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw. Thou sun, said I, fair light,
And thou enlighten'd earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?
Not of myself; by some great Maker then,
In goodness and in pow'r pre-eminent;
Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,
From whom I have that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know.
While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither
From where I first drew air, and first beheld
This happy light; when answer none return'd,
On a green shady brink, profuse of flowers,

Penſive I ſat me down: there gentle ſleep
Firſt found me, and with ſoft oppreſſion ſiez'd
My drouzed ſenſe, untroubled, though I thought
I then was paſſing to my former ſtate
Inſenſible, and forthwith to diſſolve:
When ſuddenly ſtood at my head a dream,
Whoſe inward apparition gently mov'd
My fancy to believe I yet had being,
And liv'd. One came, methought, of ſhape divine,
And ſaid, Thy manſion wants thee, Adam, riſe,
Firſt man, of men innumerable ordain'd
Firſt Father, call'd by thee, I come thy guide
To the garden of bliſs, thy ſeat prepar'd.
So ſaying, by the hand he took me rais'd,
And over fields and waters, as in air
Smooth ſliding without ſtep, laſt led me up
A woody mountain; whoſe high top was plain,
A circuit wide, inclos'd, with goodlieſt trees
Planted, with walks, and bow'rs, that what I ſaw
Of earth before ſcarce pleaſant ſeem'd. Each tree
Loaden with faireſt fruit, that hung to th' eye
Tempting, ſtirr'd in me ſudden appetite
To pluck and eat; whereat I wak'd, and found
Before mine eyes all real, as the dream
Had lively ſhadow'd. Here had new begun
My wand'ring, had not he who was my guide
Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,
Preſence divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
In adoration at his feet I fell
Submiſs: he rear'd me', and whom thou ſought'ſt I am,
Said, mildly, Author of all this thou ſeeſt
Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
This Paradiſe I give thee, count it thine
To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat:
Of every tree that in the garden grows
Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:
But of the tree whoſe operation brings
Knowledge of good and ill, which I have ſet
The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,
Amid the garden by the tree of life,

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

O by what name, for thou above all these,
Above mankind, or ought than mankind higher,
Surpassest far by naming, how may I
Adore thee, Author of this universe,
And all this good to man? for whose well-being
So amply, and with hands so liberal,
Thou hast provided all things: but with me
I see not who partakes. In solitude
What happiness, who can enjoy alone,
Or all enjoying, what contentment find?

Thus I presumptuous; and the vision bright,
As with a smile more brighten'd, thus reply'd.
What call'st thou solitude? Is not the earth
With various living creatures, and the air,
Replenish'd, and all these at thy command
To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not
Their language and their ways? they also know,
And reason not contemptibly; with these
Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large.
So spake the universal Lord, and seem'd
So ord'ring. I, with leave of speech implor'd,
And humble deprecation, thus reply'd.
Let not my words offend thee, heavenly Power,
My Maker, be propitious while I speak.
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
And these inferior far beneath me set?
Among unequals what society
Can sort, what harmony or true delight?
Which must be mutual, in proportion due
Giv'n and receiv'd; but in disparity
The one intense, the other still remiss,
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike. Of fellowship I speak
Such as I seek, fit to participate
All rational delight, wherein the brute
Cannot be human consort: they rejoice
Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd;
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.
Whereto th' Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd.
A nice and subtle happiness I see
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice
Of thy associates, Adam, and wilt taste
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
Seem I to thee sufficiently possess'd
Of happiness, or not? who am alone
From all eternity; for none I know

Second to me, or like: equal much less.
How have I then with whom to hold converse,
Save with the creatures which I made, and those
To me inferior, infinite descents
Beneath what other creatures are to thee?
He ceas'd; I lowly answer'd. To attain
The heighth and depth of thy eternal ways
All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things:
Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee
Is no deficience found: not so is man,
But in degree, the cause of his desire
By conversation with his like to help,
Or solace his defects. No need that thou
Shouldst propagate, already infinite,
And through all numbers absolute, though one;
But man by number is to manifest
His single imperfection, and beget
Like of his like, his image multiply'd,
In unity defective, which requires
Collateral love, and dearest amity.
Thou in thy secrecy although alone,
Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
Social communication; yet so pleas'd,
Canst raise thy creatures to what heighth thou wilt
Of union or communion, deify'd:
I by conversing cannot these erect
From prone, nor in their ways complacence find.
Thus I emboldn'd spake, and freedom us'd
Permissive, and acceptance found; which gain'd
This answer from the gracious voice divine.
Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd;
And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,
Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thyself,
Expressing well the spirit within thee free,
My image, not imparted to the brute;
Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee
Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike;
And be so minded still: I, ere thou spak'st,
Knew it not good for man to be alone;
And no such company as then thou saw'st

Intended thee, for trial only brought,
To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet:
What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd,
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.
He ended, or I heard no more; for now
My earthly by his heav'nly overpower'd,
Which it had long stood under, strain'd to the heighth
In that celestial colloquy sublime,
As with an object that excels the sense
Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
By nature as in aid; and clos'd mine eyes.
Mine eyes he clos'd, but open left the cell
Of fancy, my internal sight, by which
Abstract as in a trance methought I saw,
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood;
Who stooping open'd my left side, and took
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm
And life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh fill'd up, and heal'd:
The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands;
Under his forming hands a creature grew,
Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair,
That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd,
And in her looks, which from that time infus'd
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
And into all things from her air inspir'd
The spirit of love and amorous delight.
She disappear'd, and left me dark; I wak'd
To find her, or for ever to deplore
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:
When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
With what all earth or heaven could bestow
To make her amiable: on she came,
Led by her heav'nly Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice, nor uninform'd

Of nuptial ſanctity and marriage-rites:
Grace was in all her ſteps, heav'n in her eye,
In every geſture dignity and love.
I overjoy'd could not forbear aloud.
This turn hath made amends; thou haſt fulfill'd
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair, but faireſt this
Of all thy gifts, nor envieſt. I now ſee
Bone of my bone, fleſh of my fleſh, myſelf
Before me: woman is her name, of man
Extracted; for this cauſe he ſhall forego
Father and mother, and t' his wife adhere;
And they ſhall be one fleſh, one heart, one ſoul.
She heard me thus; and though divinely brought,
Yet innocence, and virgin modeſty,
Her virtue and the conſcience of her worth,
That would be woo'd, and not unſought be won,
Not obvious, not obtruſive, but retir'd,
The more deſirable, or to ſay all,
Nature herſelf, though pure of ſinful thought,
Wrought in her ſo, that ſeeing me, ſhe turn'd;
I follow'd her: ſhe what was honour knew,
And with obſequious majeſty approv'd
My pleaded reaſon. To the nuptial bow'r
I led her bluſhing like the morn: all heav'n,
And happy conſtellations, on that hour
Shed their ſelecteſt influence; the earth
Gave ſign of gratulation, and each hill;
Joyous the birds; freſh gales and gentle airs
Whiſper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung roſe, flung odours from the ſpicy ſhrub,
Diſporting, till the amorous bird of night
Sung 'ſpouſal, and bid haſte the ev'ning ſtar
On his hill-top, to light the bridal lamp.
Thus have I told thee all my ſtate, and brought
My ſtory to the ſum of earthly bliſs
Which I enjoy; and muſt confeſs to find
In all things elſe delight indeed, but ſuch
As us'd or not, works in the mind no change,
Nor vehement deſire; theſe delicacies

I mean of taſte, ſight, ſmell, herbs, fruits, and flow'rs,
Walks, and the melody of birds: but here
Far otherwiſe, tranſported I behold,
Tranſported touch; here paſſion firſt I felt;
Commotion ſtrange, in all enjoyments elſe
Superior and unmov'd, here only weak
Againſt the charm of beauty's pow'rful glance.
Or nature fail'd in me, and left ſome part
Not proof enough ſuch object to ſuſtain;
Or from my ſide ſubducting, took perhaps
More than enough; at leaſt on her beſtow'd
Too much of ornament, in outward ſhow
Elaborate, of inward leſs exact.
For well I underſtand in the prime end
Of nature her th' inferior; in the mind
And inward faculties, which moſt excel:
In outward alſo her reſembling leſs
His image who made both, and leſs expreſſing
The character of that dominion given
O'er other creatures: yet when I approach
Her lovelineſs, ſo abſolute ſhe ſeems,
And in herſelf complete, ſo well to know
Her own, that what ſhe wills to do or ſay,
Seems wiſeſt, virtuouſeſt, diſcreeteſt, beſt;
All higher knowledge in her preſence falls
Degraded, wiſdom in diſcourſe with her
Loſes diſcount'nanc'd, and like folly ſhows;
Authority and reaſon on her wait,
As one intended firſt, not after made
Occaſionally; and to conſummate all,
Greatneſs of mind, and nobleneſs their ſeat
Build in her loveliеſt, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic plac'd.
To whom the Angel with contracted brow.
Accuſe not nature, ſhe hath done her part;
Do thou but thine; and be not diffident
Of wiſdom; ſhe deſerts thee not, if thou
Diſmiſs not her, when moſt thou need'ſt her nigh,
By attributing overmuch to things
Leſs excellent, as thou thyſelf perceiv'ſt.

For what admir'ſt thou, what tranſports thee ſo?
An outſide; fair no doubt, and worthy well
Thy cheriſhing, thy honouring, and thy love,
Not thy ſubjection. Weigh with her thyſelf;
Then value; oft-times nothing profits more
Than ſelf-eſteem, grounded on juſt and right
Well-manag'd; of that ſkill the more thou know'ſt,
The more ſhe will acknowledge thee her head,
And to realities yield all her ſhows:
Made to adorn for thy delight the more,
So awful, that with honour thou may'ſt love
Thy mate, who ſees when thou art ſeen leaſt wiſe.
But if the ſenſe of touch whereby mankind
Is propagated ſeem ſuch dear delight
Beyond all other, think the ſame vouchſaf'd
To cattle and each beaſt; which would not be
To them made common, and divulg'd, if ought
Therein enjoy'd were worthy to ſubdue
The ſoul of man, or paſſion in him move.
What high'er in her ſociety thou find'ſt
Attractive, human, rational, love ſtill;
In loving thou doſt well, in paſſion not,
Wherein true love conſiſts not; love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his ſeat
In reaſ'n, and is judicious; is the ſcale
By which to heav'nly love thou may'ſt aſcend;
Not ſunk in carnal pleaſure; for which cauſe
Among the beaſts no mate for thee was found.
To whom thus half-abaſh'd Adam reply'd.
Neither her outſide form'd ſo fair, nor ought
In procreation common to all kinds
(Though higher of the genial bed by far,
And with myſterious reverence I deem),
So much delights me, as thoſe graceful acts,
Thoſe thouſand decencies that daily flow
From all her words and actions mild with love
And ſweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
Union of mind, or in us both one ſoul;
Harmony to behold in wedded pair
More grateful than harmonious ſound to th' ear

Yet these subject not: I to thee disclose
What inward thence I feel; not therefore foil'd,
Who meet with various objects, from the sense
Variously representing; yet still free
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
To love thou blam'st me not; for love thou say'st
Leads up to heav'n, is both the way and guide:
Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask:
Love not the heav'nly spirits, and how their love
Express they? by looks only', or do they mix,
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?
To whom the angel, with a smile that glow'd
Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue,
Answer'd. Let it suffice thee that thou know'st
Us happy', and without love no happiness.
Whatever pure thou in the body' enjoy'st,
(And pure thou wert created), we enjoy
In eminence, and obstacle find none
Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars;
Easier than air with air, if sp'rits embrace,
Total they mix, union of pure with pure
Desiring; nor restrain'd conveyance need,
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.
But I can now no more; the parting sun
Beyond the earth's green cape and verdant isles
Hesperian sets, my signal to depart,
Be strong, live happy', and love; but first of all
Him whom to love is to obey, and keep
His great command; take heed lest passion sway
Thy judgment to do ought, which else free will
Would not admit: thine of all thy sons,
The weal or woe in thee is plac'd; beware.
I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
And all the bless'd: stand fast; to stand or fall
Free in their own arbitrament it lies.
Perfect within, no outward aid require:
And all temptation to transgress repel.
So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus
Follow'd with benediction. Since to part,
Go heav'nly guest, ethereal messenger,

Sent from whose sov'reign goodness I adore.
Gentle to me, and affable, hath been
Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever
With grateful memory; thou to mankind
Be good and friendly still, and oft return.
So parted they; the Angel up to Heav'n
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bow'r.

The End of the Eighth Book.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IX.

The ARGUMENT.

Satan having compaſſed the earth, with meditated guile, returns as a miſt by night into Paradiſe, and enters into the ſerpent ſleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labours; which Eve propoſes to divide in ſeveral places, each labouring apart: Adam conſents not, alledging the danger, leſt the enemy, of whom they were forewarned, ſhould attempt her found alone: Eve, loath to be thought not circumſpect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather deſirous to make trial of her ſtrength; Adam at laſt yields. The ſerpent finds her alone; his ſubtle approach, firſt gazing, then ſpeaking, with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve, wondering to hear the ſerpent ſpeak, aſks how he attained to human ſpeech and ſuch underſtanding not till now; the ſerpent anſwers, that by taſting of a certain tree in the garden, he attained both to ſpeech and reaſon, till then void of both: Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the tree of knowledge

forbidden: The ſerpent now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat; ſhe, pleaſed with the taſte, deliberates a while whether to impart thereof to Adam or not; at laſt brings him of the fruit, relates what perſuaded her to eat thereof. Adam at firſt amazed, but perceiving her loſt, reſolves through vehemence of love to periſh with her; and extenuating the treſpaſs, eats alſo of the fruit: The effects thereof in them both; they ſeek to cover their nakedneſs; then fall to variance, and accuſation of one another.

NO more of talk, where God or Angel gueſt
With Man, as with his friend, familiar us'd
To ſit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repaſt, permitting him the while
Venial diſcourſe unblam'd: I now muſt change
Thoſe notes to tragic; foul diſtruſt, and breach
Diſloyal on the part of Man, revolt,
And diſobedience; on the part of Heaven
Now alienated, diſtance and diſtaſte,
Anger and juſt rebuke, and judgment given,
That brought into this world a world of woe,
Sin, and her ſhadow Death, and Miſery
Death's harbinger; Sad taſk, yet argument
Not leſs, but more heroic than the wrath
Of ſtern Achilles on his foe purſu'd
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage
Of Turnus for Lāvinia diſeſpous'd;
Of Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that ſo long
Perplex'd the Greek, and Cytherea's ſon;
If anſwerable ſtyle I can obtain
Of my celeſtial patroneſs, who deigns
Her nightly viſitation unimplor'd,
And dictates to me ſlumb'ring, or inſpires
Eaſy my unpremeditated verſe:
Since firſt this ſubject for heroic ſong
Pleas'd me, long chuſing, and beginning late;
Not ſedulous by nature to indite

Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroic deem'd, chief maſt'ry to diſſect
With long and tedious havock fabled knights
In battles feign'd; the better fortitude
Of patience and heroic martyrdom
Unſung; or to deſcribe races and games,
Or tilting furniture, imblazon'd ſhields,
Impreſſes quaint, capariſons, and ſteeds;
Baſes and tinſel trappings, gorgeous knights
At jouſt and tournament; then marſhall'd feaſt
Serv'd up in hall, with ſewers, and ſeneſhals;
The ſkill of artifice or office mean,
Not that which juſtly gives heroic name
To perſon or to poem. Me of theſe
Nor ſkill'd nor ſtudious, higher argument
Remains, ſufficient of itſelf to raiſe
That name, unleſs an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing
Depreſs'd; and much they may, if all be mine,
Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear.
The ſun was ſunk, and after him the ſtar
Of Heſperus, whoſe office is to bring
Twilight upon the earth, ſhort arbiter
'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
Night's hemiſphere had veil'd th' horizon round:
When Satan, who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
In meditated fraud and malice, bent
On man's deſtruction, maugre what might hap
Of heavier on himſelf, fearleſs return'd.
By night he fled, and at midnight return'd
From compaſſing the earth, cautious of day,
Since Uriel, regent of the ſun, deſcry'd
His entrance, and forewarn'd the Cherubim
That kept their watch; thence full of anguiſh driv'n,
The ſpace of ſev'n continu'd nights he rode
With darkneſs, thrice the equinoctial line
He circled, four times croſs'd the car of night
From pole to pole, traverſing each colure;
On th' eighth returned, and on the coaſt averſe

From entrance or Cherubic watch, by ſtealth
Found unſuſpected way. There was a place,
Now not, though ſin, not time, firſt wrought the change,
Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradiſe
Into a gulf ſhot under ground, till part
Roſe up a fountain by the tree of life:
In with the river ſunk, and with it roſe
Satan, involv'd in riſing miſt; then ſought
Where to lie hid: ſea he had ſearch'd, and land,
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool
Mæotis, up beyond the river Ob;
Downward as far antarctic; and in length
Weſt from Orontes to the ocean barr'd
At Darien, thence to the land where flows
Ganges and Indus: thus the orb he roam'd
With narrow ſearch, and with inſpection deep
Conſider'd ev'ry creature, which of all
Moſt opportune might ſerve his wiles, and found
The ſerpent ſubtleſt beaſt of all the field.
Him after long debate, irreſolute
Of thoughts revolv'd, his final ſentence choſe
Fit veſſel, fitteſt imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark ſuggeſtions hide
From ſharpeſt ſight: for in the wily ſnake,
Whatever ſleights none would ſuſpicious mark,
As from his wit and native ſubtilty
Proceeding, which in other beaſts obſerv'd
Doubt might beget of diabolic pow'r
Active within beyond the ſenſe of brute.
Thus he reſolv'd, but firſt from inward grief
His burſting paſſion into plaints thus pour'd.

O Earth, how like to Heav'n, if not preferr'd
More juſtly, ſeat worthier of Gods, as built
With ſecond thoughts, reforming what was old?
For what God after better worſe would build?
Terreſtrial Heav'n, danc'd round by other Heav'ns
That ſhine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
Light above light, for thee alone, as ſeems,
In thee concent'ring all their precious beams
Of ſacred influence! As God in Heav'n

Is center, yet extends to all; so thou
Cent'ring receiv'st from all those orbs; in thee,
Not in themselves, all their known virtue' appears
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
Of creatures animate with gradual life
Of growth, sense, reason, all summ'd up in Man.
With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,
If I could joy in ought, sweet interchange
Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crown'd,
Rocks, dens, and caves! but I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
Torment within me', as from the hateful siege
Of contraries; all good to me becomes
Bane, and in Heav'n much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no nor in Heav'n
To dwell, unless by mast'ring heav'n's Supreme;
Nor hope to be myself less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and him destroy'd,
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made; all this will soon
Follow, as to him link'd in weal or woe;
In woe then, that destruction wide may range:
To me shall be the glory sole among
Th' infernal Pow'rs, in one day to have marr'd
What he Almighty styl'd, six nights and days
Continu'd making, and who knows how long
Before had been contriving? though perhaps
Not longer than since I in one night freed
From servitude inglorious well nigh half
Th' angelic name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers; he, to be aveng'd,
And to repair his numbers thus impair'd,
Whether such virtue spent of old now fail'd
More Angels to create, if they at least
Are his created, or, to spite us more,

Determin'd to advance into our room
A creature form'd of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original,
With heav'nly spoils, our spoils: what he decreed,
He' effected; Man he made, and for him built,
Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
Him lord pronounc'd, and, O indignity!
Subjected to his service Angel-wings,
And flaming ministers to watch and tend
Their earthly charge. Of these the vigilance
I dread, and to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight-vapour glide obscure, and pry
In every bush or brake, where hap may find
The serpent sleeping, in whose mazy folds
To hide me and the dark intent I bring.
O foul descent! that I who erst contended
With Gods to sit the high'est, am now constrain'd
Into a beast, and mix'd with bestial slime,
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the heighth of Deity aspir'd.
But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to? Who aspires, must down as low
As high he soar'd, obnoxious, first or last,
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils:
Let it; I reck not, so it light well aim'd,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favourite
Of Heav'n, this man of clay, son of despite,
Whom us the more to spite his Maker rais'd
From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid.
So saying, through each thicket, dank or dry,
Like a black mist low creeping, he held on
His midnight search, where soonest he might find
The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
In labyrinth of many a round self-roll'd,
His head the midst, well stor'd with subtles:
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,
Nor nocent yet, but on the grassy herb
Fearless unfear'd he slept. In at his mouth

The devil enter'd, and his brutal ſenſe,
In heart or head, poſſeſſing, ſoon inſpir'd
With act intelligential; but his ſleep
Diſturb'd not, waiting cloſe th' approach of morn.
Now when a ſacred light began to dawn
In Eden on the humid flow'rs, that breath'd
Their morning incenſe, when all things that breathe,
From th' earth's great altar ſend up ſilent praiſe
To the Creator, and his noſtrils fill
With grateful ſmell, forth came the human pair,
And join'd their vocal worſhip to the quire
Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
The ſeaſon, prime for ſweeteſt ſcents and airs:
Then commune how that day they beſt may ply
Their growing work; for much their work outgrew
The hands diſpatch of two gard'ning ſo wide.
And Eve firſt to her huſband thus began.
Adam, well may we labour ſtill to dreſs
This garden, ſtill to tend plant, herb, and flow'r,
Our pleaſant taſk injoin'd; but till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by reſtraint; what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides,
Tending to wild. Thou therefore now adviſe,
Or bear what to my mind firſt thoughts preſent:
Let us divide our labours; thou where choice
Leads thee, or where moſt needs, whether to wind
The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
The claſping ivy where to climb; while I
In yonder ſpring of roſes intermix'd
With myrtle, find what to redreſs till noon:
For while ſo near other thus all day
Our taſk we chuſe, what wonder if ſo near
Looks intervene, and ſmiles, or object new
Caſual diſcourſe drawn on, which intermits
Our day's work, brought to little, though begun
Early, and th' hour of ſupper comes unearn'd?
To whom mild anſwer Adam thus return'd.
Sole Eve, aſſociate ſole, to me beyond

Compare, above all living creatures dear,
Well haſt thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd,
How we beſt might fulfil the work which here
God hath aſſign'd us; nor of me ſhall paſs
Unprais'd: for nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to ſtudy houſehold good,
And good works in her huſband to promote.
Yet not ſo ſtrictly hath our Lord impos'd
Labour, as to debar us when we need
Refreſhment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this ſweet intercourſe
Of looks and ſmiles; for ſmiles from reaſon flow,
To brute deny'd, and are of love the food,
Love not the loweſt end of human life.
For not to irkſome toil, but to delight
He made us, and delight to reaſon join'd.
Theſe paths and bow'rs doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderneſs with eaſe, as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Aſſiſt us. But if much converſe perhaps
Thee ſatiate, to ſhort abſence I could yield:
For ſolitude ſometimes is beſt ſociety,
And ſhort retirement urges ſweet return.
But other doubts poſſeſſes me, leſt harm
Befal thee ſever'd from me; for thou know'ſt
What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe
Envying our happineſs, and of his own
Deſpairing, ſeeks to work us woe and ſhame
By ſly aſſault; and ſomewhere nigh at hand
Watches no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wiſh and beſt advantage, us aſunder;
Hopeleſs to circumvent us join'd, where each
To other ſpeedy aid might lend at need
Whether his firſt deſign be to withdraw
Our fealty from God, or to diſturb
Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliſs
Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more;
Or this, or worſe, leave not the faithful ſide
That gave thee be'ing, ſtill ſhades thee, and protects.
The wife, where danger and diſhonour lurks,

Safeſt and ſeemlieſt by her huſband ſtays,
Who guards her, or with her the worſt endures.
To whom the virgin majeſty of Eve,
As one who loves, and ſome unkindneſs meets,
With ſweet auſtere compoſure thus reply'd.
Offspring of heav'n and earth, and all earth's Lord,
That ſuch an enemy we have, who ſeeks
Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn,
And from the parting Angel overheard,
As in a ſhady nook I ſtood behind,
Juſt then return'd at ſhut of ev'ning flowers.
But that thou ſhould'ſt my firmneſs therefore doubt
To God or thee, becauſe we have a foe
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fear'ſt not, being ſuch
As we, not capable of death or pain,
Can either not receive, or can repel.
His fraud is then thy fear; which plain infers
Thy equal fear, that my firm faith and love
Can by his fraud be ſhaken or ſeduc'd;
Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breaſt,
Adam, miſthought of her to thee ſo dear?
To whom with healing words Adam reply'd.
Daughter of God and man, immortal Eve,
For ſuch thou art, from ſin and blame entire:
Not diffident of thee do I diſſuade
Thy abſence from my ſight, but to avoid
Th' attempt itſelf, intended by our foe.
For he who tempts, though' in vain, at leaſt aſperſes
The tempted with diſhonour foul, ſuppos'd
Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
Againſt temptation: thou thyſelf with ſcorn
And anger would reſent the offer'd wrong,
Though ineffectual found: miſdeem not then,
If ſuch affront I labour to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;
Or daring, firſt on me th' aſſault ſhall light.
Nor thou his malice and falſe guile contemn;
Subtle he needs muſt be, who could ſeduce

Angels; nor think superfluous others aid.
I from the influence of thy looks receive
Access in every virtue, in thy sight
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
Shame to be overcome, or over-reach'd,
Would utmost vigour raise, and rais'd unite.
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
When I am present, and thy trial chuse
With me, best witness of thy virtue try'd?
So spoke domestic Adam in his care
And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
Less attributed to her faith sincere,
Thus her reply with accent sweet renew'd.
If this be our condition, thus to dwell
In narrow circuit straiten'd by a foe.
Subtle or violent, we not endu'd
Single with like defence, where-ever met,
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin: only our foe
Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integrity: his foul esteem
Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns
Foul on himself; then wherefore shun'd or fear'd
By us? who rather double honour gain
From his surmise prov'd false; find peace within,
Favour from Heav'n, our witness from th' event.
And what is faith, love, virtue, unassay'd
Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?
Let us not then suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combin'd.
Frail is our happiness, if this be so,
And Eden were not Eden thus expos'd.
To whom thus Adam fervently reply'd.
O woman, best are all things as the will
Of God ordain'd them: his creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left
Of all that he created; much less man,

Or ought that might his happy ſtate ſecure,
Secure from outward force; within himſelf
The danger lies, yet lies within his pow'r:
Againſt his will he can receive no harm.
But God left free the will; for what obeys
Reaſon, is free; and reaſon he made right,
But bid her well beware, and ſtill erect,
Leſt by ſome fair appearing good ſurpris'd
She dictate falſe, and miſinform the will
To do what God expreſsly hath forbid.
Not then miſtruſt, but tender love, injoins,
That I ſhould mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
Firm we ſubſiſt, yet poſſible to ſwerve;
Since reaſon not impoſſibly may meet
Some ſpecious object by the foe ſuborn'd,
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping ſtricteſt watch, as ſhe was warn'd.
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
Were better, and moſt likely if from me
Thou ſever not: trial will come unſought.
Wouldſt thou approve thy conſtancy? approve
Firſt thy obedience; th' other who can know,
Not ſeeing thee attempted? who attеſt?
But if thou think, trial unſought may find
Us both ſecurer than thus warn'd thou ſeem'ſt,
Go; for thy ſtay, not free, abſents thee more;
Go in thy native innocence, rely
On what thou haſt of virtue, ſummon all,
For God tow'rds thee hath done his part, do thine.
So ſpake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve
Perſiſted, yet ſubmiſs though laſt, reply'd.
With thy permiſſion then, and thus forewarn'd,
Chiefly by what thy own laſt reaſoning words
Touch'd only, that our trial when leaſt ſought,
May find us both perhaps far leſs prepar'd,
The willinger I go; nor much expect
A foe ſo proud will firſt the weaker ſeek;
So bent, the more ſhall ſhame him his repulſe.
Thus ſaying, from her huſband's hand her hand
Soft ſhe withdrew, and like a wood-nymph light

Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
Betook her to the groves; but Delia's self
In gait surpass'd, and goddess-like deport;
Though not, as she, with bow and quiver arm'd,
But with such gard'ning tools as art yet rude,
Guiltless of fire, had form'd, or Angels brought.
To Pallas, or Pomona, thus adorn'd,
Likest she seem'd, Pomona when she fled
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
Her long with ardent look his eye pursu'd
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
Oft he to her his charge of quick return
Repeated; she to him as oft engag'd
To be return'd by noon amid the bow'r,
And all things in best order to invite
Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve,
Of thy presum'd return! event perverse!
Thou never from that hour in Paradise
Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose;
Such ambush hid among sweet flow'rs and shades,
Waited with hellish rancour imminent
To intercept thy way, or send thee back
Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss,
For now, and since first break of dawn, the fiend
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,
And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
The only two of mankind, but in them
The whole included race, his purpos'd prey.
In bow'r and field he sought, where any tuft
Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
Their tendance, or plantation for delight;
By fountain or by shady rivulet
He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
Eve separate: he wish'd, but not with hope
Of what is seldom chanc'd: when to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood
Half spy'd, so thick the roses bushing round

About her glow'd; oft ſtooping to ſupport
Each flow'r of ſlender ſtalk, whoſe head though gay
Carnation, purple', azure, or ſpeck'd with gold,
Hung drooping unſuſtain'd: them ſhe upſtays
Gently with myrtle band; mindleſs the while
Herſelf, though faireſt unſupported flow'r,
From her beſt prop ſo far, and ſtorm ſo high.
Nearer he drew, and many a walk travers'd
Of ſtatelieſt covert, cedar, pine, or palm;
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now ſeen
Among thick-woven arborets and flow'rs
Imborder'd on each bank, the hand of Eve:
Spot more delicious than thoſe gardens feign'd
Or of reviv'd Adonis; or renown'd
Alcinous, hoſt of old Laertes' ſon;
Or that, not myſtic, where the ſapient king
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian ſpouſe.
Much he the place admir'd, the perſon more,
As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houſes thick and ſewers annoy th' air,
Forth iſſuing on a ſummer's morn, to breathe
Among the pleaſant villages and farms
Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight;
The ſmell of grain, or tedded graſs, or kine,
Or dairy', each rural ſight, each rural ſound;
If chance, with nymphlike ſtep, fair virgin paſs,
What pleaſing ſeem'd, for her now pleaſes more,
She moſt, and in her look ſums all delight;
Such pleaſure took the Serpent to behold
This flow'ry plat, the ſweet receſs of Eve
Thus early, thus alone; her heav'nly form
Angelic, but more ſoft, and feminine,
Her graceful innocence, her ev'ry air
Of geſture, or leaſt action, overaw'd
His malice, and with rapine ſweet bereav'd
His fierceneſs of the fierce intent it brought:
That ſpace the evil one abſtracted ſtood
From his own ev'il, and from the time remain'd
Stupidly good, of enmity diſarm'd,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, or revenge.

But the hot hell that always in him burns,
Though in mid heav'n, soon ended his delight;
And tortures him now more, the more he sees
Of pleasure not for him ordain'd: then soon
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.

Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported, to forget
What hither brought us! hate, not love, no hope
Of Paradise for hell, hope here to taste
Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,
Save what is in destroying; other joy
To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
Occasion which now smiles. Behold alone
The woman, opportune to all attempts;
Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh
Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
And strength of courage haughty, and of limb
Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould;
Foe not unformidable, exempt from wound;
I not; so much hath hell debas'd, and pain
Infeebled me, to what I was in Heav'n.
She fair, divinely fair, fit love for Gods,
Not terrible, though terror be in love
And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate,
Hate stronger, under shew of love well feign'd,
The way which to her ruin now I tend.
So spake th' enemy of mankind, inclos'd
In serpent, inmate bad, and towards Eve
Address'd his way, not with indented wave
Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,
Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd
Fold above fold, a surging maze; his head
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect
Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape,
And lovely: never since of serpent kind
Lovelier; not those that in Illyria chang'd
Hermione and Cadmus, or the God

In Epidaurus; nor to which transform'd
Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen;
He with Olympias, this with her who bore
Scipio the height of Rome. With tract oblique
At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
As when a ship by skilful steersman wrought
Nigh river's mouth or foreland where the wind
Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail:
So varied he, and of his tortuous train
Curl'd many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
To lure her eye. She busied heard the sound
Of rustling leaves; but minded not, as us'd,
To such disport before her through the field,
From ev'ry beast, more duteous at her call,
Than at Circean call the herd disguis'd.
He bolder now, uncall'd before her stood,
But as in gaze admiring: oft he bow'd
His turret crest, and sleek enamell'd neck,
Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length
The eye of Eve to mark his play; he glad
Of her attention gain'd, with serpent tongue
Organic, or impulse of vocal air,
His fraudulent temptation thus began.
Wonder not, sov'reign mistress, if perhaps
Thou canst, who art sole wonder; much less arm
Thy looks, the heav'n of mildness, with disdain,
Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze
Insatiate; I thus single; nor have fear'd
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
By gift, and thy celestial beauty' adore,
Where ravishment beheld, there best beheld
Where universally admir'd; but here
In this inclosure wild, these beasts among.
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
Half what in thee is fair, one man except,

Who ſees thee? (and what is one?) who ſhouldſt be ſeen
A goddeſs among gods, ador'd and ſerv'd
By angels numberleſs, thy daily train.
So gloz'd the tempter, and his proem tun'd;
Into the heart of Eve his words made way,
Though at the voice much marvelling; at length
Not unamaz'd ſhe thus in anſwer ſpake.
What may this mean? language of man pronoune'd
By tongue of brute, and human ſenſe expreſs'd
The firſt at leaſt of theſe I thought deny'd
To beaſts, whom God on their creation day
Created mute to all articulate ſound:
The latter I demur: for in their looks
Much reas'n, and in their actions, oft appears.
Thee, ſerpent, ſubtleſt beaſt of all the field
I knew, but not with human voice endu'd;
Redouble then this miracle, and ſay,
How cam'ſt thou ſpeakable of mute? and how
To me ſo friendly grown above the reſt
Of brutal kind, that daily are in ſight?
Say, for ſuch wonder claims attention due.
To whom the guileful tempter thus reply'd.
Empreſs of this fair world, reſplendent Eve,
Eaſy it is to me to tell thee all
What thou command'ſt, and right thou ſhould'ſt be obey'd.
I was at firſt as other beaſts that graze
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low
As was my food; nor ought but food diſcern'd
Or ſex, and apprehended nothing high:
Till on a day roving the field, I chanc'd
A goodly tree far diſtant to behold,
Loaden with fruit of faireſt colours mix'd,
Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughs a ſavoury odour blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my ſenſe
Than ſmell of ſweeteſt fenel, or the teats
Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at ev'n,
Unſuck'd of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
To ſatisfy the ſharp deſire I had

Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv'd
Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
Pow'rful persuaders, quicken'd at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen.
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;
For high from ground the branches would require
Thy utmost reach, or Adam's: round the tree
All other beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
I spar'd not; for such pleasure till that hour
At feed or fountain never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward pow'rs, and speech
Wanted not long, though to this shape retain'd.
Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
I turn'd my thoughts; and, with capacious mind,
Consider'd all things visible in Heaven,
Or Earth, or Middle, all things fair and good;
But all that fair and good in thy divine
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heav'nly ray,
United I beheld; no fair to thine
Equivalent or second, which compell'd
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee, of right declar'd
Sov'reign of creatures, universal dame.
So talk'd the spirited sly Snake; and Eve
Yet more amaz'd unwary thus reply'd.
Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd,
But say, where grows the tree, from hence how far?
For many are the trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us: in such abundance lies our choice,
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden Nature of her birth.

To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad.
Empress, the way is ready, and not long;
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past
Of blowing myrrh and balm: if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon.
Lead then, said Eve. He leading swiftly roll'd
In angles, and made intricate seem straight,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Brightens his crest; as when a wand'ring fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
Kindled through agitation to a flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil Sp'rit attends,
Hovering, and blazing with delusive light
Misleads th' amaz'd night wand'rer from his way,
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,
There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far.
So glister'd the dire Snake, and into fraud
Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree
Of prohibition, root of all our woe:
Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.
Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither,
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here t' excess;
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee,
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects.
But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice; the rest, we live
Law to ourselves, our reason is our law.
To whom the tempter guilefully reply'd.
Indeed? hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat?
Yet lords declar'd of all in earth or air.
To whom thus Eve yet sinless. Of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat;
But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
The garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

She scarce had said, tho' brief, when now more bold
The tempter, but with show of zeal and love
To man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on: and as to passion mov'd,
Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely and in act
Rais'd, as of some great matter to begin.
As when of old some orator renown'd
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourish'd, since mute, to some great cause address'd,
Stood in himself collected, while each part,
Motion, each act won audience ere the tongue,
Sometimes in heighth began, as no delay
Of preface brooking through his zeal of right:
So standing, moving, or to heighth up grown,
The tempter all impassion'd thus began.
O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,
Mother of science, now I feel thy pow'r
Within me clear, not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of highest agents, deem'd however wise.
Queen of this universe, do not believe
Those rigid threats of death; ye shall not die:
How should ye? by the fruit? it gives you life
To knowledge; by the threat'ner? look on me,
Me who have touch'd and tasted, yet both live,
And life more perfect have attain'd than fate
Meant me, by vent'ring higher than my lot.
Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
Is open? or will God incense his ire
For such a petty trespass, and not praise
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
Of death denounc'd, whatever thing death be,
Deterr'd not from atchieving what might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;
Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
Be real, why not know, since easier shunn'd?
God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just;
Not just, not God, not fear'd then, nor obey'd:
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
Why then was this forbid? Why but to awe,

Why but to keep ye low and ignorant,
His worſhippers? he knows, that in the day
Ye eat thereof, your eyes that ſeem ſo clear,
Yet are but dim, ſhall perfectly be then
Open'd and clear'd, and ye ſhall be as gods,
Knowing both good and evil as they know.
That ye ſhall be as Gods, ſince I as Man,
Internal man, is but proportion meet;
I of brute, human; ye of human, Gods.
So ye ſhall die perhaps, by putting off
Human, to put on Gods, death to be wiſh'd,
Though threaten'd, which no worſe than this can bring.
And what are Gods, that Man may not become
As they, participating god-like food?
The gods are firſt, and that advantage uſe
On our belief, that all from them proceeds:
I queſtion it; for this fair earth I ſee,
Warm'd by the ſun, producing every kind,
Them nothing: if they all things, who inclos'd
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
That whoſo eats thereof, forthwith attains
Wiſdom without their leave? and wherein lies
Th' offence, that man ſhould thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
Impart againſt his will, if all be his?
Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
In heav'nly breaſts? theſe, theſe, and many more
Cauſes, import your need of this fair fruit.
Goddeſs humane, reach then, and freely taſte.
He ended; and his words replete with guile
Into her heart too eaſy entrance won:
Fix'd on the fruit ſhe gaz'd, which to behold
Might tempt alone; and in her ears the ſound
Yet rung of his perſuaſive words, impregn'd
With reaſon, to her ſeeming, and with truth;
Mean while the hour of noon drew on, and wak'd
An eager appetite, rais'd by the ſmell
So ſavoury of that fruit, which with deſire,
Inclinable now grown to touch and taſte,

Solicited her longing eye: yet first
Pausing a while, thus to herself she mus'd.
Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd;
Whose taste, too long forborn, at first essay
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise:
Thy praise he also who forbids thy use,
Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
Forbids us then to taste; but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want:
For good unknown, sure is not had: or had,
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions bind not. But if death
Bind us with after bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die.
How dies the serpent? he hath eat'n and lives.
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us deny'd
This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy
The good befall'n him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile,
What fear I then, rather what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and evil,
Of God or death, of law or penalty?
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
To reach, and feed at once both body' and mind?
So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat:
Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat,

Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty Serpent: and well might; for Eve
Intent now wholly on her taste naught else
Regarded, such delight till then, as seem'd,
In fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fancy'd so, through expectation high
Of knowledge: nor was God-head from her thought.
Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint,
And knew not eating death. Satiate at length,
And heighten'd as with wine, jocund and boon
Thus to herself she pleasingly began.
O sov'reign, virtuous, precious of all trees
In Paradise, of operation blest'd
To sapience, hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise,
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches, offer'd free to all;
Till dieted by thee I grow mature
In knowledge, as the Gods, who all things know;
Though others envy what they cannot give;
For had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remain'd
In ignorance; thou open'st wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire.
And I perhaps am secret; Heav'n is high,
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great forbidder, safe with all his spies
About him. But to Adam in what sort
Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with me; or rather not,
But keep the odds of knowledge in my pow'r
Without copartner? so to add what wants
In female sex, the more to draw his love,

And render me more equal, and perhaps,
A thing not undesirable, sometimes
Superior; for inferior who is free?
This may be well. But what if God have seen,
And death ensue? then I shall be no more,
And Adam wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct?
A death to think. Confirm'd then I resolve,
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe;
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
I could endure, without him live no life.
So saying, from the tree her step she turn'd;
But first low rev'rence done, as to the pow'r
That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd
Into the plant sciential sap, deriv'd
From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flow'rs a garland to adorn
Her tresses, and her rural labours crown,
As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delay'd:
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,
Misgave him; he the falt'ring measure felt;
And for to meet her went, the way she took
That morn when first they parted. By the tree
Of knowledge he must pass; there he her met,
Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smil'd,
New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.
To him she hasted; in her face excuse
Came prologue, and apology too prompt,
Which with bland words at will she thus address'd.
Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?
Thee I have miss'd, and thought it long, depriv'd
Thy presence, agony of love till now
Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
Mean I to try, what rash untry'd I sought,
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear.

This tree is not, as we are told, a tree
Of danger tasted, nor t' evil unknown
Op'ning the way; but of divine effect
To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste;
And hath been tasted such; the serpent wise,
Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
Not dead, as we are threaten'd, but henceforth
Endu'd with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration, and with me
Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
Th' effects to correspond; op'ner mine eyes,
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
And growing up to godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss:
Tedious unshar'd with thee, and odious soon.
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot,
May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
Lest thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
Deity for thee, when fate will not permit.
Thus Eve with count'nance blythe her story told;
But in her cheek distemper flushing glow'd.
On th' other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amaz'd,
Astonish'd stood, and blank while horror chill
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd;
From his slack hand the garland wreath'd for Eve
Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed:
Speechless he stood, and pale; till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke.
O fairest of creation, last and best
Of all God's works, creature in whom excell'd
Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
How art thou lost, how on a sudden lost,
Defac'd, deflow'r'd, and now to death devote?
Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress

The ſtrict forbiddance, how to violate
The ſacred fruit forbidd'n? Some curſed fraud
Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown:
And me with thee hath ruin'd: for with thee
Certain my reſolution is to die;
How can I live without thee, how forego
Thy ſweet converſe and love ſo dearly join'd,
To live again in theſe wild woods forlorn?
Should God create another Eve, and I
Another rib afford, yet loſs of thee
Would never from my heart; no, no, I feel
The link of nature draw me: fleſh of fleſh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy ſtate
Mine never ſhall be parted, bliſs or woe.
So having ſaid, as one from ſad diſmay
Recomforted, and, after thoughts diſturb'd,
Submitting to what ſeem'd remedileſs,
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd.
Bold deed thou haſt preſum'd, advent'rous Eve,
And peril great provok'd, who thus haſt dar'd,
Had it been only coveting to eye
That ſacred fruit, ſacred to abſtinence,
Much more to taſte it, under ban to touch.
But paſt who can recal, or done undo?
Not God omnipotent, nor fate; yet ſo
Perhaps thou ſhalt not die, perhaps the fact
Is not ſo heinous now, foretaſted fruit,
Profan'd firſt by the ſerpent, by him firſt
Made common and unhallow'd ere our taſte:
Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives,
Lives, as thou ſaidſt, and gains to live, as man,
Higher degree of life; inducement ſtrong
To us, as likely taſting to attain
Proportional aſcent, which cannot be
But by the Gods, or Angels, Demi-gods.
Nor can I think, that God, Creator wiſe,
Though threat'ning, will in earneſt ſo deſtroy
Us his prime creatures, dignify'd ſo high
Set over all his works; which in our fall,
For us created, needs with us muſt fail,

Dependent made: so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;
Not well conceiv'd of God, who though his pow'r
Creation could repeat, yet would be loath
Us to abolish, lest the adversary
Triumph, and say; fickle their state whom God
Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
He ruin'd, now mankind: whom will he next?
Matter of scorn, not to be giv'n the foe;
However, I with thee have fix'd my lot,
Certain to undergo like doom: if death
Consort with thee, death is to me as life;
So forcible within my heart I feel
The bond of nature draw me to my own,
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
Our state, can not be sever'd, we are one,
One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.
So Adam; and thus Eve to him reply'd,
O glorious trial of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Engaging me to emulate, but short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
Adam? from whose dear side I boast me sprung,
And gladly of thy union hear thee speak,
One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof
This day affords, declaring thee resolv'd,
Rather than death, or ought than death more dread,
Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear,
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit,
Whose virtue, (for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion) hath presented
This happy trial of thy love, which else
So eminently never had been known.
Were it I thought death menac'd would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not persuade thee; rather die
Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact
Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assur'd
Remarkably so late of thy so true,

So faithful love unequall'd, but I feel
Far otherwise th' event, not death, but life
Augmented, open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys,
Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds.
So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy
Tenderly wept; much won, that he is love
Had so ennobled, as of choice t' incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
In recompense (for such compliance bad
Such recompense best merits) for the bough
She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat,
Against his better knowledge; not deceiv'd,
But fondly overcome with female charm.
Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
In pangs; and Nature gave a second groan;
Sky lour'd, and uttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin
Original; while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate
Her former trespass fear'd, the more to soothe
Him with her lov'd society; that now,
As with new wine intoxicated both,
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings
Wherewith to scorn the earth. But that false fruit
Far other operation first display'd,
Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve
Began to cast lascivious eyes, she him
As wantonly repaid; in lust they burnt
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.
Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant of sapience no small part,
Since to each meaning savour we apply,
And palate call judicious: I the praise
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd

From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidd'n, it might be wish'd,
For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,
As meet is, after such delicious fare;
For never did thy beauty since the day
I saw thee first, and wedded thee, adorn'd
With all perfections, so inflame my sense
With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree.
So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
Of amorous intent; well understood
Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire,
Her hand he seiz'd, and to a shady bank,
Thick overhead with verdant roof imbow'r'd,
He led her nothing loath; flow'rs were the couch,
Pansies, and violets, and asphodel
And hyacinth, earth's freshest softest lap,
There they their fill of love, and love's disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep
Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play.
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
That with exhilerating vapour bland
About their spi'rits had play'd, and inmost pow'rs
Made err, was now exhal'd; and grosser sleep
Bred of unkind fumes, with conscious dreams
Incumber'd, now had left them; up they rose
As from unrest, and each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their minds
How darken'd; innocence, that as a veil
Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone;
Just confidence, and native righteousness,
And honour from about them, naked left
To guilty shame; he cover'd, but his robe
Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong,
Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap
Of Philistean Dalilah, and wak'd
Shorn of his strength: they destitute and bare

Of all their virtue: silent, and in face
Confounded, long they sat, as struck mute:
Till Adam, though not less than Eve abash'd.
At length wave utterance to these words constrain'd.
O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
To counterfeit man's voice; true in our fall,
False in our promis'd rising; since our eyes
Open'd we find indeed, and find we know,
Both good and ev'il, good lost, and evil got,
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void.
Of innocence, of faith, of purity.
Our wonted ornaments now soil'd and stain'd,
And in our faces evident and signs
Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store;
Ev'n shame, the last of evils; of the first
Be sure then. How shall I behold the face
Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy
And rapture so'-oft beheld? those heav'nly shapes
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
Insufferably bright. O might I here
In solitude live savage, in some glade
Obscur'd, where highest woods impenetrable
To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad
And brown as ev'ning: cover me, ye pines,
Ye cedars with innumerable boughs
Hide me, where I may never see them more.
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
What best may for the present serve to hide
The parts of each from other, that seem most
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;
Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sow'd,
And girded on our loins, may cover round
Those middle parts, that this new comer, shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.
So counsel'd he, and both together went
Into the thickest wood: there soon they chose
The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renown'd:
But such as at this day to Indians known

In Malabar or Decan, ſpreads her arms
Branching ſo broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother-tree, a pillar'd ſhade
High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between;
There oft the Indian herdſman ſhunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his paſturing herds
At loopholes cut through thickeſt ſhade: thoſe leaves
They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe;
And with what ſkill they had, together ſow'd
To gird their waiſt; vain covering, if to hide
Their guilt and dreaded ſhame; O how unlike
To that firſt naked glory! Such of late
Columbus found th' American, ſo girt
With feather'd cincture, naked elſe and wild
Among the trees on iſles and woody ſhores.
Thus fenc'd, and, as they thought, their ſhame in part
Cover'd, but not at reſt or eaſe of mind,
They ſat them down to weep; nor only tears
Rain'd at their eyes, but high winds worſe within
Began to riſe, high paſſions, anger, hate,
Miſtruſt, ſuſpicion, diſcord, and ſhook ſore
Their inward ſtate of mind; calm region once,
And full of peace, now toſt and turbulent:
For underſtanding rul'd not, and the will
Heard not her lore, both in ſubjection now
To ſenſual appetite, who from beneath
Uſurping, over ſov'reign reaſon claim'd
Superior ſway: from thus diſtemper'd breaſt,
Adam, eſtrang'd in look and alter'd ſtile,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd.

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

To whom soon mov'd with touch of blame thus Eve.
What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam, severe!
Imput'st thou that to my default, or will
Of wand'ring, as thou call'st it, which who knows
But might as ill have happen'd thou being by,
Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
Or here th' attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd
Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake;
No ground of enmity between us known,
Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
Was I t' have never parted from thy side?
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
Being as I am, why didst not thou the head
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger as thou saidst!
Too facile then thou didst not much gainsay;
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
Hadst thou been firm and fix'd in thy dissent,
Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me.
To whom then first incens'd Adam reply'd.
Is this the love, is this the recompense,
Of mine to thee, ungrateful Eve, express'd
Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I;
Who might have liv'd, and joy'd immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?
And am I now upbraided as the cause
Of thy transgressing? not enough severe,
It seems, in thy restraint; what could I more?
I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking enemy
That lay in wait; beyond this had been force,
And force upon free will hath here no place.
But confidence then bore thee on, secure
Either to meet no danger, or to find
Matter of glorious trial: and perhaps
I also err'd in overmuch admiring
What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue
That error now, which is become my crime,
And thou th' accuser. Thus it shall befal

Him who to worth in women overtrusting,
Lets her will rule: restraint she will not brook;
And left t' herself, if evil thence ensue,
She first his weak indulgence will accuse.
Thus they in mutual accusation spent
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning,
And of their vain contest appear'd no end.

THE END OF THE NINTH BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

Man's transgression known, the guardian Angels forsake Paradise, and return up to Heaven to approve their vigilence, and are approved, God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors; who descends, and gives sentence accordingly; then in pity clothes them and reascends. Sin and death sitting till then at the gates of hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new world, and the sin by man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confined in hell, but to follow Satan their sire up to the place of man: To make the way easier from hell to this world to and fro, they pave a broad high-way or bridge over Chaos, according to the track that Satan first made; then preparing for earth, they meet him, proud of his success, returning to hell; their mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandemonium, in full assembly relates with boasting his suc-

ceſs againſt man; inſtead of applauſe, is entertained with a general hiſs by all his audience, transformed with himſelf alſo ſuddenly into ſerpents, according to his doom given in Paradiſe; then deluded with a ſhow of the forbidden tree ſpringing up before them, they greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew duſt and bitter aſhes. The proceedings of Sin and Death: God foretells the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but for the preſent commands his Angels to make ſeveral alterations in the heavens and elements. Adam more and more perceiving his fallen condition, heavily bewails; rejects the condolement of Eve; ſhe perſiſts, and at length appeaſes him: then, to evade the curſe likely to fall on their offspring, propoſes to Adam violent ways, which he approves not; but conceiving better hopes, put her in mind of the late promiſe made them, that her ſeed ſhould be revenged on the ſerpent, and exhorts her with him to ſeek peace of the offended Deity, by repentance and ſupplication.

MEAN while the heinous and deſpiteful act
Of Satan done in Paradiſe, and how
He in the ſerpent had perverted Eve,
Her huſband ſhe, to taſte the fatal fruit,
Was known in heav'n; for what can 'ſcape the eye
Of God all-ſeeing, or deceive his heart
Omniſcient? who in all things wiſe and juſt,
Hindered not Satan to attempt the mind
Of man, with ſtrength entire, and free-will arm'd,
Complete to have diſcover'd and repuls'd
Whatever wiles of foe or ſeeming friend.
For ſtill they knew, and ought t' have ſtill remember'd
The high injunction not to taſte that fruit,
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,
Incurr'd (what could they leſs?) the penalty,
And manifold in ſin, deſerv'd to fall.
Up into heav'n from Paradiſe in haſte
Th' angelic guards aſcended, mute and ſad

For Man; for of his ſtate by this they knew,
Much wond'ring how the ſubtle fiend had ſtol'n
Entrance unſeen. Soon as th' unwelcome news
From earth arriv'd at heav'n-gate, diſpleas'd
All were who heard; dim ſadneſs did not ſpare
That time celeſtial viſages, yet mix'd
With pity, violated not their bliſs,
About the new-arriv'd, in multitudes
Th' ethereal people ran, to hear and know
How all befel: they tow'ards the throne ſupreme
Accountable made haſte, to make appear
With righteous plea their utmoſt vigilance;
And eaſily approv'd: when the Moſt High
Eternal Father, from his ſecret cloud,
Amidſt in thunder utter'd thus his voice.

Aſſembled Angels, and ye pow'rs return'd
From unſucceſsful charge, be not diſmay'd,
Nor troubled at theſe tidings from the earth,
Which your ſincereſt care could not prevent,
Foretold ſo lately what would come to paſs,
When firſt this tempter croſs'd the gulf from Hell,
I told ye then he ſhould prevail and ſpeed
On his bad errand; man ſhould be ſeduc'd
And flatter'd out of all, believing lies
Againſt his Maker: no decree of mine
Concurring to neceſſitate his fall,
Or touch with lighteſt moment of impulſe
His free will, to her own inclining left
In even ſcale. But fall'n he is: and now
What reſts, but that the mortal ſentence paſs
On his tranſgreſſion, death denounc'd that day?
Which he preſumes already vain and void,
Becauſe not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,
By ſome immediate ſtroke; but ſoon ſhall find
Forbearance no acquittance ere day end
Juſtice ſhall not return as bounty ſcorn'd.
But whom ſend I to judge them? whom but thee
Vicegerent Son? to thee I have transferr'd
All Judgment, whether in heav'n, or earth, or hell.
Eaſy it may be ſeen that I intend

Mercy colleague with juſtice, ſending thee,
Man's friend, his Mediator, his deſign'd
Both ranſom and Redeemer voluntary,
And deſtin'd man himſelf to judge man fall'n.
So ſpake the Father, and unfolding bright
Tow'ard the right hand his glory, on the Son
Blaz'd forth unclouded deity: he full
Reſplendent all his Father manifeſt
Expreſs'd, and thus divinely anſwer'd mild.
Father eternal, thine is to decree;
Mine both in heaven and earth to do thy will
Supreme, that thou in me thy Son belov'd
May'ſt ever reſt well pleas'd. I go to judge
On earth theſe thy tranſgreſſors; but thou know'ſt,
Whoever judg'd, the worſt on me muſt light,
When time ſhall be; for ſo I undertook
Before thee; and not repenting, this obtain
Of right, that I may mitigate their doom,
On me deriv'd; yet I ſhall temper ſo
Juſtice with mercy', as may illuſtrate moſt
Them fully ſatisfy'd, and thee appeaſe:
Attendance none ſhall need, nor train, where none
Are to behold the judgment, but the judg'd.
Thoſe two; the third beſt abſent is condemn'd,
Convict by flight, and rebel to all law;
Conviction to the ſerpent none belongs.
Thus ſaying, from his radiant ſeat he roſe
Of high collateral glory'; him thrones and pow'rs
Princedoms and dominations miniſtrant
Accompanied to heaven-gate, from whence
Eden and all the coaſt in proſpect lay.
Down he deſcended ſtraight; the ſpeed of gods
Time counts not, though with ſwifteſt minutes wing'd.
Now was the ſun in weſtern cadence low
From noon, and gentle airs due at their hour
To fan the earth now wak'd, and uſher in
The ev'ning cool; when he, from wrath more cool,
Came, the mild judge and interceſſor both,
To ſentence man. The voice of God they heard
Now walking in the garden, by ſoft winds

Brought to their ears, while day declin'd they heard,
And from his presence hid themselves among
The thickest trees, both man and wife; till God
Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud.
Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet
My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
Not pleas'd, thus entertain'd with solitude,
Where obvious duty' erewhile appear'd unsought:
Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth.
He came, and with him Eve, more loath, tho' first
T' offend; discount'nanc'd both, and discompos'd:
Love was not in their looks, either to God
Or to each other; but apparent guilt,
And shame, and perturbation, and despair,
Anger, and obstinacy', and hate, and guile.
Whence Adam falt'ring long, thus answer'd brief.
I heard thee in the gard'n, and of thy voice,
Afraid, being naked, hid myself. To whom
The gracious Judge without revile reply'd.
My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,
But still rejoic'd; how is it now become
So dreadful to thee? that thou' art naked, who
Hath told thee? hast thou eaten of the tree
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?
To whom thus Adam sore beset reply'd.
O heav'n! in evil strait this day I stand
Before my Judge, either to undergo
Myself the total crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my life;
Whose failing while her faith to me remains,
I should conceal, and not expose to blame
By my complaint: but strict necessity
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint,
Lest on my head both sin and punishment,
However insupportable, be all
Devolv'd; tho' should I hold my peace, yet thou
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal;
This woman, whom thou mad'st to be my help,
And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,

So fit, so acceptable, so divine,
That from her hand I could suspect no ill;
And what she did, whatever in itself,
Her doing seem'd to justify the deed;
She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.
To whom the Sov'reign Presence thus reply'd.
Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,
Superior, or but equal, that to her
Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
Wherein God set thee' above her, made of thee,
And for thee, whose perfection far excell'd
Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd
She was indeed, and lovely to attract
Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
Were such as under government well seem'd,
Unseemly to bear rule; which was thy part
And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.
So having said, he thus to Eve in few.
Say, woman, what is this which thou hast done?
To whom sad Eve with shame nigh overwhelm'd,
Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge
Bold or loquacious, thus abash'd reply'd.
The serpent me beguil'd, and I did eat.
Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
To judgment he proceeded on th' accus'd
Serpent, tho' brute, unable to transfer
The guilt on him who made him instrument
Of mischief, and polluted from the end
Of his creation; justly then accurs'd,
As vitiated in nature: more to know
Concern'd not man, (since he no further knew),
Nor alter'd his offence; yet God at last
To Satan first in sin his doom apply'd,
Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best:
And on the serpent thus his curse let fall.
Because thou hast done this, thou art accurs'd
Above all cattle, each beast of the field;
Upon thy belly grovelling thou shalt go,
And dust shall eat all the days of thy life.

Between thee and the woman I will put
Enmity, and between thine and her feed;
Her feed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.
So spake this oracle, then verify'd
When Jesus son of Mary, second Eve,
Saw Satan fall like lightning down from heav'n,
Prince of the air; then rising from his grave
Spoil'd principalities and pow'rs, triumph'd
In open show, and with ascension bright
Captivity led captive through the air,
The realm itself of Satan long usurp'd:
Whom he shall tread at last under our feet;
Ev'n he who now foretold his fatal bruise,
And to the woman thus his sentence turn'd.
Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
By thy conception; children thou shalt bring
In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will
Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule.
On Adam last thus judgment he pronounc'd,
Because thou hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife,
And eaten of the tree, concerning which
I charg'd thee, saying, thou shalt not eat thereof:
Curs'd is the ground for thy sake; thou in sorrow
Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life;
Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
Unbid and thou shalt eat th' herb of the field.
In the sweet of thy face shalt thou eat bread,
Till thou return unto the ground; for thou
Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.
So judg'd the man, both judge and saviour sent
And th' instant stroke of death denounc'd that day
Remov'd far off; then pitying how they stood
Before him naked to the air, that now
Must suffer change, disdain'd not to begin
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume;
As when he wash'd his servant's feet, so now,
As father of his family, he clad
Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,
Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid

And thought not much to clothe his enemies;
Nor he their outward only with the skins
Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness,
Arraying cover'd from his Father's sight.
To him with swift ascent he up return'd,
Into his blissful bosom reassum'd
In glory as of old; to him appear'd,
All, though all-knowing, what had pass'd with man
Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Mean while, ere thus was sinn'd and judg'd on earth,
Within the gates of hell sat Sin and Death,
In counterview within the gates, that now
Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
Far into Chaos, since the fiend pass'd through,
Sin op'ning, who thus now to Death began.

O son, why sit we here each other viewing
Idly, while Satan, our great author thrives
In other worlds, and happier seat provides
For us, his offspring dear. It cannot be
But that success attends him; if mishap,
Ere this he had return'd, with fury driv'n
By his avengers; since no place like this
Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
Wings growing, and dominion giv'n me large
Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on,
Or sympathy, or some connat'ral force,
Pow'rful at greatest distance to unite,
With secret amity, things of like kind,
By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade
Inseparable, must with me along:
For Death from Sin no pow'r can separate.
But lest the difficulty of passing back
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
Impassable, impervious, let us try
Advent'rous work, yet to thy pow'r and mine
Not unagreeable, to found a path
Over this main from hell to that new world
Where Satan now prevails; a monument

Of merit high to all th' infernal hoſt,
Eaſing their paſſage hence, for intercourſe,
Or tranſmigration, as their lot ſhall lead.
Nor can I miſs the way, ſo ſtrongly drawn
By this new-felt attraction and inſtinct.
Whom thus the meagre ſhadow anſwer'd ſoon.
Go whither fate and inclination ſtrong
Leads thee; I ſhall not lag behind, nor err
The way, thou leading; ſuch a ſcent I draw
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taſte
The ſavour of death from all things there that live;
Nor ſhall I to the work thou enterpriſeſt
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.
So ſaying, with delight he ſnuff'd the ſmell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
Againſt the day of battle, to a field,
Where armies lie incamp'd, come flying lur'd
With ſcent of living carcaſes deſign'd
For death, the following day, in bloody fight:
So ſcented the grim feature, and upturn'd
His noſtril wide into the mirky air,
Sagacious of his quarry from ſo far.
Then both from out hell-gates, into the waſte
Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
Flew diverſe; and with pow'r (their pow'r was great)
Hovering upon the waters, what they met
Solid or ſlimy, as in raging ſea
Toſt up and down, together crouded drove,
From each ſide ſhoaling tow'ards the mouth of hell;
As when two polar winds, blowing adverſe
Upon the Cronian ſea, together drive
Mountains of ice, that ſtop th' imagin'd way
Beyond Petſora eaſtward, to the rich
Cathaian coaſt. The aggregated ſoil
Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
As with a trident ſmote, and fix'd as firm
As Delos floating once; the reſt his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move;
And with Aſphaltic ſlime, broad as the gate,

Deep to the roots of hell the gather'd beach
They fasten'd, and the mole immense wrought on,
Over the foaming deep high arch'd; a bridge
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
Immovable of this new fenceless world
Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to hell.
So, if great things to small may be compar'd,
Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
From Susa his Memnonian palace high
Came to the sea, and over Hellespont
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia join'd,
And scourg'd with many a stroke th' indignant waves.
Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
Pontifical, a ridge of pendant rock,
Over the vex'd abyss, following the track
Of Satan, to the self-same place where he
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
From out of Chaos, to the outside bare
Of this round world: with pins of adamant,
And chains, they made all fast; too fast they made,
And durable; and now in little space
The confines met of empyrean heav'n,
And of this world, and on the left hand hell
With long reach interpos'd; three several ways
In sight, to each of these three places led.
And now their way to earth they had descry'd,
To Paradise first tending, when behold
Satan, in likeness of an Angel bright,
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering
His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose:
Disguis'd he came; but those his children dear
Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.
He, after Eve seduc'd, unminded slunk
Into the wood fast by, and changing shape
T' observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded
Upon her husband; saw their shame that sought
Vain overtures; but when he saw descend
The Son of God to judge them, terrify'd

He fled not hoping to escape, but shun
The present, fearing guilty what his wrath
Might suddenly inflict; that past'd, return'd
By night, and list'ning where the hapless pair
Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,
Thence gather'd his own doom; which understood
Not instant, but of future time with joy
And tidings fraught, to Hell he now return'd;
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhop'd
Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight
Of that stupendous bridge his joy increas'd.
Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke.
O parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
Thy trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own;
Thou art their author and prime architect:
For I no sooner in my heart divin'd,
My heart, which by a secret harmony
Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet,
That thou on earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks
Now also evidence, but strait I felt
Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt
That I must after thee with this thy son;
Such fatal consequence unites us three.
Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds,
Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
Detain from following thy illustrious tract.
Thou hast atchiev'd our liberty, confin'd
Within hell-gates till now; thus us impower'd
To fortify thus far, and overlay
With this portentous bridge the dark abyss.
Thine now is all this world; thy virtue' hath won
What thy hands builded not, thy wisdom gain'd
With odds what war hath lost, and fully' aveng'd
Our foil in Heav'n; here thou shalt monarch reign,
There didst not: there let him still victor sway
As battle hath adjudg'd, from this new world
Retiring by his own doom alienated,

And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
Of all things parted by th' empyreal bounds
His quadrature, from thy orbicular world,
Or try thee now more dang'rous to his throne.
Whom thus the prince of darkneſs anſwer'd glad.
Fair daughter, and thou ſon and grandchild both,
High proof ye now have giv'n to be the race
Of Satan, (for I glory in the name,
Antagoniſt of Heav'n's almighty king),
Amply have merited of me, of all
Th' infernal empire, that ſo near heav'n's door
Triumphal with triumphal act have met,
Mine with this glorious work, and made one realm
Hell and this world, one realm, one continent
Of eaſy thorough-fare. Therefore while I
Deſcend through darkneſs, on your road with eaſe,
To my aſſociate pow'rs, them to acquaint
With theſe ſucceſſes, and with them rejoice;
You two this way, among theſe numerous orbs,
All yours, right down to Paradiſe deſcend;
There dwell, and reign in bliſs; thence on the earth
Dominion exerciſe, and in the air,
Chiefly on Man, ſole lord of all declar'd;
Him firſt make ſure your thrall, and laſtly kill.
My ſubſtitutes I ſend ye, and create
Plenipotent on earth, of matchleſs might
Iſſuing from me; on your joint vigour now
My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
Through ſin to death expos'd by my exploit.
If your joint pow'r prevail, th' affairs of hell
No detriment need fear; go, and be ſtrong.
So ſaying he diſmiſs'd them; they with ſpeed
Their courſe through thickeſt conſtellations held,
Spreading their bane; the blaſted ſtars look'd wan,
And planets, planet-ſtruck, real eclipſe
Then ſuffer'd. Th' other way Satan went down
The cauſey to hell-gate; on either ſide
Diſparted Chaos over-built exclaim'd,
And with rebounding ſurge the bars aſſail'd,
That ſcorn'd his indignation: through the gate,

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

Congratulant approach'd him who with hand
Silence, and with these words attention won.
Thrones, dominations, princedoms, virtues, pow'rs,
For in possession such, not only' of right
I call ye and declare ye now return'd
Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
Triumphant out of this infernal pit
Abominable, accurs'd, the house of woe,
And dungeon of our tyrant: now possess,
As lords, a spacious world, t' our native heav'n
Little inferior, by my adventure hard
With peril great atchiev'd. Long were to tell
What I have done, what suffer'd, with what pain
Voyag'd th' unreal vast, unbounded deep
Of horrible confusion, over which
By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd
T' expedite your glorious march: but I
Toil'd out my uncouth passage, forc'd to ride
Th' untractable abyss, plung'd in the womb
Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild,
That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely' oppos'd
My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
Protesting fate supreme; thence how I found
The new-created world, which fame in heav'n
Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful
Of absolute perfection, therein man
Plac'd in a Paradise, by our exile
Made happy: him by fraud I have seduc'd
From his Creator, and, the more t' increase
Your wonder, with an apple; he thereat
Offended, worth your laughter, hath giv'n up
Both his beloved man and all his world,
To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,
Without our hazard, labour, or alarm,
To range in, and to dwell, and over man
To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.
True is, me also he hath judg'd, or rather
Me not, but the brute serpent, in whose shape
Man I deceiv'd: that which to me belongs,
Is enmity, which he will put between

Me and mankind: I am to bruise his heel;
His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:
A world who would not purchase with a bruise,
Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account
Of my performance: what remains, ye gods,
But up, and enter now into full bliss?
So having said, a while he stood, expecting
Their universal shout and high applause
To fill his ears; when contrary, he hears
On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn; he wonder'd, but not long
Had leisure, wond'ring at himself now more;
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
His arms clung to his ribs, his legs intwining
Each other, till supplanted down he fell
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
Reluctant; but in vain, a greater pow'r,
Now rul'd him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd,
According to his doom: he would have spoke,
But hiss for hiss return'd with forked tongue
To forked tongue; for now were all transform'd
Alike, to serpents all, as accessories
To his bold riot: dreadful was the din
Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
With complicated monsters head and tail;
Scorpion, and Asp, and Amphisbæna dire,
Cerastes horn'd, Hydrus, and Elops drear,
And Dipsas, (not so thick swarm'd once the soil
Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
Ophiusa): but still greatest he the midst,
Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
Ingender'd in the Pythian vale on slime.
Huge Python, and his pow'r no less he seem'd
Above the rest still to retain: they all
Him follow'd issuing forth to th' open field,
Where all yet left of that revolted rout
Heav'n fall'n, in station stood or just array,
Sublime with expectation when to see
In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief:

They saw, but other sight instead, a crowd
Of ugly serpents; horror on them fell,
And horrid sympathy; for what they saw,
They felt themselves now changing; down their arms,
Down fell both spear and shield, down they as fast,
And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form
Catch'd by contagion; like in punishment,
As in their crime. Thus was th' applause they meant,
Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood
A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,
His will who reigns above, to aggravate
Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
Us'd by the tempter: on that prospect strange
Their earnest eyes they fix'd, imagining
For one forbidden tree a multitude
Now ris'n, to work them further woe or shame;
Yet parch'd with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;
But on they roll'd in heaps, and up the trees
Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks
That curl'd Megæra: greedily they pluck'd
The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flam'd:
This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
Deceiv'd; they fondly thinking to allay
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit
Chew'd bitter ashes, which th' offended taste
With spatt'ring noise rejected: oft they essay'd
Hunger and thirst constraining, drug'd as oft,
With hatefullest disrelish writh'd their jaws
With foot and cinder fill'd: so oft they fell
Into the same illusion not as man,
Whom they triumph'd once laps'd. Thus were they
And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,
Till their lost shape, permitted, they resum'd;
Yearly injoin'd, some say, to undergo
This annual humbling certain number's days,
To dash their pride, and joy for man seduc'd.

However, some tradition they dispers'd
Among the Heathen of their purchase got,
And fabled how the serpent, whom they call'd
Ophion with Eurynome, the wide
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
Of high Olympus, thence by Satan driv'n
And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.
Mean while in Paradise the hellish pair
Too soon arriv'd, Sin there in pow'r before,
Once actual, now in body, and to dwell
Habitual habitant; beheld her Death
Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
On his pale horse: to whom Sin thus began.
Second of Satan sprung, all-conqu'ring Death,
What think'st thou of our empire now, though earn'd
With travel difficult, not better far
Than still at hell's dark threshold t' have sat watch,
Unnam'd, undreaded, and thyself half-starv'd?
Whom thus the Sin-born monster answer'd soon.
To me, who with eternal famine pine,
Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heav'n,
There best, where most with ravin I may meet;
Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems
To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corps.
To whom th' incestuous mother thus reply'd.
Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flow'rs
Feed first, on each beast next, and fish, and fowl,
No homely morsels; and what other thing
The scythe of Time mows down, devour unspar'd;
Till I in man residing, through the race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect,
And season him thy last and sweetest prey.
This said, they both betook them several ways,
Both to destroy, or unimmortal make
All kinds, and for destruction to mature
Sooner or later: which th' Almighty seeing,
From his transcendent seat the saints among,
To those bright orders utter'd thus his voice.
See with what heat these dogs of hell advance
To waste and havock yonder world, which I

So fair and good created, and had ſtill
Kept in that ſtate, had not the folly' of man
Let in theſe waſteful furies; who impute
Folly to me; ſo doth the prince of hell,
And his adherents, that with ſo much eaſe
I ſuffered them to enter and poſſeſs
A place ſo heav'nly, and conniving ſeem
To gratify my ſcornful enemies,
That laugh, as if tranſported with ſome fit
Of paſſion, I to them had quitted all,
At random yielded up to their miſrule;
And know not that I call'd and drew them thither,
My hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth
Which man's polluting ſin with taint hath ſhed
On what was pure, till cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burſt
With ſuck'd and glutted offal, at one ſling
Of thy victorious arm, well pleaſing Son,
Both Sin, and Death, and yawning Grave at laſt
Through Chaos hurl'd, obſtruct the mouth of Hell
For ever, and ſeal up his ravenous jaws.
Then heav'n and earth renew'd ſhall be made pure
To ſanctify that ſhall receive no ſtain:
Till then the curſe pronounc'd on both precedes.
He ended, and the heav'nly audience loud
Sung Halleluiah, as the ſound of ſeas,
Through multitude that ſung: Juſt are thy ways,
Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;
Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son,
Deſtin'd reſtorer of mankind; by whom
New heav'n and earth, ſhall to the ages riſe,
Or down from heav'n deſcend. Such was the ſong,
While the Creator calling forth by name
His mighty Angels, gave them ſeveral charge,
As ſorted beſt with preſent things. The ſun
Had firſt his precept ſo to move, ſo ſhine
As might affect the earth with cold and heat
Scarce tolerable; and from the north to call
Decrepit winter; from the ſouth to bring
Solſtitial ſummer's heat. To the blank moon
Her office they preſcrib'd; to th' other five,

Their planetary motions and aſpects,
In ſextile, ſquare, and trine, and oppoſite
Of noxious efficacy, and when to join
In ſynod unbenign; and taught the fix'd
Their influence malignant when to ſhow'r;
Which of them riſing with the ſun, or falling,
Should prove tempeſtuous: to the minds they ſet
Their corners, when with bluſter to confound
Sea, air, and ſhore, the thunder when to roll
With terror through the dark aereal hall.
Some ſay he bid his Angels turn aſcanſe
The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
From the ſun's axle; they with labour puſh'd
Oblique the centrique globe: ſome ſay the ſun
Was bid turn reins from th' equinoctial road
Like diſtant breadth to Taurus with the ſeven
Atlantic Siſters, and the Spartan Twins,
Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amain
By Leo, and the Virgin, and the Scales,
As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change
Of ſeaſons to each clime; elſe had the ſpring
Perpetual ſmil'd on earth with vernant flow'rs,
Equal in days and nights, except to thoſe
Beyond the polar circles; to them day
Had unbenighted ſhone, while the low ſun
To recompenſe his diſtance, in their ſight
Had rounded ſtill th' horizon, and not known
Or eaſt or weſt, which had forbid the ſnow
From cold Eſtotiland, and ſouth as far
Beneath Magellan. At that taſted fruit
The ſun, as from Thyeſtean banquet, turn'd
His courſe intended; elſe how had the world
Inhabited, tho' ſinleſs, more than now,
Avoided pinching cold and ſcorching heat?
Theſe changes in the heav'n's, tho' ſlow, produc'd
Like change on ſea and land, ſideral blaſt,
Vapour, and miſt, and exhalation hot,
Corrupt and peſtilent: now from the north
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed ſhore,
Burſting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice,

And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,
Boreas, and Cæcias, and Argestes loud,
And Thrascias, rend the woods, and seas upturn;
With adverse blast upturns them from the south
Notus and Afer black with thundrous clouds
From Serraliona; thwart of these as fierce
Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,
Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,
Sirocco, and Libecchio. Thus began
Outrage from lifeless things: but Discord first,
Daughter of Sin among th' irrational
Death introduc'd, through fierce antipathy:
Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish; to graze the herb all leaving,
Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
Of man, but fled him, or with count'nance grim
Glar'd on him passing. These were from without
The growing miseries, which Adam saw
Already' in part, though hid in gloomiest shades,
To sorrow' abandon'd; but worse felt within,
And in a troubled sea of passion tost,
Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint.
O miserable of happy! is this th' end
Of this new glorious world, and me so late
The glory of that glory, who now become
Accurs'd of blessed? hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my heighth
Of happiness! yet well, if here would end
The misery; I deserv'd it, and would bear
My own deservings; but this will not serve;
All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice once heard
Delightfully, *Increase and multiply*,
Now death to hear! for what can I increase
Or multiply but curses on my head?
Who of all ages to succeed, but feeling
The evil on him brought by me, will curse
My head? Ill fare our ancestor impure;
For this we may thank Adam: but his thanks
Shall be the execration: so besides

Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me redound,
On me as on their natural center light
Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!
Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me Man? did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me, or here place
In this delicious garden? As my will
Concurr'd not to my be'ing, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust,
Desirous to resign and render back
All I receiv'd, unable to perform
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes? inexplicable
Thy justice seems; yet to say truth, too late
I thus contest; then should have been refus'd
Those terms whatever, when they were propos'd:
Thou didst accept them; wilt thou enjoy the good,
Then cavil the conditions? And though God
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son
Prove disobedient, and reprov'd, retort,
Wherefore didst thou beget me'? I sought it not:
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,
But natural necessity, begot.
God made thee' of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him; thy reward was of his grace;
Thy punishment then justly' is at his will.
Be' it so, for I submit; his doom is fair,
That dust I am, and shall to dust return.
O welcome hour whenever! why delays
His hand to execute what his decree
Fix'd on this day? why do I overlive?
Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out
To deathless pain? how gladly would I meet
Mortality my sentence, and be earth
Insensibly? how glad would lay me down

As in my mother's lap? there I should rest
And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more
Would thunder in my ears; no fear of worse
To me and to my offspring would torment me
With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;
Lest that pure breath of life, the sp'rit of man,
Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish
With this corporeal clod; then in the grave,
Or in some other dismal place, who knows
But I shall die a living death? O thought
Horrid, if true! yet why? it was but breath
Of life that sinn'd: what dies but what had life
And sin? the body properly had neither.
All of me then shall die; let this appease
The doubt, since human reach no further knows.
For though the Lord of all be infinite,
Is his wrath also? be it, Man is not so,
But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise
Wrath without end on Man whom death must end?
Can he make deathless death; that were to make
Strange contradiction, which to God himself
Impossible is held, as argument
Of weakness not of pow'r. Will he draw out,
For anger's sake, finite to infinite
In punish'd man, to satisfy his rigour
Satisfy'd never? that were to extend
His sentence beyond dust, and nature's law,
By which all causes else according still
To the reception of their matter act,
Not to th' extent of their own sphere. But say
That death be not one stroke, as I suppos'd,
Bereaving sense, but endless misery
From this day onward, which I feel begun
Both in me, and without me, and so last
To perpetuity; Ay me, that fear
Comes thund'ring back with dreadful revolution
On my defenceless head; both Death and I
Am found eternal, and incorporate both;
Nor I on my part single, in me all

Posterity stands curs'd: fair patrimony
That I must leave ye, sons; O were I able
To waste in all myself, and leave ye none!
So disinherited, how would ye bliss
Me, now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind
For one man's fault thus guiltless be condemn'd,
If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
But all corrupt, both mind and will deprav'd,
Not to do only, but to will the same
With me? how can they then acquitted stand
In sight of God? Him after all disputes
Forc'd I absolve: all my evasion vain,
And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still
But to my own conviction: first and last
On me, me only, as the source and spring
Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;
So might the wrath. Fond wish! could thou support
That burden heavier than the earth to bear,
Than all the world much heavier, though divide
With that bad woman? Thus what thou desir'st,
And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
Beyond all past example and future,
To Satan only like both crime and doom.
O conscience, into what abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driv'n me; out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!
Thus Adam to himself lamented loud
Through the still night; not now, as ere man fell,
Wholesome and cool, and mild, but with black air
Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom,
Which to his evil conscience represented
All things with double terror: on the ground
Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
Curs'd his creation, death as oft accurs'd
Of tardy execution, since denounc'd
The day of his offence. Why comes not death,
Said he, with one thrice acceptable stroke
To end me? Shall Truth fail to keep her word,
Justice divine not hasten to be just?

But Death comes not at call, Juſtice divine
Mends not her ſloweſt pace for pray'rs or cries.
O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bow'rs,
With other echo late I taught your ſhades
To anſwer, and reſound far other ſong.
Whom thus afflicted when ſad Eve beheld,
Deſolate where ſhe ſat, approaching nigh,
Soft words to his fierce paſſion ſhe aſſay'd:
But her with ſtern regard he thus repell'd.

Out of my ſight, thou ſerpent; that name beſt
Befits thee with him leagu'd, thyſelf as falſe
And hateful; nothing wants, but that thy ſhape,
Like his, and colour ſerpentine may ſhow
Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee
Henceforth, leſt that too heav'nly form, pretended
To helliſh falſehood, ſnare them. But for thee
I had perſiſted happy, had not thy pride
And wand'ring vanity, when leaſt was ſafe,
Rejected my forewarning, and diſdain'd
Not to be truſted; longing to be ſeen,
Though by the dev'il himſelf, him overweening
To over-reach; but with the ſerpent meeting,
Fool'd and beguil'd; by him thou, I by thee,
To truſt thee from my ſide, imagin'd wiſe,
Conſtant, mature, proof againſt all aſſaults;
And underſtood not all was but a ſhow,
Rather than ſolid virtue'; all but a rib,
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,
More to the part ſiniſter, from me drawn,
Well if thrown out, as ſupernumerary
To my juſt number found. O why did God,
Creator wiſe, that peopled higheſt Heav'n
With ſpirits maſculine, create at laſt
This novelty on earth, this fair defect
Of nature; and not fill the world at once
With Men as Angels without feminine,
Or find ſome other way to generate
Mankind? This miſchief had not then befall'n,
And more that ſhall befal; innumerable
Diſturbances on earth through female ſnares,

And ſtrait conjunction with this ſex: for either
He never ſhall find out fit mate, but ſuch
As ſome misfortune brings him, or miſtake;
Or whom he wiſhes moſt ſhall ſeldom gain
Through her perverſeneſs; but ſhall ſee her gain'd
By a far worſe; or if ſhe love, with-held
By parents; or his happieſt choice too late
Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock-bound
To a fell adverſary's hate or ſhame
Which infinite calamity ſhall cauſe
To human life, and houſehold peace confound.
He added not, and from her turn'd; but Eve
Not ſo repuls'd, with tears that ceas'd not flowing,
And treſſes all diſorder'd, at his feet
Fell humble, and embracing them, beſought
His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.
Forſake me not thus, Adam, witneſs Heav'n
What love ſincere, and rev'rence in my heart
I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
Unhappily deceiv'd; thy ſuppliant
I beg, and claſp thy knees; bereave me not,
Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
Thy counſel, in this uttermoſt diſtreſs,
My only ſtrength and ſtay: forlorn of thee,
Whither ſhall I betake me, where ſubſiſt?
While yet we live, ſcarce one ſhort hour perhaps,
Between us two let there be peace, both joining,
As join'd in injuries, one enmity
Againſt a foe by doom expreſs aſſign'd us,
That cruel ſerpent. On me exerciſe not
Thy hatred for this miſery befall'n,
On me already loſt, me than thyſelf
More miſerable: both have ſinn'd, but thou
Againſt God only', I againſt God and thee;
And to the place of judgment will return,
There with my cries importune Heav'n, that all
The ſentence from thy head remov'd, may light
On me, ſole cauſe to thee of all this woe,
Me, me only, juſt object of his ire.

She ended weeping; and her lowly plight,
Immoveable till peace obtain'd from fault
Acknowledg'd and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
Commiseration; soon his heart relented
Tow'ards her, his life so late and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress,
Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,
His counsel, whom she had displeas'd, his aid;
As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost,
And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon.
Unwary', and too desirous, as before,
So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st
The punishment all on thyself; alas,
Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain
His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If pray'rs
Could alter high decrees, I to that place
Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
That on my head all might be visited,
Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiv'n,
To me committed, and by me expos'd.
But rise, let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere; but strive
In offices of love, how we may lighten
Each other's burden in our share of woe;
Since this day's death denounc'd, if ought I see,
Will prove no sudden but a slow-pac'd evil,
A long day's dying, to augment our pain,
And to our seed (O hapless seed!) deriv'd.
To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, reply'd.
Adam, by sad experiment I know
How little weight my words with thee can find,
Found so erroneous, thence by just event
Found so unfortunate: nevertheless,
Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place
Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart,
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen
Tending to some relief of our extremes,

Or end, though ſharp and ſad, yet tolerable,
As in our evils, and of eaſier choice.
If care of our deſcent perplex us moſt,
Which muſt be born to certain woe, devour'd
By Death at laſt; and miſerable it is
To be to others cauſe of miſery,
Our own begott'en, and of our loins to bring
Into this curſed world a woful race,
That after wretched life muſt be at laſt
Food for ſo foul a monſter; in thy pow'r
It lies, yet ere conception, to prevent
The race unbleſs'd, to be'ing yet unbegot.
Childleſs thou art, childleſs remain: ſo Death
Shall be deceiv'd his glut, and with us two
Be forc'd to ſatisfy his ravenous maw.
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
Converſing, looking, loving, to abſtain
From love's due rites, nuptial embraces ſweet,
And with deſire to languiſhing without hope,
Before the preſent object languiſhing
With like deſire, which would be miſery
And torment leſs than none of what we dread;
Then both ourſelves and ſeed at once to free
From what we fear for both, let us make ſhort,
Let us ſeek Death; or he not found, ſupply
With our own hands his office on ourſelves;
Why ſtand we longer ſhivering under fears,
That ſhow no end but death, and have the pow'r,
Of many ways to die the ſhorteſt chuſing,
Deſtruction with deſtruction to deſtroy?
She ended here, or vehement deſpair
Broke off the reſt; ſo much of death her thoughts
Had entertain'd, as dy'd her cheeks with pale.
But Adam, with ſuch counſel nothing ſway'd,
To better hopes his more attentive mind
Lab'ring had rais'd, and thus to Eve reply'd.
Eve, thy contempt of life and pleaſure ſeems
To argue in thee ſomething more ſublime
And excellent than what thy mind contemns;
But ſelf-deſtruction therefore ſought, refutes

That excellence thought in thee, and implies,
Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
For loss of time and pleasure overlov'd.
Or if thou covet death as utmost end
Of misery, so thinking to evade
The penalty pronounc'd, doubt not but God
Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire than so
To be forestall'd; much more I fear lest death
So snatch'd will not exempt us from the pain
We are by doom to pay; rather such acts
Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
To make death in us live: then let us seek
Some safer resolution, which methinks
I have in view, calling to mind with heed
Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
The serpent's head; piteous amends, unless
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe
Satan, who in the serpent hath contriv'd
Against us this deceit: to crush his head
Would be revenge indeed; which will be lost
By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
Resolv'd, as thou proposest; so our foe
Shall 'scape his punishment ordain'd, and we
Instead shall double ours upon our heads.
No more be mention'd then of violence
Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness,
That cuts us off from hope, and savours only
Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
Reluctance against God, and his just yoke
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
And gracious temper he both heard and judg'd,
Without wrath or reviling: we expected
Immediate dissolution, which we thought
Was meant by death that day; when lo, to thee
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
And bringing forth, soon recompens'd with joy,
Fruit of thy womb: on me the curse aslope
Glanc'd on the ground: with labour I must earn
My bread: what harm? Idleness had been worse;
My labour will sustain me: and lest cold

Or heat should injure us, his timely care
Hath unbesought provided, and his hands
Clothed us unworthy, pitying while he judged:
How much more, if we pray him, will his ear
Be open, and heart to pity incline,
And teach us further by what means to shun
Th' inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow?
Which now the sky with various face begins
To shew us in this mountain, while the winds
Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks
Of these fair spreading trees; which bids us seek
Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish
Our limbs benumbed, ere this diurnal star
Leave cold the night, how his gather'd beams
Reflected, may with matter sere foment,
Or by collision of two bodies grind
The air attrite to fire, as late the clouds
Justling or push'd with winds, rude in their shock
Tine the slant lightning, whose thwart flame driv'n down
Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine,
And sends a comfortable heat from far
Which might supply the sun: such fire to use,
And what may else be remedy to cure
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,
He will instruct us praying, and of grace
Beseeching him, so as we need not fear
To pass commodiously this life, sustain'd
By him with many comforts, till we end
In dust, our final rest and native home.
What better can we do, than to the place
Repairing where he judged us, prostrate fall
Before him reverent, and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorr'ow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?
Undoubted he will relent, and turn
From his displeasure; in whose look serene,
When angry most he seem'd, and most severe,
What else but favour, grace, and mercy shone?

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

THE END OF THE TENTH BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK XI.

The ARGUMENT.

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

THUS they in lowliest plight repentant stood
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above
Prevenient grace descending had remov'd
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh

Regenerate grow inſtead, that ſighs now breath'd
Unutterable, which the ſp'rit of pray'r
Inſpir'd, and wing'd for Heav'n with ſpeedier flight
Than loudeſt oratory: yet their port
Not of mean ſuiters, nor important leſs
Seem'd their petition, than when the ancient pair
In fables old, leſs ancient yet than theſe,
Deucalion and chaſte Pyrrha, to reſtore
The race of mankind drown'd, before the ſhrine
Of Themis ſtood devout. To Heav'n their pray'rs
Flew up, nor miſs'd the way, by envious winds
Flown vagabond or fruſtrate: in they paſs'd
Dimenſionleſs through heav'nly doors; then clad
With incenſe, where the golden altar fum'd,
By their great Interceſſor, came in ſight
Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son
Preſenting, thus to intercede began.

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

To whom the Father, without cloud, ſerene:
All thy requeſt for Man, accepted Son,
Obtain; all thy requeſt was my decree.
But longer in that Paradiſe to dwell,
The law I gave to Nature him forbids:
Thoſe pure immortal elements, that know
No groſs, no unharmonious mixture foul,
Eject him tainted now, and purge him off
As a diſtemper, groſs to air as groſs,
And mortal food, as may diſpoſe him beſt
For diſſolution wrought by ſin, that firſt
Diſtemper'd all things, and of incorrupt
Corrupted. I at firſt with two fair gifts
Created him endow'd with happineſs
And immortality: that fondly loſt,
This other ſerv'd but to eternize woe;
Till I provided death; ſo death becomes
His final remedy, and after life
Try'd in ſharp tribulation, and refin'd
By faith and faithful works, to ſecond life,
Wak'd in the renovation of the juſt,
Reſigns him up with heav'n and earth renew'd.
But let us call to ſynod all the bleſs'd
Thro' Heav'n's wide bounds; from them I will not hide
My judgments, how with mankind I proceed,
As how with peccant Angels late they ſaw,
And in their ſtate, though firm, ſtood more confin'd.
He ended, and the Son gave ſignal high
To the bright miniſter that watch'd; he blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb ſince perhaps
When God deſcended, and perhaps once more
To ſound at general doom. Th' angelic blaſt
Fill'd all the regions; from their bliſsful bowers
Of amarantine ſhade, fountain or ſpring,
By the waters of life, where'er they ſat
In fellowſhips of joy, the ſons of light
Haſted, reſorting to the ſummons high,
And took their ſeats; till from his throne ſupreme
Th' Almighty thus pronounc'd his ſov'reign will.

O sons, like one of us man is become
To know both good and evil, since his taste
Of that defended fruit: but let him boast
His knowledge of good lost, and evil got;
Happier, had it suffic'd him to have known
Good by itself, and evil not at all.
He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite;
My motions in him: longer than they move,
His heart I know, how variable and vain
Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand
Reach also of the tree of life and eat,
And live for ever, dream at least to live
For ever, to remove him I decree,
And send him from the garden forth to till
The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.
Michael, this my behest have thou in charge;
Take to thee from among the Cherubim
Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the fiend,
Or in behalf of man, or to invade
Vacant possession, some new trouble raise:
Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God
Without remorse drive out the sinful pair,
From hallow'd ground th' unholy, and denounce
To them and to their progeny from hence
Perpetual banishment. Yet lest they faint
At the sad sentence rigorously urg'd,
For I behold them soften'd, and with tears
Bewailing their excess, all terror hide.
If patiently thy bidding they obey,
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
To Adam what shall come in future days,
As I shall thee enlighten; intermix
My covenant in the woman's seed renew'd;
So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace:
And on the east side of the garden place,
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs
Cherubic watch, and of a sword the flame
Wide waving, all approach far off to fright,
And guard all passage to the tree of life;
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove

To ſpirits foul, and all my trees their prey,
With whoſe ſtol'n fruit man once more to delude.
He ceas'd; and the archangelic pow'r prepar'd
For ſwift deſcent; with him the cohort bright
Of watchful Cherubim; four faces each
Had, like a double Janus, all their ſhape
Spangl'd with eyes, more numerous than thoſe
Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drouſe,
Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the paſt'ral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Mean-while,
To re-ſalute the world with ſacred light,
Leucothea wak'd, and with freſh dews imbalm'd
The earth; when Adam, and firſt matron Eve,
Had ended now their oriſons, and found
Strength added from above, new hope to ſpring
Out of deſpair, joy, but with fear yet link'd;
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew'd.
Eve, eaſily my faith admits, that all
The good which we enjoy, from Heav'n deſcends;
But that from us ought ſhould aſcend to Heav'n,
So prevalent as to concern the mind
Of God high bliſs'd, or to incline his will,
Hard to belief may ſeem; yet this will prayer
Or one ſhort ſigh of human breath, upborne
Ev'n to the ſeat of God. For ſince I ſought,
By pray'r, th' offended Deity to appeaſe,
Kneel'd, and before him humbled all my heart,
Methought I ſaw him placable and mild,
Bending his ear; perſuaſion in me grew
That I was heard with favour; peace return'd
Home to my breaſt, and to my memory
His promiſe, that thy ſeed ſhall bruiſe our foe;
Which then not minded in diſmay, yet now
Aſſures me that the bitterneſs of death
Is paſt, and we ſhall live. Whence hail to thee,
Eve rightly call'd, mother of all mankind,
Mother of all things living, ſince by thee
Man is to live, and all things live for Man.
To whom thus Eve with ſad demeanor meek.
Ill worthy I ſuch title ſhould belong

To me transgressor, who for thee ordain'd
A help, became thy snare; to me reproach
Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise:
But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
That I who first brought death on all, am grac'd
The source of life; next favourable thou,
Who highly thus t' intitle me vouchsaf'st,
Far other name deserving. But the field
To labour calls us now with sweat impos'd,
Though after sleepless night; for see the morn,
All unconcern'd with our unrest begins,
Her rosy progress smiling: let us forth;
I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
Where-e'er our day's work lies, though now injoin'd
Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?
Here let us live, tho' in fall'n state, content.

So spake, so wish'd much humbl'd Eve; But fate
Subscrib'd not: Nature first gave sign, impress'd
On bird, beast, air, air suddenly eclips'd
After short blush of morn: nigh in her sight,
The bird of Jove stoop'd from his airy tour,
Two birds of gayest plume before him drove:
Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
First hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace,
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;
Direct to th' eastern gate was bent their flight,
Adam observ'd and with his eye the chace
Pursuing, not unmov'd to Eve thus spake.

O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,
Which Heav'n by these mute signs in nature shows
Forerunners of his purpose, or to warn
Us haply too secure of our discharge
From penalty, because from death releas'd
Some days; how long, and what till then our life,
Who knows, or more than this, that we are dust,
And thither must return, and be no more?
Why else this double object in our sight,
Of flight pursu'd in th' air, and o'er the ground,
One way the self-same hour? why in the east

Darkneſs ere day's mid courſe, and morning-light
More orient in yon weſtern cloud, that draws
O'er the blew firmament a radiant white,
And flow deſcends, with ſomething heav'nly fraught?
He err'd not; for by this the heav'nly bands
Down from a ſky of jaſper lighted now
In Paradiſe, and on a hill made halt;
A glorious apparition, had not doubt
And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adam's eye;
Not that more glorious, when the Angels met
Jacob in Mahanaim, where he ſaw
The field pavilion'd with his guardians bright;
Nor that which on the flaming mount appear'd
In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire,
Againſt the Aſſyrian king, who to ſurpriſe
One man, aſſaſſin-like, had levy'd war,
War unproclaim'd. The princely Hierarch
In their bright ſtand there left his pow'rs to ſieze
Poſſeſſion of the garden; he alone,
To find where Adam ſhelter'd took his way,
Not unperceiv'd of Adam, who to Eve,
While the great viſitant approach'd, thus ſpake:
Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
Of us will ſoon determine, or impoſe
New laws to be obſerv'd; for I deſcry,
From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
One of the heav'nly hoſt, and by his gait
None of the meaneſt, ſome great potentate
Or of the Thrones above, ſuch majeſty
Inveſts him coming; yet not terrible,
That I ſhould fear; nor ſociable mild,
As Raphael, that I ſhould much confide;
But ſolemn and ſublime, whom not t' offend,
With reverence I muſt meet, and thou retire.
He ended; and th' Arch-angel ſoon drew nigh,
Not in his ſhape celeſtial, but as man
Clad to meet man; over his lucid arms
A military veſt of purple flow'd,
Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain
Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old

In time of truce; Iris had dipt the woof;
His ſtarry helm unbuckled ſhow'd him prime
In manhood, where youth ended; by his ſide,
As in a gliſt'ring zodiac, hung the ſword,
Satan's dire dread, and in his hand the ſpear.
Adam bow'd low; he kingly from his ſtate
Inclin'd not, but his coming thus declar'd.

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

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

O unexpected ſtroke, worſe than of death!
Muſt I thus leave thee, Paradiſe? thus leave
Thee, native ſoil, theſe happy walks and ſhades,
Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to ſpend,
Quiet, though ſad, the reſpite of that day
That muſt be mortal to us both. O flower's
That never will in other climate grow,
My early viſitation, and my laſt
At ev'n, which I bred up with tender hand
From the firſt op'ning bud, and gave ye names,
Who now ſhall rear ye to the ſun, or rank
Your tribes and water from th' ambroſial fount?
Thee laſtly, nuptial bow'r, by me adorn'd
With what to ſight or ſmell was ſweet! from thee
How ſhall I part, and whither wander down
Into a lower world, to this obſcure

And wild? how ſhall we breathe in other air
Leſs pure, accuſtom'd to immortal fruits?
Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild:
Lament not, Eve, but patiently reſign
What juſtly thou haſt loſt; nor ſet thy heart,
Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine,
Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes
Thy huſband; him to follow thou art bound;
Where he abides think there thy native ſoil.
Adam by this from the cold ſudden damp
Recovering, and his ſcatter'd ſp'rits return'd,
To Michael thus his humble words addreſs'd.
Celeſtial, whether among the Thrones, or nam'd
Of them the high'eſt, for ſuch of ſhape may ſeem
Prince above princes, gently thou haſt told
Thy meſſage, which might elſe in telling wound,
And in performing end us; what beſides
Of ſorrow, and dejection, and deſpair,
Our frailty can ſuſtain, thy tidings bring,
Departure from this happy place, our ſweet
Receſs, and only conſolation left
Familiar to our eyes; all places elſe
Inhoſpitable appear and deſolate,
Nor knowing us nor known: and if by prayer
Inceſſant I could hope to change the will
Of him who all things can, I would not ceaſe
To weary him with my aſſiduous cries:
But prayer againſt his abſolute decree
No more avails than breath againſt the wind,
Blown ſtifling back on him that breathes it forth:
Therefore to his great bidding I ſubmit.
This moſt afflicts me, that departing hence,
As from his face I ſhall be hid, depriv'd
His bleſſed count'nance; here I could frequent
With worſhip place by place where he vouchſaf'd
Preſence divine, and to my ſons relate,
On this mount he appear'd, under this tree
Stood viſible, among theſe pines his voice
I heard, here with him at this fountain talk'd;
So many greatful altars, I would rear

Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
Of lustre from the brook, in memory,
Or monument to ages, and thereon
Offer sweet smelling gums, and fruits, and flow'rs:
In yonder nether world, where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or footsteps trace?
For though I fled him angry, yet recall'd
To life prolong'd and promis'd race, I now
Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
Of glory, and far off his steps adore.

To whom thus Michael with regard benign.
Adam, thou know'st Heav'n his, and all the earth
Nor this rock only'; his omnipresence fills
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
Fomented by his virtual pow'r and warm'd:
All th' earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
No despicable gift; surmise not then
His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd
Of Paradise or Eden; this had been
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
All generations, and had hither come
From all the ends of th' earth, to celebrate
And reverence thee their great progenitor.
But this pre-eminence thou' hast lost, brought down
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:
Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain
God is as here, and will be found alike
Present, and of his presence many a sign
Still following thee, still compassing thee round
With goodness and paternal love, his face
Express, and of his steps the track divine.
Which that thou may'st believe, and be confirm'd
Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent
To show thee what shall come in future days
To thee and to thy offspring good with bad;
Expect to hear supernal grace contending
With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn
True patience, and to temper joy with fear
And pious sorrow, equally inur'd
By moderation either state to bear,

Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
Safest thy life, and best prepar'd endure
Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
This hill; let Eve (for I have drench'd her eyes)
Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wak'st;
As once thou slept'st, while she to life was form'd.
To whom thus Adam gratefully reply'd.
Ascend, I follow thee, safe guide, the path
Thou lead'st me', and to the hand of Heav'n submit,
However chast'ning, to the evil turn
My obvious breast, arming to overcome
By suffering, and earn rest from labour won,
If so I may attain. So both ascend
In the visions of God. It was a hill
Of Paradise the highest, from whose top
The hemisphere of earth in clearest ken
Stretch'd out to th' amplest reach of prospect lay.
Not higher that hill, nor wider looking round,
Whereon for different cause the tempter set
Our second Adam in the wilderness,
To show him all earth's kingdoms, and their glory.
His eye might there command where-ever stood
City of old or modern fame, the seat
Of mightiest empire, from the destin'd walls
Of Cambula, seat of Cathaian Can,
And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
To Paquin of Sinæan king, and thence
To Arga and Lahor of great Mogul,
Down to the golden Chersonese, or where
The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
In Hispahan, or where the Russian Czar
In Mosco, or the Sultan in Bizanee,
Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken
Th' empire of Negus to his utmost port
Ercoco, and the less maritime kings,
Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
And Sofala thought Ophir, to the realm
Of Congo, and Angola farthest south:
Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount,
The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,

Morocco, and Algiers, and Tremiſen;
On Europe thence, and where Rome was to ſway
The world: in ſp'rit perhaps he alſo ſaw
Rich Mexico the ſeat of Montezuma,
And Cuſco, in Peru, the richer ſeat
Of Atabalipa, and yet unſpoil'd
Guiana, whoſe great city Geryon's ſons
Call El Dorado. But to nobler ſights
Michael from Adam's eyes the film remov'd,
Which the falſe fruit that promis'd clearer ſight
Had bred; then purg'd with eupharaſy and rue
The viſual nerve, for he had much to ſee;
And from the well of life three drops inſtill'd,
So deep the pow'r of theſe ingredients pierc'd.
Even to the inmoſt ſeat of mental ſight,
That Adam now inforc'd to cloſe his eyes,
Sunk down, and all his ſp'rits became intranc'd;
But him the gentle Angel by the hand
Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd.

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

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

Whereat he inly rag'd, and as they talk'd,
Smote him into the midriff with a ſtone
That beat out life; he fell, and deadly pale
Groan'd out his ſoul with guſhing blood effus'd.
Much at that ſight was Adam in his heart
Diſmay'd, and thus in haſte to th' Angel cry'd.
O teacher, ſome great miſchief hath befall'n
To that meek man, who well had ſacrific'd;
Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?
T' whom Michael thus, he alſo mov'd, reply'd.
Theſe two are brethren, Adam, and to come
Out of thy loins; th' unjuſt the juſt hath ſlain,
For envy that his brother's offering found
From Heav'n acceptance: but the bloody fact
Will be aveng'd; and th' other's faith approv'd,
Loſe no reward, though here thou ſee him die,
Rolling in duſt and gore. To which our ſire.
Alas, both for the deed and for the cauſe!
But have I now ſeen Death? Is this the way
I muſt return to native duſt? O ſight
Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!
To whom Michael. Death thou haſt ſeen
In his firſt ſhape on man; but many ſhapes
Of death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave, all diſmal; yet to ſenſe
More terrible at th' entrance than within.
Some as thou ſaw'ſt, by violent ſtroke ſhall die,
By fire, flood, famine; by intemp'rance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth ſhall bring
Diſeaſes dire, of which a monſtrous crew,
Before thee ſhall appear; that thou may'ſt know
What miſery th' inabſtinence of Eve
Shall bring on men. Immediately a place
Before his eyes appear'd, ſad, noiſome, dark,
A lazar-houſe it ſeem'd, wherein were laid
Numbers of all diſeas'd, all maladies
Of ghaſtly ſpaſm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-ſick agony, all ſev'rous kind,
Convulſions, epilepſies, fierce catarrhs,

Inteſtine ſtone and ulcer, colic pangs,
Demoniac phrenzy, moaping melancholy,
And moon-ſtruck madneſs, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide waſting peſtilence,
Dropſies, and aſthma's, and joint-racking rheums.
Dire was the toſſing, deep the groans; Deſpair
Tended the ſick, buſieſt from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delay'd to ſtrike, though oft invok'd
With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
Sight ſo deform what heart of rock could long
Dry-ey'd behold? Adam could not, but wept,
Though not of women born; compaſſion quell'd
His beſt of man, and gave him up to tears
A ſpace, till firmer thoughts reſtrain'd exceſs;
And ſcarce recovering words his plaint renew'd.
O miſerable mankind, to what fall
Degraded, to what wretched ſtate reſerv'd!
Better end here unborn. Why is life giv'n
To be thus wreſted from us? rather why
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
What we receive, would rather not accept
Life offer'd, or ſoon beg to lay it down,
Glad to be ſo diſmiſs'd in peace. Can thus
Th' image of God in man, created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty ſince,
To ſuch unſightly ſufferings be debas'd
Under inhuman pains? Why ſhould not man,
Retaining ſtill divine ſimilitude
In part, from ſuch deformities be free,
And for his Maker's image ſake, exempt?
Their Maker's image, anſwer'd Michael, then
Forſook them, when themſelves they vilify'd
To ſerve ungovern'd Appetite, and took
His image whom they ſerv'd, a brutiſh vice,
Inductive mainly to the ſin of Eve.
Therefore ſo abject is their puniſhment,
Diſfiguring not God's likeneſs, but their own;
Or if his likeneſs, by themſelves defac'd,
While they pervert pure nature's healthful rules

To loathſome ſickneſs; worthily, ſince they
God's image did not rever'nce in themſelves.
I yield it juſt, ſaid Adam, and ſubmit.
But is there yet no other way, beſides
Theſe painful paſſages, how we may come
To death, and mix with our co-natural duſt?
There is, ſaid Michael, if thou well obſerve
The rule of not too much, by temp'rance taught,
In what thou eat'ſt and drink'ſt, ſeeking from thence
Due nouriſhment, not gluttonous delight,
Till many years over thy head return:
So may'ſt thou live, till like ripe fruit thou drop
Into thy mother's lap, or be with eaſe
Gather'd, not harſhly pluck'd, for death mature:
This is old age; but then thou muſt outlive
Thy youth, thy ſtrength, thy beauty, which will change
To wither'd, weak, and gray; thy ſenſes then
Obtuſe, all taſte of pleaſure muſt forego,
To what thou haſt; and for the air of youth,
Hopeful and chearful, in thy blood will reign
A melancholy damp of cold and dry
To weigh thy ſpirits down, and laſt conſume
The balm of life. To whom our anceſtor:
Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
Life much; bent rather how I may be quit
Faireſt and eaſieſt of this cumbrous charge;
Which I muſt keep, till my appointed day
Of rend'ring up, and patiently attend
My diſſolution. Michael reply'd.
Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'ſt,
Live well; how long or ſhort permit to Heav'n:
And now prepare thee for another ſight.
He look'd, and ſaw a ſpacious plain, whereon
Were tents of various hue: by ſome were herds
Of cattle grazing; others, whence the ſound
Was heard, of harp and organ; and who mov'd
Their ſtops and chords, was ſeen; his volant touch
Inſtinct through all proportions, low and high,
Fled, and purſu'd tranſverſe the reſonant fugue.

In other part ſtood one who at the forge
Lab'ring, two maſſy clods of ir'on and braſs
Had melted, (whether found where caſual fire
Had waſted woods on mountain or in vale,
Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot
To ſome cave's mouth, or whether waſh'd by ſtream
From underground), the liquid ore he drain'd
Into fit moulds prepar'd; from which he form'd
Firſt his own tools; then, what might elſe be wrought
Fuſil or grav'n in metal. After theſe,
But on the hither ſide, a different ſort
From the high neighb'ring hills, which was their ſeat
Down to the plain deſcended: by their guiſe
Juſt men they ſeem'd, and all their ſtudy bent
To worſhip God aright, and know his works
Not hid, nor thoſe things laſt which might preſerve
Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain
Long had not walk'd, when from the tents behold
A bevy of fair women, richly gay
In gems and wanton dreſs; to th' harp they ſung
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on.
The men, though grave, ey'd them, and let their eyes
Rove without rein, till in the amorous net
Firſt caught, they lik'd, and each his liking choſe:
And now of love they treat, till th' ev'ning ſtar,
Love's harbinger, appear'd; then all in heat
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invok'd
Hymen, then firſt to marriage-rites invok'd:
With feaſt and muſic all the tents reſound.
Such happy interview and fair event
Of love and youth not loſt, ſongs, garlands, flow'rs,
And charming ſymphonies attach'd the heart
Of Adam, ſoon inclin'd t' admit delight,
The bent of nature; which he thus expreſs'd.

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

To whom thus Michael. Judge not what is best
By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,
Created, as thou art, to nobler end,
Holy and pure, conformity divine.
Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
Who slew his brother; studious they appear
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare,
Unmindful of their Maker, though his Sp'rit
Taught them, but they his gifts acknowledg'd none.
Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget:
For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd
Of goddesses, so blythe, so smooth, so gay,
Yet empty of all good, wherein consists
Woman's domestic honour and chief praise;
Bred only and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetence, to sing, to dance,
To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye.
To these, that sober race of men, whose lives
Religious titled them the sons of God,
Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles
Of these fair atheists, and now swim in joy,
Erelong to swim at large; and laugh, for which
The world erelong a world of tears must weep.
To whom thus Adam, of soft joy bereft.
O pity' and shame, that they who to live well,
Enter'd so fair, should turn aside to tread
Paths indirect, or in the midway faint!
But still I see the tenor of Man's woe
Holds on the same from Woman to begin.
From man's effeminate slackness it begins,
Said th' Angel, who would better hold his place
By wisdom, and superior gifts receiv'd.
But now prepare thee for another scene.
He look'd, and saw wide territories spread
Before him, towns, and rural works between,
Cities of men with lofty gates and tow'rs;
Concourse in arms, fierce faces threat'ning war,
Giants of mighty bone, and bold emprise:

Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
Single or in array of battle rang'd
Both horse and foot, nor idly must'ring stood;
One way a band select from forage drives
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine
From a fat meadow-ground, or fleecy flock,
Ewes and their bleating lambs, over the plain,
Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly,
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray;
With cruel tournament the squadrons join;
Where cattle pastur'd late, now scatter'd lies
With carcases and arms th' insanguin'd field
Deserted: others to a city strong
Lay siege, incamp'd, by battery, scale, and mine,
Assaulting; others from the wall defend
With dart and jav'lin, stones and sulph'rous fire;
On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.
In other parts the sceptcr'd heralds call
To council in the city gates; anon
Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mix'd
Assemble, and harangues are heard, but soon
In factious opposition; till at last
Of middle age one rising, eminent
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
Of justice, of religion, truth and peace,
And judgment from above: him old and young
Exploded, and had seiz'd with violent hands,
Had not a cloud descending snatch'd him thence
Unseen amid the throng: so violence
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,
Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
Lamenting turn'd full sad; O what are these,
Death's ministers, not men, who thus deal death
Inhumanly to men, and multiply
Ten thousandfold the sin of him who slew
His brother! for of whom such massacre
Make they but of their brethren, men of men?
But who was that just man, whom had not Heav'n
Rescu'd, had in his righteousness been lost?

To whom thus Michael. Thefe are the product
Of thofe ill-mated marriages thou faw'ft;
Where good with bad were match'd, who of themfelves
Abhor to join; and by imprudence mix'd,
Produce prodigious births of body' or mind.
Such were thefe giants, men of high renown;
For in thofe days might only fhall be' admir'd,
And valour and heroic virtue call'd;
To overcome in battle, and fubdue
Nations, and bring home fpoils with infinite
Man-flaughter, fhall be held the higheft pitch
Of human glory, and for glory done
Of triumph, to be ftyl'd great conquerors,
Patrons of mankind, gods, and fons of gods;
Deftroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.
Thus fame fhall be atchiev'd, renown on earth,
And what moft merits fame in filence hid.
But he, the lev'nth from thee, whom thou beheld'ft,
The only righteous in a world perverfe,
And therefore hated, therefore fo befet
With foes, for daring fingle to be juft,
And utter odious truth, that God would come
To judge them with his faints: him the Moft High
Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged fteeds
Did, as thou faw'ft, receive, to walk with God
High in falvation, and the climes of bliffs,
Exempt from death; to fhow thee what reward
Awaits the good, the reft what punifhment;
Which now directs thine eyes, and foon behold.
He look'd, and faw the face of things quite chang'd:
The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar;
All now was turn'd to jollity and game,
To luxury and riot, feaft and dance,
Marrying or proftituting, as befel
Rape or adultery, where paffing fair
Allur'd them; thence from cups to civil broils.
At length a reverend fire among them came,
And of their doings great diflike declar'd,
And teftify'd againft their ways; he oft
Frequented their aflemblies, whereſo met,

Triumphs or festivals, and to them preach'd
Conversion and repentance, as to souls
In prison under judgments imminent:
But all in vain; which when he saw, he ceas'd
Contending, and remov'd his tents far off;
Then from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;
Measur'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and height;
Smear'd round with pitch; and in the side a door
Contriv'd; and of provisions laid in large
For man and beast: when lo, a wonder strange!
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small
Came sev'ns, and pairs, and enter'd in, as taught
Their order: last the sire, and his three sons,
With their four wives; and God made fast the door.
Meanwhile the south-wind rose, and with black wings
Wide hovering, all the clouds together drove
From under Heav'n; the hills to their supply
Vapour, and exhalation dusk and moist,
Sent up amain; and now the thicken'd sky
Like a dark ceiling stood; down rush'd the rain
Impetuous, and continu'd, till the earth
No more was seen; the floating vessel swam
Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow
Rode tilting o'er the waves: all dwelling else
Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water roll'd; sea cover'd sea,
Sea without shore; and in their palaces
Where luxury late reign'd, sea-monsters whelp'd
And stabl'd; of mankind, so numerous late,
All left in one small bottom swam imbark'd.
How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
The end of all thy offspring, end so sad,
Depopulation? thee another flood,
Of tears and sorrow' a flood, thee also drown'd,
And sunk thee as thy sons; till gently rear'd
By th' Angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
Though comfortless, as when a father mourns
His children, all in view destroy'd at once;
And scarce to th' Angel utter'd thus thy plaint.

O visions, ill foreseen! better had I
Liv'd ignorant of future, so had borne
My part of evil only, each day's lot
Enough to bear; those now, that were dispens'd
The burden of many ages, on me light
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
Abortive, to torment me ere their being,
With thought that they must be. Let no man seek
Henceforth to be foretold what shall befal
Him or his children; evil he may be sure,
Which neither his foreknowledge can prevent,
And he the future evil shall no less
In apprehension than in substance feel,
Grievous to bear: but that care now is past,
Man is not whom to warn: these few escap'd
Famine and anguish will at last consume,
Wand'ring that wat'ry desart. I had hope,
When violence was ceas'd, and war on earth,
All would have then gone well, peace would have crown'd
With length of happy days the race of man:
But I was far deceiv'd; for now I see
Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
How comes it thus? unfold, celestial guide,
And whether here the race of man will end.

To whom thus Michael. Those whom last thou saw'st
In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
First seen in acts of prowess eminent,
And great exploits, but of true virtue void,
Who having spilt much blood, and done much waste
Subduing nations, and atchiev'd thereby
Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey,
Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,
Surfeit, and lust, till wantonness and pride
Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
The conquer'd also, and inslav'd by war,
Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose,
And fear of God, from whom their piety feign'd
In sharp contest of battle found no aid,
Against invaders; therefore cool'd in zeal,
Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,

Worldly or diſſolute, on what their lords
Shall leave them to enjoy; for th' earth ſhall bear
More than enough, that temp'rance may be try'd:
So all ſhall turn degenerate, all deprav'd;
Juſtice and temp'rance, truth and faith forgot;
One man except, the only ſon of light
In a dark age, againſt example good,
Againſt alurement, cuſtom, and a world
Offended; fearleſs of reproach and ſcorn,
Or violence, he of their wicked ways
Shall them admoniſh, and before them ſet
The path of righteouſneſs, how much more ſafe,
And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come
On their impenitence; and ſhall return
Of them derided, but of God obſerv'd
The one juſt man alive; by his command
Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheld'ſt,
To ſave himſelf and houſehold from amidſt
A world devote to univerſal wrack.
No ſooner he with them of man and beaſt
Select for life, ſhall in the ark be lodg'd,
And ſhelter'd round, but all the cataracts
Of Heav'n ſet open on the earth ſhall pour
Rain day and night; all fountains of the deep
Broke up, ſhall heave th' ocean to uſurp
Beyond all bounds, till inundation riſe
Above the higheſt hills; then ſhall this mount
Of Paradiſe by might of waves be mov'd
Out of his place, puſh'd by the horned flood
With all his verdure ſpoil'd, and trees adrift,
Down the great river to th' opening gulph,
And there take root, an iſland ſalt and bare,
The haunt of ſeals, and ores, and ſea-mews clang:
To teach thee that God attributes to place
No ſanctity, if none be thither brought
By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
And now what further ſhall enſue, behold.

He look'd, and ſaw the ark hull on the flood,
Which now abated: for the clouds were fled,
Driv'n by a keen north-wind, that blowing dry

Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decay'd;
And the clear sun on his wide wat'ry glass
Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,
As after thirst, which made their flowing shrink
From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
With soft foot tow'ards the deep, who now had stopt,
His sluices, as the heav'n his window shut.
The ark no more now flotes, but seems on ground,
Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd,
And now the tops of hills as rocks appear;
With clamour thence the rapid currents drive
Tow'ards the retreating sea their furious tide.
Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,
And after him, the surer messenger,
A dove sent forth once and again to spy
Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light;
The second time returning, in his bill
An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign:
Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
The ancient sire descends with all his train;
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
Grateful to Heav'n, over his head beholds
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow,
Conspicuous, with three lifted colours gay,
Betok'ning peace from God, and cov'nant new.
Whereat the heart of Adam erst so sad
Greatly rejoic'd, and thus his joy broke forth.
O thou who future things canst represent
As present, heav'nly instructor, I revive
At this last sight, assur'd that Man shall live
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
Far less I now lament for one whole world
Of wicked sons destroy'd, than I rejoice
For one man found so perfect and so just,
That God vouchsafes to raise another world
From him, and all his anger to forget;
But say what mean those colour'd streaks in Heav'n,
Distended as the brow of God appeas'd?
Or serve they as a flow'ry verge to bind

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

The End of the Eleventh Book

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK XII.

The ARGUMENT.

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

As one who in his journey baits at noon, [paus'd
Though bent on speed: so here th' Arch-angel
Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd,

If Adam ought perhaps might interpose:
Then with transition sweet new speech resumes.
Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end;
And man as from a second stock proceed,
Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive
Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine
Must needs impair and weary human sense:
Henceforth what is to come I will relate,
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend,
This second source of men, while yet but few,
And while the dread of judgment past remains
Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,
With some regard to what is just and right
Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace;
Labr'ing the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn, wine, and oil, and from the herd or flock,
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,
With large wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred feast,
Shall spend their days in Joy unblam'd, and dwell
Long time in peace, by families and tribes,
Under paternal rule; till one shall rise
Of proud ambitious heart, who, not content
With fair equality, fraternal taste,
Will arrogate dominion undeserv'd
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
Concord and law of nature from the earth,
Hunting (and men, not beasts, shall be his game)
With war and hostile snare such as refuse
Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styl'd
Before the Lord, as in despite of Heav'n,
Or from Heav'n claiming second sov'reignty;
And from rebellion shall derive his name,
Though of rebellion others he accuse.
He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
With him or under him to tyrannize,
Marching from Eden tow'ards the west, shall find
The plain wherein a black bituminous gurge
Boils out from under ground, the mouth of hell:
Of brick, and of that stuff, they cast to build

A city' and tow'r, whose top may reach to Heav'n;
And get themselves a name; lest far dispers'd
In foreign lands, their memory be lost,
Regardless whether good or evil fame.
But God, who oft descends to visit men
Unseen, and through their habitations walks
To mark their doings, them beholding soon,
Comes down to see their city, ere the tow'r
Obstruct Heav'n-tow'rs, and in derision sets
Upon their tongues a various sp'rit, to raze
Quite out their native language, and instead
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown.
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud,
Among the builders each to others call
Not understood, till hoarse, and all in rage,
As mock'd they storm; great laughter was in Heav'n
And looking down, to see the hubbub strange,
And hear the din; thus was the building left
Ridiculous, and the work confusion nam'd.
Whereto thus Adam fatherly displeas'd.
O execrable son so to aspire
Above his brethren, to himself assuming
Authority usurp'd from God not giv'n:
He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation: but man over men
He made not lord; such title to himself
Reserving, human left from human free.
But this usurper his encroachment proud
Stays not on man; to God his tow'r intends
Siege and defiance. Wretched man! what food
Will he convey up hither to sustain
Himself and his rash army, where thin air
Above the clouds will pine his intrails gross,
And famish him of breath, if not of bread?
To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorr'st
That son, who on the quiet state of men
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational liberty; yet known withal,
Since thy original lapse, true liberty

Is loſt, which always with right reaſon dwells
Twinn'd and from her hath no dividual being:
Reaſon in man obſcur'd, or not obey'd,
Immediately inordinate deſires
And upſtart paſſions catch the government
From reaſon, and to ſervitude reduce
Man till then free. Therefore, ſince he permits
Within himſelf unworthy pow'rs to reign
Over free reaſon, God, in judgment juſt,
Subjects him from without to violent lords;
Who oft as undeſervedly inthral
His outward freedom: tyranny muſt be,
Though to the tyrant thereby no excuſe.
Yet ſometimes nations will decline ſo low
From virtue, which is reaſon, that no wrong,
But juſtice, and ſome fatal curſe annex'd,
Deprives them of their outward liberty,
Their inward loſt: witneſs th' irreverent ſon
Of him who built the ark, who, for the ſhame
Done to his father, heard this heavy curſe,
Servant of ſervants, on his vicious race.
Thus will this latter, as the former world,
Still tend from bad to worſe, till God at laſt,
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
His preſence from among them, and avert
His holy eyes, reſolving from thenceforth
To leave them to their own polluted ways;
And one peculiar nation to ſelect
From all the reſt, of whom to be invok'd,
A nation from one faithful man to ſpring:
Him on this ſide Euphrates yet reſiding,
Bred up in idol-worſhip: O that man
(Canſt thou believe?) ſhould be ſo ſtupid grown,
While yet the patriarch liv'd, who 'ſcap'd the flood,
As to forſake the living God, and fall
To worſhip their own work in wood and ſtone
For gods! yet him God the Moſt High vouchſafes
To call by viſion from his Father's houſe,
His kindred and falſe gods, into a land

Which he will ſhow him, and from him will raiſe
A mighty nation, and upon him ſhow'r
His benediction ſo, that in his ſeed
All nations ſhall be bleſs'd; he ſtrait obeys,
Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes.
I ſee him, but thou canſt not, with what faith
He leaves his gods, his friends, and native ſoil
Ur of Chaldæa, paſſing now the ford
To Haran, after him a cumbrous train
Of herds and flocks, and numerous ſervitude;
Not wand'ring; poor, but truſting all his wealth
With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.
Canaan he now attains; I ſee his tents
Pitch'd about Sechem and the neighb'ring plain
Of Moreh; there by promiſe he receives
Gift to his progeny of all that land,
From Hamath northward to the deſart ſouth,
(Things by their names I call, though yet unnam'd)
From Hermon eaſt to the great weſtern ſea;
Mount Hermon, yonder ſea, each place behold
In proſpect, as I point them; on the ſhore
Mount Carmel; here the double-founted ſtream,
Jordan, true limit caſtward; but his ſons
Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.
This ponder, that all nations of the earth
Shall in his ſeed be bleſſed: by that ſeed
Is meant thy great deliverer, who ſhall bruiſe
The ſerpent's head; whereof to thee anon
Plainlier ſhall be reveal'd. This patriarch bleſs'd,
Whom faithful Abraham due time ſhall call,
A ſon, and of his ſon a grandchild leaves,
Like him in faith, in wiſdom, and renown.
The grandchild with twelve ſons increas'd, departs
From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd
Egypt, divided by the river Nile:
See where it flows, diſgorging at ſev'n mouths
Into the ſea. To ſojourn in that land
He comes, invited by a younger ſon
In time of dearth; a ſon whoſe worthy deeds

Raise him to be the second in that realm
Of Pharaoh; there he dies, and leaves his race
Growing into a nation, and now grown
Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks
To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
Inhospitably', and kills their infant-males;
Till by two brethren (those two brethren call
Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim
His people from inthralment, they return
With glory' and spoil back to their promis'd land.
But first the lawless tyrant, who denies
To know their God, or message to regard,
Must be compell'd by signs and judgments dire;
To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd;
Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill
With loath'd intrusion, and fill all the land;
His cattle must of rot and murrain die;
Botches and blains must all his flesh imboss,
And all his people; thunder mix'd with hail,
Hail mix'd with fire, must rend th' Egyptian sky,
And wheel on th' earth, devouring where it rolls;
What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
Palpable darkness; and blot out three days;
Last, with one midnight-stroke, all the first-born
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds
The river-dragon tam'd at length submits
To let his sojourners depart, and oft
Humbles his stubborn heart; but still as ice
More harden'd after thaw; till in his rage
Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea
Swallows him with his host; but them lets pass
As on dry land between two crystal walls,
Aw'd by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided, till his rescu'd gain their shore;
Such wond'rous pow'r God to his saint will lend,

Though present in his Angel, who shall go
Before them in a cloud, and pill'ar of fire,
By day a cloud, by night a pill'ar of fire,
To guide them in their journey, and remove
Behind them, while th' obdurate king pursues:
All night he will pursue; but his approach
Darkness defends between till morning watch;
Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud
God looking forth will trouble all his host,
And craze their chariot-wheels; when by command
Moses once more his potent rod extends
Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;
On their embattled ranks the waves return,
And overwhelm their war. The race elect
Safe towards Canaan from the shore advance
Through the wild desart, not the readiest way,
Lest ent'ring on the Canaanite alarm'd,
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, chusing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for life
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untrain'd in arms, where rashness leads not on.
This also shall they gain by their delay
In the wild wilderness; there they shall found
Their government, and their great senate chuse
Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordain'd.
God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets sound,
Ordain them laws; part such as appertain
To civil justice, part religious rites
Of sacrifice, informing them, by types
And shadows of that destin'd seed to bruise
The serpent, by what means he shall atchieve
Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God
To mortal ear is dreadful; they beseech
That Moses might report to them his will,
And terror cease; he grants what they besought,
Instructed that to God is no access

Without Mediator, whose high office now
Moses in figure bears, to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretel,
And all the prophets in their age the times
Of great Messi'ah shall sing. Thus laws and rites
Establish'd, such delight hath God in men
Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
Among them to set up his tabernacle,
The holy One with mortal men to dwell.
By his prescript a sanctuary is fram'd
Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
The records of his covenant; over these
A mercy-seat of gold between the wings
Of two bright cherubim; before him burn
Sev'n lamps, as in a zodiac representing
The heav'nly fires; over the tent a cloud
Shall rust by day, a fiery gleam by night,
Save when they journey, and at length they come,
Conducted by his Angel, to the land
Promis'd to Abraham and his seed. The rest
Were long to tell, how many battles fought,
How many kings destroy'd, and kingdoms won;
Or how the sun shall in mid Heav'n stand still
A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
Man's voice commanding, sun in Gibeon stand
And thou moon in the vale of Aialon,
Till Israel overcome: so call the third
From Abraham, son of Isaac, and from him
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.

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

Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
This yet I apprehend not, why to thofe
Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth,
So many and fo various laws are giv'n;
So many laws argue fo many fins
Among them; how can God with fuch refide?
To whom thus Michael. Doubt not but that fin
Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
And therefore was law giv'n them to evince
Their natural pravity, by ftirring up
Sin againft law to fight: that when they fee
Law can difcover fin but not remove,
Save by thofe fhadowy expiations weak,
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
Some blood more precious muft be paid for man,
Juft for unjuft; that in fuch righteoufnefs
To them by faith imputed, they may find
Juftification towards God, and peace
Of confcience; which the law by ceremonies
Cannot appeafe, nor man the moral part
Perform, and not performing cannot live.
So law appears imperfect, and but given
With purpofe to refign them in full time
Up to a better covenant, difciplin'd
From fhadowy types to truth, from flefh to fpirit,
From compofition of ftrict laws to free
Acceptance of large grace, from fervile fear
To filial, works of law to works of faith.
And therefore fhall not Mofes, though of God
Highly belov'd, being but the minifter
Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jefus call,
His name and office bearing, who fhall quell
The adverfary ferpent, and bring back
Through the world's wilderneſs long wander'd man
Safe to eternal Paradife of reft.
Mean while they in their earthly Canaan plac'd,
Long time fhall dwell and profper; but when fins
National interrupt their public peace,

Provoking God to raiſe them enemies;
From whom as oft he ſaves them penitent
By judges firſt, then under kings; of whom
The ſecond, both for piety renown'd
And puiſſant deeds, a promiſe ſhall receive
Irrevocable, that his regal throne
For ever ſhall endure; the like ſhall ſing
All prophecy, that of the royal ſtock
Of David (ſo I name this king) ſhall riſe
A ſon, the woman's ſeed to thee foretold,
Foretold to Abraham, and in whom ſhall truſt
All nations, and to kings foretold, of kings
The laſt; for of his reign ſhall be no end.
But firſt a long ſucceſſion muſt enſue;
And his next ſon, for wealth and wiſdom fam'd,
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
Wand'ring, ſhall in a glorious temple' inſhrine.
Such follow him as ſhall be regiſter'd
Part good, part bad, of bad the longer ſcroll;
Whoſe foul idolatries and other faults
Heap'd to the popular ſum, will ſo incenſe
God, as to leave them, and expoſe their land,
Their city', his temple, and his holy ark,
With all his ſacred things, a ſcorn and prey
To that proud city, whoſe high walls thou ſaw'ſt
Left in confuſion, Babylon thence call'd.
There in captivity he lets them dwell
The ſpace of ſev'nty years, then brings them back,
Rememb'ring mercy, and his covenant ſworn
To David, 'ſtabliſh'd as the days of Heav'n.
Return'd from Babylon by leave of kings
Their lords, whom God diſpos'd, the houſe of God
They firſt re-edify, and for a while
In mean eſtate live moderate, till grown
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;
But firſt among the prieſts diſſenſion ſprings,
Men who attend the altar, and ſhould moſt
Endeavour peace: their ſtrife pollution brings
Upon the temple itſelf: at laſt they ſieze

The ſceptre, and regard not David's ſons;
Then loſe it to a ſtranger, that the true
Anointed king Meſſiah might be born
Barr'd of his right; yet at his birth a ſtar,
Unſeen before in heav'n, proclaims him come,
And guides the eaſtern ſages, who inquire
His place to offer incenſe, myrrh, and gold:
His place of birth a ſolemn Angel tells
To ſimple ſhepherds, keeping watch by night;
They gladly thither haſte, and by a quire
Of quadron'd Angels hear his carol ſung.
A virgin is his mother, but his ſire
The pow'r of the Moſt High; he ſhall aſcend
The throne hereditary, and bound his reign
With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the Heav'ns.
He ceas'd, diſcerning Adam with ſuch joy
Surcharg'd, as had like grief been dew'd in tears,
Without the vent of words, which theſe he breath'd.
O prophet of glad tidings, finiſher
Of utmoſt hope! now clear I underſtand
What oft my ſteadieſt thoughts have ſearch'd in vain;
Why our great expectation ſhould be call'd
The ſeed of woman: Virgin mother hail,
High in the love of Heav'n; yet from my loins
Thou ſhalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
Of God moſt high; ſo God with Man unites.
Needs muſt the ſerpent now his capital bruiſe
Expect with mortal pain: ſaw where and when
Their fight, what ſtroke ſhall bruiſe the victor's heel.
To whom thus Michael. Dream not of their fight,
As of a duel, or the local wounds
Of head or heel: not therefore joins the Son
Manhood to Godhead, with more ſtrength to foil
Thy enemy: nor ſo is overcome
Satan, whoſe fall from Heav'n, a deadlier bruiſe,
Diſabled not to give thee thy death's wound:
Which he, who comes thy Saviour, ſhall recure,
Not by deſtroying Satan, but his works
In thee and in thy ſeed: nor can this be,

But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
Obedience to the law of God, impos'd
On penalty of death, and suffering death,
The penalty to thy transgression due,
And due to theirs which out of thine will grow:
So only can high justice rest appaid,
The law of God exact he shall fulfil
Both by obedience and by love, though love
Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment
He shall endure by coming in the flesh
To a reproachful life and cursed death,
Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
In his redemption, and that his obedience
Imputed becomes theirs by faith, his obedience
To save them, not their own, though legal works.
For this he shall live hated, be blasphem'd,
Siez'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemn'd,
A shameful and accurs'd; nail'd to the cross
By his own nation; slain for bringing life;
But to the cross he nails thy enemies,
The law that is against thee, and the sins
Of all mankind, with him there crucify'd,
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
In this satisfaction. So he dies,
But soon revives; death over him no pow'r
Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
Thy ransom paid, which man from death redeems,
His death for man, as many as offer'd life
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
By faith not void of works. This God-like act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have dy'd,
In sin for ever lost from life; this act
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength,
Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms;
And fix far deeper in his head their stings,
Than temp'ral death shall bruise the victor's heel,
Or theirs whom he redeems, a death-like sleep,

A gentle wafting to immortal life,
Nor after resurrection shall he stay
Longer on earth than certain times t' appear
To his disciples, men who in his life
Still follow'd him; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learn'd,
And his salvation them who shall believe
Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befal,
For death, like that which the Redeemer dy'd,
All nations they shall teach: for from that day
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
Salvation shall be preach'd, but to the sons
Of Abraham's faith where-ever through the world;
So in his seed all nations shall be blest.
Then to the Heav'n of Heav'ns he shall ascend
With victory, triumphing through the air
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
The serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains
Through all his realm, and there confounded leave:
Then enter into glory, and resume
His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
Above all names in Heav'n; and thence shall come,
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe.
With glory' and pow'r to judge both quick and dead;
To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
Whether in Heav'n or Earth; for then the earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days.
So spake th' Arch-angel Michael, then paus'd,
As at the world's great period; and our sire,
Replete with joy and wonder, thus reply'd.
O goodness infinite, Goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce,
And evil turn to good; more wonderful
Than that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,

Whether I ſhould repent me now of ſin
By me done and occaſion'd, or rejoice
Much more, that much more good thereof ſhall ſpring;
To God more glory, more good-will to men
From God, and over wrath grace ſhall abound;
But ſay, if our Deliv'rer up to Heav'n
Muſt re-aſcend, what will betide the few
His faithful, left among th' unfaithful herd,
The enemies of truth? who then ſhall guide
His people, who defend? will they not deal
Worſe with his followers than with him they dealt?
Be ſure they will, ſaid th' Angel; but from Heav'n
He to his own a Comforter will ſend,
The promiſe of the Father, who ſhall dwell
His Sp'rit within them, and the law of faith
Working through love, upon their hearts ſhall write,
To guide them in all truth, and alſo arm
With ſpiritual armour, able to reſiſt
Satan's aſſaults; and quench his fiery darts,
What man can do againſt them, not afraid,
Though to the death againſt ſuch cruelties
With inward conſolation recompens'd,
And oft ſupported ſo as ſhall amaze
Their proudeſt perſecutors: for the Spirit
Pour'd firſt on his Apoſtles, whom he ſends
To evangelize the nations, then on all
Baptiz'd, ſhall them with wond'rous gifts endue,
To ſpeak all tongues, and do all miracles,
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each nation to receive
With joy the tidings brought from Heav'n: at length,
Their miniſtry perform'd, and race well run,
Their doctrine and their ſtory written left
They die. But in their room, as they forewarn,
Wolves ſhall ſucceed for teachers, grievous wolves,
Who all the ſacred myſteries of Heav'n
To their own vile advantages ſhall turn
Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
With ſuperſtitions and traditions taint,

Left only in those written records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.
Then shall they seek t' avail themselves of names,
Places, and titles, and with these to join
Secular pow'r, though feigning still to act
By spiritual, to themselves apropriating
The Sp'rit of God, promis'd alike and given
To all believers; and from that pretence
Spiritual laws by carnal pow'r shall force
On every conscience; laws which none shall find
Left them inroll'd, or what the Sp'rit within
Shall on the heart ingrave. What will they then
But force the Sp'rit of grace itself, and bind
His consort liberty? what but unbuild
His living temples, but built by faith to stand,
Their own faith not another's? for on earth
Who against faith and conscience can be heard
Infallible? yet many will presume:
Whence heavy persecution shall arise
On all who in the worship persevere
Of sp'rit and truth; the rest, far greater part,
Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
Religion satisfy'd; truth shall retire
Bestuck with sland'rous darts, and works of faith
Rarely be found: so shall the world go on,
To good malignant, to bad men benign,
Under her own weight groaning, till the day
Appear of respiration to the just,
And vengeance to the wicked, at return
Of him so lately promis'd to thy aid,
The woman's seed, obscurely then foretold,
Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord,
Last in the clouds from Heav'n to be reveal'd
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted world, then raise
From the conflagrant mass purg'd and refin'd,
New Heav'ns, new earth, ages of endless date
Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love,
To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.

He ended; and thus Adam last reply'd.
How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest's'd,
Measur'd this transient world, the race of time,
Till time stand fix'd? Beyond is all abyss
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach;
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;
Beyond which was my folly to aspire.
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
And love with fear the only God, to walk
As in his presence, ever to observe
His providence, and on him sole depend,
Merciful over all his works, with good
Still overcoming evil, and by small
Accomplishing great things, by things deem'd weak
Subverting worldly strong and worldly wise
By simply meek; that suffering for truth's sake
Is fortitude to highest victory,
And, to the faithful, death the gate of life;
Taught this by his example whom I now
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest's'd.
To whom thus also th' Angel last reply'd,
This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd, the sum
Of wisdom; hope no high'er, though all the stars
Thou know'st by name, and all th' ethereal pow'rs,
All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,
Or works of God in Heav'n, air, earth, or sea,
And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst,
And all the rule, one empire; only add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable, add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance, add love,
By name to come call'd charity, the soul
Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loath
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
A Paradise within thee, happier far;
Let us descend now therefore from this top
Of speculation; for the hour precise
Exacts our parting hence; and see the guards,

By me incamp'd on yonder hill, expect
Their motion, at whose front a flaming sword,
In signal of remove, wave fiercely round;
We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;
Her also I with gentle dreams have calm'd
Portending good, and all her spirits compos'd
To meek submission: thou at season fit
Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard,
Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,
The great deliverance by her seed to come
(For by the woman's seed) on all mankind:
That ye may live, which will be many days,
Both in one faith unanimous though sad,
With cause for evils past, yet much more chear'd
With meditation on the happy end.
He ended; and they both descend the hill;
Descended, Adam to the bow'r where Eve
Lay sleeping ran before, but found her wak'd;
And thus with words not sad she him receiv'd.
Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;
For God is also' in sleep, and dreams advise,
Which he hath sent propitious some great good
Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
Wearied I fell asleep; but now lead on;
In me is no delay; with thee to go,
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me
Art all things under Heav'n, all places thou,
Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence.
This further consolation yet secure
I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
Such favour I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,
By me the promis'd seed shall all restore.
So spake our mother Eve; and Adam heard
Well pleas'd, but answer'd not; for now too nigh
Th' Arch-angel stood, and from the other hill
To their fix'd station, all in bright array,
The Cherubim descended; on the ground
Gliding meteorous, as evening-mist

Ris'n from a river o'er the mariſh glides,
And gathers ground faſt at the lab'rer's heel
Homeward returning. High in front advanc'd,
The brandiſh'd ſword of God before them blaz'd
Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
And vapour as the Lybian air aduſt,
Began to parch that temp'rate clime; whereat
In either hand the haſt'ning Angel caught
Our ling'ring parents, and to th' eaſtern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff as faſt
To the ſubjected plain; then diſappear'd.
Then looking back, all th' eaſtern ſide beheld
Of Paradiſe, ſo late their happy ſeat,
Wav'd over by that flaming brand, the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd and fiery arms:
Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them ſoon;
The world was all before them, where to chooſe
Their place of reſt, and Providence their guide:
They hand in hand, with wand'ring ſteps and ſlow,
Through Eden took their ſolitary way.

FINIS.