

PARADISE —
— LOST





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Paradise Lost

By

John Milton

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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 hastens into the midst of things, presenting Satan with his Angels now fallen into Hell, described here, not in the Centre, (for heaven and earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed,) but in a place of utter darkness, 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 awakens all his legions, who lay till then in the same manner confounded; they rise, their numbers, array of battle, their chief leaders named, according to the idols known afterwards in Canaan and the countries adjoining. To these Satan directs his speech, comforts them with hopes yet of regaining Heaven, but tells them lastly of a new world and new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy or report in Heaven; for that Angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient Fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine there-

on, 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, heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top
 Of Oreb or of Sinai, didst inspire
 That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed
 In the beginning how the heavens and earth
 Rose out of Chaos. Or, if Sion hill 10
 Delight the more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
 Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
 Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
 That with no middle flight intends to soar
 Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rime.

And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
 Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
 Instruct me, for thou knowest; thou from the
 first
 Wast present, and, with mighty wings out-
 spread, 20

Dovelike satest brooding on the vast Abyss,
 And madest it pregnant. What in me is dark

Illumine, what is low raise and support ;
 That, to the highth of this great argument,
 I may assert eternal Providence,
 And justify the ways of God to men.

Say first—for Heaven hides nothing from thy
 view,

Nor the deep tract of Hell—say first what cause
 Moved our grand parents, in that happy state,
 Favored of Heaven so highly, to fall off 30
 From their Creator, and transgress his will,
 For one restraint lords of the world besides ;
 Who first seduced them to that foul revolt.—

The infernal Serpent ; he it was, whose guile,
 Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
 The mother of mankind, what time his pride
 Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his
 host

Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, 'aspiring
 To set himself in glory above his peers,
 He trusted to have equalled the Most High, 40
 If he opposed ; and with ambitious aim
 Against the throne and monarchy of God
 Raised impious war in Heaven and battle proud,
 With vain attempt. Him the almighty Power
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from the ethereal sky.
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down
 To bottomless perdition ; there to dwell,
 In 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 51

Lay, vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal. But his doom
Reserved him to more wrath; for now the
thought

Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him. Round he throws his baleful
eyes,

That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,
Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.
At once, as far as Angel's ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild. 60

A dungeon horrible on all sides round
As one great furnace flamed; yet from those
flames

No light, but rather darkness visible
Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.

Such place eternal Justice had prepared 70
For those rebellious, here their prison ordained
In utter darkness, and their portion set,

As far removed from God and light of Heaven
As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.

Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell !

There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,

He soon discerns, and, weltering by his side,

One next himself in power and next in crime,

Long after known in Palestine and named 80

Beëlzebub: to whom the arch-enemy,

And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold
words

Breaking the horrid silence, thus began :

“If thou beest he,—but oh how fallen ! how
changed

From him, who, in the happy realms of light,
Clothed with transcendent brightness didst out-
shine

Myriads though bright !—if he, whom mutual
league,

United thoughts and counsels, equal hope

And hazard in the glorious enterprise

Joined with me once, now misery hath joined 90

In equal ruin . . .” into what pit thou seest

From what highth fallen, so much the stronger
proved

He with his thunder. And till then who knew

The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,

Nor what the potent victor in his rage

Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
 Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed
 mind,

And high disdain from sense of injured merit,
 That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,
 And to the fierce contention brought along 100
 Innumerable force of Spirits armed,
 That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
 His utmost power with adverse power opposed,
 In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,
 And shook his throne. What though the field
 be lost,

All is not lost ; the unconquerable will,
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,
 And courage never to submit or yield,
 And what is else not to be overcome . . .
 That glory never shall his wrath or might 110
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
 Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
 Doubted his empire,—that were low indeed,
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath
 This downfall. Since by fate the strength of
 Gods

And this empyreal substance cannot fail ;
 Since, through experience of this great event,
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
 We may with more successful hope resolve 120

To wage by force or guile eternal war,
 Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
 Who now triumphs, and in the excess of joy
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven . . .”

So spake the apostate Angel, though in pain,
 Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair ;
 And him thus answered soon his bold compeer :

“O prince, O chief of many throned Powers,
 That led the embattled Seraphim to war
 Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds, 130
 Fearless endangered Heaven’s perpetual King,
 And put to proof his high supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate ;
 Too well I see and rue the dire event,
 That, with sad overthrow and foul defeat,
 Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as Gods and heavenly essences
 Can perish ; for the mind and spirit remains
 Invincible, and vigor soon returns, 140
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
 Here swallowed up in endless misery.
 But what if he our conqueror—whom I now
 Of force believe almighty, since no less
 Than such could have o’erpow’red such force as
 ours—

Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,

That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
 Or do him mightier service, as his thralls
 By right of war, whate'er his business be; 150
 Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
 Or do his errands in the gloomy Deep!
 What can it then avail, though yet we feel
 Strength undiminished, or eternal being
 To undergo eternal punishment?"

Whereto with speedy words the Arch-Fiend
 replied:

"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable
 Doing or suffering. But of this be sure,
 To do aught good never will be our task;
 But ever to do ill our sole delight, 160
 As being the contrary to his high will
 Whom we resist. If then his providence
 Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
 Our labor 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 destined aim.—
 But see! the angry victor hath recalled
 His ministers of vengeance and pursuit 170
 Back to the gates of Heaven; the sulphurous
 hail,
 Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
 The fiery surge, that from the precipice

Of Heaven received us falling ; and the thunder,
 Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
 To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.
 Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn
 Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.

Seest thou you dreary plain, forlorn and
 wild, 180

The seat of desolation, void of light,
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
 Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves,
 There rest, if any rest can harbor 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, 190
 If not what resolution from despair."

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
 With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blazed ; his other parts besides
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
 Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size
 Titanian or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
 Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast 200

Leviathan, which God of all his works
 Created hughest that swim the ocean-stream—
 Him, haply slumbering on the Norway-foam,
 The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff
 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night
 Invests the sea, and wished morn delays—
 So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend
 lay,

Chained on the burning lake, nor even thence 210
 Had risen or heaved his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
 Evil to others, and enraged might see
 How all his malice served but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn
 On Man by him seduced, but on himself
 Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance
 poured 220

Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature. On each hand the flames
 Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and,
 rolled
 In billows, leave in the midst a horrid vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight

Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
 That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
 He lights; if it were land that ever burned
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
 And such appeared in hue, as when the force 230
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
 Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
 And fuelled entrails, thence conceiving fire,
 Sublimed with mineral fury aid the winds,
 And leave a singed bottom all involved
 With stench and smoke—such resting found the
 sole

Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate,
 Both glorying to have 'scaped the Stygian flood
 As Gods, and by their own recovered strength, 240
 Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

“Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,”
 Said then the lost Archangel, “this the seat,
 That we must change for Heaven? this mournful
 gloom

For that celestial light? Be it so, since he,
 Who now is sovran, can dispose and bid
 What shall be right; furthest from him is best,
 Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made
 supreme

Above his equals. Farewell happy fields,
 Where joy for ever dwells! hail, horrors! hail, 250

Infernal world! and thou, profoundest Hell,
 Receive thy new possessor, one who brings
 A mind not to be changed by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
 What matter where if I be still the same,
 And what I should be, all but less than he
 Whom thunder hath made greater. Here at least
 We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built
 Here for his envy, will not drive us hence; 260
 Here we may reign secure, and in my choice
 To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell,—
 Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.
 But wherefore let me then our faithful friends,
 The associates and copartners of our loss,
 Lie thus astonished 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
 Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"

So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub 271
 Thus answered: "Leader of those armies bright,
 Which but the Omnipotent none could have
 foiled,
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
 Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
 Of battle, when it raged, in all assaults

Their surest signal, they will soon resume
 New courage and revive, though now they lie
 Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280
 As we erewhile, astounded and amazed,—
 No wonder, fallen such a pernicious highth.”

He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend
 Was moving toward the shore, his ponderous
 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 Fesolè,
 Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, 290
 Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.

His spear—to equal which the tallest pine
 Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
 Of some great ammiral, were but a wand—
 He walked with, to support uneasy steps
 Over the burning marle, not like those steps
 On Heaven's azure; and the torrid clime
 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.
 Nathless he so endured, till on the beach
 Of that inflamed sea he stood, and called 300
 His legions, Angel-forms, who lay entranced,
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
 In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
 High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge

Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
 Hath vexed the Red-sea coast, whose waves
 o'erthrew

Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
 While with perfidious hatred they pursued
 The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
 From the safe shore their floating carcasses 310
 And broken chariot-wheels; so thick bestrown,
 Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
 Under amazement of their hideous change.
 He called so loud that all the hollow deep
 Of Hell resounded: "Princes, Potentates,
 Warriors, the flower of Heaven, once yours, now
 lost,

If such astonishment as this can seize
 Eternal Spirits. Or have ye chosen this place
 After the toil of battle to repose
 Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find 320
 To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
 To adore the conqueror—who now beholds
 Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood,
 With scattered arms and ensigns—tilt anon
 His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern
 The advantage, and descending tread us down,
 Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf?—
 Awake! arise! or be for ever fallen."

They heard and were abashed, 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 obeyed,
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Waved round the coast, up-called a pitchy
cloud

34^o

Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darkened all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad Angels seen,
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain; 35^o
A multitude, like which the populous North
Poured never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.
Forthwith, from every squadron and each band,

The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great commander, godlike shapes, and
forms

Excelling human, princely dignities,
And Powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones; 360
Though of their names in heavenly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and razed
By their rebellion from the books of life.

Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till wandering o'er the
Earth,

Through God's high sufferance for the trial of
man,

By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and the invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform 370
Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for deities.

Then were they known to men by various names
And various idols, through the heathen world.

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

Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,
At their great emperor's call, as next in worth,
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof. 380

The chief were those who, from the pit of Hell
Roaming to seek their prey on Earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, Gods adored
Among the nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned
Between the Cherubim; yea, often placed
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned, 390
And with their darkness durst affront his light.

First Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with
blood

Of human sacrifice and parents' tears,
Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels
loud,

Their children's cries unheard, that passed
through fire

To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshiped in Rabba and her watery plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart 400
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God,
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.

Next Chemos, the obscene dread of Moab's sons,
 From Aroar to Nebo and the wild
 Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
 And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
 The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines, 410
 And Eleälè to the Asphaltic pool.

Peor his other name, when he enticed
 Israel, in Sittim on their march from Nile,
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged
 Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
 Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
 With these came they, who, from the bordering
 flood

Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts 420
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
 Of Baälim and Ashtaroth, those male,
 These feminine: for Spirits when they please
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
 And uncompounded is their essence pure,
 Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
 Non founded on the brittle strength of bones,
 Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they
 choose,

Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
 Can execute their aery purposes, 430
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.

For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their living Strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial Gods ; for which their heads, as low
Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians called.
Astarté, queen of heaven, with crescent horns ;
To whose bright image, nightly by the moon, 440
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
In Sion also not unsung, where stood
Her temple on the offensive mountain, built
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though
 large,
Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate,
In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
While smooth Adonis from his native rock 450
Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded. The love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark

Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off,
In his own temple, on the grunsel edge, 460
Where he fell flat and shamed his worshipers.
Dagon his name, sea monster, upward man
And downward fish ; yet had his temple high
Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him followed Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
He also against the house of God was bold ; 470
A leper once he lost and gained a king,
Ahaz his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the Gods
Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared
A crew, who, under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek 480
Their wandering Gods disguised in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
The infection, when their borrowed gold com-
posed
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 passed
 From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke
 Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
 Belial came last, than whom a Spirit more lewd
 Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love 491
 Vice for itself. To him no temple stood
 Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he
 In temples and at altars, when the priest
 Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who filled
 With lust and violence the house of God?
 In courts and palaces he also reigns,
 And in luxurious cities, where the noise
 Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
 And injury and outrage; and when night 500
 Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
 Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
 Witness the streets of Sodom and that night
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
 Exposed a matron to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime in order and in might;
 The rest were long to tell, though far renowned,
 The Ionian gods, of Javan's issue held
 Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,
 Their boasted parents; Titan, Heaven's first-
 born,
 With his enormous brood, and birthright
 seized

Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
 The imperial ensign, which, full high advanced,
 Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
 With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,
 Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
 Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds : 540

At which the universal host up-sent
 A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
 Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
 All in a moment through the gloom were seen
 Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
 With orient colours waving; with them rose
 A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
 Appeared, and serried sheilds in thick array
 Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move
 In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood 550

Of flutes and soft recorders; such as raised
 To highth of noblest temper heroes old,
 Arming to battle, and instead of rage
 Deliberate valour breathed, firm and unmoved
 With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;
 For wanting power to mitigate and swage
 With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and
 chase

Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
 Breathing united force with fixed thought, 560
 Moved on in silence, to soft pipes that charmed

Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil; and now
Advanced in view they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
Of warriors old, with ordered spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty chief
Had to impose. He through the armed files
Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views, their order due,
Their visages and statures as of Gods; 570
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and, hardening in his
strength,
Glories; for never, since created man,
Met such embodied force as named with these
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warred on by cranes: though all the giant-brood
Of Phlegra with the heroic race were joined
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mixed with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son, 580
Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
And all who since, baptized or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco or Marocco or Trebisond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
By Foutarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed

Their dread commander. He, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent, 590
Stood like a tower; his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appeared
Less than Archangel ruined, and the excess
Of glory obscured. As when the sun new-risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs: darkened so yet shone
Above them all the Archangel; but his face 600
Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
Set 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—condemned
For ever now to have their lot in pain;
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung 610
For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory withered: as, when heaven's fire
Hath scathed the forest-oaks or mountain-pines,
With signed top their stately growth though bare
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend

From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
 With all his peers; attention held them mute.

Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
 Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth; at
 last 620

Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

“O myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers
 Matchless, but with the Almighty; and that
 ’strife

Was ^{not} inglorious, though the event was dire,
 As this place testifies, and this dire change
 Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,

Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
 Of knowledge past or present, could have feared
 How such united force of Gods, how such
 As stood like these, could ever know repulse? 630

For who can yet believe, though after loss,
 That all these puissant legions, whose exile
 Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to re-ascend,
 Self-raised, and repossess their native seat?

For me be witness all the host of Heaven
 If counsels different, or danger shunned
 By me, have lost our hopes. But he, who reigns
 Monarch in Heaven, till then as one secure
 Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
 Consent or custom, and his regal state 640

Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed,

Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our
fall.

Henceforth his might we know, and know our
own,

So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war provoked; our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force affected not; that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force hath overcome but half his foe.

Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife 650
There went a fame in Heaven that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favor equal to the sons of Heaven.

Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere;
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor the Abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired—
For who can think submission? — war then,
war, 661

Open or understood, must be resolved.”

He spake, and to confirm his words out-flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumined Hell. Highly they raged

Against the Highest, and fierce, with grasped
arms,

Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top 670
Belched 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, winged with
speed,

A numerous brigade hastened: as when bands
Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe armed,
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on,
Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell
From Heaven; for even in Heaven his looks and
thoughts 680

Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed
In vision beatific. By him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransacked the centre, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother-earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
Opened into the hill a spacious wound,
And digged out ribs of gold. Let none
admire 690

That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best
 Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
 Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
 Of Babel and the works of Memphian kings,
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame
 And strength and art are easily outdone
 By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour
 What in an age they, with incessant toil
 And hands innumerable, scarce perform.
 Nigh on the plain in many cells prepared, 700
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire
 Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
 With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
 Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion
 dross;

A third as soon had formed within the ground
 A various mould, and from the boiling cells
 By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook;
 As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
 Anon out of the earth a fabric huge 710
 Rose, like an exhalation, with the sound
 Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round
 Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
 With golden architrave; nor did there want
 Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven;
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon

Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine
Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat 720
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
Stood, fixed her stately highth, and straight the
doors

Opening their brazen folds discover wide
Within her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
And level pavement. From the arched roof
Pendent, by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude 730
Admiring entered, and the work some praise
And some the architect. His hand was known
In Heaven by many a towered structure high,
Where sceptred Angels held their residence,
And sat as princes, whom the supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright:
Nor was his name unheard or unadored
In ancient Greese; and in Ausonian land
Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell 740
From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the crystal battlements; from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer's day; and with the setting sun

Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star,
 On Lemnos, the Ægæan isle. Thus they relate,
 Erring, for he with this rebellious rout
 Fell long before: nor aught availed him now
 To have built in Heaven high towers, nor did he
 'scape

By all his engines, but was headlong sent 750
 With his industrious crew to build in Hell.

Meanwhile the winged haralds, by command
 Of sovran power, with awful ceremony
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host pro-
 claim

A solemn council forthwith to be held
 At Pandemonium, the high capital
 Of Satan and his peers. Their summons called,
 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 thronged, the gates 761
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall—
 Though like a covered field, where champions
 bold

Wont ride in armed, and, at the Soldan's chair,
 Defied the best of Panim chivalry
 To mortal combat, or career with lance—
 Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the
 air,

Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As
 bees,

In spring-time when the sun with Taurus rides,
 Pour forth their populous youth about the
 hive

770

In clusters; they, among fresh dews and flowers,
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
 New rubbed with balm, expatiate and confer
 Their state-affairs: so thick the aery crowd
 Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal
 given,

Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed
 In bigness to surpass earth's giant-sons,
 Now less than smallest dwarfs in narrow room
 Throng numberless, like that pygmean race 780
 Beyond the Indian mount, or faery elves,
 Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side
 Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
 Or dreams he sees, while overhead the moon
 Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
 Wheels her pale course; they, on their mirth and
 dance

Intent, with jocund music charm his ear:
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
 Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
 Reduced their shapes immense, and were at
 large,

Though without number still, amidst the hall 791
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.

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 discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven; with what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the power of that place, to the sight of this new World which he sought.

HIGH on a throne of royal state—which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormuz and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold—

Satan exalted sat, by merit raised
 To that bad eminence; and, from despair
 Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
 Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
 Vain war with Heaven, and, by success untaught,
 He proud imaginations thus displayed. 10

“Powers and Dominions, deities of Heaven—
 For since no Deep within her gulf can hold
 Immortal vigour, though oppressed and fallen,
 I give not Heaven for lost; from this descent
 Celestial virtues rising will appear
 More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
 And trust themselves to fear no second fate—
 Me though just right, and the fixed laws of
 Heaven,

Did first create your leader, next free choice,
 With what besides, in counsel or in fight, 20
 Hath been achieved of merit, yet this loss
 Thus far at least recovered hath much more
 Established in a safe unenvied throne,
 Yielded with full consent. The happier state
 In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw
 Envy from each inferior; but who here
 Will envy whom the highest place exposes
 Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim
 Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
 Of endless pain? Where there is then no good 30
 For which to strive, no strife can grow up there

From faction; for none sure will claim in Hell
 Precedence, none whose portion is so small
 Of present pain that with ambitious mind
 Will covet more. With this advantage then
 To union and firm faith and firm accord,
 More than can be in Heaven, we now return
 To claim our just inheritance of old,
 Surer to prosper than prosperity
 Could have assured us; and by what best way 40
 Whether of open war or covert guile,
 We now debate; who can advise may speak."

He ceased, and next him Moloch, sceptred
 king,

Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit
 That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair.
 His trust was with the Eternal to be deemed
 Equal in strength, and rather than be less
 Cared not to be at all. With that care lost
 Went all his fear; of God, or Hell, or worse
 He recked not, and these words thereafter spake:

"My sentence is for open war. Of wiles, 51
 More unexpert, I boast not; them let those
 Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.
 For, while they sit contriving, shall the rest,
 Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
 The signal to ascend, sit lingering here,
 Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
 Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,

The prison of his tyranny who reigns
 By our delay? No, let us rather choose, 60
 Armed with Hell-flames and fury, all at once
 O'er Heaven's high towers to force resistless way,
 Turning our tortures into horrid arms
 Against the torturer; when to meet the noise
 Of his almighty engine he shall hear
 Infernal thunder, and for lightning see
 Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
 Among his Angles, and his throne itself
 Mixed with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire,
 His own invented torments. But perhaps 70
 The way seems difficult and steep to scale
 With upright wing against a higher foe—
 Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
 Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
 That in our proper motion we ascend
 Up to our native seat; descent and fall
 To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
 When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
 Insulting, and pursued us through the Deep,
 With what compulsion and laborious flight 80
 We sunk thus low? The ascent is easy then;
 The event is feared. Should we again provoke
 Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may
 find

To our destruction—if there be in Hell
 Fear to be worse destroyed. What can be worse

Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, con-
demned

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 90
Inexorably, and the torturing hour
Calls us to penance. More destroyed than thus
We should be quite abolished and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we do incense
His utmost ire? which, to the highth enraged,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential—happier far
Than miserable to have eternal being!—
Or, if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst 100
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heaven,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne;
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.”

He ended frowning, and his look denounced
Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than gods. On the other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane.
A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seemed 110
For dignity composed 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 noble deeds
Timorous and slothful. Yet he pleased the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began:

“I should be much for open war, O Peers,
As not behind in hate, if what was urged 120
Main reason to persuade immediate war
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success;
When he, who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge? The towers of Heaven are
filled

With armed watch, that render all access 130
Impregnable; oft on the bordering Deep
Encamped their legions, or, with obscure wing,
Scout far and wide into the realm of Night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise,
With blackest insurrection to confound
Heaven’s purest light, yet our great enemy

All incorruptible would on his throne
 Sit unpolluted, and the ethereal mould,
 Incapable of stain, would soon expel 14C
 Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
 Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope
 Is flat despair; we must exasperate
 The almighty victor to spend all his rage,
 And that must end us; that must be our cure,
 To be no more. Sad cure! for who would lose,
 Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
 Those thoughts that wander through eternity?
 To perish rather, swallowed up and lost
 In the wide womb of uncreated night, 15C
 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, 16C
 Reserved, and destined to eternal woe.
 Whatever doing, what can we suffer more?
 What can we suffer worse?' Is this then worst.
 Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
 What! when we fled amain, pursued, and struck

With heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
 The Deep to shelter us . . . This Hell then
 seemed

A refuge from those wounds. Or when we lay
 Chained on the burning lake? . . . that sure
 was worse.

What if the breath that kindled those grim
 fires, 170

Awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage,
 And plunge us in the flames? or from above
 Should intermitted Vengeance arm again
 His red right hand to plague us? What if all
 Her stores were opened, and this firmament^e
 Of Hell should sprout her cataracts of fire,
 Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall
 One day upon our heads! While we, perhaps
 Designing or exhorting glorious war,
 Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurled, 180
 Each on his rock transfixed, the sport and prey
 Of racking whirlwinds, or forever sunk
 Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
 There to converse with everlasting groans,
 Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,
 Ages of hopeless end. This would be worse.
 War therefore, open or concealed alike,
 My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye

Views all things at one view? He from Heaven's
 highth 190

All these our motions vain sees and derides;
 Not more almighty to resist our might
 Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles,
 Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heaven
 Thus trampled, thus expelled 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 200
 That so ordains. This was at first resolved
 If we were wise, against so great a foe
 Contending and so doubtful what might fall.
 I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
 And venturous, if that fail them, shrink and
 fear

What yet they know must follow, to endure
 Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
 The sentence of their conqueror. This is now
 Our doom, which if we can sustain and bear,
 Our supreme foe in time may much remit
 His anger, and perhaps, thus far removed,
 Not mind us, not offending, satisfied
 With what is punished; whence these raging fires
 Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.

Our purer essence then will overcome
 Their noxious vapour, or inured not feel,
 Or, changed at length and to the place conformed
 In temper and in nature, will receive
 Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
 This horror will grow mild, this darkness light: 220
 Besides what hope the never ending flight
 Of future days may bring, what chance, what
 change

Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
 For happy though but ill, for ill not worst;
 If we procure not to ourselves more woe.”

Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's
 garb,

Counselled ignoble ease and peaceful sloth,
 Not peace; and after him thus Mammon spake:

“Either to disenthronè the king of Heaven
 We war, if war be best, or to regain 230
 Our own right lost. Him to unthrone we then
 May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
 To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife.
 The former, vain to hope, argues as vain
 The latter; for what place can be for us
 Within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord
 supreme

We overpower? Suppose he should relent,
 And publish grace to all, on promise made
 Of new subjection; with what eyes could we

Stand in his presence humble, and receive 240
 Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne
 With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
 Forced Halleluiahs; while he lordly sits
 Our envied sovran, and his altar breathes
 Ambrosial odors and ambrosial flowers,
 Our servile offerings? This must be our task
 In Heaven, this our delight. How wearisome
 Eternity so spent, in worship paid
 To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue
 By force impossible, by leave obtained 250
 Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state
 Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
 Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
 Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
 Free and to none accountable, preferring
 Hard Liberty before the easy yoke
 Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
 Then most conspicuous, when great things of
 small,
 Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse
 We can create, and in what place so'er 260
 Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain,
 Through labor and endurance. This deep world
 Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
 Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling
 Sire
 Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,

And with the majesty of darkness round
 Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders
 roar

Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell!
 As he our darkness, cannot we his light
 Imitate when we please? This desert so 270
 Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold,
 Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
 Magnificence; and what can Heaven shew more
 Our torments also may in length of time
 Become our elements, these piercing fires
 As soft as now severe, our temper changed
 Into their temper, which must needs remove
 The sensible of pain. All things invite
 To peaceful counsels and the settled state
 Of order, how in safety best we may 280
 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 finished, when such murmur
 filled

The assembly, as when hollow rocks retain
 The sound of blustering winds, which all night
 long
 Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence
 lull
 Seafaring men o'erwatched, whose bark by
 chance,

Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: such applause was heard 290
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased,
Advising peace, for such another field
They dreaded worse than Hell; so much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michaël
Wrought still within them; and no less desire
To found this nether empire, which might rise,
By policy and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.

Which when Beëlzebub perceived, than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave 300
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed
A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat, and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic though in ruin. Sage he stood,
With Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night
Or summer's noontide air, while thus he spake:

“Thrones and imperial Powers, Offspring of
Heaven,

Ethereal Virtues! or these titles now 311
Must we renounce, and changing style be called
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire; doubtless! while we dream,

And know not that the King of Heaven hath
doomed

This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne, but to remain 320

In strictest bondage, though thus far removed
Under the inevitable curb, reserved
His captive multitude; for he, be sure,
In highth or depth, still first and last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part

By our revolt, but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven.

What sit we then projecting peace and war?
War hath determined us, and foiled with
loss 330

Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsafed or sought; for what peace will be
given

To us enslaved, but custody severe,
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
But to our power hostility and hate,
Untamed reluctance, and revenge, though slow
Yet ever plotting how the conqueror least
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel? 340

Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
 With dangerous expedition to invade
 Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault or
 seige

Or ambush from the Deep. What if we find
 Some easier enterprisel There is a place—
 If ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven
 Err not—another world, the happy seat
 Of some new race called Man, about this time
 To be created like to us, though less
 In power and excellence, but favoured more 350
 Of him who rules above; so was his will
 Pronounced among the Gods, and by an oath,
 That shook Heaven's whole circumference, con-
 firmed.

Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
 What creatures there inhabit, of what mould
 Or substance, how endued, and what their
 power,

And where their weakness, how attempted best,
 By force or subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,
 And Heaven's high arbitrator sit secure
 In his own strength, this place may lie
 exposed, 360

The utmost border of his kingdom, left
 To their defence who hold it. Here perhaps
 Some advantageous act may be achieved
 By sudden onset; either with Hell-fire

To waste his whole creation, or possess
 All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
 The puny habitants; or, if not drive,
 Seduce them to our party, that their God
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
 Abolish his own works. This would surpass 370
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
 In our confusion, and our joy up-raise
 In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
 Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
 Their frail original and faded bliss,
 Faded so soon. Advise, if this be worth
 Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
 Hatching vain empires."—Thus Beëlzebub
 Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devised
 By Satan, and in part proposed; for whence, 380
 But from the author of all ill, could spring
 So deep a malice, to confound the race
 Of mankind in one root, and Earth with 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, 390
 Synod of Gods! and, like to what ye are,

Great things resolved, which from the lowest
 Deep

Will once more lift us up, in spite of Fate,
 Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
 Of those bright confines, whence, with neigh-
 boring arms

And opportune excursion, we may chance
 Re-enter Heaven; or else in some mild zone
 Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,
 Secure, and at the brightening orient beam
 Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air, 400
 To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
 Shall breathe her balm. But first, whom shall we
 send

In search of this new world? whom shall we find
 Sufficient? who shall tempt, with wandering feet,
 The dark unbottomed infinite abyss,
 And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncouth way, or spread his aery flight,
 Upborne with indefatigable wings
 Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
 The happy isle? What strength, what art, can
 then

Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe 410
 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 appeared
 To second, or oppose, or undertake
 The perilous attempt; but all sat mute, 420
 Pondering the danger with deep thoughts, and
 each

In other's countenance read his own dismay,
 Astonished. None, among the choice and prime
 Of those Heaven-warring champions, could be
 found

So hardy as to proffer or accept
 Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised
 Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,
 Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake:

“O Progeny of Heaven, empyreal Thrones! 430
 With reason hath deep silence and demur
 Seized us, though undismayed. 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
 Barred over us prohibit all egress.

These passed, if any pass, the void profound
 Of unessential Night receives him next,
 Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being 440

Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.
 If thence he 'scape, into whatever world
 Or unknown region, what remains him less
 Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
 But I should ill become this throne, O Peers,
 And this imperial sovranity, adorned
 With splendor, armed with power, if aught pro-
 posed

And judged of public moment, in the shape
 Of difficulty or danger, could deter
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume 450
 These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
 Refusing to accept as great a share
 Of hazard as of honour, due alike
 To him who reigns, and so much to him due
 Of hazard more, as he above the rest
 High honored sits? Go therefore, mighty
 Powers,

Terror of Heaven, though fallen! intend at home,
 While here shall be our home, what best may
 ease

The present misery and render Hell
 More tolerable; if there be cure or charm 460
 To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
 Of this ill mansion. Intermit no watch
 Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
 Through all the coast of dark destruction seek
 Deliverance for us all. This enterprise

None shall partake with me."—Thus saying rose
 The monarch and prevented all reply,
 Prudent, lest from his resolution raised,
 Others among the chief might offer now—
 Certain to be refused—what erst they feared; 470
 And, so refused, might in opinion stand
 His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
 Which he through hazard huge must earn. But
 they

Dreaded not more the adventure than his voice
 Forbidding; and at once with him they rose.
 Their rising all at once was as the sound
 Of thunder heard remote. Toward him they
 bend

With awful reverence prone; and as a God
 Extol him equal to the Highest in Heaven.
 Nor failed they to express how much they
 praised 480

That for the general safety he despised
 His own; for neither do the Spirits damned
 Lose all their virtue, lest men should boast
 Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites
 Or close ambition varnished 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're-
 spread

Heaven's cheerful face, the lowering element 490
 Scowls o'er the darkened landscape snow, or
 shower,

If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
 Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
 The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
 Oh, shame to men! Devil with devil damned
 Firm concord holds, men only disagree
 Of creatures rational, though under hope
 Of heavenly grace; and, God proclaiming peace
 Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife 500
 Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
 Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
 As if— which might induce us to accord—
 Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
 That day and night for his destruction wait.

The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth
 In order came the grand infernal peers;
 Midst came their mighty paramount, and seemed
 Alone the antagonist of Heaven, nor less
 Than Hell's dread emperor, with pomp su-
 preme 510

And godlike imitated state. Him round
 A globe of fiery Seraphim enclosed,
 With bright emblazonry and horrent arms.
 Then of their session ended they bid cry,
 With trumpets' regal sound, the great result.

Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim
 Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy
 By haralds' voice explained; the hollow Abyss
 Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell
 With deafening shout returned them loud ac-
 claim, 520

Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat
 raised

By false presumptuous hope, the ranged Powers
 Disband, and, wandering, each his several way
 Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
 Leads him perplexed, where he may likeliest find
 Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
 The irksome hours till his great chief return.
 Part, on the plain or in the air sublime,
 Upon the wing or in swift race contend,
 As at the Olympian games or Pythian
 fields; 530

Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
 With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form:
 As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
 Waged in the troubled^d sky, and armies rush
 To battle in the clouds; before each van
 Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their
 spears

Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
 From either end of heaven the welkin burns.
 Others, with vast Typhœan rage, more fell

Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the
air 54^c

In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar.

As when Alcides, from Æchalia crowned
With conquest, felt the envenomed robe, and
tore

Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
And Lichas from the top of Æta threw

Into the Euboïc sea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp

Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall
By doom of battle; and complain that Fate 550
Free Virtue should enthral to Force or Chance.

Their song was partial, but the harmony
—What could it less when Spirits immortal
sing?—

Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more
sweet.

—For eloquence the soul, song charms the
sense—

Others apart sat on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate;
Fixed faith, free will, foreknowledge abso-
lute, 560

And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.

Of good and evil much they argued then.
 Of happiness and final misery,
 Passion and apathy, and glory and shame—
 Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy!
 Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm
 Pain for awhile or anguish, and excite
 Fallacious hope, or arm the obdured breast
 With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
 Another part, in squadrons and gross bands, 570
 On bold adventure to discover wide
 That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
 Might yield them easier habitation, bend
 Four ways their flying march, along the banks
 Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams;
 Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
 Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
 Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
 Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegeton 580
 Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
 Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
 Lethè, the river of oblivion, rolls
 Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
 Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain,
 Beyond this flood a frozen continent
 Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms

Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin
seems 590

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 froze, and cold performs the effect of fire.
Thither, by harpy-footed Furies haled,
At certain revolutions, all the damned
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more
fierce,

From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice 600
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine,
Immovable, infixed, and frozen round,
Periods of time; thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethean sound,
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to
lose

In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink.
But Fate withstands, and, to oppose the attempt,
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards 611
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled

The lips of Tantalus. Thus roving on,
In confused march forlorn, the adventurous
bands,
With shuddering horror pale and eyes aghast,
Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest. Through many a dark and dreary vale
They passed, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp, 620
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades
of death;
A universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature
breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feigned or fear conceived,
Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire.
Meanwhile the Adversary of God and Man,
Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest
design, 630
Puts on swift wings, and toward 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, towering high.

As when far off at sea a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood, 640
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape,
Ply stemming nightly toward the pole: so seemed
Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear
Hell-bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice threefold, the gates; threefolds were
brass,

Three iron, three of adamantine rock,
Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair, 650
But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
Voluminous and vast, a serpent armed
With mortal sting. About her middle round
A cry of hell hounds never ceasing barked
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there, yet there still barked and
howled

Within unseen. Far less abhorred than these
Vexed Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts 660
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore;

Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, called
 In secret, riding through the air she comes,
 Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
 With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon
 Eclipses at their charms. The other shape—
 If shape it might be called that shape had none
 Distinguishable in member, joint or limb,
 Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
 For each seemed either—black it stood as
 Night, 670

Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
 And shook a dreadful dart; what seemed his head
 The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
 Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
 The monster moving onward came as fast
 With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.
 The undaunted Fiend what this might be
 admired,

Admired, not feared—God and his Son except,
 Created thing nought valued he nor shunned—
 And with disdainful look thus first began: 680

“Whence and what art thou, execrable shape!
 That darest, though grim and terrible, advance
 Thy miscreated front athwart my way
 To yonder gate? Through them I mean to
 pass—

That be assured—without leave asked of thee.
 Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,

Heli-born! not to contend with Spirits of
Heaven.”

To whom the Goblin full of wrath replied:
“Art thou that traitor Angel? art thou he,
Who first broke peace in Heaven, and faith till
then

Unbroken, and, in proud rebellious arms, 691
Drew after him the third part of Heaven’s sons,
Conjured against the Highest? for which both
thou

And they, outcast from God, are here condemned
To waste eternal days in woe and pain.

And reckonest thou thyself with Spirits of
Heaven,

Hell-doomed! and breathest defiance here and
scorn,

Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,
Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment!
False fugitive! and to thy speed add wings, 700
Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
Thy lingering, or with one stroke of this dart
Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt be-
fore.”

So spake the grisly Terror, and in shape
So speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold
More dreadful and deform. On the other side,
Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
Unterrified, and like a comet burned,

That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge,
 In the artic sky, und from his horrid hair 710
 Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
 Levelled his deadly aim; their fatal hands
 No second stroke intend; and such a frown
 Each cast at the other, as when the two black
 clouds,

With heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
 Over the Caspian, then stand front to front,
 Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
 To join their dark encounter in mid air:
 So frowned the mighty combatants, that Hell
 Grew darker at their frown; so matched they
 stood;

For never but once more was either like 721
 To meet so great a foe. And now great deeds
 Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,
 Had not the snaky Sorceress, that sat
 Fast by Hell-gate and kept the fatal key,
 Risen, and with hideous outcry rushed between.

“O father, what intends thy hand, she cried,
 Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
 Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
 Against thy father's head? and knowest for
 whom;

For him who sits above, and laughs the
 while 731

At thee ordained his drudge, to execute

Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice,
bids;—

His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both!"

He spake, and at her words the hellish Pest
Forbore, then these to her Satan returned:

"So strange thy outcry, and thy words so
strange

Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends, till first I know of thee 740
What thing thou art, thus double-formed, and
why,

In this infernal vale first met, thou callest
Me father, and that phantasm callest my son.
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee."

To whom thus the portress of Hell-gate re-
plied:

"Hast thou forgotten me then? and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul? once deemed so fair
In Heaven; when at the assembly, and in sight
Of all the Seraphim, with thee combined 750
In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surprised thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth; till, on the left side opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,

Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed,
 Out of thy head I sprung. Amazement seized
 All the host of Heaven; back they recoiled afraid
 At first, and called me Sin, and for a sign 760
 Portentous held me; but familiar grown
 I pleased, and with attractive graces won
 The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
 Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing
 Becamest enamoured, and such joy thou tookest
 With me in secret, that my womb conceived
 A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,
 And fields were fought in Heaven, wherein
 remained

—For what could else?—to our almighty Foe
 Clear victory, to our part loss and rout 770
 Through all the Æmpyrean. Down they fell,
 Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
 Into this Deep, and in the general fall
 I also; at which time this powerful key
 Into my hand was given, with charge to keep
 These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
 Without my opening. Pensive here I sat,
 Alone; but long I sat not, till my womb,
 Pregnant by thee and now excessive grown,
 Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes. 780
 At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
 Thine own begotten, breaking violent away,

Tore through my entrails, that, with fear and
 pain
 Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
 Transformed: but he, my inbred enemy,
 Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,
 Made to destroy. I fled, and cried out *Death!*
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sighed
 From all her caves, and back resounded *Death!*
 I fled, but he pursued—though more, it
 seems, 796
 Inflamed with lust than rage—and, swifter far,
 Me overtook, his mother, all dismayed,
 And, in embraces forcible and foul
 Ingendering with me, of that rape begot
 These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
 Surround me, as thou sawest, hourly conceived
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
 To me; for, when they list, into the womb
 That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw
 My bowels, their repast; then, bursting forth 800
 Afresh, with conscious terrors vex me round,
 That rest or intermission none I find.
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits
 Grim Death, my son and foe, who sets them on,
 And me his parent would full soon devour,
 For want of other prey, but that he knows
 His end with mine involved, and knows that I
 Should prove a bitter morsel and his bane,

Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounced.
 But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun 810
 His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
 To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
 Though tempered heavenly; for that mortal dint,
 Save he who reigns above, none can resist."

She finished, and the subtle Fiend his lore
 Soon learned, now milder, and thus answered
 smooth:

"Dear daughter—since thou claimest me for thy
 sire,
 And my fair son here shewest me, the dear
 pledge
 Of Dalliance had with thee in Heaven, and joys
 Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire
 change

Befallen us, unforeseen, unthought of—know, 821
 I come no enemy, but to set free
 From out this dark and dismal house of pain,
 Both him and thee, and all the heavenly host
 Of Spirits, that, in our just pretences armed,
 Fell with us from on high. From them I go
 This uncouth errand, sole, and one for all
 Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
 The unfounded Deep, and, through the Void
 immense

To search with wandering quest a place fore-
 told 830

Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
 Created vast and round, a place of bliss
 In the purlieus of Heaven, and therein placed
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply
 Perhaps our vacant room, though more removed,
 Lest Heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,
 Might hap to move new broils. Be this or aught
 Than this more secret now designed, I haste
 To know; and, this once known, shall soon re-
 turn

And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down un-
 seen

841

Wing silently the buxom air, embalmed
 With odours. There ye shall be fed and filled
 Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey."

He ceased, for both seemed highly pleased, and
 Death

Grinned horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
 His famine should be filled, and blessed his maw
 Destined to that good hour. No less rejoiced
 His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire:

"The key of this infernal pit, by due
 And by command of Heaven's all-powerful King,
 I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
 These adamantine gates; against all force
 Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
 Fearless to be o'ermatched by living might.

850

But what owe I to his commands above,
 Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
 Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
 To sit in hateful office here confined,
 Inhabitant of Heaven and heavenly born, 860
 Here in perpetual agony and pain,
 With terrors and with clamours compassed round
 Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
 Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
 My being gavest me; whom should I obey
 But thee? whom follow? Thou wilt bring me
 soon

To that new world of light and bliss, among
 The Gods who live at ease, where I shall reign
 At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems
 Thy daughter and thy darling, without
 end." 870

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

The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
 Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
 Unfastens. On a sudden open fly,
 With impetuous recoil and jarring sound, 880

The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
 Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
 Of Erebus. She opened, but to shut
 Excelled her power; the gates wide open stood,
 That with extended wings a bannered host,
 Under spread ensigns marching, might pass
 through

With horse and chariots ranked in loose array;
 So wide they stood, and like a furnace mouth
 Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.

Before their eyes in sudden view appear 890
 The secrets of the hoary Deep, a dark,
 Illimitable ocean, without bound,
 Without dimension, where length, breadth, and
 highth,

And time and place, are lost; where eldest Night
 And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
 Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
 Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.

For Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry, four champions
 fierce,

Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
 Their embryon atoms: they around the flag 900
 Of each his faction, in their several clans,
 Light-armed or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or
 slow,

Swarm populous, unnumbered as the sands
 Of Barca or Cyrenè's torrid soil.

Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
 Their lighter wings. To whom these most^t
 adhere

He rules a moment; Chaos umpire sits,
 And by decision more embroils the fray,
 By which he reigns; next him high arbiter
 Chance govern all. Into this wild Abyss 910

—The womb of Nature and perhaps her grave,
 Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
 But all these in their pregnant causes mixed
 Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless the 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 looked awhile,
 Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith
 He had to cross. Nor was his ear less pealed 920
 With noises loud and ruinous—to compare
 Great things with small—than when *Bellona*
 storms

With all her battering engines, bent to rase
 Some capital city; or less than if this frame
 Of heaven were falling, and these elements
 In mutiny had from her axle torn
 The steadfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
 He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
 Up-lifted spurns the ground; thence many a
 league,

As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides 930
 Audacious; but, the seat soon failing, meets
 A vast vacuity. All unawares,
 Fluttering 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 stayed—
 Quenched in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea
 Nor good dry land—nigh foundered on he
 fares, 940

Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
 Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
 As when a gryphon, through the wilderness
 With winged course, o'r hill or moory dale,
 Pursues the Arimaspians, who by stealth
 Had from his wakeful custody purloined
 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 951
 Of stunning sounds and voices all confused,
 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
 Bordering on light; when straight behold the
 throne

Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread 960
 Wide on the wasteful Deep! With him enthroned
 Set 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 embroiled,
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

To whom Satan turning boldly, thus: "Ye
 Powers

And Spirits of this nethermost Abyss,
 Chaos and ancient Night! I come no spy, 970
 With purpose to explore or to disturb
 The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint,
 Wandering this darksome desert, as my way
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
 Alone and without guide, half lost, I seek
 What readiest path leads where your gloomy
 bounds

Confine with Heaven; or if some other place,
 From your dominion won, the ethereal King

Possesses lately, thither to arrive
 I travel this profound. Direct my course. 980
 Directed no mean recompense it brings
 To your behoof: if I that region lost,
 All usurpation thence expelled, reduce
 To her original darkness and your sway—
 Which is my present journey—and once more
 Erect the standard there of ancient Night,
 Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge! ”

Thus Satan, and him thus the Anarch old,
 With faltering speech and visage incomposed,
 Answered: ‘I know thee, stranger, who thou
 art,
 That mighty leading Angel, who of late 991
 Made head against Heaven’s King, though over-
 thrown.

I saw and heard; for such a numerous host
 Fled not in silence through the frightened Deep,
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
 Confusion worse confounded; and Heaven-gates
 Poured out by millions her victorious bands
 Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
 Keep residence; if all I can will serve,
 That little which is left so to defend, 1000
 Encroached on still through your intestine broils,
 Weakening the sceptre of old Night. First Hell,
 Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
 Now lately heaven and earth, another world,

Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain
 To that side Heaven from whence your legions
 fell.

If that way be your walk, you have not far;
 So much the nearer danger. Go and speed!
 Havoc, and spoil, and ruin are my gain."

He ceased, and Satan stayed not to reply, 1010
 But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,
 With fresh alacrity and force renewed,
 Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
 Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
 Of fighting elements, on all sides round
 Environed, wins his way; harder beset
 And more endangered, than when Argo passed
 Through Bosphorus, betwixt the justling Rocks;
 Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunned
 Charybdis, and by the other Whirlpool
 steered. 1020

So he with difficulty and labour hard
 Moved on: with difficulty and labour he;
 But, he once past, soon after when Man fell—
 Strange alteration!—Sin and Death amain
 Following his track, such was the will of Heaven,
 Paved after him a broad and beaten way
 Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling gulf
 Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length,
 From Hell continued, reaching the utmost orb

Of this frail World; by which the Spirits
 perverse,

With easy intercourse, pass to and fro 1031
 To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
 God and good Angels guard by special grace.

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

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

GOD, sitting on his throne, sees Satan flying toward 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 toward 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 toward man; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended toward man without the satisfaction of Divine justice; man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and therefore with all his progeny devoted to death must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for man: the Father accepts him, ordains his Incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in Heaven and Earth; commands all the angels to adore him; they obey, and hymning to their harps in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this World's uttermost 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 Heaven first-born!

Or of the Eternal coeternal beam

May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,

And never but in unapproached light

Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,

Bright effluence of bright essence, increate!

Or hearest thou rather pure ethereal stream,

Whose fountain who shall tell? before the sun,

Before the heaven thou wert, and at the voice

Of God, as with a mantle didst invest 10

The rising World of waters dark and deep,

Won from the void and formless Infinite.—

Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,

Escaped the Stygian pool, though long detained

In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight,

Through utter and through middle darkness borne,

With other notes than to the Orphean lyre,

I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;

Taught by the heavenly Muse to venture down

The dark descent, and up to re-ascend, 20

Though hard and rare;—thee I revisit safe,
 And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou
 Revisitest not these eyes, that roll in vain
 To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
 So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orbs,
 Or dim suffusion veiled. Yet not the more
 Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
 Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
 Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath, 30
 That wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow,
 Nightly I visit; nor sometimes forget
 Those other two equalled with me in fate,
 So were I equalled with them in renown,
 Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides,
 And Tiresiäs and Phineus, prophets old:
 Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
 Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
 Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
 Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the
 year. 40

Seasons return, but not to me returns
 Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn,
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
 But cloud instead and ever-during dark
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
 Cut off, and, for the book of knowledge fair,

Presented with a universal blank
Of Nature's works, to me expunged and raised,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. 50
So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her
powers

Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Now had the Almighty Father from above,
From the pure Æmpyrean where he sits,
High throned above all highth, bent down his
eye,

His own works and their works at once to view.
About him all the Sanctities of Heaven 60
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son. On earth he first beheld
Our two first parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the Happy Garden placed,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivalled love,
In blissful solitude. He then surveyed
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there 70
Coasting the wall of Heaven on this side Night,
In the dun air sublime, and ready now
To stoop, with wearied wings and willing feet,

On the bare outside of this World, that seemed
 Firm land embosomed, 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 80
 Transports our Adversary? whom no bounds
 Prescribed, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
 Heaped on him there, nor yet the main Abyss
 Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems
 On desperate revenge, that shall redound
 Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
 Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his
 way

Not far off Heaven, in the precincts of light,
 Directly toward the new-created World,
 And Man there placed, with purpose to
 assay 90

If him by force he can destroy, or worse,
 By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert;
 For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
 And easily transgress the soul command,
 Sole pledge of his obedience; so will fall
 He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
 Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
 All he could have. I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.

Such I created all the ethereal Powers 100
 And Spirits, both them who stood and them who
 failed;

Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have given
 sincere

Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,
 Where only what they needs must do appeared,
 Not what they would? what praise could they
 receive?

What pleasure I from such obedience paid?
 When will and reason—reason also is choice—
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoiled,
 Made passive both, had served necessity, 110
 Not me. They therefore, as to right belonged,
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
 As if Predestination overruled
 Their will, disposed by absolute decree,
 Or high foreknowledge. They themselves
 decreed

Their own revolt, not I. If I foreknew,
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
 Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.
 So, without least impulse or shadow of fate. 120
 Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
 They trespass, authors to themselves in all,

Both what they judge and what they choose; for

so

I formed them free, and free they must remain,
Till they enthral themselves; I else must change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree

Unchangeable, eternal, which ordained
Their freedom; they themselves ordained their
fall

The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-depraved; Man falls, de-
ceived 130

By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,
The other none. In mercy and justice both,
Through Heaven and Earth, so shall my glory
excel;

But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine."

Thus while God spake ambrosial fragrance
filled

All Heaven, and in the blessed Spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffused.

Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious: in him all his father shone
Substantially expressed; and in his face 140

Divine compassion visibly appeared,
Love without end, and without measure grace,
Which uttering thus he to his Father spake:

"O Father, gracious was that word which
closed

Thy sovran sentence, that Man should find
grace;

For which both Heaven and Earth shall high
extol

Thy praises, with the innumerable sound
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy
throne

Encompassed shall resound thee ever blest.

For should Man finally be lost, should Man, 150

Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though joined
With his own folly . . . that be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
Of all things made, and judgest only right.

Or shall the Adversary thus obtain

His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to nought;
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplished, and to Hell 160

Draw after him the whole race of mankind,

By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself

Abolish thy creation, and unmake

For him what for thy glory thou hast made? . . .

So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
Be questioned and blasphemed without defence."

To whom the great Creator thus replied:

"O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son, who art alone

My word, my wisdom, and effectual might, 170
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
As my eternal purpose hath decreed.
Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will;
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsafed; once more I will renew
His lapsed powers, though forfeit and enthralled
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe;
By me upheld, that he may know how frail 180
His fallen condition is, and to me owe
All his deliverance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
Elect above the rest—so is my will;
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warned
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
The incensed Deity, while offered grace
Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due. 190
To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavored with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire Conscience, whom if they will hear,
Light after light, well used, they shall attain,
And to the end persisting safe arrive.

This my long sufferance and my day of grace
 They who neglect and scorn shall never taste;
 But hard be hardened, blind be blinded more, 200
 That they may stumble on and deeper fall;
 And none but such from mercy I exclude.—
 But yet all is not done; Man disobeying,
 Disloyal, breaks his feälty, and sins
 Against the high supremacy of Heaven,
 Affecting Godhead, and, so losing all,
 To expiate his treason hath nought left,
 But, to destruction sacred and devote,
 He with his whole posterity must die,
 Die he or justice must; unless for him 210
 Some other able, and as willing, pay
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
 Say, heavenly Powers, where shall we find such
 love?

Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
 Man's mortal crime, and just the unjust to save?
 Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?"

He asked, but all the heavenly quire stood
 mute,

And silence was in Heaven; on Man's behalf
 Patron or intercessor none appeared,
 Much less than durst upon his own head
 draw 220

The deadly forfeiture and ransom set.
 And now without redemption all mankind

Must have been lost, adjudged to Death and
Hell

By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renewed:

“Father, thy word is passed, Man shall find
grace;

And shall Grace not find means, that find her
way,

The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all 230

Comes unprevented, unimplored, unsought?

Happy for man so coming! be her aid

Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;

Atonement for himself or offering meet,

Indebted and undone, hath none to bring.—

Behold me then: me for him, life for life

I offer; on me let thine anger fall;

Account me Man: I for his sake will leave

Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee

Freely put off, and for him lastly die, 240

Well pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage.

Under his gloomy power I shall not long

Lie vanquished; thou hast given me to possess

Life in myself forever; 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 250
 My vanquisher, spoiled of his vaunted spoil.
 Death his death's wound shall then receive, and
 stoop

Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarmed;
 I through the ample air, in triumph high,
 Shall lead Hell captive, maugre Hell, and shew
 The powers of darkness bound: thou, at the sight
 Pleased, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,
 While, by the raised, I ruin all my foes,
 Death last, and with his carcase glut the grave;
 Then, with the multitude of my redeemed, 260
 Shall enter Heaven, long absent, and return,
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assured
 And reconcilment; wrath shall be no more
 Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire."

His words here ended, but his meek aspect
 Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
 To mortal men, above which only shone
 Filial obedience; as a sacrifice
 Glad to be offered, he attends the will 270
 Of his great Father. Admiration seized
 All Heaven, what this might mean, and whither
 tend,
 Wondering; but soon the Almighty thus replied:

“O thou in Heaven and Earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath! O thou
My sole complacence! well thou knowest how
dear

To me are all my works, nor Man the least,
Though last created; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right-hand, to save,
By losing thee awhile, the whole race lost. 280

Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join;

And be thyself Man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
By wondrous birth; be thou in Adam's room
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.

As in him perish all men, so in thee,

As from a second root, shall be restored

As many as are restored, without thee none.

His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit, 290

Imputed; shall absolve them who renounce

Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,

And live in thee transplanted, and from thee

Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,

Shall satisfy for Man, be judged and die,

And dying rise, and rising with him raise

His brethren, ransomed with his own dear life.

So heavenly love shall outdo hellish hate,

Giving to death, and dying to redeem,

So dearly to redeem what hellish hate

So easily destroyed, and still destroys
 In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
 Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
 Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
 Because thou hast, though throned in highest
 bliss,

Equal to God, and equally enjoying
 Godlike fruition, quitted all, to save
 A world from utter loss, and hast been found
 By merit more than birthright Son of God,
 Found worthiest to be so by being good, 310
 Far more than great or high: because in thee
 Love hath abounded more than glory abound;
 Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
 With thee thy manhood also to this throne:
 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
 Both God and man, Son both of God and Man,
 Anointed universal King. All power
 I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
 Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme,
 Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions, I
 reduce:

All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide 321
 In Heaven, on 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 330

Bad men and Angels. They arraigned shall sink
 Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,
 Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
 The World shall burn, and from her ashes spring
 New heaven and earth, wherein the just shall
 dwell;

And, after all their tribulations long,
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
 With Joy and Love triumphing, and fair Truth.
 Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by,
 For regal sceptre then no more shall need; 340
 God shall be all in all. 'But, all ye Gods,
 Adore him, who to compass all this dies:
 Adore the Son, and honor him as me.'

No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but, all
 The multitude of Angels—with a shout
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
 As from blest voices—uttering joy, Heaven rung
 With jubilee, and loud Hosannas filled
 The eternal regions. Lowly reverent
 Toward either throne they bow, and to the
 ground

With solemn adoration down they cast 351

Their crowns, inwove with amarant and gold;
 Immortal amarant, a flower which once
 In Paradise, fast by the Tree of Life,
 Began to bloom; but soon, for Man's offence,
 To Heaven removed, where first it grew, there
 grows

And flowers aloft shading the Fount of Life,
 And where the River of Bliss through midst of
 Heaven

Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream.
 With these that never fade the Spirits elect 360
 Bind their resplendent locks, inwreathed with
 beams.

Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
 Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.
 Then, crowned again, their golden harps they
 took—

Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side
 Like quivers hung—and with preamble sweet
 Of charming symphony they introduce
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;
 No voice exempt, no voice but well could join 370
 Melodious part, such concord is in Heaven.

Thee, Father, first they sung, omnipotent,
 Immutable, immortal, infinite,
 Eternal King; thee, Author of all being,
 Fountain of light, thyself invisible

Amidst the glorious brightness, where thou
sittest

Throned inaccessible; but when thou shadest
The full blaze of thy beams, and, through a cloud,
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine. . .
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear, 380
Yet dazzle Heaven, that brightest Seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their
eyes.

The next they sang of all creation first,
Begotten Son, divine similitude,
In whose conspicuous countenance, without cloud
Made visible, the almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold; on thee
Impressed the effulgence of his glory abides;
Transfused on thee his ample Spirit rests.
"He Heaven of Heavens and all the powers
therein

By thee created; and by thee threw down 391
The aspiring Dominations. Thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook
Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drovest of warring Angels disarrayed.
Back from pursuit thy powers with loud acclaim
Thee only extolled, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foot.

Not so on man; him, through their malice
 fallen, 400

Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
 So strictly, but much more to pity incline.

No sooner did thy dear and only Son

Perceive thee purposed not to doom frail Man

So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,

He, to appease thy wrath and end the strife

Of mercy and justice in thy face discerned,

Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat

Second to thee, offered himself to die

For Man's offence. Oh, unexampled love, 410

Love nowhere 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 Heaven, above the starry sphere,

Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.

Meanwhile upon the firm opacous globe

Of this round World, whose first convex divides

The luminous inferior orbs enclosed 420

From Chaos and the inroad of Darkness old,

Satan alighted walks. A globe far off

It seemed, now seems a boundless continent,

Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night

Starless exposed, and ever-threatening storms

Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;

Nought seeking but the praise of men here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds.

All the unaccomplished works of Nature's hand,
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixed,
Dissolved on Earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution, wander here;
Not in the neighboring moon, as some have
dreamed;

Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460
Translated Saints or middle Spirits hold
Betwixt the angelical and human kind.
Hither, of ill-joined sons and daughters born,
First from the ancient world those Giants came,
With many a vain exploit, though then re-
nowned;

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, to be deemed
A god, leaped fondly into Ætna flames 470
Empedocles; and he who, to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leaped into the sea,
Cleombrotus; and many more too long,
Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars,
White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery.
Here pilgrims roam, that strayed so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead who lives in Heaven;
And they who, to be sure of Paradise,

Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised. 480
 They pass the planets seven, and pass the fixed,
 And that crystalline sphere whose balance
 weighs

The trepidation talked, and that first moved;
 And now Saint Peter at Heaven's wicket seems
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
 Of Heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when lo!
 A violent cross-wind from either coast
 Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues
 awry,

Into the divious air. Then might ye see
 Cowls, hoods, and habits with their wearers,
 toss 490

And fluttered into rags; then reliques, beads,
 Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
 The sport of winds; all these, upwhirled aloft,
 Fly o'er the backside of the World far off
 Into a Limbo large and broad, since called
 The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
 Long after, now unpeopled and untrod.

All this dark globe the Fiend found as he
 passed,
 And long he wandered, till at last a gleam
 Of dawning light turned thitherward in
 haste 500
 His traveled steps. Far distant he descries,

Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heaven, a structure high;
At top whereof, but far more rich, appeared
The work as of a kingly palace-gate,
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellished; thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on Earth
By model, or by shading pencil drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw 510
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cried, *This is the gate of Heaven.*
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but, drawn up to Heaven, some-
times
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flowed
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from Earth sailing arrived 520
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
The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss;
Direct against which opened from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to the Earth, a passage wide;

Wider by far than that of after-times
 Over Mount Sion, and, though that were
 large, 530

Over the Promised Land to God so dear;
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
 On high behests his Angels to and fro
 Passed frequent, and his eye with choice regard
 From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood,
 To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
 Borders on Egypt and the Arabian shore;
 So wide the opening seemed, where bounds were
 set

To darkness, such as bound the ocean-wave.

Satan from hence, now on the lower stair, 540
 That scaled by steps of gold to Heaven-gate,
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
 Of all this World at once. As when a scout,
 Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
 All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
 Which to his eye discovers unaware
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land,
 First seen, or some renowned metropolis,
 With glistening spires and pinnacles adorned, 550
 Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams. . .
 Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,
 The Spirit malign, but much more envy seized,
 At sight of all this World beheld so fair.

Round he surveys—and well might, where **he**
stood,

So high above the circling canopy
Of Night's extended shade—from eastern point
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas,
Beyond the horizon; then from pole to pole 560
He views in breadth, and, without longer pause,
Down right into the World's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh-hand seemed other worlds.
Or other worlds they seemed, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales,
Thrice-happy isles; but who dwelt happy
there 570

He stayed not to inquire. Above them all
The golden sun, in splendor likest Heaven,
Allured 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 580

Days, months, and years, toward his all-cheering
lamp

Turn swift their various motions, or are turned
By his magnetic beam, that gently warns
The Universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep :
So wonderously was set his station bright.

There lands the Fiend, a spot like which
perhaps

Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb,
Through his glazed optic tube, yet never
saw. 590

The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compared with aught on Earth, metal or stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike informed
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire:
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear;
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breastplate, and a stone besides
Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen,
That stone, or like to that, which here below 600
Philosophers in vain so long have sought;
In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
Drained through a limbec to his native form.

What wonder then if fields and regions here
 Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
 Potable gold, when, with one virtuous touch,
 The arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,
 Produces, with terrestrial humor mixed, 61c
 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 sunshine, as when his beams at noon
 Culminate from the equator, as they now
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
 Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air,
 Nowhere so clear, sharpened his visual ray 62c
 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 turned, 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
 employed
 He seemed, or fixed in cogitation deep.

Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope 63c
 To find who might direct his wandering flight
 To Paradise, the happy seat of Man,

His journey's end and our beginning woe :
 But first he casts to change his proper shape,
 Which else might work him danger or delay.

And now a stripling Cherub he appears,
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
 Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb
 Suitable grace diffused, so well he feigned.

Under a coronet his flowing hair 640
 In curls on either cheek played; wings he wore
 Of many a colored 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 turned,
 Admonished by his ear, and straight was known
 The Archangel Uriel, one of the seven
 Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
 Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650
 That run through all the Heavens, or down to
 the Earth

Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
 O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts:

“Uriel, for thou of those seven Spirits that
 stand

In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
 The first art wont his great authentic will
 Interpreter through highest Heaven to bring,
 Where all his sons the embassy attend;

And here are likeliest by supreme decree
 Like honor to obtain, and as his eye 660
 To visit oft this new creation round . . .
 Unspeakable desire to see and know
 All these his wondrous works, but chiefly Man,
 His chief delight and favor, him for whom
 All these his works so wondrous he ordained,
 Had brought me from the quires of Cherubim,
 Alone thus wandering. Brightest Seraph, tell,
 In which of all these shining orbs hath Man
 His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
 But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell; 670
 That I may find him, and with secret gaze
 Or open admiration him behold,
 On whom the great Creator hath bestowed
 Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces
 poured;
 That both in him and all things, as in meet,
 The universal Maker we may praise;
 Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes
 To deepest Hell, and, to repair that loss,
 Created this new happy race of Men
 To serve him better: wise are all his
 ways." 680

So spake the false dissembler unperceived;
 For neither man nor angel can discern
 Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
 Invisible, except to God alone,

By his permissive will, through Heaven and
Earth.

And oft, though Wisdom wake, Suspicion sleeps
At Wisdom's gate, and 'c Simplicity
Resigns her charge, while Goodness thinks no ill,
Where no ill seems: which now for once beguiled
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held 690
The sharpest-sighted Spirit of all in Heaven;
Who in the fraudulent imposter foul,
In his uprightness, answer thus returned:

“Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify
The great Work-master, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some per-
haps, 700

Contented with report, hear only in Heaven:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight!
But what created mind can comprehend
Their number, or the wisdom infinite
That brought them forth, but hid their causes
deep?

I saw when at his word the formless mass,
This World's material mould, came to a heap;

Confusion heard his voice, and wild Uproar 710
 Stood ruled, stood vast Infinitude confined;
 Till at his second bidding Darkness fled,
 Light shone, and order from disorder sprung.
 Swift to their several quarters hasted then
 The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire;
 And this ethereal quintessence of heaven
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
 That rolled orbicular, and turned to stars,
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
 Each had his place appointed, each his course: 720
 The rest in circuit walls this Universe.

Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
 With light from hence, though but reflected,
 shines.

That place is Earth, the seat of Man; that light
 His day, which else, as the other hemisphere,
 Night would invade; but there the neighbouring
 moon

—So call that opposite fair star—her aid
 Timely interposes, and, her monthly round
 Still ending, still renewing, through mid-heaven,
 With borrowed light her countenance triform 730
 Hence fills and empties, to enlighten the Earth,
 And in her pale dominion checks the night.
 That spot to which I point is Paradise,
 Adam's abode, those lofty shades his bower.
 Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires."

Thus said, he turned; and Satan bowing low,
As to superior Spirits is wont in Heaven,
Where honor due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and toward the coast of Earth beneath,
Down from the ecliptic, sped with hoped
 success, 740
Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel,
Nor stayed, till on Niphates' top he lights.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the Evil Spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers, prepares resistance, but, hindered by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.

OH for that warning voice, which he who saw
 The Apocalypse heard cry in Heaven aloud,
 Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
 Came furious down to be revenged on men,
Woe to the inhabitants on earth! that now,
 While time was, our first parents had been
 warned

The coming of their secret foe, and 'scaped,
 Haply so 'scaped, his mortal snare. For now
 Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,
 The tempter ere the accuser of mankind, 10
 To wreak on innocent frail Man his loss
 Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell.
 Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
 Far off and fearless; nor with cause to boast
 Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth
 Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
 And like a devilish engine back recoils
 Upon himself. Horror and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
 The hell within him; for within him hell 20
 He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
 One step, no more than from himself, can fly

By change of place. Now conscience wakes
despair,

That slumbered, wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be—
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must
ensue.

Sometimes toward Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;
Sometimes toward heaven and the full-blazing
sun,

Which now sat high in his meridian tower; 30
Then much revolving thus in sighs began:

“O thou, that, with surpassing glory crowned,
Lookest from thy sole dominion, like the God
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down, 40
Warring in Heaven against Heaven’s matchless
King.

Ah, wherefore? he deserved no such return
From me, whom he created what I was,
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be less than to afford him praise,

The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks?
 How due! Yet all his good proved ill in me,
 And wrought but malice. Lifted up so high
 I'sdei.ed subjection, and thought one step
 higher 50

Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
 The debt immense of endless gratitude,
 So burdensome still paying still to owe;
 Forgetful what from him I still received,
 And understood not that a grateful mind
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
 Indebted and discharged; what burden then?
 Oh, had his powerful destiny ordained
 Me some inferior Angel! I had stood
 Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised 60
 Ambition. Yet why not? some other Power
 As great might have aspired, and me though mean
 Drawn to his part. But other Powers as great
 Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
 Or from without to all temptations armed.
 Hadst thou the same free will and power to
 stand?

Thou hadst. Whom hast thou then or what to
 accuse,

But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?
 Be then his love accursed, since, love or hate,
 To me alike it deals eternal woe. 70
 Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will

Chose freely what it now so justly rues.—
 Me miserable! which way shall I fly
 Infinite wrath and infinite despair?
 Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;
 And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep
 Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
 To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.
 Oh, then, at last relent! Is there no place
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left?— 80
 None left but by submission; and that word
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
 Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduced
 With other promises and other vaunts
 Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
 The 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 advanced, 90
 The lower still I fall, only supreme
 In misery; such joy ambition finds.—
 But say I could repent, and could obtain
 By act of grace my former state—how soon
 Would highth recall high thoughts! how soon
 unsay
 What feigned submission swore! Ease would
 recant
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void—

For never can true reconcilment grow
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so
 deep—

Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 100

And heavier fall; so should I purchase dear

Short intermission bought with double smart.

This knows my Punisher; therefore as far

From granting he, as I from begging, peace.

All hope excluded thus, behold, instead

Of us outcast, exiled, his new delight,

Mankind created, and for him this World!

So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,

Farewell remorse! all good to me is lost.

Evil, be thou my good; by thee at least 110

Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,

By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;

As Man ere long, and this new World shall

know."

Thus while he spake each passion dimmed his
 face,

Thrice changed with pale, ire, envy, and despair,

Which marred his borrowed visage, and betrayed

Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld;

For heavenly minds from such distempers foul

Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware

Each perturbation smoothed with outward

calm,

120

Artificer of fraud; and was the first

That practised falsehood under saintly shew
 Deep malice to conceal, couched with revenge.
 Yet not enough had practised to deceive
 Uriel, once warned; whose eye pursued him
 down

The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount
 Saw him disfigured, more than could befall
 Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
 He marked and mad demeanor, then alone,
 As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen. 130

So on he fares, and to the border comes
 Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
 Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
 As with a rural mound, the champain head
 Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
 With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild
 Access denied; and overhead up-grew
 Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
 Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
 A silvan scene; and, as the ranks ascend, 140
 Shade above shade, a woody theatre
 Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
 The verdurous wall of Paradise up-sprung,
 Which to our general sire gave prospect large
 Into his nether empire neighboring round.
 And higher than that wall a circling row
 Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
 Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,

Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill
Satan had journeyed on, pensive and slow;
But further way found none, so thick entwined,
As one continued brake, the undergrowth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed
All path of man or beast that passed that way:
One gate there only was, and that looked east
On the other side. Which when the Arch-felon
saw,

Due entrance he disdained, and, in contempt, 180
At one slight bound high overleaped all bound
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve,
In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold;
Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault, 190
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the Tree of Life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
Thereby regained, but sat devising death
To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought

Of that life-giving plant, but only used
 For prospect, what well used had been the
 pledge 200

Of immortality. So little knows
 Any, but God alone, to value right
 The good before him, but perverts best things
 To worse abuse, or to their meanest use.

Beneath him with new wonder now he views,
 To all delight of human sense exposed,
 In narrow room Nature's whole wealth, yea, more,
 A Heaven on Earth; for blissful Paradise
 Of God the garden was, by him in the east
 Of Eden planted. Eden stretched her line 210
 From Auran eastward to the royal towers
 Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
 Or where the sons of Eden long before
 Dwelt in Telassar. In this pleasant soil
 His far more pleasant garden God ordained.
 Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow
 All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
 And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,
 High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
 Of vegetable gold; and, next to life 220
 Our death, the Tree of Knowledge, grew fast by,
 Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
 Southward through Eden went a river large,
 Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
 Passed, underneath ungulfed; For God had thrown

That mountain, as his garden-mould high raised,
 Upon the rapid current, which, through veins
 Of porous earth with kindly thirst up-drawn,
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
 Watered the garden; thence united fell 230
 Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
 Which from his darksome passage now appears;
 And now, divided into four main streams,
 Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm
 And country, whereof here needs no account;
 But rather to tell how, if Art could tell
 How, from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
 With mazy error under pendent shades,
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240
 Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
 In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
 Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
 Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
 The open field, and where the unpierced shade
 Imbrowned the noontide bowers. Thus was this
 place

A happy rural seat of various view;
 Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and
 balm,
 Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,
 Hung amiable—Hesperian fables true, 250
 If true, here only—and of delicious taste.

Hid Amalthea and her florid son,
 Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye;
 Nor, where Abassin kings their issue guard, 28^o
 Mount Amara, though this by some supposed
 True Paradise, under the Ethiop line
 By Nilus' head, enclosed with shining rock,
 A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
 From this Assyrian garden, where the Fiend
 Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
 Of living creatures, new to sight and strange.

Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
 Godlike erect, with native honor clad,
 In naked majesty seemed lords of all, 29^o
 And worthy seemed; for in their looks divine
 The image of their glorious Maker shone,
 Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure
 —Severe, but in true filial freedom placed,—
 Whence true authority in men; though both
 Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;
 For contemplation he and valor formed,
 For softness she, and sweet attractive grace;
 He for God only, she for God in him.
 His fair large front and eye sublime declared 300
 Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung
 Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad.
 She, as a veil down to the slender waist,
 Her unadorned golden tresses wore

Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved,
 As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied
 Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
 And by her yielded, by him best received,
 Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, 310
 And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.

Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed;
 Then was not guilty shame. Dishonest shame
 Of Nature's works, honor dishonorable,
 Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
 With shews instead, mere shews of seeming pure,
 And banished from Man's life his happiest life,
 Simplicity and spotless innocence!

So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight
 Of God or Angel, for they thought no ill: 320
 So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair
 That ever since in love's embraces met;
 Adam the goodliest man of men since born
 His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.

Under a tuft of shade, that on a green
 Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain-side,
 They sat them down; and, after no more toil
 Of their sweet gardening labor than sufficed
 To recommend cool Zephyr, and made ease
 More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite 330
 More grateful, to their supper fruits they fell,
 Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
 Yielded them, sidelong as they sat recline

On the soft downy bank, damasked with flowers.
 The savory pulp they chew, and in the rind,
 Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming
 stream;

Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
 Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems
 Fair couple, linked in happy nuptial league,
 Alone as they. About them frisking played 340
 All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all
 chase

In wood or wilderness, forest or den.
 Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw
 Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
 Gambolled before them; the unwieldy elephant,
 To make them mirth, used all his might, and
 wreathed

His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly,
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
 His braided train, and of his fatal guile
 Gave proof unheeded. Others on the grass 350
 Couched, and now filled with pasture gazing sat,
 Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,
 Declined, was hasting now with prone career
 'To the Ocean isles, and in the ascending scale
 Of heaven the stars that usher evening rose:
 When Satan, still in gaze, as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length failed speech recovered sad:
 "O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold?"

Into our room of bliss thus high advanced
 Creatures of other mould, earth-born per-
 haps, 360

Not Spirits, yet to heavenly Spirits bright
 Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace
 The hand that formed them on their shape hath
 poured.

Ah, gentle pair! ye little think how nigh
 Your change approaches, when all these delights
 Will vanish; and deliver ye to woe,
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy.
 Happy, but for so happy ill secured 370
 Long to continue, and this high seat your
 Heaven

Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out such a foe
 As now is entered; yet no purposed 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 work; he gave it me, 380
 Which I as freely give. Hell shall unfold,
 To entertain you two, her widest gates,
 And send forth all her kings; there will be room,

Not like these narrow limits, to receive
 Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
 Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
 On you who wrong me not, for him who
 wronged.

And should I at your harmless innocence
 Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
 Honor and empire, with revenge enlarged 390
 By conquering this new World, compels me now
 To do what else, though damned, I should abhor.''

So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,
 'The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.
 Then, from his lofty stand on that high tree,
 Down he alights among the sportful herd
 Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
 Now other, as their shape served best his end
 Nearer to view his prey, and, unespied,
 To mark what of their state he more might
 learn 400

By word or action marked. About them round
 A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
 Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied
 In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
 Straight couches close, then rising changes oft
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
 Griped in each paw: when Adam first of men
 To first of woman Eve thus moving speech

Turned him, all ear to hear new utterance
 flow : 410

“Sole partner and sole part of all these joys,
 Dearer thyself than all, needs must the power
 That made us, and for us this ample World,
 Be infinitely good, and of his good
 As liberal and free as infinite;
 That raised us from the dust, and placed us here
 In all this happiness, who at his hand
 Have nothing merited, nor can perform
 Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires
 From us no other service than to keep 420
 This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
 In Paradise that bear delicious fruit,
 So various, not to taste that only Tree
 Of Knowledge, planted by the Tree of Life;
 So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,
 Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou
 knowest

God hath pronounced it death to taste that tree,
 The only sign of our obedience left,
 Among so many signs of power and rule
 Conferred upon us, and dominion given 430
 Over all other creatures that possess
 Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
 One easy prohibition, who enjoy
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
 Unlimited of manifold delights;

But let us ever praise him, and extol
 His bounty, following our delightful task,
 To prune these growing plants, and tend these
 flowers,
 Which were it toilsome yet with thee were
 sweet.”

To whom thus Eve replied;--“ O thou for whom
 And from whom I was formed, flesh of thy
 flesh, 441
 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 nowhere find.
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep
 I first awaked, and found myself reposed 450
 Under a shade on flowers, much wondering
 where

And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
 Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
 Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
 Into a liquid plain, then stood unmoved
 Pure as the expanse of heaven. I thither went,
 With unexperienced thought, and laid me down
 On the green bank, to look into the clear
 Smooth lake, that to me seemed another sky.

As I bent down to look, just opposite 460
 A shape within the watery gleam appeared,
 Bending to look on me: I started back,
 It started back; but pleased I soon returned,
 Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks
 Of sympathy and love. There I had fixed
 Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,
 Had not a voice thus warned me: 'What thou
 seest,

What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
 With thee it came and goes. But follow me,
 And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470
 Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he
 Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy
 Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
 Multitudes like thyself, and thence be called
 Mother of human race.' What could I do,
 But follow straight, invisibly thus led?
 'Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall,
 Under a platan; yet methought less fair,
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
 Than that smooth watery image. Back I
 turned; 480

Thou following criedst aloud, 'Return, fair Eve;
 Whom fliest thou? whom thou fliest, of him
 thou art,

His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,

Substantial life, to have thee by my side
Henceforth an individual solace dear;
Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim
My other half.' With that thy gentle hand
Seized mine; I yielded, and from that time see
How beauty is excelled by manly grace 490
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair."

So spake our general mother, and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction unproved,
And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned
On our first father; half her swelling breast
Naked met his, under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid. He in delight,
Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
Smiled with superior love, as Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds 500
That shed May flowers, and pressed her matron lip
With kisses pure. Aside the Devil turned
For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plained:
"Sight hateful! sight tormenting! thus these two
Imparadised in one another's arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust,
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least, 510
Still unfulfilled, with pain of longing pines.
Yet let me not forget what I have gained

From their own mouths. All is not theirs it
seems;

One fatal tree there stands, of Knowledge called,
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? 520
Oh, fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt
Equal with Gods. Aspiring to be such,
They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?—
But first with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspied.

A chance but chance may lead where I may
meet 530

Some wandering Spirit of Heaven by fountain-
side,

Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw
What further would be learned. 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 turned,
But with sly circumspection, and began

Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale
his roam.

Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where heaven
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun 540
Slowly descended, and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levelled his evening rays. It was a rock
Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.

Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
Chief of the angelic guards, awaiting night. 550
About him exercised heroic games

The unarmed youth of Heaven, but nigh at hand
Celestial armory, shields, helmets, and spears,
Hung high, with diamond flaming and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapors fired
Impress the air, and shews the mariner
From what point of his compass to beware
Impetuous winds. He thus began in haste: 560

“Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
No evil thing approach or enter in. . .

This day at highth of noon came to my sphere

A Spirit, zealous, as he seemed, to know
 More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly Man,
 God's latest image. I described his way
 Bent on all speed, and marked his aery gait;
 But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
 Where he first lighted, soon discerned his
 looks 570

Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscured.
 Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
 Lost sight of him. One of the banished crew,
 I fear, hath ventured from the Deep, to raise
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find."

To whom the winged warrior thus returned:
 "Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
 Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sittest,
 See far and wide. In at this gate none pass
 The vigilance here placed, but such as come 580
 Well known from Heaven; and since meridian
 hour

No creature thence. If Spirit of other sort,
 So minded, have o'erleaped these earthy bounds
 On purpose, hard thou knowest it to exclude
 Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.
 But if within the circuit of these walks,
 In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
 Thou tellest, by morrow dawning I shall know."

So promised he; and Uriel to his charge

Returned on that bright beam, whose point now
raised

Bore him slope downward to the sun now
fallen 591

Beneath the Azorès ; whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had hither rolled
Diurnal, or this less volubil earth,
By shorter flight to the east, had left him there,
Arraying with reflected purple and gold
The clouds that on his western throne attend.

Now came still Evening on, and Twilight grey
Had in her sober livery all things clad;
Silence accompanied ; for beast and bird, 600
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale;
She all night long her amorous descant sung.
Silence was placed ; now glowed the firmament
With living sapphire ; Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen unveiled her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw;
When Adam thus to Eve:—"Fair Consort, the
hour

Of night and all things now retired to rest 611
Mind us of like repose, since God hath set
Labor and rest, as day and night, to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,

Now falling with soft slumberous weight, inclines
 Our eyelids. Other creatures all day long
 Rove idle, unemployed, and less need rest;
 Man hath his daily work of body or mind
 Appointed, which declares his dignity,
 And the regard of Heaven on all his ways; 620
 While other animals unactive range,
 And of their doings God takes no account.—
 Tomorrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
 With first approach of light, we must be risen,
 And at our pleasant labor to reform,
 Yon flowery arbors, 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
 guns, 630

That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,
 Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
 Meanwhile as Nature wills, night bids us rest.”

To whom thus Eve with perfect beauty adorned:
 “My author and disposer, what thou biddest
 Unargued I obey; so God ordains:
 God is thy law, thou mine; to know no more
 Is woman’s happiest knowledge, and her praise.
 With thee conversing I forget all time;
 All seasons and their change, all please alike. 640
 Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,

In Nature and all things; which these soft fires
 Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
 Of various influence foment and warm,
 Temper or nourish, or in part shed down 670
 Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
 On earth, made hereby apter to receive
 Perfection from the sun's more potent ray;
 These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
 Shine not in vain. Nor think, though men were
 none,
 That heaven would want spectators, God want
 praise.

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth;
 Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold,
 Both day and night. How often, from the
 steep 680
 Of echoing hill or thicket, have we heard
 Celestial voices to the midnight air,
 Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
 Singing their great Creator! Oft in bands
 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
 With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds
 In full harmonic number, joined, their songs
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to
 Heaven."

Thus talking, hand in hand alone they passed
 On to their blissful bower. It was a place 690

Chosen by the sovran Planter, when he framed
All things to Man's delightful use. The roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade,
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous
 flower,
Iris all hues, roses and jessamine
Reared high their flourished heads between, and
 wrought
Mosaic; underfoot the violet, 700
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broidered the ground, more colored 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 sequestered, though but feigned,
Pan or Silvanus never slept, nor Nymph,
Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs
Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed, 710
And heavenly quires the hymenæan sung,
What day the genial Angel to our sire
Brought her, in naked beauty more adorned,
More lovely, than Pandora, whom the Gods
Endowed with all their gifts, and, oh! too like

In sad event, when, to the unwiser son
 Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared
 Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged
 On him who had stolen Jove's authentic fire.

Thus, at their shady lodge arrived, both
 stood, 720

Both turned, and under open sky adored
 The God that made both sky, air, earth, and
 heaven,

Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
 And starry pole: "Thou also madest the night,
 Maker omnipotent! and thou the day,

Which we, in our appointed work employed,
 Have finished, happy in our mutual help
 And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss.

Ordained by thee; and this delicious place
 For us too large, where thy abundance wants 730
 Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.

But thou hast promised from us two a race
 To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep,"

This said unanimous, and other rites
 Observing none, but adoration pure,
 Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
 Handed they went; and, eased the putting-off
 These troublesome disguises which we wear, 740
 Straight side by side were laid; not turned, I ween,

Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refused;
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 750
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common else.
By thee adulterous lust was driven from men
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother first were known.
Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbecoming holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets! 760
Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,
Present or past, as saints and patriarchs used.
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeared,
Casual fruition; nor in court amours,
Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
Or serenate, which the starved lover sings

To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770
 These lulled by nightingales, embracing, slept,
 And on their naked limbs the flowery roof,
 Showered roses, which the morn repaired. Sleep on
 Blest pair! and oh, yet happiest! if ye seek
 No happier state, and know to know no more.

Now had night measured with her shadowy cone
 Half-way up-hill this vast sublunar vault
 And from their ivory port the Cherubim
 Forth issuing, at the accustomed hour, stood armed
 To their night-watches in warlike parade; 780
 When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake

“Uzziel, have these draw off, and coast the south
 With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;
 Our circuit meets full west.”—As flame they part,
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.

From these, two strong and subtle Spirits he called
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge:

“Ithuriël and Zephon, with winged speed
 Search through this garden, leave unsearched no
 nook:

But chiefly where those two fair creatures
 lodge, 790

Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.

This evening from the sun's decline arrived

Who tells of some infernal Spirit seen

Hitherward bent—who could have thought?—
 escaped

The bars of Hell, on errand bad, no doubt:
Such, where ye find, seize fast and hither bring."

So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct
In search of whom they sought. Him there they
found,

Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve 800

Assaying by his devilish art to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions, as he list, phantasms and dreams;
Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
The animal spirits, that from pure blood arise,
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
At least distempered, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes; vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits, engendering pride.

Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear 810

Touched lightly; for no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness. Up he starts
Discovered and surprised. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the tun some magazine to store
Against a rumored war, the smutty grain
With sudden blaze diffused inflames the air:
So started up in his own shape the Fiend.

Back stepped those two fair Angels, half-
amazed 820

So sudden to behold the grisly king;
 Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon:
 "Which of those rebel Spirits adjudged to Hell
 Comest thou, escaped thy prison? and trans-
 formed,

Why satest thou like an enemy in wait,
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep?"

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

To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with
 scorn:

"Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,
 Or undiminished brightness to be known,
 As when thou stoodest in Heaven upright and
 pure.

That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
 Departed from thee, and thou resemblest now
 Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul. 840
 But come; for thou, be sure, shalt give account
 To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
 This place inviolable, and these from harm."

So spake the Cherub; and his grave rebuke,
 Severe in youthful beauty, added grace

Invincible. Abashed the Devil stood,
 And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
 Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pined
 His loss; but chiefly to find here observed
 His lustre visibly impaired; yet seemed 850
 Undaunted:—"If I must contend," said he,
 "Best with the best, the sender, not the sent,
 Or all at once; more glory will be won,
 Or less be lost."—"Thy fear," said Zephon bold,
 "Will save us trial what the least can do
 Single against thee wicked, and thence weak."

The Fiend replied not, overcome with rage;
 But, like a proud steed reined went haughty on,
 Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly
 He held it vain; awe from above had quelled 860
 His heart, not else dismayed. Now drew they nigh
 The western point, where those half-rounding
 guards

Just met, and closing stood in squadron joined,
 Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,
 Gabriël, from the front thus called aloud:

"O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
 Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
 Ithuriël and Zephon though the shade;
 And with them comes a third of regal port,
 But faded splendor wan, who by his gait 870
 And fierce demeanour seems the Prince of Hell,
 Not likely to part hence without contest.

Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.”

He scarce had ended, when those two
approached,
And brief related whom they brought, where
found,

How busied, in what form and posture couched.
To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake:
“Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds pre-
scribed

To thy transgressions, and disturbed the charge
Of others? who approve not to transgress 880
By thy example, but have power and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employed, it seems, to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss.”

To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow:
“Gabriel, thou hadst in Heaven the esteem of
wise,

And such I held thee; but this question asked
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his
pain?

Who would not, finding way, break loose from
Hell,

Though thither doomed? Thou wouldst thyself,
no doubt, 890

And boldly venture to whatever place.

Furthest from pain, where thou mightest hope to
change

Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
 Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;
 To thee no reason, who knowest only good,
 But evil hast not tried; 'and wilt object
 His will who bound us. Let him surer bar
 His iron gates, if he intends our stay
 In that dark durance. Thus much what was
 asked:

The rest is true, they found me where they
 say: 900

But that implies not violence or harm."

Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel moved,
 Disdainfully half-smiling, thus replied:

"Oh, loss of one in Heaven to judge of wise,
 Since Satan fell! whom folly overthrew,
 And now returns him from his prison, scaped,
 Bravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
 Or not, who ask what boldness brought him
 hither,

Unlicensed from his bounds in Hell prescribed;
 So wise he judges it to fly from pain 910
 However, and to scape his punishment!

So judge thou still, presumptuous! till the wrath,
 Which thou incurrst by flying, meet thy flight
 Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
 Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
 Can equal anger infinite provoked.

But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee

Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them
 Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they
 Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief! 920
 The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alleged
 To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
 Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive."

To which the Fiend thus answered, frowning
 stern:

"Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain,
 Insulting Angel! well thou knowest I stood
 Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid
 The blasting, vollied thunder made all speed,
 And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
 But still thy words at random, as before, 930
 Argue thy inexperience what behoves,
 From hard assays and ill successes past,
 A faithful leader, not to hazard all
 Through ways of danger by himself untried.
 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; 940
 Though for possession put to try once more
 What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
 Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
 High up in Heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,

And practised distances, to cringe, not fight.”

To whom the warrior Angel soon replied:
 “To say and straight unsay, pretending first
 Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
 Argues no leader but a liar traced,
 Satan! and couldst thou faithful add? O
 name, 950

O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!
 Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?—
 Army of fiends! fit body to fit head,
 Was this your discipline and faith engaged,
 Your military obedience, to dissolve
 Allegiance to the acknowledged Power supreme?
 And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou
 Once fawned, and cringed, and servilely adored
 Heaven’s awful Monarch? wherefore but in
 hope 960

To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
 But mark what I areed thee now: Avaunt!
 Fly thither whence thou fleddest! If, from this
 hour,

Within these hallowed limits thou appear,
 Back to the infernal pit I drag thee chained,
 And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
 The facile gates of Hell, too slightly barred.”

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

“Then when I am thy captive talk of
chains, 970

Proud liminary Cherub! but ere then
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
Used to the yoke, drawest his triumphant wheels
In progress through the road of Heaven star-
paved.”

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

Lest on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan alarmed,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Teneriffe or Atlas, unremoved.

His stature reached the sky, and on his crest
Sat Horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp
What seemed both spear and shield. Now dread-
ful deeds 990

Might have ensued, nor only Paradise
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of heaven perhaps, or all the elements

At least had gone to wrack, disturbed and torn
With violence of this conflict, had not soon
The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in heaven his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weighed,
The pendulous round earth with balanced air 1000
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
Battles and realms. In these he put two weights
The sequel each of parting and of fight:
The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam,
Which Gabriel spying thus bespake the Fiend:

“Satan, I know thy strength, and thou knowest
mine,

Neither our own, but given; what folly then
To boast what arms can do! since thine no more
Than Heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled
now

To trample thee as mire. For proof look up, 1010
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
Where thou art weighed, and shown how light,
how weak,

If thou resist.” The Fiend looked up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

MORNING approached, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream; he likes it not, yet comforts her: they come forth to their day-labors; 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 the eastern clime
Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam waked, so custom'd, for his sleep
Was aery light, from pure digestion bred

And temperate vapors bland, which the only
 sound

Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
 Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
 Of birds on every bough; so much the more
 His wonder was to find unawakened Eve,
 With tresses discomposed and glowing cheek, 10
 As though unquiet rest. He, on his side
 Leaning half-raised, with looks of cordial love,
 Hung over her enamored, 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, whispered thus:--

“Awake,

My fairest, my espoused, my latest found,
 Heaven's last best gift, my ever-new delight,
 Awake! the morning shines, and the fresh
 field 20

Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark how spring
 Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
 What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy
 reed,

How Nature paints her colors, how the bee
 Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet.”

Such whispering waked her, but with startled eye
 On Adam, whom embracing thus she spake:

“O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,

My glory, my perfection, glad I see
Thy face, and morn returned; for I this night— 30
Such night till this I never passed—have
dreamed,

If dreamed, 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 called me forth to walk
With gentle voice—I thought it thine. It said,
Why sleepest thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake 40
Tunes sweetest his love-labored song; now reigns
Full-orbed the moon, and, with more pleasing
light,

Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
If none regard. Heaven wakes with all his eyes,
Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire?

In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.'

I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
To find thee I directed then my walk;
And on, methought, alone I passed through
ways

50

That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted knowledge. Fair it seemed,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day;

And, as I wondering looked, beside it stood
 One shaped and winged like one of those from
 Heaven,

By us oft seen: his dewy locks distilled
 Ambrosia. On that tree he also gazed;
 And, 'O fair plant,' said he, 'with fruit sur-
 charged,

Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
 Nor God, nor Man? is knowledge so despised? 60
 Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?

Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
 Longer thy offered good; why else set here?

This said, he paused not, but with venturous arm
 He plucked, he tasted. Me damp horror chilled
 At such bold words, vouched with a deed so bold;
 But he thus, overjoyed: 'O fruit divine,

Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,
 Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit

For Gods, yet able to make Gods of men. 70

And why not Gods of men, since good, the more
 Communicated, more abundant grows,

The author not impaired, but honored more?

Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve!

Partake thou also; happy though thou art,
 Happier thou mayest be, worthier canst not be.

Taste this, and be henceforth among the Gods,
 Thyself a Goddess, not to earth confined,

But sometimes in the air, as we, sometimes

Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine, and see 80
 What life the Gods live there, and such live thou.'
 So saying he drew nigh, and to me held,
 Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part
 Which he had plucked; the pleasant savoury smell
 So quickened appetite, that I, methought,
 Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
 With him I flew, and underneath beheld
 The earth outstretched immense, a prospect wide
 And various. Wondering at my flight and change
 To this high exaltation, suddenly 90
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk
 down,

And fell asleep; but oh, how glad I waked
 To find this but a dream!" Thus Eve her night
 Related, and thus Adam answered 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 harbor none,
 Created pure. But know that in the soul 100
 Are many lesser faculties, that serve
 Reason as chief; among these Fancy next
 Her office holds; of all external things,
 Which the five watchful senses represent,
 She forms imaginations, aery shapes,
 Which Reason joining or disjoining frames

All what we affirm or what deny, and call
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
 Into her private cell, when Nature rests.
 Oft in her absence mimic Fancy wakes 110
 To imitate her; but, misjoining shapes,
 Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
 Ill-matching words and deeds long past or late.
 Some such resemblances, methinks, I find
 Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,
 But with addition strange; yet be not sad.
 Evil into the mind of God or Man
 May come and go, so unapproved, and leave
 No spot or blame behind; which gives me hope
 That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream 120
 Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
 Be not disheartened then, nor cloud those looks,
 That wont be more cheerful and serene,
 Than when fair Morning first smiles on the
 world;
 And let us to our fresh employments rise,
 Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers
 That open now their choicest bosomed smells,
 Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store."

So cheered he his fair spouse, and she was
 cheered,
 But silently a gentle tear let fall 130
 From either eye, and wiped them with her hair.
 Two other precious drops that ready stood,

Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
 Kissed, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
 And pious awe, that feared to have offended.

So all was cleared, and to the field they haste.
 But first, from under shady arborous roof
 Soon as they forth were come to open sight
 Of dayspring, and the sun—who scarce uprisen,
 With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim, 140
 Shot parallel to the earth his dewy ray,
 Discovering in wide landscape all the east
 Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains—
 Lowly they bowed, adoring, and began
 Their orisons; each morning duly paid
 In various style; for neither various style
 Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
 Their Maker in fit strains, pronounced or sung
 Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
 Flowed from their lips, in prose or numerous
 verse,

More tuneable than needed lute or harp 151
 To add more sweetness; and they thus began:

“These are thy glorious works, Parent of
 good,
 Almighty! thine this universal frame,
 Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then!
 Unspeakable, who sittest above these heavens,
 To us invisible, or dimly seen
 In these thy lowest works; yet these declare

Thy goodness beyond thought, and power
divine.--

Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light, 160
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heaven,
On Earth join, all ye creatures, to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crownest the smiling
Morn

With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. 170
Thou Sun, of this great World both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater; sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climbest,
And when high noon hast gained, and when thou
fallest.

Moon, that now meetest the orient Sun, now fliest,
With the fixed Stars, fixed in their orb that flies;
And ye, five other wandering Fires, that move
In mystic dance not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness called up light.
Air, and ye Elements, the eldest birth 180
Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix
And nourish all things, let your ceaseless change

Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
 Ye Mists and Exhalations, that now rise
 From hill or steaming lake, dusky or grey,
 Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
 In honor to the World's great Author rise;
 Whether to deck with clouds the uncolored sky,
 Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers, 190
 Rising or falling still advance his praise.

His praise, ye Winds, that from four quarters blow,
 Breathe soft or loud ; and wave your tops, ye
 Pines,

With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
 Fountains, and ye that warble, as ye flow,
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
 Join voices, all ye living Souls ; ye Birds,
 That singing up to Heaven-gate ascend,
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
 Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk 200
 The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep,
 Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
 To hill or valley, fountain, or fresh shade,
 Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
 Hail, universal Lord, be bounteous still
 To give us only good ; and if the night
 Have gathered aught of evil, or concealed,
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark !”

So prayed they innocent, and to their thoughts
 Firm peace recovered soon, and wonted calm. 210

On to their morning's rural work they haste,
 Among sweet dews and flowers; where any row
 Of fruit-trees over-woody reached too far
 Their pampered boughs, and needed hands to
 check

Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine
 To wed her elm; she spoused about him twines
 Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
 Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn
 His barren leaves. Them thus employed beheld
 With pity Heaven's high King, and to him called
 Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that deigned 221
 To travel with Tobias, and secured

His marriage with the seven-times wedded maid.

"Raphael," said he, "thou hearest what stir
 on Earth

Satan, from Hell scaped through the darksome
 gulf,

Hath raised in Paradise, and how disturbed
 This night the human pair, how he designs
 In them at once to ruin all mankind.

Go therefore, half this day, as friend with friend,
 Converse with Adam, in what bower or shade 230
 Thou findest him from the heat of noon retired,
 To respite his day-labor with repast,
 Or with repose; and such discourse bring-on,
 As may advice him of his happy state,
 Happiness in his power left free to will,

Left to his own free-will, his will though free
 Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware
 He swerve not, too secure. Tell him withal
 His danger; and from whom; what enemy,
 Late fallen himself from Heaven, is plotting
 now 240

The fall of others from like state of bliss;
 By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;
 But by deceit and lies. This let him know,
 Lest wilfully transgressing he pretend
 Surprisal, unadmonished, unforewarned."

So spake the eternal Father, and fulfilled
 All justice. Nor delayed the winged Saint
 After his charge received; but, from among
 Thousand celestial Ardours, where he stood,
 Veiled with his gorgeous wings, up-springing
 light
 Flew through the midst of Heaven—the angelic
 quires, 251

On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
 Through all the empyreal road—till, at the gate
 Of Heaven arrived, the gate self-opened wide,
 On golden hinges turning, as by work
 Divine the sovran Architect had framed.
 From hence—no cloud or, to obstruct his sight,
 Star interposed however small—he sees,
 Not unconform to other shining globes,

Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars
crowded

Above all hills. As when by night the glass 261

Of Galileo, less assured, observes

Imagined lands and regions in the moon;

Or pilot from amidst the Cyclades

Delos or Samos first appearing ken,

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 270

Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems

A phœnix, gazed by all, as that sole bird,

When, to enshrine his reliques in the Sun's

Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.

At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise

He lights, and to his proper shape returns,

A Seraph winged. Six wings he wore, to shade

His lineaments divine; the pair that clad

Each shoulder broad came mantling o'er his breast

With regal ornament; the middle pair 280

Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round

Skirted his loins and thighs, with downy gold

And colors dipped in heaven; the third his feet

Shadowed from either heel, with feathered mail,

Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood,

And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance
filled

The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
Of Angels under watch, and to his state
And to his message high in honor rise;
For on some message high they guessed him
bound.

Their glittering tents he passed, and now is come
Into the blissful field, through groves of
myrrh, 292

And flowering odors, cassia, nard, and balm,
A wilderness of sweets; For Nature here
Wantoned as in her prime, and played at will
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss.

Him, through the spicy forest onward come,
Adam discerned, as in the door he sat
Of his cool bower, while now the mounted
sun 300

Shot down direct his fervid rays, to warm
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam
needs;

And Eve within, due at her hour, prepared
For dinner savory fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nectarous draughts between, from milky
stream,

Berry or grape: to whom thus Adam called:

“Haste hitler, Eve, and, worth thy sight, be
hold

Eastward among those trees what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another morn 310
Risen on mid-noon. Some great behest from
Heaven

To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And what thy stores contain bring forth, and pour
Abundance, fit to honor and receive
Our heavenly stranger. Well we may afford
Our givers, their own gifts, and large bestow
From large bestowed, where Nature multiplies
Her fertile growth, and by disburdening grows
More fruitful, which instructs us not to
spare.” 320

To whom thus Eve:—“Adam, earth’s hallowed
mould,
Of God inspired! small store will serve, where
store,

All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes.
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant and juciest gourd, will pluck such
choice

To entertain our Angel-guest, as he.
Beholding shall confess, that here on Earth

God hath dispensed bounties as in Heaven." 330

So saying, with despatchful looks in haste
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent,
 What choice to choose for delicacy best,
 What order, so contrived as not to mix
 Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring
 Taste after taste upheld with kindest change;
 Bestirs her then, and, from each tender stalk
 Whatever earth, all-bearing mother, yields,
 In India East or West, or middle shore
 In Pontus, or the Punic coast, or where 340
 Alcinoüs reigned, fruit of all kinds, in coat
 Rough or smooth-rind, or bearded husk, or shell,
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
 Heaps with unsparing hand. For drink the grape
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels
 " pressed

She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold
 Wants her fit vessels pure; then strows the ground
 With rose and odors from the shrub unfumed.

Meanwhile our primitive great sire, to meet 350
 His godlike guest, walks forth, without more train
 Accompanied than with his own complete
 Perfections; in himself was all his state,
 More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
 On princes, when their rich retinue long
 Of horses led, and grooms besmeared with gold,

Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
 Nearer his presence, Adam, though not awed,
 Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek,
 As to a superior nature, bowing low, 360
 Thus said: — ‘Native of Heaven—for other place
 None can than Heaven such glorious shape
 contain—

Since, by descending from the Thrones above,
 Those happy places thou hast deigned awhile
 To want, and honor these, vouchsafe with us,
 Two only, who yet by sovran gift possess
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
 To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
 To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
 Be over, and the sun more cool decline.’ 370

Whom thus the angelic Virtue answered mild:
 ‘Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
 As may not oft invite, though Spirits of Heaven
 To visit thee. Lead on then where thy bower
 O’ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
 I have at will.’—So to the silvan lodge
 They came, that like Pomona’s arbor smiled,
 With flowerets decked, and fragrant smells; but
 Eve,

Undecked save with herself, more lovely fair 380
 Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feigned
 Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,

Stood to entertain her guest from Heaven; no veil
 She needed, virtue proof; no thought infirm
 Altered her cheek. On whom the angel *Hail!*
 Bestowed, the holy salutation used
 Long after to blest Mary, second Eve :

“Hail, Mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb
 Shall find the world more numerous with thy sons,
 Than with these various fruits the trees of
 God 390
 Have heaped this table!”—Raised of grassy turf
 Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
 And on her ample square from side to side
 All autumn piled, though spring and autumn here
 Danced hand in hand. Awhile discourse they
 hold—

No fear less dinner cool—when thus began
 Our author :—“Heavenly stranger, please to taste
 These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
 All perfect good, unmeasured out, descends,
 To us for food and for delight hath caused 400
 The earth to yield; unsavory food perhaps
 To spiritual natures; only this I know,
 That one celestial Father gives to all.”

To whom the Angel :—“Therefore what he
 gives—

Whose praise be ever sung—to Man, in part
 Spiritual, may of purest Spirits be found
 No ingrateful food; and food alike those pure

Intelligential substances require,
 As doth your rational; and both contain
 Within them every lower faculty 410
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch,
 taste,

Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
 And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
 For know, whatever was created needs
 To be sustained and fed; of elements
 The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
 Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
 Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon;
 Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged
 Vapors not yet into her substance turned. 420

Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
 From her moist continent to higher orbs.
 The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
 From all his alimantal recompense
 In humid exhalations, and at even
 Sups with the Ocean. Though in Heaven the trees
 Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
 Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each
 morn

We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
 Covered with pearly grain : yet God hath here 430
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,
 As may compare with Heaven; and to taste
 Think not I shall be nice." So down they sat,

And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
 The Angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
 Of theologians; but with keen despatch
 Of real hunger, the concoctive heat
 To transubstantiate; what redounds transpires
 Through Spirits with ease; nor wonder: if by fire
 Of sooty coal the empiric alchemist 440

Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold
 As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve
 Ministered naked, and their flowing cups
 With pleasant liquors crowned. O innocence
 Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
 Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
 Enamored at that sight; but in those hearts
 Love unlibidinous reigned, nor jealousy
 Was understood, the injured lover's hell. 450

Thus when with meats and drinks they had
 sufficed,

Not burdened nature, sudden mind arose
 In Adam not to let the occasion pass,
 Given him by this great conference, to know
 Of things above his world, and of there being
 Who dwell in Heaven, whose excellence he saw
 Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,
 Divine effulgence, whose high power so far
 Exceeded human, and his wary speech
 Thus to the empyreal minister he framed: 460

“Inhabitant with God, now know I well
 Thy favor, in this honor done to Man,
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed
 To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
 Food not of Angels, yet accepted so,
 As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
 At Heaven’s high feasts to have fed; yet what
 compare !”

To whom the winged Hierarch replied:
 “O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
 All things proceed, and up to him return, 470
 If not depraved from good, created all
 Such to perfection, one first matter all,
 Indued with various forms, various degrees
 Of substance, and, in things that live, of life;
 But more refined, more spirituous, and pure,
 As nearer to him placed or nearer tending,
 Each in their several active spheres assigned,
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
 Proportioned to each kind. So from the root
 Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the
 leaves 480
 More aery, last the bright consummate flower
 Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,
 Man’s nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
 To intellectual; give both life and sense,
 Fancy and understanding; whence the soul

Reason receives, and reason is her being,
 Discursive, or intuitive; discourse
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
 Differing but in degree, of kind the same. 490
 Wonder not then what God for you saw good
 If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
 To proper substance. Time may come when men
 With Angels may participate, and find
 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare;
 And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
 Improved by tract of time, and winged ascend
 Ethereäl, as we, or may at choice
 Here or in heavenly Paradise dwell; 500
 If ye be found obedient, and retain
 Unalterably firm his love entire,
 Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy
 Your fill what happiness this happy state
 Can comprehend, incapable of more."

To whom the patriarch of mankind replied:
 "O favorable Spirit, propitious guest,
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
 Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
 From centre to circumference; whereon, 510
 In contemplation of created things,
 By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
 What meant that caution joined, *If ye be found
 Obedient?* can we want obedience then

To him, or possibly his love desert?
 Who formed us from the dust, and placed us
 here,

Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
 Human desires can seek or apprehend."

To whom the Angel:—"Son of Heaven and
 Earth,

Attend! That thou art happy, owe to God: 520

That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,

That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.

This was that caution given thee; be advised.

God may thee perfect, not immutable;

And good he made thee, but to persevere

He left it in thy power; ordained thy will

By nature free, not overruled by fate

Inextricable, or strict necessity.

Our voluntary service he requires,

Not our necessitated; such with him 530

Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how

Can hearts not free be tried, whether they serve

Willing or no? who will but what they must

By destiny, and can no other choose.

Myself and all the angelic host, that stand

In sight of God enthroned, our happy state

Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;

On other surety none; freely we serve,

Because we freely love, as in our will

To love or not; in this we stand or fall. 540

And some are fallen, to disobedience fallen,
 And so from Heaven to deepest Hell. Oh, fall
 From what high state of bliss into what woe!"

To whom our great progenitor:—"Thy words
 Attentive, and with more delighted ear,
 Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
 Cherubic songs by night from neighboring hills
 Aerial music send; nor knew I not
 To be both will and deed created free.

Yet that we never shall forget to love 550
 Our Maker, and obey him whose command
 Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
 Assured me, and still assure; though what thou
 tellest

Hath passed in Heaven, some doubt within me
 move,

But more desire to hear, if thou consent,
 The full relation, which must needs be strange,
 Worthy of sacred silence to be heard.

And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun
 Hath finished half his journey, and scarce begins
 His other half in the great zone of heaven." 560

Thus Adam made request; and Raphaël,
 After short pause assenting, thus began:

"High matter thou enjoimest me, O prime of
 men,
 Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate
 To human sense the invisible exploits

Of warring Spirits? how, without remorse,
 The ruin of so many glorious once,
 And perfect while they stood? how last unfold
 The secrets of another world, perhaps
 Not lawful to reveal? Yet for thy good 570
 This is dispensed; and what surmounts the reach
 Of human sense I shall delineate so,
 By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
 As may express them best. Though what if
 Earth

Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
 Each to other like, more than on Earth is
 thought!

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

Upon her centre poised; when on a day—
 For time, though in eternity, applied 580
 To motion, measures all things durable
 By present, past, and future—on such day
 As Heaven's great year brings forth, the empy-
 real host

Of Angels, by imperial summons called,
 Innumerable before the Almighty's throne
 Forthwith from all the ends of Heaven appeared,
 Under their hierarchs in orders bright.
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,
 Standards and gonfalons, 'twixt van and rear,

Stream in the air, and for distinction serve 590
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
 Or in their glittering tissues bear emblazed
 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 embosomed sat the Son,
 Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake:

“ ‘Hear, all ye Angels, progeny of light, 600
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues,
 Powers,

Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand.
 This day I have begot whom I declare
 My only Son, and on this holy hill
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
 At my right-hand; your head I him appoint;
 And by myself have sworn, to him shall bow
 All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord.
 Under his great vicegerent reign abide,
 United as one individual soul, 610
 For ever happy. Him who disobeys
 Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day,
 Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
 Into utter darkness, deep engulfed, his place
 Ordained without redemption, without end.’

“So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words

All seemed well, pleased; all seemed, but were
not all.

That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance about the sacred hill,
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere 620
Of planets and of fixed in all her wheels
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem;
And in their motions harmony divine
So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now approached—
For we have also our evening and our morn,
We ours for change delectable, not need—
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they
turn 630

Desirous. All in circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden piled
With Angels' food, and rubied nectar flows
In pearl, in diamond and massy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven
On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowerets
crowned,
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy, secure
Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
Excess, before the all-bounteous King, who
showered

With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy. 641
 "Now when ambrosial night, with clouds
 exhaled
 From that high mount of God, whence light and
 shade
 Spring both, the face of brightest Heaven had
 changed
 To grateful twilight—for night comes not there
 In darker veil—and roseate dews disposed
 All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far
 Than all this globous Earth in plain outspread—
 Such are the courts of God—the angelic throng, 650
 Dispersed in bands and files, their camp extend
 By living streams among the trees of life,
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden reared,
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
 Fanned with cool winds; save those who, in their
 course,
 Melodious hymns about the sovran throne
 Alternate all night long. But not so waked
 Satan—so called him now, his former name
 Is heard no more in Heaven. He of the first,
 If not the first Archangel, great in power, 660
 In favor. and pre-eminence, yet fraught
 With envy against the Son of God, that day
 Honored by his great Father, and proclaimed
 Messiah, King anointed, could not bear

Through pride that sight, and thought himself
impaired.

Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolved
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
Unworshiped, unobeyed, the throne supreme, 670
Contemptuous; and his next subordinate
Awakening, thus to him in secret spake:

“ ‘Sleepest thou, companion dear? what sleep
can close

Thy eyelids? and rememberest what decree,
Of yesterday, so late hath passed the lips
Of Heaven's Almighty. Thou to me thy thoughts
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont to impart;
Both waking we were one; how then can now
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;
New laws from him who reigns new minds may raise.
In us who serve, new counsels, to debate 681
What doubtful may ensue.—More in this place
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
Tell them that by command, ere yet dim night
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste.
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward with flying march, where we possess
The quarters of the North; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our King. 690

The great Messiah, and his new commands,
 Who speedily through all the hierarchies
 Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.'

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

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

“To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear,
 Lightning divine, ineffable, serene, .
 Made answer:—‘Mighty Father, thou thy foes
 Justly hast in derision, and secure
 Laughest at their vain designs and tumults vain,
 Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
 Illustrates, when they see all regal power
 Given me to quell their pride, and in event 740
 Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
 Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven.’

“So spake the Son; but Satan with his powers
 Far was advanced on winged speed, a host
 Innumerable as the stars of night,
 Or stars of morning, dewdrops which the sun

Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
 Regions they passed, the mighty regencies
 Of Seraphim and Potentates and Thrones
 In their triple degrees; regions to which 750
 All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
 Than what this garden is to all the earth
 And all the sea, from one entire globose
 Stretched into longitude; which having passed
 At length into the limits of the North
 They came, and Satan to his royal seat
 High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
 Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers
 From diamond quarries hewn and rocks of gold,
 The palace of great Lucifer—so call 760
 That structure in the dialect of men
 Interpreted—which not long after he,
 Affecting all equality with God,
 In imitation of that mount whereon
 Messiah was declared in sight of Heaven,
 The Mountain of the Congregation called;
 For thither he assembled all his train,
 Pretending so commanded to consult
 About the great reception of their king
 Thither to come; and with calumnious art 770
 Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears:

“ ‘Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues,
 Powers . . .

If these magnific titles yet remain

Not merely titular, since by decree
 Another now hath to himself engrossed
 All power, and us eclipsed, under the name
 Of King, anointed; for whom all this haste
 Of midnight-march, and hurried meeting here,
 This only to consult how we may best,
 With what may be devised of honors new, 780
 Receive him, coming to receive from us
 Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
 Too much to one, but double how endured
 To one and to his image now proclaimed?
 But what if better counsels might erect
 Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke!
 Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
 The supple knee?—ye will not, if I trust
 To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves,
 Natives and sons of Heaven, possessed before 790
 By none; and if not equal all, yet free,
 Equally free; for orders and degrees
 Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
 Who can in reason then, or right, assume
 Monarchy over such as live by right
 His equals, if in power 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 the abuse 800
 Of those imperial titles, which assert

Our being ordained to govern, not to serve.'

“Thus far his bold discourse without control
Had audience, when among the Seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored
The Deity, and divine commands obeyed,
Stood up, and, in a flame of zeal severe,
The current of his fury thus opposed:

“ ‘O argument blasphemous, false, and proud!
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heaven 810
Expected! least of all from thee, ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God? pronounced and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right indued
With regal sceptre, every soul in Heaven
Shall bend the knee, and in that honor due
Confess him rightful King. Unjust, thou sayest,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign, 820
One over all with unsucceeded power.
Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty? who made
Thee what thou art, and formed the Powers of
Heaven

Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being.
Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,
And of our good and of our dignity
How provident he is, how far from thought

To make us less, bent rather to exalt
 Our happy state, under one head more near 830
 United. But, to grant it thee unjust
 That equal over equals monarch reign—
 Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou
 count,

Or all angelic nature joined in one,
 Equal to him, begotten Son? by whom
 As by his Word the mighty Father made
 All things, even thee; and all the Spirits of
 Heaven

By him created in their bright degrees;
 Crowned them with glory and to their glory
 named

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues,
 Powers.

Essential Powers; nor by his reign obscured, 841
 But more illustrious made; since he the head
 One of our number thus reduced becomes;
 His laws our laws; all honor to him done
 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
 And tempt not these; but hasten to appease
 The incensed Father, and the incensed Son,
 While pardon may be found, in time besought.'

“So spake the fervent Angel; but his zeal
 None seconded, as out of season judged, 850
 Or singular and rash, whereat rejoiced
 The Apostate, and more haughty thus replied:

“ ‘That we were formed then sayest thou? and
the work

Of secondary hands, by task transferred
From Father to his Son? strange point, and new!
Doctrine which we would know whence learned.

Who saw

When this creation was? rememberest thou
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
We know no time when we were not as now;
Know none before us, self-begot, self-raised 860
By our own quickening power, when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native Heaven, ethereal sons.

Our puissance is our own; our own right-hand
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
Who is our equal. Then thou shalt behold
Whether by supplication we intend
Address, and to begirt the almighty throne
Beseeching or besieging. This report,
These tidings carry to the anointed King; 870
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.’

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

“ ‘O alienate from God! O Spirit accursed,
Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall

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

"So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found
 Among the faithless, faithful only he;
 Among innumerable false, unmoved,
 Unshaken, unseduced, untterrified
 His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal; 900
 Nor number, nor example with him wrought
 To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
 Though single. From amidst them forth he
 passed,
 Long way through hostile scorn, which he
 sustained

Superior, nor of violence feared aught;
And, with retorted scorn, his back he turned
On those proud towers, to swift destruction
doomed.

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 toward the wall of Heaven; which opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place of punishment prepared for them in the Deep: MESSIAH returns with triumph to his Father.

ALL night the dreadless Angel, unpursued,
Through Heaven's wide champaign, held his
way, till Morn,
Waked by the circling Hours, with rosy hand,
Unbarred the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where Light and Darkness is perpetual round

Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes
through Heaven

Grateful vicissitude, like day and night;

Light issues forth, and at the other door

Obsequious Darkness enters, till her hour 10

To veil the heaven; through darkness there
might well

Seem twilight here. And now went forth the
Morn

Such as in highest Heaven, arrayed in gold

Empyrean; from before her vanished Night,

Shot through with orient beams; when all the
plain,

Covered with thick embattled squadrons bright,

Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,

Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view.

War he perceived, war in procinct, and found

Already known what he for news had thought 20

To have reported; gladly then he mixed

Among those friendly Powers, who him received

With joy and acclamations loud, that one,

That of so many myriads fallen yet one,

Returned 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 maintained 30
 Against revolted multitudes the cause
 Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;
 And for the testimony of truth hast borne
 Universal reproach, far worse to bear
 Than violence; for this was all thy care
 To stand approved in sight of God, though
 worlds

Judged thee perverse. The easier conquest now
 Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
 Back on thy foes more glorious to return
 Than scorned thou didst depart, and to subdue 40
 By force who reason for their law refuse,
 Right reason for their law, and for their King
 Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.—
 Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,
 And thou in military prowess next,
 Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
 Invincible; lead forth my armed Saints,
 By thousands and by millions, ranged for fight,
 Equal in number to that godless crew
 Rebellious; them with fire and hostile arms 50
 Fearless assault, and, to the brow of Heaven
 Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss,
 Into their place of punishment, the gulf
 Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
 His fiery chaos to receive their fall.'

‘So spake the sovran voice, and clouds began

To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
 In dusky wreaths reluctant flames, the sign
 Of wrath awaked; nor with less dread the loud
 Ethereal trumpet from on high gan blow: 60
 At which command the Powers militant,
 That stood for Heaven, in mighty quadrate joined
 Of union irresistible, moved on
 In silence their bright legions, to the sound
 Of instrumental harmony, that breathed
 Heroic ardor to adventurous deeds,
 Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
 Of God and his Messiah. On they move
 Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
 Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream divides
 Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground 71
 Their march was, and the passive air up-bore
 Their nimble tread: as when the total kind
 Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
 Came, summoned over Eden, to receive
 Their names of thee. So over many a tract
 Of Heaven they marched, and many a province
 wide,
 Tenfold the length of this terrene. At last,
 Far in the horizon to the north, appeared
 From skirt to skirt a fiery region stretched 80
 In battailous aspect; and, nearer view,
 Bristled with upright beams innumerable
 Of rigid spears, and helmets thronged, and shields

Various, with boastful argument portrayed,
 The banded Powers of Satan hasting on
 With furious expedition; for they weened
 That selfsame day, by fight or by surprise,
 To win the mount of God, and on his throne
 To set the envier of his state, the proud
 Aspirer; but their thoughts proved fond and
 vain 90

In the midway. Though strange to us it seemed
 At first that Angel should with Angel war,
 And in fierce hosting meet who wont to meet
 So oft in festivals of joy and love,
 Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,
 Hymning the eternal Father; but the shout
 Of battle now began, and rushing sound
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.

“High in the midst, exalted as a God,
 The Apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat, 100
 Idol of majesty divine, enclosed
 With flaming Cherubim and golden shields;
 Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
 ’Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
 A dreadful interval, and front to front
 Presented stood, in terrible array
 Of hideous length. Before the cloudy van,
 On the rough edge of battle ere it joined,
 Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced,
 Came towering, armed in adamant and gold. 110

Abdiel that sight endured not, where he stood
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores:

“O Heaven! that such resemblance of the
 Highest

Should yet remain, where faith and realty
 Remain, not! Wherefore should not strength
 and might

There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
 Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable?
 His puissance, trusting in the Almighty's aid,
 I mean to try, whose reason I have tried 120
 Unsound and false. Nor is it aught but just,
 That he who in debate of truth hath won
 Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
 Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,
 When reason hath to deal with force, yet so
 Most reason is that reason overcome.

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

“Proud, art thou met? Thy hope was to
 have reached

The highth of thy aspiring unopposed,
 The throne of God unguarded, and his side
 Abandoned at the terror of thy power
 Or potent tongue. Fool! not to think how vain

Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms;
 Who, out of smallest things, could without end
 Have raised incessant armies to defeat
 Thy folly; or with solitary hand,
 Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow 140
 Unaided could have finished thee, and whelmed
 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
 Seemed 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 answered:—'Ill for thee, but in wished
 hour 150

Of my revenge, first sought for, thou returnest
 From flight, seditious Angel! to receive
 Thy merited reward, the first assay
 Of this right-hand provoked, since first that tongue,
 Inspired with contradiction, durst oppose
 A third part of the Gods, in synod met
 Their deities to assert, who, while they feel
 Vigor divine within them, can allow
 Omnipotence to none. But well thou comest
 Before thy fellows, ambitiöus to win 160
 From me some plume, that thy success may shew

Destruction to the rest. This pause between—
 Unanswered lest thou boast—to let thee know : . .
 At first I thought that liberty and Heaven
 To heavenly souls had been all one; but now
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
 Ministering Spirits, trained up in feast and song.
 Such hast thou armed, the minstrelsy of Heaven,
 Servility with freedom to contend,
 As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.’

“To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied: 171
 ‘Apostate! still thou errest, nor end wilt find
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote.
 Unjustly thou depravest it with the name
 Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,
 Or Nature. God and Nature bid the same,
 When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
 Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
 To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebelled
 Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee, 180
 Thyself not free, but to thyself enthralled ;
 Yet lewdly darest our ministering upbraid.
 Reign thou in Hell, thy kingdom ; let me serve
 In Heaven God ever blest, and his divine
 Behests obey, worthiest to be obeyed.
 Yet chains in Hell, not realms, expect; meanwhile
 From me returned, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
 This greeting on thy impious crest receive.’

“So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,

Which hung not, but so swift with tempest
fell 190

On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
Such ruin intercept. Ten paces huge
He back recoiled ; the tenth on bended knee
His massy spear unstayed ; as if on earth
Winds underground, or waters forcing way,
Sidelong had pushed a mountain from his seat,
Half-sunk with all his pines. Amazement seized
The rebel Thrones, but greater rage, to see
Thus foiled their mightiest ; ours joy filled, and
shout,

Presage of victory, and fierce desire 201
Of battle ; whereat Michaël bid sound
The Archangel-trumpet. Through the vast of
Heaven

It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
Hosanna to the Highest ; nor stood at gaze
The adverse legions, nor less hideous joined
The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
And clamor such as heard in Heaven till now
Was never ; arms on armor clashing brayed
Horrible discord, and the madding wheels 210
Of brazen chariots raged ; dire was the noise
Of conflict ; overhead the dismal hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
And flying vaulted either host with fire.

So under fiery cope together rushed
Both battles main, with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage ; all Heaven
Resounded, and, had Earth been then, all Earth
Had to her centre shook. What wonder ! when
Millions of fierce encountering Angels fought 220
On either side, the least of whom could wield
These elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions. How much more of power,
Army against army, numberless to raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,
Though not destroy, their happy native seat !
Had not the eternal King omnipotent,
From his strong hold of Heaven, high over-ruled
And limited their might ; though numbered such
As each divided legion might have seemed 230
A numerous host, in strength each armed hand
A legion ; led in fight, yet leader seemed
Each warrior single as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to close
The ridges of grim war. No thought of flight,
None of retreat ; no unbecoming deed
That argued fear ; each on himself relied, /
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory. Deeds of eternal fame 240
Were done, but infinite ; for wide was spread
That war and various ; sometimes on firm ground

A standing fight, then soaring on main wing
 Tormented all the air; all air seemed then
 Conflicting fire.—Long time in even scale
 The battle hung; till Satan, who that day
 Prodigious power had shewn, and met in arms
 No equal, ranging through the dire attack
 Of fighting Seraphim confused, at length
 Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and felled
 Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed
 sway

251

Brandished aloft the horrid edge came down,
 Wide wasting: such destruction to withstand
 He hasted, and opposed the rocky orb
 Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
 A vast circumference. At his approach
 The great Archangel from his warlike toil
 Surceased, and glad, as hoping here to end
 Intestine war in Heaven, the arch-foe subdued
 Or captive dragged in chains, with hostile
 frown

260

And visage all inflamed first thus began:

“ ‘Author of evil unknown till thy revolt,
 Unnamed in Heaven, now plenteous, as thou seest
 These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
 Though heaviest by just measure on thyself
 And thy adherents; how hast thou disturbed
 Heaven’s blessed peace, and into Nature brought
 Misery, uncreated till the crime

Of thy rebellion! How hast thou instilled
 Thy malice into thousands, once upright 270
 And faithful, now proved false! But think not
 here

To trouble holy rest. Heaven casts thee out
 From all her confines; Heaven, the seat of bliss,
 Brooks not the works of violence and war.
 Hence then, and evil go with thee along,
 Thy offspring, to the place of evil, Hell,
 Thou and thy wicked crew—there mingle broils—
 Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
 Or some more sudden vengeance, winged from God
 Precipitate thee with augmented pain.' 280

“So spake the prince of Angels; to whom thus
 The Adversary:—‘Nor think thou with wind
 Of aery threats to awe whom yet with deeds
 Thou canst not. Hast thou turned the least of
 these

To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
 Unvanquished, 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 callest evil, but we style
 The strife of glory; which we mean to win, 290
 Or turn this Heaven itself into the Hell
 Thou fablest; here however to dwell free,
 If not to reign. Meanwhile thy utmost force,

And join him named Almighty to thy aid,
I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.'

“They ended parle, and both addressed for fight
Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
Of Angels, can relate, or to what things
Likened on earth conspicuous, that may lift
Human imagination to such highth 300
Of godlike power? for likest Gods they seemed,
Stood they or moved, in stature, motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.
Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air
Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields
Blazed opposite, while Expectation stood
In horror. From each hand with speed retired,
Where erst was thickest fight, the angelic throng,
And left large field, unsafe within the wind
Of such commotion; such as, to set forth 310
Great things by small, if, Nature's concord broke,
Among the constellations war were sprung,
Two planets, rushing from aspect malign
Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.
Together both, with next to almighty arm
Uplifted imminent, one stroke they aimed
That might determine, and not need repeat,
As not of power at once; nor odds appeared
In might or swift prevention. But the sword 320
Of Michael, from the armory of God,

Was given him tempered 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 stayed,
 But, with steep wheel reverse, deep entering
 shared

All his right side; then Satan first knew pain,
 And writhed him to and fro convolved; so sore
 The griding sword with discontinuous wound
 Passed through him. But the ethereal sub-
 stance closed, 330

Not long divisible; and from the gash
 A stream of nectarous humor issuing flowed
 Sanguine, such as celestial Spirits may bleed,
 And all his armor stained, erewhile so bright.
 Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run
 By Angels many and strong, who interposed
 Defense, while others bore him on their shields
 Back to his chariot, where it stood retired
 From off the files of war; there they him laid
 Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and
 shame, 340

To find himself not matchless, and his pride
 Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
 His confidence to equal God in power.
 Yet soon he healed; for Spirits that live throughout
 Vital in every part, not as frail man
 In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,

Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air.
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear, 350
All intellect, all sense, and as they please,
They limb themselves, and color, shape, or size
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.

“Meanwhile in other parts like deeds deserved
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,
And with fierce ensigns pierced the deep array
Of Moloch, furious king, who him defied,
And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound
Threatened, nor from the Holy One of Heaven
Refrained his tongue blasphemous; but anon, 360
Down cloven to the waist, with shattered arms
And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing
Uriel and Raphaël his vaunting foe,
Though huge and in a rock of diamond armed,
Vanquished Adramelech and Asmadai,
Two potent Thrones, that to be less than Gods
Disdained; but meaner thoughts learned in their
flight,
Mangled with ghastly wounds though plate and
mail.

Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
The athiest crew, but, with redoubled blow, 370
Ariel, and Arioch, and the violence
Of Ramiel, scorched and blasted, overthrew.

I might relate of thousands, and their names
 Eternize here on Earth; but those elect
 Angels, contented with their fame in Heaven,
 Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,
 In might though wondrous and in acts of war,
 Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
 Cancelled from Heaven and sacred memory,
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell ; 380
 For strength, from truth divided and from just,
 Illaudable, nought merits but dispraise
 And ignominy, yet to glory aspires,
 Vainglorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
 Therefore eternal silence be their doom.

“And now, their mightiest quelled, the battle
 swerved,

With many an inroad gored ; deformed rout
 Entered, and foul disorder ; all the ground
 With shivered armor strown, and on a heap
 Chariot and charioteer lay overturned, 390
 And fiery foaming steeds ; what stood recoiled,
 O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanic host,
 Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surprised,
 Then first with fear surprised and sense of pain,
 Fled ignominous, to such evil brought
 By sin of disobedience, till that hour
 Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
 Far otherwise the inviolable Saints,
 In cubic phalanx firm, advanced entire,

Invulnerable, impenetrably armed ; 400
 Such high advantages their innocence
 Gave them above their foes ; not to have sinned,
 Not to have disobeyed ; in fight they stood
 Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pained
 By wound, though from their place by violence
 moved.

“Now Night her course began, and, over Heaven
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce imposed,
 And silence on the odious din of war.
 Under her cloudy covert both retired,
 Victor and vanquished. On the foughten field 410
 Michaël and his Angels prevalent .

Encamping placed in guard their watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires ; on the other part,
 Satan with his rebellious disappeared, \\
 Far in the dark dislodged ; and, void of rest,
 His potentates to council called by night,
 And in the midst thus undismayed began :

“ ‘O now in danger tried, now known in arms
 Not to be overpowered, companions dear,
 Found worthy not of liberty alone, 420
 Too mean pretense, but what we more affect
 Honor, dominion, glory, and renown,
 Who have sustained one day in doubtful fight
 —And if one day, why not eternal days?—
 What Heaven’s Lord had powerfulest to send
 Against us from about his throne, and judged

Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
 But proves not so ; then fallible, it seems,
 Of future we may deem him, though till now
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly
 armed, 430

Some disadvantage we endured and pain,
 Till now not known, but known, as soon contemned ;
 Since now we find this our empyreal form
 Incapable of mortal injury,
 Imperishable, and, though pierced with wound,
 Soon closing, and by native vigor healed.

Of evil then so small as easy think
 The remedy. Perhaps more valid arms,
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
 May serve to better us and worse our foes, 440
 Or equal what between us made the odds,
 In nature none. If other hidden cause
 Left them superior, while we can preserve
 Unhurt our minds and understanding sound,
 Due search and consultation will disclose.'

“He sat; and in the assembly next up-stood
 Nisroch, of Principalities the prime.

As one he stood escaped from cruel fight,
 Sore toiled, his riven arms to havoc hewn,
 And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake: 450

“‘Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free
 Enjoyment of our right as Gods; yet hard
 For Gods, and too unequal work, we find

Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
 Against unpained, impassive; from which evil
 Ruin must needs ensue. For what avails
 Valor or strength, though matchless, quelled
 with pain

Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
 Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine, 460
 But live content, which is the calmest life;
 But pain is perfect misery, the worst
 Of evils, and excessive overturns
 All patience. He who therefore can invent
 With what more forcible we may offend
 Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
 Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
 No less than for deliverance what we owe.'

“Whereto with look composed Satan replied:
 ‘Not uninvented that, which thou aright 470
 Believest so main to our success, I bring.—
 Which of us who beholds the bright surface
 Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,
 This continent of spacious Heaven, adorned
 With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial, gems and
 gold;
 Whose eye so superficially surveys
 These things as not to mind from whence they
 grow,
 Deep underground, materials dark and crude

Of spiritous and fiery spume, till, touched
 With Heaven's ray and tempered, they shoot
 forth 480

So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?
 These in their dark nativity the deep
 Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;
 Which into hallow engines long and round
 Thick rammed, at the other bore with touch of
 fire

Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
 From far with thundering noise among our foes
 Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
 To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever stands
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have dis-
 armed 490

The Thunderer of his only dreaded bold.
 Nor long shall be our labor; yet ere dawn,
 Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive;
 Abandon fear; to strength and counsel joined
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despaired.'

“He ended, and his words their drooping cheer
 Enlightened, and their languished hope revived.
 The invention all admired, and each how he
 To be the inventor missed; so easy it seemed
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have
 thought 500

Impossible. Yet haply of thy race,
 In future days, if malice should abound,

Some one intent on mischief, or inspired
 With devilish machination, might devise
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men,
 For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.

“Forthwith from council to the work they flew;
 None arguing stood; innumerable hands
 Were ready; in a moment up they turned
 With the celestial soil, and saw beneath 510
 The originals of Nature in their crude
 Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam
 They found, the mingled, and, with subtle art,
 Concocted and adusted, they reduced
 To blackest grain, and into store conveyed.
 Part hidden veins digged up—nor hath this Earth
 Entrails unlike—of mineral and stone,
 Whereof to found their engines and their balls
 Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
 Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire. 520
 So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,
 Secret they finished, and in order set,
 With silent circumspection unespied.

“Now when fair Morn orient in Heaven appeared
 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
 Looked round, and scouts each coast light-armed
 scour,

Each quarter, to descry the distant foe, 530
 Where lodged, or whither fled, or if for fight,
 In motion or in halt Him soon they met
 Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
 But firm battalion. Back with speediest sail
 Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing,
 Came flying, and in mid-air aloud thus cried :

“ ‘Arm, warriors, arm for fight! The foe at hand,
 Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
 This day; fear not his flight! so thick a cloud
 He comes, and settled in his face I see 540

Sad resolution and secure. Let each
 His adamantine coat gird well, and each
 Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orbéd shield,
 Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,
 If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,
 But rattling storm of arrows barbed with fire.’

“So warned he them, aware themselves, and
 soon

In order, quit of all impediment;
 Instant without disturb they took alarm,
 And onward moved embattled: when behold, 550
 Not distant far, with heavy pace the foe
 Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
 Training his devilish enginery, impaled
 On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood
 Awhile; but suddenly at head appeared

Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud :

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

“So scoffing in ambiguous words he scarce
Had ended, when to right and left the front
Divided, and to either flank retired; 570
Which to our eyes discovered, new and strange,
A triple mounted row of pillars laid
On wheels—for like to pillars most they seemed,
Or hollowed bodies made of oak or fir,
With branches lopt, in wood or mountain felled—
Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths
With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,
Portending hollow truce. At each behind
A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
Stood waving, tipped with fire; while we,
suspense,
Collected stood within our thoughts amused; 581
Not long, for sudden all at once their reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied

With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame
But soon obscured with smoke, all Heaven
 appeared,
From those deep-throated engines belched, whose
 roar
Embowelled with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
Their devilish glut, chained thunderbolts and hail
Of iron globes; which, on the victor host 590
Levelled, with such impetuous fury smote
That whom they hit none on their feet might
 stand,
Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
By thousands, Angel on Archangel rolled;
The sooner for their arms; unarmed, they might
Have easily as Spirits evaded swift,
By quick contraction or remove; but now
Foul dissipation followed and forced rout;
Nor served it to relax their serried files.
What should they do? If on they rushed, repulse
Repeated, and indecent overthrow 601
Doubled, would render them yet more despised,
And to their foes a laughter; for in view
Stood ranked of Seraphim another row,
In posture to displode their second tire
Of thunder: back defeated to return
They worse abhorred. Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision called:

“ ‘O friends, why come not on these victors
proud?

Erewhile they fierce were coming; and when we,
To entertain them fair with open front 611
And breast—what could we more?—propounded
terms

Of composition, straight they changed their
minds,

Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance. Yet for a dance they seemed
Somewhat extravagant and wild; perhaps
For joy of offered p^{er}ce. But I suppose
If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.’

“To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood:
‘Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force, urged
home, 622

Such as we might perceive amused them all,
And stumbled many. Who receives them right
Had need from head to foot well understand;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They shew us when our foes walk not upright.’

“So they among themselves in pleasant vein
Stood scoffing, highthened in their thoughts
beyond

All doubt of victory; Eternal Might 630
To match with their inventions they presumed

So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
 And all his host derided, while they stood
 Awhile in trouble. But they stood not long;
 Rage prompted them at length, and found them
 arms

Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
 Forthwith—behold the excellence, the power,
 Which God hath in his mighty Angels placed!—
 Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
 —For Earth hath this variety from Heaven 640
 Of pleasure situate in hill and dale—
 Light as the lightning-glimpse, they ran, they flew;
 From their foundations loosening to and fro
 They plucked the seated hills, with all their load,
 Rocks, waters, woods, and by their shaggy tops
 Uplifting bore them in their hands. Amaze,
 Be sure, and terror seized the rebel host,
 When coming toward them so dread they saw
 The bottom of the mountains upward turned;
 Till on those cursed engines' triple row 650
 They saw them whelmed, 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 oppressed whole legions
 armed.

Their armor helped their harm, crushed-in and
 bruised

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

The rest, in imitation, to like arms
Betook them, and the neighboring hills up-tore;
So hills amid the air encountered hills,
Hurled to and fro with jaculation dire,
That underground they fought in dismal shade;
Infernal noise; war seemed a civil game
To this uproar; horrid confusion heaped
Upon confusion rose. And now all Heaven
Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread, 670

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

“ ‘Effulgence of my glory, Son beloved, 680
Son in whose face invisible is beheld
Visibly what by Deity I am,
And in whose hand what by decree I do,
Second Omnipotence! two days are past,

Two days, as we compute the days of Heaven,
 Since Michael and his powers went forth to tame
 These disobedient. Sore hath been their fight,
 As likeliest was when two such foes met armed:
 For to themselves I left them; and, thou knowest,
 Equal in their creation they were formed, 690
 Save what sin hath impaired, 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 performed what War can do,
 And to disordered Rage let loose the reins,
 With mountains as with weapons armed, which
 makes

Wild work in Heaven, and dangerous to the main.
 Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;
 For thee I have ordained it, and thus far 700
 Have suffered, that the glory may be thine
 Of ending this great war, since none but thou
 Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
 Immense I have transfused, that all may know
 In Heaven and Hell thy power above compare;
 And this perverse commotion governed 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, 710

Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
 That shake Heaven's basis, bring forth all my war,
 My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
 Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh ;
 Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out
 From all Heaven's bounds into the upper 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 expressed 720
 Ineffably into his face received ;

And thus the filial Godhead answering spake ;
 " 'O Father, O Supreme of heavenly Thrones,
 First, Highest, Holiest, Best, thou always seekest
 To glorify thy Son, I always thee,
 As is most just. This I my glory account,
 My exaltation, and my whole delight,
 That thou in me well pleased declarest thy will
 Fulfilled, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
 Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume, 730
 And gladlier shall resign when in the end
 Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
 For ever, and in me all whom thou lovest :
 But whom thou hatest I hate, and can put on
 Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,
 Image of thee in all things ; and shall soon,

Armed with thy might, rid Heaven of these rebelled,
 To their prepared ill mansion driven down,
 To chains of darkness, and the undying worm,
 That from thy just obedience could revolt, 740
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.

Then shall thy Saints unmixed, and from the
 impure

Far separate, circling thy holy mount
 Unfeigned Hallelujahs to thee sing,
 Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief '

“So said he, o'er his sceptre bowing, rose
 From the right hand of glory where he sat ;
 And the third sacred morn began to shine,
 Dawning through Heaven. Forth rushed with
 whirlwind-sound

The chariot of Paternal Deity, 750
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel,
 undrawn,

Itself instinct with spirit, but convoyed
 By four cherubic shapes. Four faces each
 Had wonderous ; as with stars their bodies all
 And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels
 Of beryl, and careering fires between ;
 Over their heads a crystal firmament,
 Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
 Amber and colors of the showery arch.

He in celestial panoply all armed 760
 Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,

Ascended ; at his right hand Victory
Sat eagle-winged ; beside him hung his bow
And quiver, with three-bolted thunder stored,
And from about him fierce effusion rolled
Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire.
Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,
He onward came ; far off his coming shone ;
And twenty thousand—I their number heard—
Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen. 770
He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime,
On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned,
Illustrious far and wide, but by his own
First seen ; then unexpected joy surprised,
When the great ensign of Messiah blazed,
Aloft by Angels borne, his sign in Heaven ;
Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced
His army, circumfused on either wing,
Under their Head embodied all in one.
Before him Power divine his way prepared ; 780
At his command the uprooted hills retired,
Each to his place ; they heard his voice and went
Obsequious ; Heaven his wonted face renewed,
And with fresh flowerets hill and valley smiled.
This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdured,
And to rebellious fight rallied their Powers,
Insensate, hope conceiving from despair ;
In heavenly Spirits could such perverseness dwell ?
But to convince the proud what signs avail,

Or wonders move the obdurate to relent? 790
 They, hardened more by what might most reclaim,
 Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
 Took envy; and, aspiring to his highth,
 Stood re-imbattled fierce, by force or fraud
 Weening to prosper, and at length prevail
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall
 In universal ruin last; and now
 To final battle drew, disdaining flight,
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
 To all his host on either hand thus spake: 800
 “ ‘Stand still in bright array, ye Saints; here
 stand,
 Ye Angels armed; this day from battle rest.
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause;
 And as ye have received, so have ye done,
 Invincibly; but of this cursed crew
 The punishment to other hand belongs;
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints.
 Number to this day’s work is not ordained,
 Nor multitude; stand only, and behold 810
 God’s indignation on these godless poured
 By me; not you, but me, they have despised,
 Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
 Because the Father, to whom, in Heaven supreme,
 Kingdom, and power, and glory appertains,
 Hath honored me, according to his will.

Therefore to me their doom he hath assigned;
 That they may have their wish, to try with me
 In battle which the stronger proves; they all,
 Or I alone against them; since by strength 820
 They measure all, of other excellence
 Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
 Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.'

“So spake the Son, and into terror changed
 His countenance, too severe to be beheld,
 And full of wrath bent on his enemies.

At once the Four spread out their starry wings,
 With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
 Of his fierce chariot rolled, as with the sound
 Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host. 830

He on his impious foes right onward drove,
 Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels
 The steadfast Æmpyrean shook throughout,
 All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
 Among them he arrived, in his right-hand
 Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
 Before him, such as in their souls infixed
 Plagues; they, astonished, all resistance lost,
 All courage; down their idle weapons cropt;
 O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode
 O'er Thrones and mighty Seraphim pros-
 trate, 841

That wished the mountains now might be again
 Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.

Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
 His arrows, from the fourfold-visaged Four
 Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
 Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
 One spirit in them ruled, and every eye
 Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
 Among the accursed, that withered all their
 strength

And of their wonted vigor left them drained, 851
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen.
 Yet half his strength he put not forth, but checked
 His thunder in mid-volley; for he meant
 Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven.
 The overthrown he raised, and, as a herd
 Of goats or timorous flock, together thronged,
 Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued
 With terrors and with furies, to the bounds
 And mystal wall of Heaven, which, opening wide,
 Rolled inward, and a spacious gap disclosed 861
 Into the wasteful Deep. The monstrous sight
 Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
 Urged them behind; headlong themselves they
 threw

Down from the verge of Heaven; eternal wrath
 Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

“Hell heard the unsufferable noise, Hell saw
 Heaven ruining from Heaven, and would have fled
 Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast too deep

Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound. 870
 Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roared,
 And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
 Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
 Encumbered him with ruin; Hell at last
 Yawning received them whole, and on them
 closed;

Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
 Disburdened Heaven rejoiced, and soon repaired
 Her mural breach, returning whence it rolled.
 Sole victor, from the expulsion of his foes, 880
 Messiah his triumphal chariot turned.
 To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood
 Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
 With jubilee advanced; and as they went,
 Shaded with branching palm, each Order bright,
 Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
 Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
 Worthiest to reign. He celebrated rode,
 Triumphant through mid-Heaven, into the courts
 And temple of his mighty Father throned 890
 On high; who into glory him received,
 Where now he sits, at the right-hand of bliss.

“Thus, measuring things in Heaven by things
 on Earth,

At thy request, and that thou mayest beware
 By what is past, to thee I have revealed

What might have else to human race been hid;
The discord which befell, and war in Heaven
Among the angelic Powers, and the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring, who rebelled
With Satan; he who envies now thy state, 900
Who now is plotting how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that, with him
Bereaved of happiness, thou mayest partake
His punishment, eternal misery;
Which would be all his solace and revenge,
As a despise done against the Most High,
Thee once to gain companion of his woe.
But listen not to his temptations; warn
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard,
By terrible example, the reward 910
Of disobedience. Firm they might have stood,
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress."

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 Heaven, Urania—by that name
if rightly thou art called—whose voice divine
Following, above the 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 dwellest; but, heavenly-born,
Before the hills appeared or fountain flowed,
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play 10
In presence of the Almighty Father, pleased

With thy celestial song. Up-led by thee
Into the Heaven-of heavens I have presumed,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy tempering. With like safety guided down
Return me to my native element;
Lest, from this flying steed unreined—as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime—
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall,
Erroneous there to wander and forlorn.— 20
Half yet remains unsung, but, narrower bound,
Within the visible diurnal sphere.
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged
To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days,
On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues,
In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
Visitest my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east. Still govern thou my song, 30
Urania, and fit audience find, though few;
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodopè, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamor drowned
Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou who thee implores;
For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.

Say, Goddess, what ensued when Raphaël, 40
The affable Archangel, had forewarned
Adam, by dire example, to beware
Apostasy, by what befell in Heaven
To those apostates; lest the like befall
In Paradise to Adam or his race,
Charged not to touch the interdicted tree,
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
So easily obeyed, amid the choice
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
Though wandering. He, with his consorted
Eve, 50
The story heard attentive, and was filled
With admiration and deep muse, to hear
Of things so high and strange, things to their
thought
So unimaginable as hate in Heaven,
And war so near the peace of God in bliss,
With such confusion; but the evil, soon
Driven back, redounded as a flood on those
From whom it sprung, impossible to mix
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repealed
The doubts that in his heart arose; and now 60
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
What nearer might concern him, how this World
Of heaven and earth conspicuous first began;
When, and whereof created; for what cause;
What within Eden, or without, was done

Before his memory—as one, whose drought
 Yet scarce allayed, still eyes the current stream,
 Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites—
 Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly guest:

“Great things, and full of wonder in our
 ears, 70

Far differing from this World, thou hast revealed,
 Divine interpreter! by favor sent
 Down from the Æmpyrean, to forewarn
 Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
 Unknown, which human knowledge could not
 reach.

For which to the infinitely Good we owe
 Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
 Receive with solemn purpose, to observe
 Immutably his sovran will, the end
 Of what we are. But since thou hast vouch-
 safed’ 80

Gently, for our instruction, to impart
 Things above earthly thought, which yet
 concerned

Our knowing, as to highest Wisdom seemed,
 Deign to descend now lower, and relate,
 What may no less perhaps avail us known,
 How first began this heaven, which we behold
 Distant so high, with moving fires adorned
 Innumerable; and this which yields or fills
 All space, the ambient air, wide interfused.

Embracing round this florid earth; what cause go
 Moved the Creator, in his holy rest
 Through all eternity, so late to build
 In Chaos; and the work begun how soon
 Absolved: if unforbid thou mayest 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. Suspense in
 heaven,

Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears, 100
 And longer will delay to hear thee tell
 His generation, and the rising birth
 Of Nature from the unapparent Deep:
 Or if the star of evening and the moon
 Haste to thy audience, Night with her will bring
 Silence, and Sleep listening 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 answered mild: 110
 "This also thy request, with caution asked,
 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 withheld
 Thy hearing; such commission from above
 I have received, to answer thy desire
 Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain 120
 To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope
 Things not revealed, which the invisible King,
 Only omniscient, hath suppressed in night,
 To none communicable in Earth or Heaven;
 Enough is left besides to search and know.
 But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
 Her temperance over appetite, to know
 In measure what the mind may well contain;
 Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
 Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind. 130

"Know then, that after Lucifer from Heaven
 —So call him, brighter once amidst the host
 Of Angels, than that star the stars among—
 Fell with his flaming legions through the Deep
 Into his place, and the great Son returned
 Victorious with his Saints, the omnipotent,
 Eternal Father from his throne beheld
 Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake:

"At least our envious foe hath failed, who
 thought
 All like himself rebellious, by whose aid 140
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat
 Of Deity supreme, us dispossessed,
 He trusted to have seized, and into fraud

PARADISE LOST.

Drew many, whom their place knows here no more,
Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,
Their station; Heaven yet populous retains
Number sufficient to possess her realms,
Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
With ministeries due, and solemn rites.

But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm 150

Already done, to have dispeopled Heaven,
My damage fondly deemed, 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 raised,
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither, under long obedience tried,
And Earth be changed to Heaven, and Heaven
to Earth, 160

One kingdom, joy and union without end.
Meanwhile inhabit lax, ye Powers of Heaven;
And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee
This I perform; speak thou, and be it done!
My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee
I send along: ride forth, and bid the Deep
Within appointed bounds be heaven and earth—
Boundless the Deep, because I am to fill
Infinitude; nor vacuous the space,
Though I, uncircumscribed, myself retire, 170

And put not forth my goodness, which is free
To act or not; necessity and chance
Approach not me, and what I will is fate.'

“So spake the 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 notion can receive.

Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heaven, 180
When such was heard declared the Almighty's will;
Glory they sung to the Most High, goodwill
To future men, and in their dwellings peace;
Glory to Him whose just avenging ire
Had driven out the ungodly from his sight
And the habitations of the just; to Him
Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordained
Good out of evil to create, instead
Of Spirits malign a better race to bring
Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse 190
His good to worlds and ages infinite.

“So sang the Hierarchies. Meanwhile the Son
On his great expedition now appeared,
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crowned
Of majesty divine, sapience and love
Immense, and all his Father in him shone.
About his chariot numberless were poured
Cherub and Seraph, Potentates and Thrones,

And Virtues, winged Spirits, and chariots winged,
 From the armory of God, where stand of old 200
 Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodged,
 Against a solemn day, harnessed at hand,
 Celestial equipage ; and now came forth
 Spontaneous, for within them Spirit lived,
 Attendant on their Lord. Heaven opened wide
 Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound
 On golden hinges moving, to let forth
 The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
 And Spirit coming to create new worlds.—
 On heavenly ground they stood, and from the
 shore

They viewed the vast immeasurable abyss, 211
 Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
 Up from the bottom turned by furious winds
 And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
 Heaven's highth, and with the centre mix the pole.

“ Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou Deep
 peace !”

Said then the omnific Word ; ‘your discord end !’
 Nor stayed, but, on the wings of Cherubim
 Up-lifted, in paternal glory rode
 Far into Chaos, and the World unborn ; 220
 For Chaos heard his voice. Him all his train
 Followed in bright procession, to behold
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.
 Then stayed the fervid wheels, and in his hand

He took the golden compasses, prepared
 In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
 This Universe, and all created things.
 One foot he centered, and the other turned
 Round through the vast profundity obscure,
 And said :—'Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
 This be thy just circumference, O World !' 231

"Thus God the heaven created, thus the earth,
 Matter unformed and void. Darkness profound
 Covered the Abyss ; but on the watery calm
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,
 And vital virtue infused and vital warmth,
 Throughout the fluid mass, but downward purged
 The black, tartareous, cold, infernal, dregs
 Adverse to life : then founded, then conglobed,
 Like things to like, the rest to several place 240
 Disparted, and between spun out the air,
 And Earth, self-balanced, 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 aery gloom began.
 Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
 Was not ; she in a cloudy tabernacle
 Sojourned the while. God saw the light was good ;
 And light from darkness by the hemisphere 250
 Divided. Light the Day, and darkness Night

He named. Thus was the first day even and morn;
 Nor passed uncelebrated, nor unsung
 By the celestial quires. When orient light
 Exhaling first from darkness they beheld,
 Birthday of heaven and earth, with joy and shout
 The hollow universal orb they filled,
 And touched their golden harps, and hymning
 praised

God and his works; Creator him they sung,
 Both when first evening was, and when first morn.

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

“The Earth was formed, but, in the womb as yet
 Of waters, embryon immature, involved,
 Appeared not; over all the face of Earth

Main ocean flowed, not idle, but, with warm
 Prolific humor softening all her globe, 280
 Fermented the great mother to conceive,
 Sate with genial moisture; when God said:

'Be gathered now, ye waters, under heaven
 Into one place, and yet dry land appear!
 Immediately the mountains huge appear,
 Emergent, and their broad bare backs up-heave
 Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky.
 So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low
 Down sunk a hollow bottom, broad and deep,
 Capacious bed of waters. Thither they 290
 Hasted with glad precipitance, up-rolled,
 As drops on dust conglobing, from the dry;
 Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
 For haste: such flight the great command im-
 pressed

On the swift floods. As armies at the call
 Of trumpet—for of armies thou hast heard—
 Troop to their standard, so the watery throng,
 Wave rolling after wave, where way they found;
 If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
 Soft-ebbing: nor withstood them rock or hill; 300
 But they, or underground, or circuit wide
 With serpent error wandering, found their way,
 And on the washy ooz 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 called Seas;

And saw that it was good, and said:—'Let the earth
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed, 310
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth.'

He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorned,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure
clad

Her universal face with pleasant green;
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowered,
Opening their various colors, and made gay
Her bosom, smelling sweet; and, these scarce
blown,

Forth flourished thick the clustering vine, forth
crept

The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed 321
Embattled in her field, and the 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
gemmed

Their blossoms. With high woods the hills were
crowned,

With tufts the valleys and each fountain-side,
With borders long the rivers; that Earth now

Seemed liked to Heaven, a seat where Gods might
dwell,

Or wander with delight, and love to haunt 330

Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rained

Upon the earth, and man to till the ground

None was, but from the earth a dewy mist

Went up and watered all the ground, and each

Plant of the field, which ere it was in the earth

God made, and every herb, before it grew

On the green stem. God saw that it was good:

So even and morn recorded the third day.

“Again the Almighty spake:—‘Let there be
lights

High in the expanse of heaven, to divide 340

The day from night; and let them be for signs,

For seasons, and for days, and circling years;

And let them be for lights, as I ordain

Their office in the firmament of heaven,

To give light on the earth!’ and it was so.

And God made two great lights, great for their use

To Man, the greater to have rule by day,

The less by night, altern; and made the stars,

And set them in the firmament of heaven

To illuminate the earth, and rule the day 350

In their vicissitude, and rule the night,

And light from darkness to divide. God saw,

Surveying his great work, that it was good.

For, of celestial bodies first, the Sun

A mighty sphere he framed, unlightsome first,
 Though of ethereal mould; then formed the Moon
 Globose, and every magnitude of Stars,
 And sowed with stars the heaven, thick as a field.
 Of light by far the greater part he took,
 Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and
 placed 360

In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
 And drink the liquid light; firm to retain
 Her gathered 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 horns.
 By tincture or reflection they augment
 Their small peculiar, though, from human sight
 So far remote, with diminution seen.

First in his east the glorious lamp was seen, 370
 Regent of day, and all the horizon round
 Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
 His longitude through heaven's high road; the
 gray

Dawn and the Pleiadès before him danced,
 Shedding sweet influence. Less bright the moon,
 But opposite in levelled west, was set,
 His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
 From him; for other light she needed none
 In that aspect, and still that distance keeps

Till night; then in the east her turn she
 shines, 380

Revolved on heaven's great axle, and her reign
 With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
 With thousand thousand stars, that then appeared
 Spangling the hemisphere. Then, first adorned
 With their bright luminaries that set and rose,
 Glad evening and glad morn crowned 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
 Displayed on the open firmament of heaven.’ 390
 And God created the great whales, and each
 Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
 The waters generated by their kinds,
 And every bird of wing after his kind;
 And saw that it was good, and blessed them,
 saying:

‘Be fruitful, multiply, and, in the seas,
 And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;
 And let the fowl be multiplied on the earth!’
 Forth with the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
 With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals 400
 Of fish that, with their fins and shining scales,
 Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft
 Bank the mid sea. Part, single or with mate,

Graze the seaweed, their pasture, and through
groves

Of corals stray, or, sporting with quick glance,
Shew to the sun their waved coats dropt with
gold;

Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend
Moist nutriments; or under rocks their food
In jointed armor watch; on smooth the seal
And bended dolphins play; part, huge of
bulk, 410

Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
Tempest the ocean. There leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
Stretched 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.

Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and
shores,
Their brood as numerous hatch from the egg,
that soon,
Bursting with kindly rupture, forth disclose 419
Their callow young; but feathered soon and
fledge

They summed their pens, and, soaring the air
sublime,

With clang despised 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, ranged in figure, wedged their way,
 Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
 Their aery caravan, high over seas
 Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing
 Easing their flight—so steers the prudent
 crane 430

Her annual voyage, borne on winds—the air
 Floats as they pass, fanned with unnumbered
 plumes.

From branch to branch the smaller birds with
 song

Solaced the woods, and spread their painted
 wings,

Till even; nor then the solemn nightingale
 Ceased warbling, but all night tuned her soft
 lays.

Others, on silver lakes and rivers, bathed
 Their downy breast; the swan, with arched neck
 Between her white wings mantling, proudly rows
 Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit 440
 The dank, and, rising on stiff pinions, tower
 The mid aerial sky. Others on ground
 Walked firm; the crested cock whose clarion
 sounds

The silent hours, and the other whose gay train
 Adorns him, colored with the florid hue
 On rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus

With fish replenished, and the air with fowl,
Evening and morn solemnized the fifth day.

“The sixth, and of creation last, arose
With evening harps and matin; when God
said :

450

‘Let the earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
Cattle and creeping things, and beast of the earth,
Each in their kind.’ The earth obeyed, and
straight,

Opening her fertile womb, teemed at a birth
Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,
Limbed 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
walked—

✓The cattle in the fields and meadows green : 460

Those rare and solitary, these in flocks

Pasturing at once, and in broad herds up-sprung.

The grassy clods now calved; now half-appeared

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 tiger, as the mole,

Rising the crumbled earth above them threw

In hillocks; the swift stag from underground

Bore up his branching head; scarce from his mould
Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheaved 471
His vastness; fleeced 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 waved their limber fans
For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
In all the liveries decked of summer's pride,
With spots of gold and purple, azure and green;
These, as a line, their long dimensions drew, 480
Streaking the ground with sinuous trace : not all
Minims of nature; some of serpent kind,
Wondrous in length and corpulence, involved
Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
The parsimonious emmet, provident
Of future, in small room large heart enclosed;
Pattern of just equality perhaps
Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes
Of commonalty. Swarming next appeared
The female bee, that feeds her husband drone 490
Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
With honey stored. The rest are numberless
And thou their nature knowest, and gavest 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 heaven in all her glory shone, and rolled
Her motions, at the great First Mover’s hand 500
First wheeled their course; earth, in her rich
attire .

Consummate lovely, smiled; air, water, earth,
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was
walked,

Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remained.
There wanted yet the master-work, the end
Of all yet done; a creature, who not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endued
With sanctity of reason might erect
His stature, and, upright with front serene,
Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence 510
Magnanimous to correspond with Heaven,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends; thither with heart, and voice, and eyes
Directed in devotion, to adore

And worship God supreme, who made him chief
Of all his work: therefore the 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 520
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
Beast of the field, and over all the earth,

And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.
 This said, he formed thee, Adam, thee, O man,
 Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed
 The breath of life ; in his own image he
 Created thee, in the image of God
 Express, and thou becamest a living soul.
 Male he created thee, but thy consort
 Female, for race ; then blessed mankind, and said :
 'Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth; 531
 Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold,
 Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the air,
 And every living thing that moves on the earth.'—
 Wherever thus created, for no place
 Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou knowest,
 He brought thee into this delicious grove,
 This garden, planted with the trees of God,
 Delectable both to behold and taste;
 And freely all their pleasant fruit for food 540
 Gave thee ; all sorts are here that all the earth
 yields,
 Variety without end ; but of the tree,
 Which tasted works knowledge of good and evil,
 Thou mayest not ; in the day thou eatest, thou diest.
 Death is the penalty imposed ; beware,
 And govern well thy appetite, lest Sin
 Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.

"Here finished he, and all that he had made
 Viewed, and behold ! all was entirely good.

So even and morn accomplished the sixth day ; 550
Yet not till the Creator, from his work
Desisting, though unwearied, up returned,
Up to the Heaven-of-heavens, his high abode,
Thence to behold this new created World
The addition of his empire, how it shewed
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
Answering his' great idea. Up he rode,
Followed with acclamation and the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tuned
Angelic harmonies. The earth, the air 560
Resounded—thou rememberest, for thou heardest—
The heavens and all the constellations rung,
The planets in their stations listening stood,
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
'Open, ye everlasting gates !' they sung,
'Open, ye Heavens, your living doors ! Let in
The great Creator from his work returned
Magnificent, his six days' work, a world.
Open, and henceforth oft ; for God will deign
To visit oft the dwellings of just men, 570
Delighted, and, with frequent intercourse,
Thither will send his winged messengers
On errands of supernal grace.' So sung
The glorious train ascending. He through
Heaven,
That opened 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 580
 Powdered with stars.—And now on Earth the
 seventh

Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
 Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
 Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
 Of Heaven's high-seated top, the imperial throne
 Of Godhead, fixed for ever firm and sure,
 The Filial Power arrived, and sat him down
 With his great Father; for he also went
 Invisible, yet stayed—such privilege
 Hath Omnipresence—and the work ordained, 590
 Author and end of all things, and, from work
 Now resting, blessed and hallowed the seventh
 day,

As resting on that day from all his work;
 But not in silence holy kept. The harp
 Had work and rested not; the solemn pipe
 And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
 All sounds on fret, by string or golden wire,
 Tempered soft tunings, intermixed with voice
 Choral or unison; of incense clouds,
 Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount. 600
 Creation and the six days' acts they sung:
 'Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite

Thy power! what thought can measure thee, or
tongue

Relate thee? greater now in thy return
Than from the Giant-angels. Thee that day
Thy thunders magnified; but to create
Is greater than created to destroy.

Who can impare thee, mighty King, or bound
Thy empire! Easily the proud attempt
Of Spirits apostate, and their counsels vain, 610
Thou hast repelled, while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshipers. Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose, serves
To manifest the more thy might; his evil
Thou usest, and from thence createst more good.
Witness this new-made World, another Heaven
From Heaven-gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars 620
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
Of destined habitation; but thou knowest
Their seasons. Among these the seat of men,
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfused,
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men,
And sons of men! whom God hath thus advanced,
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 worshipers 630

Holy and just; thrice happy if they know

Their happiness, and persevere upright!'

“So sung they, and the Empyrean rung
With Hallelujahs; thus was Sabbath kept.

And thy request think now fulfilled, that asked

How first this World and face of things began,

And what before thy memory was done

From the beginning, that posterity

Informed by thee might know. If else thou
seekest

Aught, not surpassing human measure, say.” 640

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

THE Angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice that he awhile
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to
hear;

Then, as new waked, thus gratefully replied:

“What thanks sufficient, or what recompense
Equal, have I to render thee? divine
Historian, who thus largely hast allayed
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsafed
This friendly condescension to relate
Things else by me unsearchable, now heard 10
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,

With glory attributed to the high
Creator. Something yet of doubt remains,
Which only the solution can resolve.—
When I behold this goodly frame, this World
Of heaven and earth consisting, and compute
Their magnitudes; this earth, a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compared
And all her numbered stars, that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible—for such 20
Their distance argues, and their swift return
Diurnal—merely to officiate light
Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,
One day and night, in all their vast survey
Useless besides—reasoning I oft admire
How Nature, wise and frugal, could commit
Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
So many nobler bodies to create,
Greater so manifold, to this one use,
For aught appears, and on their orbs impose 30
Such restless revolution, day by day
Repeated, while the sedentary earth,
That better might with far less compass move,
Served by more noble than herself, attains
Her end without least motion, and receives,
As tribute, such a sunless journey brought
Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;
Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.”
So spake our sire, and by his countenance seemed

Entering on studious thoughts abstruse; which
 Eve

Perceiving, where she sat retired in sight, 41
 With lowliness majestic from her seat,
 And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
 Rose, and went forth among her fruits and
 flowers,

To visit how they prospered, bud and bloom,
 Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
 And, touched 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 reserved, 50
 Adam relating, she sole auditress;
 Her husband the relator she preferred
 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 pleased her. Oh, when meet
 now

Such pairs, in love and mutual honor joined!
 With goddess-like demeanor forth she went,
 Not unattended, for on her as queen 60
 A pomp of winning Graces waited still,
 And from about her shot darts of desire
 Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.
 And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt proposed,

Benevolent and facile thus replied:

“To ask or search I blame thee not, for heaven
 Is as the book of God before thee set,
 Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
 His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years—
 This to attain, whether heaven move or earth, 70
 Imports not, if thou reckon right—the rest
 From Man or Angel the great Architect
 Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
 His secrets, to be scanned by them who ought
 Rather admire; or, if they list to try
 Conjecture, he his fabric of the heavens
 Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
 His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
 Hereafter; when they come to model heaven
 And calculate the stars, how they will wield 80
 The mighty frame, how build, unbuild, contrive,
 To save appearances, how gird the sphere
 With centric and eccentric scribbled o’er,
 Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb.

Already by thy reasoning this I guess,
 Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposes
 That bodies bright and greater should not serve
 The less not bright, nor heaven such journeys
 run,

Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
 The benefit. Consider first, that great 90
 Or bright infers not excellence: the earth,

Though, in comparison of heaven, so small,
 Nor glistering, 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 received,
 His beams, unactive else, their vigor find.
 Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
 Officious, but to thee, earth's habitant.
 And for the heaven's wide circuit, let it speak
 The Maker's high magnificence, who built
 So spacious, and his line stretched out so far,
 That Man may know he dwells not in his own;
 An edifice too large for him to fill,
 Lodged in a small partition, and the rest
 Ordained 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 thinkest not
 slow,
 Who since the morning-hour set out from Heaven
 Where God resides, and ere mid-day arrived
 In Eden, distance inexpressible
 By numbers that have name. But this I urgé,
 Admitting motion in the heavens, to shew
 Invalid that which thee to doubt it moved;
 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,
 Placed heaven from earth so far, that earthly sight,
 If it presumes, might err in things too high, 121
 And no advantage gain. What if the sun
 Be centre to the World, and other stars,
 By his attractive virtue and their own
 Incited, dance about him various rounds!
 Their wandering course, now high, now low, then
 hid,
 Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
 In six thou seest; and what if seven to these
 The planet-earth, so steadfast though she seem,
 Insensibly three different motions move! 130
 Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe
 Moved contrary with thwart obliquities;
 Or save the sun his labor, and that swift
 Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb supposed,
 Invisible else above all stars, the wheel
 Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,
 If earth, industrious of herself, fetch day
 Traveling east, and with her part averse
 From the sun's beam meet night, her other part
 Still luminous by his ray. What if that light 140
 Sent from her, through the wide transpicious air,
 To the terrestrial moon, be as a star
 Enlightening 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 softened soil, for some to eat
Alloted there; and other suns perhaps,
With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry
Communicating male and female light 150
—Which two great sexes animate the World—
Stored in each orb perhaps with some that live.
For such vast room in nature unpossessed
By living soul, desert and desolate,
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute
Each orb a glimpse of light, conveyed so far
Down to this habitable, which returns
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.—
But whether thus these things or whether not,
Whether the sun, predominant in heaven, 160
Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun,
He from the east his flaming road begin,
Or she from west her silent course advance,
With inoffensive pace, 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,
Wherever placed, let him dispose; joy thou 170
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
And thy fair Eve; heaven is for thee too high
To know what passes there. Be lowly wise;

Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
 Live, in what state, condition, or degree,
 Contented that thus far hath been revealed
 Not of Earth only, but of highest Heaven."

To whom thus Adam, cleared of doubt, replied:
 "How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure 180
 Intelligence of Heaven, Angel serene:
 And, freed from intricacies, thought 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 wandering thoughts, and notions
 vain.

But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
 Unchecked; and of her roving is no end,
 Till warned, or by experience taught, she
 learn 190

That not to know at large of things remote
 From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
 That which before us lies in daily life
 Is the prime wisdom; what is more, is fume,
 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
 And renders us in things that most concern
 Unpractised, unprepared, 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 200
 Of something not unseasonable to ask,
 By sufferance, and thy wonted favor, deigned.—
 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 not yet 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 Heaven, 210
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
 Than fruits of palm-tree, pleasantest to thirst
 And hunger both, from labor, at the hour
 Of sweet repast. They satiate and soon fill,
 Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine
 Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.”

To whom thus Raphael answered, heavenly
 meek :

“Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men,
 Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
 Abundantly his gifts hath also poured, 220
 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 Heaven of thee on Earth
 Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire
 Gladly into the ways of God with Man;

For God, we see, hath honored thee, and set
 On Man his equal love. Say therefore on;
 For I that day was absent, as befell,
 Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure, 230
 Far on excursion toward the gates of Hell;
 Squared in full legion—such command we had—
 To see that none thence issued forth a spy
 Or enemy, while God was in his work;
 Lest he, incensed at such eruption bold,
 Destruction with creation might have mixed.
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt;
 But us he sends upon his high behests
 For state, as sovran King, and to endure
 Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast
 shut, 240
 The dismal gates, and barricadoed 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 returned up to the coasts of light,
 Ere Sabbath-evening; so we had in charge.
 But thy relations now; for I attend,
 Pleased with thy words no less than thou with
 mine.”

So spake the godlike Power, and thus our Sire:
 “For Man to tell how human life began 250
 Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
 Desire with the still longer to converse

Induced me. — As new waked from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid,
In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun
Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.
Straight toward heaven my wondering eyes I
turned,

And gazed awhile the ample sky, till, raised
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavoring, and upright 260
Stood on my feet. About me round I saw
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murmuring streams ; by these,
Creatures that lived and moved, and walked or
flew,

Birds on the branches warbling ; all things smiled ;
With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed.
Myself I then perused, and limb by limb
Surveyed, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigor led ;
But who I was, or where, or from what cause, 270
Knew not. To speak I tried, and forthwith spake ;
My tongue obeyed, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw. 'Thou sun,' said I, 'fair light,
And thou enlightened 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 I came thus, how here.
Not of myself ; by some great Maker then,

In goodness and in power pre-eminent.
 Tell me how may I know him, how adore, 280
 From whom I have that thus I move and live,
 And feel that I am happier than I know.

“While thus I called, and strayed I knew not
 whither,
 From where I first drew air, and first beheld
 This happy light, when answer none returned,
 On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,
 Pensive I sat me down ; there gentle sleep
 First found me, and with soft oppression seized
 My drowsied sense, untroubled though I thought
 I then was passing to my former state 290
 Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve :
 When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
 Whose inward apparition gently moved
 My fancy to believe I yet had being,
 And lived. One came, methought, of shape divine,
 And said :—‘Thy mansion wants thee, Adam ; rise,
 First Man, of men innumerable ordained
 First Father I called by thee, I come thy guide
 To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepared.’—
 So saying, by the hand he took me, raised, 300
 And over fields and waters, as in air,
 Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
 A woody mountain, whose high top was plain,
 A circuit wide, enclosed, with goodliest trees
 Planted, with walks and bowers, that what I saw

Of earth before scarce pleasant seemed. Each tree
 Loaden with fairest fruit that, hung to the eye
 Tempting, stirred in me sudden appetite
 To pluck and eat ; whereat I waked, and found
 Before mine eyes all real, as the dream 310
 Had lively shadowed. Here had new begun
 My wandering, had not He, who was my guide
 Up hither, from among the trees appeared
 Presence divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
 In adoration at his feet I fell
 Submiss; he reared me, and, 'Whom thou sought-
 est I am,'

Said mildly, 'Author of all this thou seest
 Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
 This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
 To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat. 320
 Of every tree that in the garden grows
 Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no 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 eatest thereof, my sole command
 Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt die, 330
 From that day mortal, and this happy state
 Shalt lose, expelled from hence into a world

Of woe and sorrow.' Sternly he pronounced
 The rigid interdiction, which resounds
 Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice
 Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect
 Returned, and gracious purpose thus renewed:
 'Not only these fair bounds, but all the Earth
 To Thee and to thy race I give; as lords
 Possess it, and all things that therein live, 340
 Or live in sea or air, beast, fish, and fowl.
 In sign whereof, each bird and beast, behold!
 After their kinds, I bring them to receive
 From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
 With low subjection. Understand the same
 Of fish within their watery residence,
 Not hither summoned, 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 cowering
 low 350
 With blandishment, each bird stooped on his
 wing.

I named them, as they passed, and understood
 Their nature, with such knowledge God endued
 My sudden apprehension. But in these
 I found not what, methought, I wanted still;
 And to the heavenly Vision thus presumed:

“ ‘Oh, by what name, for thou above all these,
 Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher.

Surpassest far my naming, how may I
 Adore thee, Author of this Universe, 360
 And all this good to Man? for whose well-being
 So amply, and with hand 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 brightened, thus replied:

“ ‘What callest thou solitude? Is not the earth
 With various living creatures, and the air 370
 Replenished, and all these at thy command
 To come and play before thee? Knowest thou not
 Their language and their ways? They also know,
 And reason not contemptibly; with these
 Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large.’—
 So spake the universal Lord, and seemed
 So ordering. I, with leave of speech implored,
 And humble deprecation, thus replied:

“ ‘Let not my words offend thee, heavenly
 Power,
 My Maker, be propitious while I speak. 380
 Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
 And these inferior far beneath me set?
 Among unequals what society
 Can sort, what harmony or true delight?
 Which must be mutual, in proportion due

Given and received; but in disparity,
 The one intense, the other still remiss,
 Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
 Tedious alike. Of fellowship I speak
 Such as I seek, fit to participate 390
 All rational delight, wherein the brute
 Cannot be human consort. They rejoice
 Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
 So fitly them in pair thou hast combined.
 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 the Almighty answered, not dis-
 pleased:

‘A nice and subtle happiness, I see,
 Thou to thyself proposhest, in the choice 400
 Of thy associates, Adam, and wilt taste
 No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
 What thinkest thou then of me, and this my state?
 Seem I to thee sufficiently possessed
 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 410
 Beneath what other creatures are to thee.’

“He ceased; I lowly answered:—‘To attain

The highth and depth of thy eternal ways
 All human thoughts come short, Supreme of
 things!

Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee
 Is no deficiencie 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
 Shouldest propagate, already infinite, 420
 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 multiplied,
 In unity defective, which requires
 Collateral love, and dearest amity.
 Thou in thy secrecy although alone,
 Best with thyself accompanied, seekest not
 Social communication, yet, so pleased,
 Canst raise thy creature to what highth thou wilt
 Of union or communion, deified; 431
 I, by conversing, cannot these erect
 From prone, nor in their ways complacence
 find.'—

Thus I emboldened spake, and freedom used
 Permissive, and acceptance found, which gained
 This answer from the gracious Voice divine:

“ Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleased,
 And find thee knowing not of beasts alone,

Which thou hast rightly named, but of thyself,
 Expressing well the spirit within thee free, 440
 My image, not imparted to the brute,
 Whose fellowship therefore, unmeet for thee,
 Good reason was thou freely shouldest dislike;
 And be so minded still. I, ere thou spakest,
 Knew it not good for Man to be alone,
 And no such company as then thou sawest
 Intended thee, for trial only brought,
 To see how thou couldest judge of fit and meet.
 What next I bring shall please thee, be assured,
 Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self, 450
 Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.'

‘He ended, or I heard no more; for now
 My earthly by his heavenly overpowered,
 Which it had long stood under, strained to the
 highth

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, called
 By Nature as in aid, and closed mine eyes.
 Mine eyes he closed, but open left the cell 460
 Of fancy, my internal sight, by which,
 Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,
 Though sleeping, where I lay and saw the Shape
 Still glorious before whom awake I stood;
 Who stooping opened 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 filled up and healed.
 The rib he formed and fashioned with his hands:
 Under his forming hands a creature grew, 470
 Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair,
 That what seemed fair in all the world seemed now
 Mean, or in her summed up, in her contained,
 And in her looks, which from that time infused
 Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
 And into all things from her air inspired
 The spirit of love and amorous delight.

She disappeared, and left me dark; I waked
 To find her, or forever to deplore
 Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure: 480
 When, out of hope, behold her not far off,
 Such as I saw her in my dream, adorned
 With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow,
 To make her amiable. On she came,
 Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen
 And guided by his voice; nor uninformed
 Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rights.
 Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
 In every gesture dignity and love.

I overjoyed could not forbear aloud:

“ ‘This turn hath made amends; thou hast
 fulfilled

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's her name, of Man
 Extracted; for this cause he shall forgo
 Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
 And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.'

'She heard me thus; and, though divinely
 brought, 500

Yet innocence and virgin modesty,
 Her virtue and the conscience of her worth,
 That would be wooed, and not unsought be won,
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retired,
 The more desirable; or, to say all,
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
 Wrought in her so, that seeing me she turned;
 I followed her, she what was honor knew,
 And with obsequious majesty approved
 My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower 510
 I led her blushing like the Morn: all heaven,
 And happy constellations, on that hour
 Shed their selectest influence; the earth
 Gave signs of gratulation, and each hill;
 Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs
 Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings
 Flung rose, flung odors from the spicy shrub,
 Disporting, till the amorous bird of night

Sung spousal, and bid haste the Evening-star
 On his hill-top, to light the bridal lamp. 520

“Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
 My story to the sum of earthly bliss
 Which I enjoy; and must confess to find
 In all things else delight indeed, but such
 As, used or not, works in the mind no change,
 Nor vehement desire; these delicacies
 I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and
 flowers,

Walks, and the melody of birds: but here,
 Far otherwise, transported I behold,
 Transported touch; here passion first I felt, 530
 Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else
 Superior and unmoved, here only weak
 Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.
 Or Nature failed 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 bestowed
 Too much of ornament, in outward shew
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.

For well I understand, in the prime end 540
 Of Nature, her the 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. 550
 All higher Knowledge in her presence falls,
 Degraded; Wisdom in discourse with her
 Loses discountenanced, and like Folly shews;
 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 loveliest, and create an awe
 About her, as a guard angelic placed."

To whom the Angel with contracted brow: 560
 "Accuse not Nature, she hath done her part;
 Do thou but thine, and be not diffident
 Of Wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou
 Dismiss not her, when most thou needest her nigh,
 By attributing overmuch to things
 Less excellent, as thou thyself perceivest.
 For what admirest thou? what transports thee so?
 An outside; fair, no doubt, and worthy well
 Thy cherishing, thy honoring, and thy love,
 Not thy subjection. Weigh with her thyself; 570
 Then value. Oft-times nothing profits more
 Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right,
 Well managed; of that skill the more thou knowest,

The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
 And to realities yield all her shews;
 Made so adorn for thy delight the more,
 So awful, that with honor thou mayest love
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
 But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
 Is propagated, seem such dear delight 580
 Beyond all other, think the same vouchsafed
 To cattle and each beast; which would not be
 To them made common and divulged, if aught
 Therein enjoyed were worthy to subdue
 The soul of Man, or passion in him move.
 What higher in her society thou findest,
 Attractive, human, rational, love still;
 In loving thou dost well; in passion not,
 Wherein true love consists not; love refines
 The thought, and heart enlarges, hath his seat 590
 In reason, and is judicious, is the scale
 By which to heavenly love thou mayst ascend,
 Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause
 Among the beasts no mate for thee was found."

To whom thus, half abashed, Adam replied:
 "Neither her outside formed so fair, nor aught
 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, 600
 Those thousand decencies, that daily flow

From all her words and actions, mixed with love
 And sweet compliance, which declare unfeigned
 Union of mind, or in us both one soul ;
 Harmony to behold in wedded pair
 More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.
 Yet these subject not ; I to thee disclose
 What inward thence I feel, not therefore foiled,
 Who meet with various objects, from the sense
 Variously representing, yet still free 610
 Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
 To love thou blamest me not, for love thou sayest
 Leads up to Heaven, is both the way and guide.
 Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask.—
 Love not the heavenly Spirits? and how their love
 Express they ? by looks only, or do they mix
 Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch ?”

To whom the Angel, with a smile that glowed
 Celestial rosy-red, love’s proper hue,
 Answered :—“Let it suffice thee that thou knowest
 Us happy, and without love no happiness. 621
 Whatever pure thou in the body enjoyest—
 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 Spirits embrace,
 Total they mix, union of pure with pure
 Desiring, nor restrained conveyance need
 As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.—

But I can now no more ; the parting sun 630
 Beyond the earth's Green Cape and Verdant Isles
 Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.

Be strong, live happy, and love ! but first of all
 Him whom to love is to obey, and keep
 His great command ; take heed lest passion sway
 Thy judgment to do aught, which else free-will
 Would not admit ; thine, and of all thy sons
 The weal or woe in thee is placed ; beware !
 I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
 And all the Blest. Stand fast ; to stand or fall 640
 Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.

Perfect within, no outward aid require ;
 And all temptations to transgress repel."

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

So parted they, the Angel up to Heaven
 From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

SATAN having compassed the earth, with meditated guile returns as a midst by night into Paradise, enters to the Serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labors, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each laboring apart; Adam consents not, alleging the danger, lest that enemy, of whom they were forewarned, should attempt her found alone. Eve, loth to be thought not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make trial of her strength; Adam at last yields. The Serpent finds her alone; his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking, with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve, wondering to hear the Serpent speak, asks how he attained to human speech and such understanding not till now: the Serpent answers, that by tasting of a certain tree in the garden he attained both to speech and reason, till then void of both. Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the Tree of Knowledge forbidden. The Serpent now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat; she, pleased with the taste, deliberates 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 used
 To sit indulgent, and with him partake
 Rural repast, permitting him the while
 Venial discourse unblamed. 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 judgement given, 15
 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 pursued
 Thrice fugitive about Troy-wall; or rage
 Of Turnus for Lavinia disespoused;
 Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
 Perplexed the Greek, and Cytherea's son;—
 If answerable style I can obtain 20
 Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
 Her nightly visitation, unimplored,
 And dictates to me slumbering, or inspires
 Easy my unpremeditated verse,
 Since first this subject for heroic song
 Pleased me, long choosing and beginning late,
 Not sedulous by nature to indite
 Wars, hitherto the only argument

Heroic deemed, chief mastery to dissect,
 With long and tedious havoc, fabled knights, 30
 In battles feigned—the better fortitude
 Of patience and heroic martyrdom
 Unsung—or to describe races and games,
 Or tilting furniture, emblazoned shields,
 Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds,
 Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
 At joust and torneament; then marshalled feast
 Served 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 skilled 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,
 Depressed; and much they may if all be mine,
 Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear.

The sun was sunk, and after him the star
 Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
 Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter 50
 'Twixt day and night; and now from end to end
 Night's hemisphere had veiled the horizon round,
 When Satan, who late fled, before the threats
 Of Gabriel, out of Eden, now improved
 In meditated fraud and malice, bent
 On Man's destruction, maugre what might hap

Of heavier on himself, fearless returned.—
 By night he fled, and at midnight returned,
 From compassing the earth; cautious of day,
 Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried 60
 His entrance, and forewarned the Cherubim
 That kept their watch. Thence, full of anguish,
 driven

The space of seven continued nights he rode
 With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line
 He circled, four times crossed the car of Night
 From pole to pole, traversing each colure;
 On the eighth return, and, on the coast averse
 From entrance or cherubic watch, by stealth
 Found unsuspected way. There was a place
 —Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought
 the change— 70

Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,
 Into a gulf shot underground, till part
 Rose up a fountain by the Tree of Life.
 In with the river sunk, and with it rose
 Satan, involved in rising mist; then sought
 Where to lie hid. Sea he had searched 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 barred 80
 At Dariën, thence to the land where flows
 Ganges and Indus. Thus the orb he roamed

With narrow search, and, with inspection deep,
 Considered every 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 revolved, his final sentence chose,
 Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
 To enter, and his dark suggestions hide 90
 From sharpest sight; for in the wily snake
 Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,
 As from his wit and native subtlety
 Proceeding, which, in other beasts observed,
 Doubt might beget of diabolic power,
 Active within beyond the sense of brute.

Thus he resolved, but first from inward grief
 His bursting passion into plaints thus poured:

“O Earth, how like to Heaven, if not preferred
 More justly, seat worthier of Gods, as built 100
 With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
 For what God, after better, worse would build?
 Terrestrial Heaven, danced round by other
 heavens,

That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
 Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,
 In thee concentrating all their precious beams
 Of sacred influence! As God in Heaven
 Is centre, yet extends to all, so thou
 Centring receivest from all those orbs; in thee,

Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears,
 Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth 111
 Of creatures animate with gradual life
 Of growth, sense, reason, all summed up in Man.
 With what delight could I have walked thee
 round,

If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange
 Of hill and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
 Now land, now sea, and shores with forest
 crowned,

Rocks, dens, and caves! but I in none of these
 Find place or refuge; and the more I see
 Pleasures about me, so much more I feel 120
 Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
 Of contraries; all good to me becomes
 Bane, and in Heaven much worse would be my
 state.

But neither here seek I, no, nor in Heaven,
 To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven'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
 destroyed, 130

Or won to what may work his utter loss,
 For whom all this was made, all this will soon
 Follow, as to him linked in weal or woe;

In woe then; that destruction wide may range.
To me shall be the glory sole among
The infernal Powers, in one day to have marred
What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days
Continued making, and who knows how long
Before had been contriving? though perhaps
Not longer than since I in one night freed 140
From servitude inglorious well nigh half
The angelic name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers. He, to be avenged,
And to repair his numbers thus impaired,
Whether such virtue, spent of old, now failed
More Angels to create—if they at least
Are his created—or to spoils us more,
Determined to advance into our room
A creature formed of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original, 150
With heavenly spoils, our spoils. What he decreed
He effected; Man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this World, and Earth his seat;
Him lord pronounced, 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-vapor, glide obscure, and pry
In every bush and brake, where hap may find 160
The serpent sleeping, in whose mazy folds

To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.—
O foul descent ! that I, who erst contended
With Gods to sit the highest, am now constrained
Into a beast, and, mixed with bestial slime,
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the highth of Deity aspired.
But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to? Who aspires must down as low
As high he soared, obnoxious first or last 170
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long back on itself recoils.—
Let it; I reck not, so it light well amid,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favorite
Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,
Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised
From dust. Spite then with spite is best repaid.”

So saying, through each thicket, dank or dry,
Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on 180
His midnight search, where soonest he might find
The serpent. Him fast sleeping soon he found,
In labyrinth of many a round self-rolled,
His head the midst, well stored with subtle wiles;
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,
Nor nocent yet; but on the grassy herb,
Fearless unfeared, he slept. In at his mouth
The Devil entered, and his brutal sense,
In heart or head, possessing soon inspired

With act intelligential; but his sleep 190
 Disturbed not, waiting close the approach of morn.

Now, when as sacred light began to dawn,
 In Eden, on the humid flowers, that breathed
 Their morning incense, when all things that
 breathe,

From the Earth's great altar, send up silent praise
 To the Creator, and his nostrils fill

With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
 And joined their vocal worship to the quire
 Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
 The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs. 200

Then commune, how that day they best may ply
 Their growing work; for much their work out-
 grew

The hands' dispatch of two, gardening so wide,
 And Eve first to her husband thus began:

“Adam, well may we labor still to dress
 This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,
 Our pleasant task enjoined; but, till more hands
 Aid us, the work under our labor grows,
 Luxurious by restraint; what we by day
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind, 210
 One night or two with wanton growth derides,
 Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,
 Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present.—
 Let us divide our labors; thou, where choice
 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind

The woodbine round this arbor, or direct
 The clasping ivy where to climb; while I,
 In yonder spring of roses, intermixed
 With myrtle, find what to redress till noon;
 For, while so near each other thus all day 220
 Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
 Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
 Casual discourse draw on! which intermits
 Our day's work, brought to little, though begun
 Early, and the hour of supper comes unearned."

To whom mild answer Adam thus returned:
 "Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
 Compare above all living creatures dear!
 Well hast thou motioned, well thy thoughts
 employed,
 How we might best fulfill the work which
 here 230

God hath assigned us, nor of me shalt pass
 Unpraised; 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 imposed
 Labor, as to debar us when we need
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
 Of looks and smiles; for smiles from reason flow,
 To brute denied, and are of love the food, 240
 Love not the lowest end of human life;

For not to irksome toil, but to delight,
 He made us, and delight to reason joined.
 These paths and bowers 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. 250

But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
 Befall thee severed from me; for thou knowest
 What hath been warned us, what malicious foe
 Envyng our happiness, and of his own
 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame
 By sly assault; and somewhere near at hand
 Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find,
 His wish and best advantage, us asunder;
 Hopeless to circumvent us joined, where each
 To other speedy aid might lend at need. 260

Whether his first design be to withdraw
 Our feälty from God, or to disturb
 Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
 Enjoyed by us excites his envy more;—
 Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side
 That gave thee being, still shades thee and
 protects.

The wife, where danger or dishonor lurks,

Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures."

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

"Offspring of Heaven and Earth, and all
Earth's lord !

That such an enemy we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee informed I learn,
And from the parting Angel overheard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then returned at shut of evening flowers.
But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe 280
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.

His violence thou fearest 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 seduced ;
Thoughts, which how found they harbor in thy
breast ?

Adam ! misthought of her to thee so dear !"

To whom with healing words Adam replied: 290
"Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve !
—For such thou art, from sin and blame entire—
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade

Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
 The attempt itself, intended by our foe.
 For he who tempts, though in vain, at least
 asperses

The tempted with dishonor foul, supposed
 Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
 Against temptation. Thou thyself with scorn
 And anger wouldst resent the offered wrong, 300
 Though ineffectual found; misdeem not then,
 If such affront I labor to avert
 From thee alone, which on us both at once
 The Enemy, though bold, will hardly dare,
 Or daring, first on me the assault shall light.
 Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
 Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce
 Angel; nor think superfluous others' aid.
 I from the influence of thy looks receive
 Access in every virtue, in thy sight 310
 More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
 Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
 Shame to be overcome or overreached,
 Would utmost vigor raise, and raised unite.
 Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
 Whem I am present, and thy trial choose
 With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?"

So spake domestic Adam in his care
 And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
 Less attributed to her faith sincere, 320

Thus her reply with accent sweet renewed :

“If this be our condition, thus to dwell
 In narrow circuit straitened by a foe,
 Subtle or violent, we not endued
 Single with like defence, wherever 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 dishonor on our front, but turns 330
 Foul on himself; then wherefore shunned or feared
 By us? who rather double honor gain
 From his surmise proved false, find peace within,
 Favor from Heaven, our witness, from the event.
 And what is faith, love, virtue unassayed
 Alone, without exterior help sustained?
 Let us not then suspect our happy state
 Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
 As not secure to single or combined.
 Frail is our happiness, if this be so, 340
 And Eden were no Eden thus exposed.”

To whom thus Adam fervently replied :
 “O Woman, best are all things as the will
 Of God ordained them; his creating hand
 Nothing imperfect or deficient left
 Of all that he created, much less Man,
 Or aught that might this happy state secure,
 Secure from outward force; within himself

The danger lies, yet lies within his power :
 Against his will he can receive no harm. 350
 But God left free the will, for what obeys
 Reason is free; and reason he made right,
 But bid her well beware, and still erect,
 Lest, by some fair-appearing good surprised,
 She dictate false, and misinform the will
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.
 Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins
 That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,
 Since reason not impossibly may meet 360
 Some specious object by the foe suborned,
 And fall into deception unaware,
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warned.
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
 Were better, and most likely it from me
 Thou sever not; trial will come unsought.
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
 First thy obedience; the other who can know,
 Not seeing thee attempted? who attest?
 But if thou think trial unsought may find 370
 Us both securer than thus warned thou seemest,
 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 toward thee hath done his part; do
 thine."

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

“With thy permission then, and thus forewarned,
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
 Touched only, that our trial, when lest sought, 380
 May find us both perhaps far less prepared,
 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 surpassed, and goddess-like deport,
 Though not as she with bow and quiver armed, 390
 But with such gardening-tools as yet art rude,
 Guiltless of fire, had formed, or Angels brought
 To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorned,
 Likest she seemed—Pomona when she fled
 Vertumnus—or to Ceres in her prime,
 Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
 Her long with ardent look his eye pursued,
 Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
 Oft he to her his charge of quick return
 Repeated; she to him as oft engaged 400
 To be returned by noon amid the bower,
 And all things in best order to invite
 Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.

O much deceived, much failing, hapless Eve,
 Of thy presumed return! event perverse!
 Thou never from that hour in Paradise
 Foundest either sweet repast, or sound repose;
 Such ambush, hid among sweet flowers and shades,
 Waited, with hellish rancour imminent,
 To intercept thy way, or send thee back 410
 Despoiled 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 purposed prey.
 In bower and field he sought, where any tuft
 Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
 Their tendance or plantation for delight;
 By fountain or by shady rivulet 420
 He sought them both, but wished his hap
 might find
 Eve separate; he wished, but not with hope
 Of what so seldom chanced, when to his wis
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
 Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
 Half-spied, so thick the roses bushing round
 About her glowed, oft stooping to support
 Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though
 gay
 Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,

Hung drooping unsustained; them she up-
 stays 430

Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
 Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
 From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh
 Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed
 Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;
 Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen
 Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers
 Imbordered on each bank, the hand of Eve:
 Spot more delicious than those gardens feigned
 Or of revived Adonis, or renowned 440
 Alcinoüs, host of old Laertes' son,
 Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
 Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse:
 Much he the place admired, the person more.
 As one, who long in populous city pent,
 Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
 Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
 Among the pleasant villages and farms
 Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight,
 The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine, 450
 Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
 If chance with nymphlike step fair virgin pass,
 What pleasing seemed for her now pleases more,
 She most, and in her look sums all delight:
 Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold
 This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve,

Thus early, thus alone. Her heavenly form
 Angelic, but more soft and feminine,
 Her graceful innocence, her every air
 Of gesture or least action overawed 460
 His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought.
 That space the Evil-one abstracted stood
 From his own evil, and for the time remained
 Stupidly good, of enmity disarmed,
 Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge.
 But the hot hell that always in him burns,
 Though in mid-Heaven, soon ended his delight,
 And tortures him now more, the more he sees
 Of pleasure not for him ordained. Then soon 470
 Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
 Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites:

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

Compulsion thus transported to forget
 What hither brought us? hate, not love, nor hope
 Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
 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 480
 The woman, opportune to all attempts,
 Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,

And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould
 Foe not formidable, exempt from wound,
 I not; so much hath Hell debased, and pain
 Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heaven.
 She fair, divinely fair, fit love for Gods,
 Not terrible, though terror be in love, 49c
 And beauty, not approached by stronger hate,
 Hate stronger under shew of love well feigned,
 The way which to her ruin now I tend."

So spake the Enemy of Mankind, enclosed
 In serpent, inmate bad, and toward Eve
 Addressed his way; not with indented wave,
 Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,
 Circular base of rising folds, that towered
 Fold above fold, a surging maze, his head
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes, 500
 With burnished 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 changed
 Hermionè and Cadmus, or the god
 In Epidaurus; nor to which transformed
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline, was seen,
 He with Olympias, this with her who bore
 Scipio, the highth of Rome. With tract oblique
 At first, as one who sought access but feared 511

To interrupt, sidelong 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
 Curled many a wanton wreath, in sight of Eve
 To lure her eye. She, busied, heard the sound
 Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as used
 To such disport before her through the field, 520
 From every beast, more duteous at her call,
 Than at Circean call the herd disguised.
 He, bolder now, uncalled before her stood,
 But as in gaze admiring : oft he bowed
 His turret-crest and sleek enamelled neck,
 Fawning, and licked the ground whereon she trod.
 His gentle dumb expression turned at length
 The eye of Eve to mark his play ; he, glad
 Of her attention gained, with serpent-tongue
 Organic, or impulse of vocal air, 530
 His fraudulent temptation thus began :

"Wonder not, sovran mistress—if perhaps
 Thou canst, who art sole wonder—much less arm
 Thy looks, the heaven of mildness, with disdain,
 Displeased that I approach thee thus, and gaze
 Insatiate, I thus single, nor have feared
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retired.
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair!
 Thine all things living gaze on, all things thine

By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore, 540
 With ravishment beheld, there best beheld
 Where universally admired But here,
 In this enclosure 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, adored and served
 By Angels numberless. thy daily train.”
 So glozed the Tempter, and his proem tuned:
 Into the heart of Eve his words made way, 550
 Though at the voice much marvelling; at length,
 Not unamazed, she thus in answer spake:

“What may this mean? language of Man pro-
 nounced

By tongue of brute, and human sense expressed !
 The first at least of these I thought denied
 To beasts, whom God on their creation-day,
 Created mute to all articulate sound;
 The latter I demur, for in their looks
 Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.
 Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all the field 560
 I knew, but not with human voice endued.
 Redouble then this miracle, and say,
 How camest 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 replied:
 “Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!
 Easy to me it is to tell thee all
 What thou commandest, and right thou shouldst
 be obeyed. 570

I was at first, as other beasts that graze
 The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
 As was my food; nor aught but food discerned
 Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:
 Till on a day, roving the field, I chanced
 A goodly tree far distant to behold,
 Loaden with fruit of fairest colors mixed,
 Ruddy and gold. I nearer drew to gaze;
 When from the boughs a savory odor blown,
 Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense 580
 Than smell of sweetest fennel; or the teats
 Of ewe or goat, dropping with milk at even,
 Unsucked of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
 To satisfy the sharp desire I had
 Of tasting those fair apples I resolved
 Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
 Powerful persuaders, quickened at the sent
 Of that alluring fruit, urged 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 591
 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 spared not, for such pleasure till that hour
 At feed or fountain never had I found.
 Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
 Strange alteration in me, to degree
 Of reason in my inward powers, and speech 600
 Wanted not long, though to this shape retained.
 Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
 I turned my thoughts, and with capacious mind
 Considered 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 heavenly ray,
 United I beheld; no fair to thine
 Equivalent or second! which compelled
 Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come 610
 And gaze, and worship thee of right declared
 Sovran of creatures, universal Dame!"

So talked the spirited sly Snake, and Eve,
 Yet more amazed, unwary thus replied:
 "Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
 The virtue of that fruit, in thee first proved.
 But say, where grows the tree? from hence how
 far?

For many are the trees of God that grow
 In Paradise, and various, yet unknown

To us, in such abundance lies our choice, 620
 As leaves a greater store of fruit untouched,
 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." 630

"Lead then," said Eve. He leading swiftly
 rolled

In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
 To mischief swift: hope elevates, and joy
 Brightens his crest. As when a wandering fire,
 Compact of unctuous vapor, which the night
 Condenses, and the cold environs round,
 Kindled through agitation to a flame
 —Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends—
 Hovering and blazing with delusive light, 639
 Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his
 way,

To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;
 There swallowed up and lost, from succour far:
 So glistered 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 spared our coming
hither,

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

To whom the Tempter guilefully replied:
“Indeed! Hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,
Yet lords declared of all in earth or air?”

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

She scarce had said, though brief, when now
more bold

The Tempter, but with shew of zeal and love
To Man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on; and, as to passion moved,
Fluctuates disturbed, yet comely, and in act
Raised, as of some great matter to begin.

As when of old some orator renowned, 670

In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
 Flourished, since mute, to some great cause
 addressed,

Stood in himself collected; while each part,
 Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue;
 Sometimes in highth began, as no delay
 Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right:
 So standing, moving, or to highth up-grown,
 The Tempter, all impassioned, thus began:

“O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,
 Mother of science ! now I feel thy power 680
 Within me clear, not only to discern
 Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
 Of highest agents, deemed however wise.
 Queen of this Universe ! do not believe
 Those rigid threats of death. Ye shall not die.
 How should you ? by the fruit ? it gives you life
 To knowledge ; by the threatener ? look on me,
 Me who have touched and tasted, yet both live,
 And life more perfect have attained than Fate
 Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot. 690
 Shall that be shut to Man, which to the beast
 Is open ? or will God incense his ire
 For such a petty trespass ? and not praise
 Rather your dauntless virtue ? whom the pain
 Of death denounced—whatever thing death be
 Deterred not from achieving what might lead
 To happier life, knowledge of good and evil ;

Of good, how just? of evil . . . if what is evil
 Be real, why not known, since easier shunned?
 God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just; 700
 Not just, not God; not feared then, nor obeyed:
 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 worshipers? He knows that, in the day
 Ye eat thereof, your eyes, that seem so clear,
 Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
 Opened and cleared, and ye shall be as Gods,
 Knowing both good and evil, as they know.
 That ye shall be as Gods, since I as Man, 710
 Internal Man, is but proportion meet;
 I, of brute, human; ye, of human, Gods.
 So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
 Human, to put on Gods; death to be wished,
 Though threatened, which no worse than this can
 bring.

And what are Gods, that Man may not become
 As they, participating godlike food?
 The Gods are first, and that advantage use
 On our belief, that all from them proceeds.
 I question it; for this fair earth I see, 720
 Warmed by the sun, producing every kind,
 Them nothing. If they all things, who enclosed
 Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
 That whoso eats thereof forthwith attains

Wisdom without their leave ? and wherein lies
 The offence, that Man should thus attain to know?
 What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
 Impart against his will, if all be his ?
 Or is it envy ? and can envy dwell
 In heavenly breasts ?—These, these, and many
 more 730

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.
 Fixed on the fruit she gazed, which to behold
 Might tempt alone, and in her ears the sound
 Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregned
 With reason, to her seeming, and with truth.
 Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and waked
 An eager appetite, raised by the smell 740
 So savory of that fruit, which with desire,
 Inclivable now grown to touch or taste,
 Solicited her longing eye; yet, first
 Pausing awhile, thus to herself she mused:

“Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,
 Though kept from Man, and worthy to be
 admired;

Whose taste, too long forborne, at first assay
 Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
 The tongue not made for speech to speak thy
 praise.

Thy praise he also who forbids thy use 750
Conceals not from us, naming thee the Tree
Of Knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
Forbids us then to taste, but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want;
For good unknown sure is not had; or had,
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain then, what forbids he but to know?
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise.
Such prohibitions bind not. But if death 760
Bind us with after-band, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die.
How dies the Serpent? He hath eaten and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and
discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us denied
This intellectual food, for beasts reserved?
For beasts it seems; yet that one beast, which first
Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy 770
The good befallen him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile,
What fear I then? rather, what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and evil,
Of God or death, of law or penalty?
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,

Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
 Of virtue to make wise. What hinders then
 To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?"

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour . 780
 Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucked, 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, nought else
 Regarded; such delight till then, as seemed,
 In fruit she never tasted; whether true
 Or fancied so, through expectation high
 Of knowledge; nor was Godhead from her
 thought.

Greedily she ingorged without restraint, 791
 And knew not eating death. Satiated at length,
 And hightened as with wine, jocund and boon,
 Thus to herself she pleasingly began:

"O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees
 In Paradise! of operation blest
 To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed,
 And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
 Created! but henceforth my early care,
 Not without song, each morning, and due
 praise, 800
 Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
 Of thy full branches, offered 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 remained
In ignorance; thou openest Wisdom's way,
And givest access, though secret she retire. 810
And I perhaps am secret. Heaven is high,
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great 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 power, 820
Without copartner? so to add what wants
In female sex, the more to draw his love,
And render me more equal, and perhaps,
A thing not undesirable, sometime
Superior; for inferior who is free?
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! Confirmed then I resolve, 830

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 turned;
 But first low reverence done, as to the Power
 That dwelt within, whose presence had infused
 Into the plant sciential sap, derived
 From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,
 Waiting desirous her return, had wove
 Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn 84c
 Her tresses, and her rural labors crown,
 As reapers oft are wont their harvest-queen.
 Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new
 Solace in her return, so long delayed :
 Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,
 Misgave him; he the faltering measure felt,
 And forth to meet her went, the way she took
 That morn when they first parted. By the Tree
 Of Knowledge he must pass, there he her met,
 Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand 850
 A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smiled,
 New gathered, and ambrosial smell diffused.
 To him she hasted; in her face Excuse
 Came prologue, and apology to prompt,
 Which, with bland words at will, she thus
 addressed :

"Hast thou not wondered Adam, at my stay?
 Thee I have missed, and thought it long, deprived

Thy presence; agony of love till now
Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought, 860
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear.

This tree is not, as we are told, a tree
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
Opening the way, but of divine effect
To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste;
And hath been tasted such. The Serpent wise,
Or not restrained as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become,
Not dead, as we are threatened, but thence-
forth 870

Endued with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration, and with me
Persuasively hath so prevailed, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
The effects to correspond; opener 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, unshared with thee, and odious soon. 880
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
Lest, thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce

Deity for thee, when Fate will not permit.”

Thus Ève with countenance blithe her story told;
 But in her cheek distemper flushing glowed.
 On the other side, Adam, soon as he heard
 The fatal trespass done by Ève, amazed,
 Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill 890
 Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed.
 From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Ève
 Down dropped, 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 excelled
 Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,
 Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
 How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost, 900
 Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote!
 Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress
 The strict forbiddance, how to violate
 The sacred fruit forbidden! Some cursed fraud
 Of enemy had beguiled thee, yet unknown,
 And me with thee hath ruined; for with thee
 Certain my resolution is to die.
 How can I live without thee! how forgo
 Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly joined,
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn! 910
 Should God create another Ève, 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 disturbed,
 Submitting to what seemed remediless,
 Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turned: 920

"Bold deed thou hast presumed, adventurous
 Eve,

And peril great provoked, who thus hast dared.—

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 recall, or done undo?

Not God omnipotent, nor Fate. Yet so

Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact

Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,

Profaned first by the Serpent, by him first 930

Made common and unhallowed, ere our taste,

Nor yet on him found deadly; yet he 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 to be Gods, or Angels, demi-gods.

Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,

Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy

Us his prime creatures, dignified so high, 940
 Set over all his works, which, in our fall,
 For us created, needs with us must fail,
 Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
 Be frustrate, do, undo, and labor lose;
 Not well conceived of God, who, though his power
 Creation could repeat, yet would be loth
 Us to abolish, lest the Adversary
 Triumph and say: 'Fickle their state whom God
 Most favors; who can please him long? Me first
 He ruined, now mankind; whom will he next?' 950
 Matter of scorn, not to be given the Foe.—
 However I with thee have fixed 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 cannot be severed; we are one,
 One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.'

So Adam, and thus Eve to him replied: 960
 "O glorious trial of exceeding love,
 Illustrious evidence, example high !
 Engaging me to emulate; but, short
 Of thy perfection, how shall I attain?
 Adam ! from whose dear side I boast me sprung
 And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
 One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof

This day affords, declaring thee resolved,
 Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,
 Shall separate us, linked in love so dear, 970
 To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
 If any be, of tasting this fair fruit;

Whose virtue—for of good still good proceeds
 Direct, or by occasion—hath presented
 This happy trial of thy love, which else
 So eminently never had been known.

Were it I thought death menaced would ensue
 This my attempt, I would sustain alone
 The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die
 Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact 980
 Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assured
 Remarkably so late of thy so true,
 So faithful, love unequalled; but I feel
 Far otherwise the event; not death, but life
 Augmented, opened eyes, new hopes, new joys,
 Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
 Hath touched 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 embraced him, and for joy 990
 Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love
 Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
 Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
 In recompense—for such compliance bad

Such recompense best merits—from the bough
 She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
 With liberal hand. He scrupled not to eat,
 Against his better knowledge; not deceived,
 But fondly overcome with female charm.
 Earth trembled from her entrails, as again 1000
 In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan;
 Sky loured, and, muttering thunder, some sad
 drops

Wept at completing of the mortal sin
 Original; while Adam took no thought,
 Eating his fill, nor Ève to iterate
 Her former trespass feared, the more to soothe
 Him with her loved society; that now,
 As with new wine intoxicated both,
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
 Divinity within them breeding wings, 1010
 Wherewith to scorn the earth. But that false fruit
 Far other operation first displayed,
 Carnal desire inflaming; he on Ève
 Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him
 As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn,
 Till Adam thus 'gan Ève to dalliance move:

“Ève, now I see thou art exact of taste
 And elegant, of sapience no small part;
 Since to each meaning savor we apply,
 And palate call judicious. I the praise 1020
 Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purveyed.

Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstained
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting. If such pleasure be
In things to us forbidden, it might be wished
For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
But come, so well refreshed, 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, adorned 1030
With all perfections, so inflame my sense
With ardor 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 seized, and to a shady bank,
Thick overhead with verdant roof imbowered,
He led her nothing loth; flowers were the couch,
Pansies and violets, and asphodel, 1040
And hyacinth, earth's freshest softest lap.
There they their fill of love and love's disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep
Oppressed them, wearied with their amorous play.
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
That with exhilarating vapor bland
About their spirits had played, and inmost powers
Made err, was now exhaled, and grosser sleep,

Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious
dreams 1050

Incumbered, now had left them, up they rose
As from unrest, and, each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how opened, and their
minds

How darkened. Innocence, that as a veil
Had shadowed them from knowing ill, was gone;
Just confidence, and native righteousness,
And honor, from about them, naked left
To guilty Shame; he covered, but his robe
Uncovered more. So rose the Danite strong,
Herculean Samson from the harlot-lap 1060
Of Philistean Dalilah, and waked

Shorn of his strength; they destitute and bare
Of all their virtue. Silent, and in face
Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute;
Till Adam, though not less than Eve abashed,
At length gave utterance to these words con-
strained:

“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 promised rising; since our eyes 1070
Opened we find indeed, and find we know
Both good and evil, good lost, and evil got;
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,
Which leaves us naked thus, of honor void,

Of innocence, of faith, of purity,
 Our wonted ornaments now soiled and stained,
 And in our faces evident the signs
 Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store,
 Even shame, the last of evils; of the first
 Be sure then. How shall I behold the face 1080
 Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy
 And rapture so oft beheld? Those heavenly shapes
 Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
 Insufferably bright. Oh, might I here
 In solitude live savage, in some glade
 Obscured, where highest woods, impenetrable
 To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad,
 And brown as evening! Cover me, ye pines!
 Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
 Hide me, where I may never see them more!—1090
 But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
 What best may for the present serve to hide
 The parts of each from other, that seem most
 To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;
 Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together
 sewed,
 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 counselled he, and both together went
 Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose 1100
 The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renowned,

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 pillared shade,
 High overarched, 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 gathered, broad as Amazonian targe; 1111
 And, with what skill they had, together sewed,
 To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide
 Their guilt and dreaded shame! Oh how unlike
 To that first naked glory! Such of late
 Columbus found the American, so girt
 With feathered cincture, naked else and wild,
 Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
 Thus fenced, and, as they thought, their shame
 in part

Covered, but not at rest or ease of mind, 1120
 They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
 Rained 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 ruled not, and the Will

Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
 To sensual Appetite, who from beneath
 Usurping-over sovran Reason claimed 1130
 Superior sway. From thus distempered breast,
 Adam, estranged in look and altered style,
 Speech intermitted thus to Eve renewed :

“Would thou hadst hearkened to my words, and
 stayed

With me, as I besought thee, when that strange
 Desire of wandering, this unhappy morn,
 I know not whence possessed thee; we had then
 Remained still happy; not, as now, despoiled
 Of all our good, shamed, naked, miserable!
 Let none henceforth seek needless cause to ap-
 prove

The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek 1141
 Such proof, conclude they then begin to fail.”

To whom, soon moved with touch of blame,
 thus Eve :

“What words have passed thy lips, Adam severe?
 Imputest thou that to my default, or will
 Of wandering, as thou callest it, which who knows
 But might as ill have happened thou being by,
 Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
 Or here the attempt, thou couldst not have
 discerned

Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake; 1150
 No ground of enmity between us known,

Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
 Was I to have never parted from thy side?
 As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
 Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,
 Command me absolutely not to go?
 Going into such danger, as thou saidst.
 Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay,
 Say, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
 Hadst thou been firm and fixed in thy dissent, 1160
 Neither had I transgressed, nor thou with me."

To whom, then first incensed, Adam replied:
 "Is this the love? is this the recompense
 Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, expressed
 Immutable when thou wert lost, not I?
 Who might have lived, and joyed 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? 1170
 I warned thee, I admonished 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 erred, in overmuch admiring
 What seemed in thee so perfect, that I thought

No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue 1180
That error now, which is become my crime,
And thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall
Him who, to worth in women overtrusting,
Lets her will rule; restraint she will not brook,
And, left to 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 appeared no end.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

MAN'S transgression known, the guardian Angels forsake Paradise, and return up to Heaven to approve their vigilance, and are approved; God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors, who descends and gives sentence accordingly; then in pity clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death sitting till then at the gates of Hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new world, and the sin by Man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confined in Hell, but to follow Satan their sire up to the place of Man: to make the way easier from Hell to this world to and fro, they pave a broad 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 success against Man; instead of applause is entertained with a general hiss by all his audience. transformed with himself also suddenly into serpents, according to his doom given in Paradise; then, deluded with a show of the forbidden tree springing up before them, they, greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretels the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but for the present commands his Angels to make several altera-

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

MEANWHILE the heinous and despiteful act
 Of Satan done in Paradise, and how
 He in the Serpent had perverted Eve,
 Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
 Was known in Heaven; for what can 'scape the eye
 Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
 Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just,
 Hindered not Satan to attempt the mind
 Of Man, with strength entire, and free-will armed
 Complete to have discovered and repulsed 10
 Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
 For still they knew, and ought to have still
 remembered

The high injunction not to taste that fruit,
 Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,
 Incurred—what could they less?—the penalty;
 And, manifold in sin, deserved to fall.

Up into Heaven from Paradise in haste
 The angelic guards ascended, mute and sad
 For Man; for of his state by this they knew,

Much wondering how the subtle Fiend had
 stolen 20

Entrance unseen. Soon as the unwelcome news
 From Earth arrived at Heaven-gate, displeased
 All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare
 That time celestial visages, yet, mixed
 With pity, violated not their bliss.

About the new-arrived in multitudes
 The ethereal people ran, to hear and know
 How all befell. They toward the throne supreme,
 Accountable, made haste to make appear
 With righteous plea their utmost vigilance, 30
 And easily approved; when the Most High
 Eternal Father, from his secret cloud
 Amidst, in thunder uttered thus his voice:

“Assembled Angels, and ye Powers returned
 From unsuccessful charge, be not dismayed,
 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 crossed the gulf from
 Hell.

I told ye then he should prevail, and speed 40
 On his bad errand; Man should be seduced
 And flattered 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 fallen he is; and now
 What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass
 On his transgression, death denounced that day?
 Which he persumes already vain and void, 50
 Because not yet inflicted, as he feared,
 By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find
 Forbearance no acquittance, ere day end:
 Justice shall not return, as Bounty, scorned.
 But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee,
 Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferred
 All judgement, whether in Heaven, or Earth, or
 Hell.

Easy it may be seen that I intend
 Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee
 Man's friend, his Mediator, his designed 60
 Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,
 And destined Man himself to judge Man fallen."

So spake the Father; and, unfolding bright
 Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
 Blazed forth unclouded deity: he full
 Resplendent all his Father manifest
 Express, and thus divinely answered mild:

"Father Eternal, thine is to decree;
 Mine, both in Heaven and Earth, to do thy will
 Supreme; that thou in me, thy Son beloved, 70
 Mayest ever rest well pleased. I go to judge
 On Earth these transgressors; but thou knowest,

Whoever judged, 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 derived; yet I shall temper so
 Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most
 Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.
 Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none
 Are to behold the judgement, but the judged, 81
 Those two; the third best absent is condemned,
 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
 Powers,
 Princedoms, and Dominations ministrant
 Accompanied to Heaven-gate, from whence
 Eden and all the coast in prospect lay.
 Down he descended straight; the speed of Gods 90
 Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes
 winged.

Now was the sun in western cadence low
 From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,
 To fan the earth now waked, and usher in
 The evening 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 declined; they
heard,

And from his presence hid themselves, among 100
The thickest trees, both man and wife, till God
Approaching, thus to Adam called aloud:

“Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet
My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
Not pleased, thus entertained with solitude,
Where obvious duty erewhile appeared, unsought
Or come I less conspicuously? or what change
Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come
forth.”

He came, and with him Eve, more loath, though
first

To offend, discountenanced both, and discomposed.
Love was not in their looks, either to God 111
Or to teach other, but apparent guilt,
And shame, and perturbation, and despair,
Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.

Whence Adam, faltering long, thus answered brief:

“I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myself.” To whom

The gracious Judge without revile replied:

“My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not feared,
But still rejoiced; how is it now become 120
So dreadful to thee? that thou art naked who
Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree,
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?”

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

To whom the sovran Presence thus replied:
 '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 excelled 150
 Hers, in real dignity? Adorned

She was indeed, and lovely, to attract
 Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
 Were such as under government well seeme;
 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 who sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelmed,
 Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge 160
 Bold or loquacious, thus abashed replied:

"The Serpent me beguiled, and I did eat."

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
 To judgment he proceeded on the accused
 Serpent, though brute, unable to transfer
 The guilt on him who made him instrument
 Of mischief, and polluted from the end
 Of his creation; justly then accursed,
 As vitiated in nature. More to know
 Concerned not Man—since he no further knew—
 Nor altered his offence. Yet God at last 171
 To Satan, first in sin, his doom applied,
 Though in mysterious terms, judged as then best;
 And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall:

"Because thou hast done this, thou art accursed
 Above all cattle, each beast of the field:
 Upon thy belly groveling thou shalt go,
 And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.
 Between thee and the Woman I will put

Enmity, and between thine and her seed; 180
 Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his
 heel.”

So spake this oracle, then verified
 When Jesus, son of Mary, second Eve,
 Saw Satan fall like lightning down from heaven,
 Prince of the air; then, rising from his grave,
 Spoiled Principalities and Powers, triumphed
 In open shew, and, with ascension bright,
 Captivity led captive through the air,
 The realm itself of Satan, long usurped,
 Whom he shall tread at last under our feet; 190
 Even he who now foretold his fatal bruise,
 And to the Woman thus his sentence turned:

“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 pronounced:
 “Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy
 wife,

And eaten of the tree, concerning which 199
 I charged thee, saying, *Thou shalt not eat thereof*,
 Cursed 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 the herb of the field;
 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,

Till thou return unto the ground; for thou
 Out of the ground was taken, know thy birth,
 For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.”

So judged he Man, both Judge and Savior sent,
 And the instant stroke of death, denounced that
 day,

Removed far off; then, pitying how they stood 211
 Before him naked to the air, that now

Must suffer change, disdained not to begin:

Thenceforth the form of servant to assume;

As when he washed his servants' 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 220

Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more

Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness

Arraying, covered from his Father's sight.

To him with swift ascent he up returned,

Into his blissful bosom reassumed

In glory, as of old; to him appeased

All, though all-knowing, what had passed with

Man

Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Meanwhile, ere thus was sinned and judge

on Earth,

Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death 230

In counterview, within the gates, that now
Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
Far into Chaos, since the Fiend passed through,
Sin opening, 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 returned, with fury driven 240
By his avengers, since no place like this
Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
Wings growing, and dominion given me large
Beyond this Deep; whatever draws me on,
Or sympathy, or some connatural force,
Powerful at greatest distance to unite,
With secret amity, things of like kind
By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade
Inseparable, must with me along; 250
For Death from Sin no power can separate.
But, lest the difficulty of passing back
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
Impassable, impervious, let us try—
Adventurous work, yet to thy power 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 the infernal host,
 Easing their passage hence, for intercourse 260
 Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.
 Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
 By this new-felt attraction and instinct.”

Whom thus the meagre shadow answered soon:
 “Go whither Fate and inclination strong
 Lead thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err
 The way, thou leading; such a sent I draw
 Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
 The savor of death from all things there that
 live.

Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest 270
 Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.”

So saying, with delight he snuffed 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 encamped, come flying, lured
 With sent of living carcasses designed
 For death, the following day, in bloody fight:
 So sented the grim Feature, and upturned
 His nostril wide into the murky air, 280
 Sagacious of his quarry from so far.

Then both, from out Hell-gates, into the waste
 Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
 Flew diverse; and with power—their power was
 great—

Hovering upon the waters, what they met
Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
Tost up and down, together crowded drove,
From each side shoaling, toward the mouth of hell;
—As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
Upon the Cronian sea, together drive 290
Mountains of ice, that stop the imagined 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 fixed as firm
As Delos, floating once; the rest his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigor not to move,
And with asphaltic slime. Broad as the gate,
Deep to the roots of Hell the gathered beach
They fastened, and the mole immense wrought on,
Over the foaming Deep high arched, a bridge 301
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
Immovable of this now fenceless World,
Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to Hell.
So, if great things to small may be compared,
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 joined; 310
And scourged with many a stroke the indignant
waves.

Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
 Pontifical, a ridge of pendent rock,
 Over the vexed Abyss, following the track
 Of Satan, to the selfsame 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 320
 The confines met of empyrean Heaven
 And of this World, and on the left hand Hell,
 With long reach interposed; three several ways,
 In sight, to each of these three places led.
 And now their way to Earth they had descried,
 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!
 Disguised he came; but those his children
 dear 330
 Their parent soon discerned, though in disguise.—
 He, after Eve seduced, unminded slunk
 Into the wood fast by, and, changing shape
 To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
 By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded
 Upon her husband, saw their shame that sought
 Vain covertures; but when he saw descend
 The Son of God to judge them, terrified

He fled; not hoping to escape, but shun
 The present; fearing, guilty, what his wrath 340
 Might suddenly inflict. That past, returned
 By night, and, listening where the hapless pair
 Sat in their sad discourse and various plaint,
 Thence gathered his own doom, which understood
 Not instant, but of future time, with joy
 And tidings fraught, to Hell he now returned;
 And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
 Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhopèd
 Met who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
 Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight 350
 Of that stupendous bridge his joy increased.
 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 viewest as not thine own:
 Thou art their author and prime architect.
 For I no sooner in my heart divined,
 My heart, which by a secret harmony
 Still moves with thine, joined in connection sweet,
 That thou on Earth hadst prospered, which thy
 looks

Now also evidence, but straight I felt 361
 Though distant from thee, worlds between, yet
 felt

That I must after thee with this thy son;
 Such fatal consequence unites us three !

Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds,
 Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
 Detain from following thy illustrious track.
 Thou hast achieved our liberty, confined
 Within Hell-gates till now, thou us impowered
 To fortify thus far, and overlay 370
 With this portentous bridge the dark Abyss.
 'Thine now is all this World; thy virtue hath won
 What thy hands builded not, thy wisdom gained
 With odds what war hath lost, and fully avenged
 Our foil in Heaven; here thou shalt monarch
 reign,

'There didst not. There let him still victor sway,
 As battle hath adjudged, from this new World
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated,
 And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
 Of all things, parted by the empyreal bounds, 380
 His quadrature, from thy orbicular World;
 Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne.'

Whom thus the Prince of Darkness answered
 glad:

'Fair daughter, and thou, son and grandchild
 both,

High proof ye now have given to be the race
 Of Satan—for I glory in the name,
 Antagonist of Heaven's almighty King—
 Amply have merited of me, of all
 The infernal empire, that so near Heaven's door,

Triumphal with triumphal act, have met 390
 Mine with this glorious work, and made one realm
 Hell and this World, one realm, one continent
 Of easy thoroughfare. Therefore while I
 Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,
 To my associate powers, them to acquaint
 With these successes, and with them rejoice,
 You two this way, among these numerous orbs,
 All yours, right-down to Paradise descend;
 There dwell and reign in bliss; thence on the
 earth

Dominion exercise and in the air, 400
 Chiefly on Man, sole lord of all declared;
 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 vigor now
 My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
 Through Sin to Death exposed by my exploit.
 If your joint power prevail, the affairs of Hell
 No detriment need fear; go, and be strong!"

So saying he dismissed them: they with
 speed 410
 Their course through thickest constellations held,
 Spreading their bane—the blasted stars looked
 wan,
 And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse
 Then suffered—The other way Satan went down

The causey to Hell-gate. On either side
 Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaimed,
 And with rebounding surge the bars assailed
 That scorned his indignation. Through the gate,
 Wide-open and unguarded, Satan passed,
 And all about found desolate; for those 420
 Appointed to sit there had left their charge,
 Flown to the upper World; the rest were all
 Far to the inland retired, about the walls
 Of Pandemonium, city and proud seat
 Of Lucifer, so by allusion called
 Of that bright star to Satan paragoned.
 There kept their watch the legions, while the
 Grand

In council sat, solicitous what chance
 Might intercept their emperor sent; so he
 Departing gave command, and they observed. 430
 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
 Heaven-banished host, left desert utmost Hell
 Many a dark league, reduced in careful watch
 Round their metropolis, and now expecting
 Each hour their great adventurer from the
 search 440

Of foreign worlds. He through the midst un-
marked,

In shew plebeian Angel militant

Of lowest order, passed; and, from the door

Of that Plutonian hall invisible,

Ascended his high throne, which, under state

Of richest texture spread, at the upper end

Was placed in regal lustre. Down awhile

He sat, and round about him saw unseen.

At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head

And shape star-bright appeared, or brighter,

clad

450

With what permissive glory since his fall

Was left him, or false glitter. All amazed

At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng

Bent their aspect, and whom they wished beheld,

Their mighty Chief returned: loud was the acclaim.

Forth rushed in haste the great consulting peers,

Raised from their dark Divan, and with like joy

Congratulant approached him, who with hand

Silence, and with these words attention, won:

“Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues,

Powers!

460

For in possession such, not only of right,

I call ye, and declare ye now, returned,

Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth

Triumphant out of this infernal pit,

Abominable, accursed, the house of woe,

And dungeon of our tyrant—now possess,
 As lords, a spacious world, to our native Heaven
 Little inferior, by my adventure hard
 With peril great achieved. Long were to tell
 What I have done, what suffered, with what
 pain 470

Voyaged the unreal, vast, unbounded Deep
 Of horrible confusion, over which
 By Sin and Death a broad way now is paved,
 To expedite your glorious march; but I
 Toiled out my uncouth passage, forced to ride
 The untractable Abyss, plunged in the womb
 Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild,
 That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely opposed
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproar,
 Protesting Fate supreme; thence how I found 480
 The new-created World, which fame in Heaven
 Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful,
 Of absolute perfection; therein Man
 Placed in a paradise, by our exile
 Made happy. Him by fraud I have seduced
 From his Creator, and, the more to increase
 Your wonder, with an apple! He thereat
 Offended—worth your laughter—hath given up
 Both his beloved Man and all his World
 To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us, 490
 Without our hazard, labor or alarm,
 To range in, and to dwell, and over Mar.

To rule, as over all he should have ruled.
 True is, me also he hath judged, or rather
 Me not, but the brute serpent, in whose shape
 Man I deceived. That which to me belongs,
 Is enmity, which he will put between
 Me and mankind: I am to bruise his heel;
 His seed—when is not set—shall bruise my head.
 A world who would not purchase with a
 bruise, 500
 Or much more grievous pain? Ye have the account
 Of my performance. What remains, ye Gods,
 But up, and enter now into full bliss?"

So having said, awhile he stood, expecting
 Their universal shout and high applause
 To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears
 On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
 A dismal universal hiss, the sound
 Of public scorn. He wondered, but not long
 Had leisure, wondering at himself now more. 510
 His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
 His arms clung to his ribs, his legs entwining
 Each other, till supplanted down he fell,
 A monstrous serpent, on his belly prone,
 Reluctant, but in vain; a greater power
 Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinned,
 According to his doom. He would have spoke,
 But hiss for hiss returned with forked tongue
 To forked tongue; for now were all transformed

Alike to serpents, all as accessories 520
 To his bold riot. Dreadful was the din
 Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
 With complicated monsters, head and tail,
 Scorpion, and Asp, and Amphisbæna dire,
 Cerastes horned, Hydrus and Ellops drear
 And Dipsas—not so thick swarmed 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
 Ingendered in the Pythian vale on slime, 530
 Huge Python; and his power no less he seemed
 Above the rest still to retain. They all
 Him followed, issuing forth to the open field,
 Where all yet left of that revolted rout,
 Heaven-fallen, 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 540
 They felt themselves now changing. Down their
 arms,
 Down fell both spear and shield, down they as fast,
 And the dire hiss renewed, and the dire form
 Caught by contagion, like in punishment,
 As in their crime. Thus was the applause they
 meant

Turned 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 550
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
Used by the Tempter. On that prospect strange
Their earnest eyes they fixed, imagining
For one forbidden tree a multitude
Now risen, to work them further woe or shame;
Yet, parched with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;
But on they rolled in heaps, and up the trees
Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks
That curled Megæra. Greedily they plucked 560
The fruitage, fair to sight, like that which grew
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flamed;
This, more delusive, not the touch, but taste
Deceived. They, fondly thinking to allay
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit
Chewed bitter ashes, which the offended taste
With spattering noise rejected. Oft they assayed,
Hunger and thirst constraining; drugged as oft,
With hatefulest disrelish, writhed their jaws
With soot and cinders filled; so oft they fell 570
Into the same illusion, not as Man

Whom they triumphed once lapsed. Thus were
they plagued;

And, worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,
Till their lost shape, permitted, they resumed;

Yearly enjoyed, some say, to undergo
This annual humbling, certain numbered days,
To dash their pride and joy for man seduced.

However, some tradition they dispersed

Among the Heathen of their purchase got,
And fabled how the Serpent, whom they called 580

Ophion with Eurynomè—the wide

Encroaching Eve perhaps—had first the rule

Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driven

And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.

Meanwhile in Paradise the hellish pair
Too soon arrived; Sin, there in power before,

Once actual, now in body, and to dwell

Habitual habitant; behind her Death,

Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet

On his pale horse; to whom Sin thus began: 590

“Second of Satan sprung, all-conquering Death!
What thinkest thou of our empire now, though
earned

With travail difficult? Not better far

Than still at Hell's dark threshold to have sat
watch

Unnamed, undreaded, and thyself half-starved?”

Whom thus the Sin-born monster answered
soon :

“To me, who with eternal famine pine,
Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heaven;
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 corpse.”

To whom the incestuous mother thus re-
plied :

602

“Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and
flowers

Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl—
No homely morsels—and, whatever thing
The scythe of Time mows down, devour unspared;
Till I, in Man residing, through the race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect,
And season him thy last and sweetest prey.”

This said, they both betook them several ways,
Both to destroy, or unimmortal make

611

All kinds, and for destruction to mature
Sooner or later; which the Almighty seeing,
From his transcendent seat the Saints among,
To those bright Orders uttered thus his voice :

“See with what heat these dogs of Hell ad-
vance

To waste and havoc yonder World, which I
So fair and good created, and had still
Kept in that state, had not the folly of Man

Let in these wasteful furies, who impute 620
 Folly to me—so doth the Prince of Hell!
 And his adherents—that with so much ease
 I suffer them to enter and possess
 A place so heavenly, and conniving seem
 To gratify my scornful enemies,
 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 called and drew them thither,
 My hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth 630
 Which Man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
 On what was pure; till, crammed and gorged,
 nigh burst,
 With sucked and glutted offal, at one sling
 Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
 Both Sin and Death, and yawning Grave at last,
 Through Chaos hurled, obstruct the mouth of Hell
 For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.
 Then Heaven and Earth renewed shall be made
 pure
 To sanctity that shall receive no stain.
 Till then the curse pronounced on both precedes."

He ended, and the heavenly audience loud 641
 Sung Hallelujah, as the sound of seas,
 Through multitude that sung:—"Just are thy
 ways,
 Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;

Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son,
 Destined restorer of mankind, by whom
 New heaven and earth shall to the ages rise,
 Or down from Heaven descend."—Such was
 their song;

While the Creator, calling forth by name
 His mighty Angels, gave them several charge, 650
 As sorted best with present things. The sun
 Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
 As might affect the earth with cold and heat
 Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call
 Decrepit winter, from the south to bring
 Solstitial summer's heat; to the blanc moon
 Her office they prescribed; to the other five
 Their planetary motions and aspects,
 In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite
 Of noxious efficacy, and when to join 660
 In synod unbenign; and taught the fixed
 Their influence malignant when to shower,
 Which of them, rising with the sun or falling,
 Should prove tempestuous: to the winds they set
 Their corners, when with bluster to confound
 Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll
 With terror through the dark aërial hall.
 Some say, he bid his Angels turn askance
 The poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
 From the sun's axle; they with labor pushed 670
 Oblique the centric globe: some say, the sun

Was bid turn reins from the equinoctial road
 Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven
 Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,
 Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down again
 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 smiled on Earth with vernal flowers,
 Equal in days and nights, except to those 680
 Beyond the polar circles; to them day
 Had unbenighted shone, while the low sun,
 To recompense his distance, in their sight
 Had rounded still the 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, turned
 His course intended; else how had the world
 Inhabited, though sinless, more than now 690
 Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?

These changes in the heavens, though slow,
 produced

Like change on sea and land, sidereal blast,
 Vapor, and mist, and exhalation hot,
 Corrupt and pestilent. Now from the north
 Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,
 Bursting their brazen dungeon, armed 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; 700

With adverse blast upturns them from the south
 Notus and Afer, black with thunderous clouds
 From Serrationa; thwart of these, as fierce,
 Forth rush the Levant and the Poient winds,
 Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,
 Sirocco, and Libecchio. Thus began
 Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,
 Daughter of Sin, among the irrational
 Death introduced, through fierce antipathy.

Beast now with beast gan war, and fowl with fowl,
 And fish with fish; to graze the herb all
 leaving 711

Devoured each other; nor stood much in awe
 Of Man, but fled him, or with countenance grim
 Glared on him passing. These were from without
 The growing miseries, which Adam saw
 Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
 To sorrow abandoned, 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 the end 720
 Of this new glorious World? and me so late
 The glory of that glory? who now, become
 Accursed of blessed, hide me from the face
 Of God, whom to behold was then my highth

Of happiness. Yet well, if here would end
 The misery; I deserved it, and would bear
 My own deservings. But this will not serve;
 All that I eat and drink, or shall beget,
 Is'propagated curse. O voice once heard
 Delightfully, *Encrease and multiply,* 730
 Now death to hear! for what can I encrease
 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 centre, light, 740
 Heavy though in their place O fleeting joys
 Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woe!
 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
 Concurred not to my being, it were but right
 And equal to reduce me to my dust,
 Desirous to resign and render back
 All I received, unable to perform 750
 Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
 The good I sought not. To the loss of that,

Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes? inexplicable
Thy justice seems. Yet, to say truth, too late
I thus contest; then should have been refused
Those terms whatever, when they were proposed.
Thou didst accept them: wilt thou enjoy the good,
Then cavil the condition? And, though God
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son 760
Prove disobedient, and reprov'd retort:

Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not!
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,
But natural necessity, begot.

God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him; thy reward was of his grace,
Thy punishment then justly is at his will.
Be it so, for I submit; his doom is fair,
That dust I am, and shall to dust return. 770

O welcome hour whenever! Why delays
His hand to execute what his decree
Fixed on this day? Why do I overlive?
Why am I mocked with death, and lengthened out
To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet
Mortality, my sentence, and be earth
Insensible! how glad would lay me down
As in my mother's lap! There I should rest,
And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more
Would thunder in my ears; no fear of worse 780

To me and to my offspring would torment me
 With cruel expectation.—Yet one doubt
 Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;
 Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of Man
 Which God inspired, 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 sinned. What dies but what had
 life

790

And sin? the body properly hath neither.
 All of me then shall die. Let this appease
 The doubt, since human reach no further knows.
 For though the Lord of all be infinite,
 Is his wrath also? Be it, Man is not so,
 But mortal doomed. 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 power. Will he draw out,
 For anger's sake, finite to infinite
 In punished Man, to satisfy his rigor
 Satisfied 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.

800

Not to the extent of their own sphere. But say
 That death be not one stroke, as I supposed,
 Bereaving sense, but endless misery 810
 From this day onward, which I feel begun
 Both in me, and without me, and so last
 To perpetuity . . . Ay, me ! that fear
 Comes thundering 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 cursed. Fair patrimony
 That I must leave ye, sons ! Oh, were I able
 To waste it all myself, and leave ye none ! 820
 So disinherited, how would ye bless
 Me, now you curse ! Ah, why should all mankind
 For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemned?—
 If guiltless; but from me what can proceed
 But all corrupt, both mind and will depraved
 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,
 Forced I absolve; all my evasions vain,
 And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me
 still
 But to my own conviction: first and last 831
 On me, me only, as the source and spring
 Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;

So might the wrath! Fond wish! couldst thou
support

That burden, heavier than the Earth to bear;
Than all the World much heavier, though divided
With that bad Woman? Thus, what thou desirest,
And what thou fearest, alike destroys all hope
Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable,
Beyond all past example and future; 840
To Satan only like, both crime and doom.

O Conscience, into what abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driven me! out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plunged."

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 850
Outstretched he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
Cursed his creation, Death as oft accused
Of tardy execution, since denounced
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 prayers or cries.
O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers!

With other echo late I taught your shades 861
 To answer, and resound far other song."—
 Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
 Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
 Soft words to his fierce passion she assayed;
 But her with stern regard he thus repelled:

“Out of my sight, thou serpent! that name best
 Befits thee with him leagued, thyself as false
 And hateful. Nothing wants, but that thy shape
 Like his, and color serpentine, may shew 870
 Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee
 Henceforth; lest that too heavenly form, pre-
 tended

To hellish falsehood, snare them. But for thee
 I had persisted happy; had not thy pride
 And wandering vanity, when least was safe,
 Rejected my forewarning, and disdained
 Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,
 Though by the Devil himself; him overweening
 To over-reach; but, with the serpent meeting,
 Fooled and beguiled, by him thou, I by thee, 880
 To trust thee from my side; imagined wise,
 Constant, mature, proof against all assaults;
 And understood not all was but a shew,
 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: Oh, why did God,
 Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven
 With Spirits masculine, create at last 890
 This novelty on Earth, this fair defect
 Of Nature, and not fill the world at once
 With men as Angels, without feminine?
 Or find some other way to generate
 Mankind? This mischief had not then befallen,
 And more that shall befall; innumerable
 Disturbances on Earth through female snares,
 And strait conjunction with this sex. For either
 He never shall find out fit mate, but such
 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake; 900
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain,
 Through her perverseness, but shall see her gained
 By a far worse; or, if she love, withheld
 By parents; or his happiest choice too late
 Shall meet; already linked and wedlock-bound
 To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
 Which infinite calamity shall cause
 To human life, and household peace confound."

He added not, and from her turned; but Eve,
 Not so repulsed, with tears that ceased not flowing,
 And tresses all disordered at his feet 910

Fell humble, and, embracing them, besought
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint:

"Forsake me not thus, Adam! witness Heaven
 What love sincere and reverence in my heart

I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
 Unhappily deceived! Thy suppliant
 I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
 Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
 Thy counsel, in this uttermost distress 920
 My only strength and stay. Forlorn of thee
 Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
 While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
 Between us two let there be peace; both rejoining,
 As joined in injuries, one enmity
 Against a foe by doom express assigned us,
 That cruel Serpent. On me exercise not
 Thy hatred for this misery befallen,
 On me already lost, me than thyself
 More miserable. Both have sinned, but thou 930
 Against God only, I against God and thee;
 And to the place of judgement will return,
 There with my cries importune Heaven, that all
 The sentence, from thy head removed, 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,
 Immovable till peace obtained from fault
 Acknowledged and deplored, to Adam wrought
 Commiseration. Soon his heart relented 940
 Toward her, his life so late and sole delight,
 Now at his feet submissive in distress;
 Creature so fair his reconcilment 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 knowest not, who desirest
 The punishment all on thyself. Alas!
 Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain 950
 His full wrath, whose thou feelest as yet least part,
 And my displeasure bearest so ill. If prayers
 Could alter high decrees, I to that place
 Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
 That on my head all might be visited:
 Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,
 To me committed, and by me exposed.
 But rise; let us no more contend, nor blame
 Each other, blamed enough elsewhere, but strive,
 In offices of love, how we may lighten 960
 Each other's burden, in our share of woe;
 Since this day's death denounced, if aught I see,
 Will prove no sudden, but a slow-paced evil,
 A long day's dying, to augment our pain,
 And to our seed—O hapless seed!—derived.”

To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied:
 “Adam, by sad experiment I know
 How little weight my words with thee can find,
 Found so erroneous; thence by just event
 Found so unfortunate. Nevertheless, 970
 Restored 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, devoured 980
By Death at last—and miserable it is
To be to others cause of misery,
Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
Into this cursed world a woeful race,
That after wretched life must be at last
Food for so foul a monster—in thy power
It lies, yet ere conception, to prevent
The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
Childless thou art, childless remain; so Death
Shall be deceived his glut, and with us two 990
Be forced to satisfy his ravenous maw.
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
From love's due rights, nuptial embraces sweet,
And with desire to languish 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, 1000
 Let us seek Death, or, he not found, supply
 With our own hands his office on ourselves.
 Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
 That shew no end but death, and have the power,
 Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,
 Destruction with destruction to destroy?"

She ended here, or vehement despair
 Broke off the rest; so much of death her thoughts
 Had entertained as dyed her cheeks with pale.
 But Adam, with such counsel nothing swayed, 1010
 To better hopes his more attentive mind
 Laboring had raised, and thus to Eve replied:

"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 life and pleasure overloved.
 Or if thou covet death, as utmost end 1020
 Of misery, so thinking to evade
 The penalty pronounced, doubt not but God
 Hath wiselier armed his vengeful ire than so
 To be forestalled; much more I fear lest death,
 So snatched, 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 1030.
Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
The Serpent's head: piteous amends! unless
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe,
Satan, who in the serpent hath contrived
Against us this deceit. To crush his head
Would be revenge indeed; which will be lost
By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
Resolved as thou proposest; so our foe
Shall scape his punishment ordained, and we
Instead shall double ours upon our heads. 1040.
No more be mentioned then of violence
Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness,
That cuts us off from hope, and savors 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 judged,
Without wrath or reviling. We expected
Immediate dissolution, which we thought
Was meant by death that day; when lo! to thee
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold, 1051
And bringing forth, soon recompensed with joy,
Fruit of thy womb; on me the curse aslope
Glanced on the ground. With labor I must earn
My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse.

My labor 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 1060
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
And teach us further by what means to shun
The 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 we his gathered beams
Reflected may with matter sere foment, 1071
Or by collision of two bodies grind
The air attrite to fire; as late the clouds,
Justling, or pushed with winds, rude in their
shock,

Tine the slant lightning, whose thwart flame
driven 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 or cure
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,

He will instruct us praying, and of grace 1081
 Beseeching him; so as we need not fear
 To pass commodiously this life, sustained
 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 1091

Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek?
 Undoubtedly he will relent, and turn
 From his displeasure, in whose look, serene,
 When angry most he seemed and most severe,
 What else but favor, grace, and mercy shone?"

So spake our father penitent, nor Eve
 Felt less remorse. They forthwith, to the place
 Repairing where he judged them, prostrate fell
 Before him reverent, and both confessed 1100
 Humbly, their faults and pardon begged, with
 tears

Watering the ground, and with their sighs the
 air

Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Son of God presents to his Father the prayers of our first parents now repenting, and intercedes for them. God accepts them, but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise: sends Michael with a band of Cherubim to dispossess them; but first to reveal to Adam future things: Michael's coming down. Adam shews 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 removed
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breathed
Unutterable, which the Spirit of prayer
Inspired, and winged for Heaven with speedier
fight
Than loudest oratory. Yet their port
Not of mean suitors, nor important less

Seemed their petition, than when the ancient
 pair,

In fables old, less ancient yet than these, 11
 Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
 The race of mankind drowned, before the shrine
 Of Themis stood devout. To Heaven their prayers
 Flew up, nor missed the way, by envious winds
 Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they passed
 Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then clad
 With incense, where the golden altar fumed,
 By their great Intercessor, came in sight
 Before the Father's throne. Them the glad Son
 Presenting thus to intercede began: 21

“See, Father, what first-fruits on Earth are
 sprung

From thy implanted grace in Man; these sighs
 And prayers, which in this golden censor, mixed
 With incense, I thy priest before thee bring;
 Fruits of more pleasing savor, from thy seed
 Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
 Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees
 Of Paradise could have produced, ere fallen
 From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear 30
 To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute;
 Unskillful 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 toward Mankind: let him live
 Before thee reconciled, at least his days
 Numbered, though sad; till death, his doom—
 which I

To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse— 41
 To better life shall yield him, where, with me
 All my redeemed 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 50
 No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
 Eject him, tainted now, and purge him off,
 As a distemper, gross, to air as gross,
 And mortal food, as may dispose him best
 For dissolution wrought by sin, that first
 Distempered all things, and of incorrupt
 Corrupted. I at first with two fair gifts
 Created him endowed, with happiness
 And immortality; that fondly lost,
 This other served but to eternize woe, 60
 Till I provided death: so death becomes
 His final remedy, and, after life

Tried in sharp tribulation and refined
 By faith and faithful works, to second life,
 Waked in the renovation of the just,
 Resigns him up with heaven and earth renewed.--
 But let us call to synod all the Blest
 Through Heaven's wide bounds; from them I will
 not hide
 My judgments, how with Mankind I proceed,
 As how with peccant Angels late they saw, 70
 And in their state, though firm, stood more con-
 firmed."

He ended, and the Son gave signal high
 To the bright minister that watched. He blew
 His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps
 When God descended, and perhaps once more
 To sound at general doom. The angelic blast
 Filled 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 80
 Hasted, resorting to the summons high,
 And took their seats, till from his throne supreme
 The Almighty thus pronounced his sovran 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 sufficed him to have known

Good by itself, and evil not at all.

His sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite, 90

My motions in him; longer than they move . . .

His heart I know how variable and vain,

Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand

Reach also of the Tree of Life, and eat,

And live for ever, dream at least to live

For ever, to remove him I decree,

And send him from the garden forth, to till

The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.

‘Michael, this my behest have thou in charge.

Take to thee, from among the Cherubim, 100

Thy choice of flaming warriors; lest the Fiend,

Or in behalf of Man, or to invade

Vacant possession, some new trouble raise.

Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God

Without remorse drive out the sinful pair,

From hallowed ground the unholy, and denounce

To them and to their progeny from thence

Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint

At the sad sentence rigorously urged—

For I behold them softened, and with tears 110

Bewailing their excess—all terror hide.

If patiently thy bidding they obey,

Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal

To Adam what shall come in future days,

As I shall thee enlighten; intermix

My covenant in the Woman’s seed renewed.

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 120
Wide-waving, all approach far off to fright,
And guard all passage to the Tree of Life;
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
To Spirits foul, and all my trees their prey,
With whose stolen fruit Man once more to delude."

He ceased, and the archangelic Power prepared
For swift descent; with him the cohort bright
Of watchful Cherubim. Four faces each
Had, like a double Janus, all their shape
Spangled with eyes, more numerous than those 130
Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,
Charmed with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile,
To resolute the World with sacred light,
Leucothea waked, and with fresh dews embalmed
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 linked;
Which thus to Eve his welcome words re-
newed: 140

"Eve, easily may faith admit that all
The good which we enjoy from Heaven descend.

But that from us aught should ascend to Heaven
So prevalent as to concern the mind
Of God high-biested, or to incline his will,
Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer
Or one short sigh of human breath, up-borne
Even to the seat of God. For since I sought
By prayer the offended Deity to appease,
Kneeling and before him humbled all my heart, 150
Methought I saw him, placable and mild,
Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew
'That I was heard with favor; peace returned
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 called, Mother of all Mankind,
Mother of all things living, since by thee 160
Man is to live, and all things live for Man.'

To whom thus Eve with sad demeanor meek:
'Ill-worthy I such title should belong
To me transgressor, who, for thee ordained
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 graced
The source of life; next favorable thou,
Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsafest, 170

Far other name deserving.—But the field
 To labor calls us, now with sweat imposed,
 Though after sleepless night; for see! the Morn,
 All unconcerned with our unrest, begins
 Her rosy progress smiling. Let us forth,
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
 Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoined
 Laborious, till day droop. While here we dwell
 —What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?—
 Here let us live, though in fallen state, con-
 tent." 180

So spake, so wished much-humbled Eve, but
 Fate

Subscribed not. Nature first gave signs, impressed
 On bird, beast, air; air suddenly eclipsed,
 After short blush of morn. Nigh in her sight
 The bird of Jove, stooped from his aery tour,
 Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;
 Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
 First hunter then, pursued a gentle brace,
 Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;
 Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight. 190
 Adam observed, and, with his eye the chase
 Pursuing, not unmoved to Eve thus spake:

“O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,
 Which Heaven by these mute signs in Nature
 shews,

Forerunners of his purpose, or to warn

Us, haply too secure of our discharge
 From penalty, because from death released
 Some days; how long, and what till then our life,
 Who knows, or more than this, that we are dust,
 And thither must return, and be no more? 200
 Why else this double object in our sight
 Of flight, pursued in the air and o'er the ground,
 One way the selfsame 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 blue firmament a radiant white,
 And slow descends, with something heavenly
 fraught?"

He erred not; for by this the heavenly bands,
 Down from a sky of jasper, lighted now
 In Paradise, and on a hill made halt; 210
 A glorious apparition, had not doubt
 And carnal fear that day dimmed Adam's eye.
 Not that more glorious, when the Angels met
 Jacob in Mahanaïm, where he saw
 The field pavilioned with his guardians bright;
 Nor that which on the flaming mount appeared,
 In Dothan, covered with a camp of fire,
 Against the Syrian king, who to surprise
 One man, assassin-like, had levied war,
 War unproclaimed. The princely Hierarch 220
 In their bright stand there left his powers, to seize
 Possession of the garden; he alone,

To find where Adam sheltered, took his way,
 Not unperceived of Adam, who to Eve,
 While the great visitant approached, thus spake:

“Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
 Of us will soon determine, or impose
 New laws to be observed; for I descry,
 From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
 One of the heavenly host, and by his gait 230
 None of the meanest; some great Potentate
 Or of the Thrones above, such majesty
 Invests him coming; yet not terrible
 That I should fear, nor sociably mild,
 As Raphaël, that I should much confide;
 But solemn and sublime, whom not to offend
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.”

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

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

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

"O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death!
 Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
 Thee, native soil! these happy walks and
 shades, 270
 Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to spend,
 Quiet though sad, the respite of that day
 That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,
 That never will in other climate grow,
 My early visitation, and my last
 At even, which I bred up with tender hand
 From the first opening bud, and gave ye names!

Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
 Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount?
 Thee lastly, nuptial bower! by me adorned 280
 With what to sight or smell was sweet, from thee
 How shall I part, and whither wander down
 Into a lower world, to this obscure
 And wild? How shall we breathe in other air
 Less pure, accustomed 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 290
 Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound;
 Where he abides, think there thy native soil."

Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp
 Recovering, and his scattered spirits returned,
 To Michael thus his humble words addressed:

"Celestial! whether among the Thrones, or
 named

Of them the highest, for such of shape may seem
 Prince above princes, gently hast thou told
 Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
 And in performing end us. What besides 300
 Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair
 Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring;
 Departure from this happy place, our sweet
 Recess, and only consolation left,

Familiar to our eyes, all places else
Inhospitable appear and desolate,
Nor knowing us nor known. And, if by prayer
Incessant I could hope to change the will
Of Him who all things can, I would not cease
To weary him with my assiduous cries. 310
But prayer against his absolute decree
No more avails than breath against the wind,
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
Therefore to his great bidding I submit.
This most afflicts me, that, departing hence,
As from his face I shall be hid, deprived
His blessed countenance. Here I could frequent
With worship place by place where he vouchsafed
Presence Divine, and to my sons relate,
On this mount he appeared, under this tree 320
Stood visible, among these pines his voice
I heard, here with him at this fountain talked.
So many grateful 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 flowers.
In yonder nether world where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or footstep trace?
For, though I fled him angry, yet, recalled 330
To life prolonged and promised 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 knowest Heaven his, and all the
Earth;

Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
Fomented by his virtual power and warmed,
All the earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
No despicable gift: surmise not then 340
His presence to these narrow bounds confined
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 the 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 350
Present; and of his presence many a sign,
Still following thee, still compassing thee round
With goodness and paternal love, his face
Express, and of his steps the track divine.
Which that thou mayst believe, and be confirmed
Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent
To shew thee what shall come in future days
To thee and to thy offspring. Good with bad
Expect to bear, supernal grace contending

With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn 360
 True patience, and to temper joy with fear
 And pious sorrow, equally inured
 By moderation either state to bear,
 Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
 Safest thy life; and best prepared endure
 Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
 This hill; let Eve—for I have drenched her eyes—
 Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wakest;
 As once thou sleptest, while she to life was
 formed.”

To whom thus Adam gratefully replied: 370
 “Ascend, I follow thee, safe guide, the path
 Thou ledest me, and to the hand of Heaven
 submit,

However chastening; to the evil turn
 My obvious breast, arming to overcome
 By suffering, and earn rest from labor 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,
 Stretched out to the amplest reach of prospect
 lay.

Not higher that hill, nor wider looking
 round, 381

Whereon for different causes the Tempter set
 Our second Adam, in the wilderness,

To shew him all Earth's kingdoms and their
glory.

His eye might there command wherever stood
City of old or modern fame, the seat
Of mightiest empire, from the destined walls
Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,
And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
To Paquin of Sinæan kings; and thence 390
To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul,
Down to the Golden Chersonese; or where
The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
In Hispahan or where the Russian Ksar
In Mosco; or the Sultan in Bizance,
Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken
The 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 400
Of Congo, and Angola farthest south;
Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount,
The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,
Marocco and Algiers, and Tremisen;
On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway
The world. In spirit perhaps he also saw
Rich Mexico, the seat of Motezume,
And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoiled
Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons 410

Call El Dorado.—But to nobler sights
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed,
 Which that false fruit, that promised clearer sight,
 Had bred; then purged with euphrasy and rue
 The visual nerve—for he had much to see—
 And from the well of life three drops instilled.
 So deep the power of these ingredients pierced,
 Even to the inmost seat of mental sight,
 That Adam, now enforced so close his eyes,
 Sunk down, and all his spirits became en-
 tranced; 420

But him the gentle Angel by the hand
 Soon raised, and his attention thus recalled:

“Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold
 The effects which thy original crime hath wrought
 In some to spring from thee, who never touched
 The excepted tree, nor with the Snake conspired,
 Nor sinned thy sin, yet from that sin derive
 Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.”

His eyes he opened, and beheld a field,
 Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves 430
 New reaped, the other part sheep-walks and folds;
 In the midst an altar as the landmark stood,
 Rustic, of grassy sord. Thither anon
 A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
 First-fruits, the green ear and the yellow sheaf,
 Unculled, as came to hand; a shepherd next,
 More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,

Choicest and best; then sacrificing laid
 The inwards and their fat, with incense strewed,
 On the cleft wood, and all due rites per-
 formed. 440

His offering soon propitious fire from heaven
 Consumed, with nimble glance and grateful steam;
 The other's not, for his was not sincere.

Whereat he inly raged, and, as they talked,
 Smote him into the midriff with a stone
 That beat out life; he fell, and deadly pale
 Groaned out his soul, with gushing blood effused.
 Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
 Dismayed, and thus in haste to the Angel cried:

“O Teacher, some great mischief hath befallen
 To that meek man, who well had sacrificed. 451
 Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?”

To whom Michael thus, he also moved, replied:
 “These are two brethren, Adam, and to come
 Out of thy loins. The unjust the just hath slain,
 For envy that his brother's offering found
 From Heaven acceptance; but the bloody fact
 Will be avenged, and the other's faith approved
 Lose no reward, though here thou see him die,
 Rolling in dust and gore.”—To which our
 sire: 460

“Alas, both for the deed and for the cause!
 But have I now seen death? Is this the way
 I must return to native dust? O sight

Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!"

To whom thus Michaël:—"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 the entrance than within. 470

Some, as thou sawest, by violent stroke shall die,
By fire, flood, famine, by intemperance more
In meats and drink, which on the earth shall
bring

Disease dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear; that thou mayst know
What misery the inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on men."—Immediately a place
Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark;
A lazarus-house it seemed, wherein were laid
Numbers of all diseased, all maladies 480
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heartsick agony, all feverous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,
Demoniac phrenzy, moping melancholy,
And moonstruck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking
rheums.

Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
Tended the sick, busiest from couch to
couch; 490

And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked
With vows, as their chief good and final hope.
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept,
Though not of woman born: compassion quelled
His best of man, and gave him up to tears
A space, till firmer thoughts restrained excess;
And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renewed:

“O miserable mankind, to what fall 500
Degraded, to what wretched state reserved!
Better end here unborn. Why is life given
To be thus wrested from us? rather why
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
What we receive, would either not accept
Life offered, or soon beg to lay it down,
Glad to be so dismissed in peace. Can thus
The image of God in Man, created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
To such unsightly sufferings be debased 510
Under inhuman pains? Why should not Man,
Retaining still divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be free,
And for his Maker’s image sake exempt?”
“Their Maker’s image,” answered Michael, “then

Forsook them, when themselves they vilified
 To serve unguided Appetite, and took
 His image whom they served, a brutish vice,
 Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.

Therefore so abject is their punishment 520
 Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own;
 Or if his likeness, by themselves defaced,
 While they pervert pure Nature's healthful rules
 To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they
 God's image did not reverence in themselves."

"I yield it just," said Adam, "and submit.
 But is there yet no other way beside
 These painful passages, how we may come
 To death, and mix with our connatural
 dust?" 529

"There is," said Michael, "if thou well observe
 The rule of *Not too much*, by temperance taught,
 In what thou eatest and drinkest, seeking from
 thence

Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
 Till many years over thy head return.
 So mayest thou live, till, like ripe fruit, thou
 drop
 Into thy mother's lap, or be with ease
 Gathered, not harshly plucked, for death mature.
 This is old-age. But then thou must outlive
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will
 change

To withered, weak, and gray; thy senses then, 540
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgo,
 To what thou hast; and, for the air of youth,
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
 A melancholy damp of cold and dry
 To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume
 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 550
 Of rendering up, and patiently attend
 My dissolution." Michaël replied:

"Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou
 livest

Live well; how long or short, permit to Heaven.
 And now prepare thee for another sight."

He looked, and saw a spacious plain, whereon
 Were tents of various hue. By some were herds
 Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound
 Of instruments, that made the melodious chime,
 Was heard, of harp and organ, and who
 moved 560

Their stops and chords were seen; his volent
 touch

Instinct, through all proportions low and high,
 Fled, and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.
 In other part stood one, who at the forge

Laboring, two massy clods of iron 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 washed by
 stream

From underground. The liquid ore he drained 570
Into fit moulds prepared; from which he formed
First his own tools; then, what might else be
 wrought

Fusil or graven in metal. After these,
But on the hither side, a different sort,
From the high neighboring hills, which was
 their seat,

Down to the plain descended. By their guise
Just men they seemed, and all their study bent
To worship God aright, and know his works
Not hid; nor those things last, which might
 preserve

Freedom and peace to men. They on the plain 580
Long had not walked, when from the tents behold
A bevy of fair women, richly gay

In gems and wanton dress; to the harp they sung
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on.

The men, though grave, eyed them, and let **their**
 eyes

Rove without rein; till, in the amorous **net**

Fast caught, they liked and each his liking
chose.

And now of love they treat, till the evening-star,
Love's harbinger, appeared; then all in heat
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke 590
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invoked:
With feast and music all the tents resound.
Such happy interview, and fair event
Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands,
flowers,

And charming symphonies, attached the heart
Of Adam, soon inclined to admit delight,
The bent of nature; which he thus expressed:

“True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest!
Much better seems this vision, and more hope
Of peaceful days portends, than those two
past. 600

Those were of hate and death, or pain much
worse;

Here nature seems fulfilled 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 sawest so pleasant were the
tents

Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race

Who slew his brother. Studious they appear
 Of arts that polish life, inventors rare; 610
 Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
 Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledge
 none.

Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;
 For that fair female troop thou sawest, that seemed
 Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
 Yet empty of all good, wherein consists
 Woman's domestic honor and chief praise;
 Bred only and completed to the taste
 Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,
 To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the
 eye . . . 620

To these that sober race of men, whose lives
 Religious titled them the sons of God,
 Shall yield up all their virtue, all thais 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 which thus Adam, of short joy bereft:
 "O pity and shame, that they, who to live well
 Entered so fair, should turn aside to tread 630
 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 the Angel, "who should better hold his place,
By wisdom and superior gifts received.—
But now prepare thee for another scene."

He looked, and saw wide territory spread
Before him, towns, and rural works between,
Cities of men with lofty gates and towers, 640
Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war,
Giants of mighty bone and bold emprise.
Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
Single or in array of battle ranged,
Both horse and foot, nor idly mustering 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, 650
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray.
With cruel tournament the squadrons join;
Where cattle pastured late, now scattered lies
With carcasses and arms the ensanguined field,
Deserted. Others to a city strong
Lay siege, encamped, by battery, scale and mine,
Assaulting; others from the wall defend
With dart and javelin, stones and sulphurous fire;
On each hand slaughter, and gigantic deeds.
In other part the sceptred haralds call 660
To council, in the city-gates. Anon
Grey-headed men and grave, with warriors mixed,

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 judgement from above. Him old and young
 Exploded, and had seized with violent hands,
 Had not a cloud descending snatched him
 thence, 670

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 turned full sad: — “Oh, 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? 680
 But who was that just man, whom had not Heaven
 Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?”

To whom thus Michael: — “These are the product
 Of those ill-mated marriages thou sawest,
 Where good with bad were matched, who of
 themselves

Abhor to join, and, by imprudence mixed,
 Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
 Such were these Giants, men of high renown;

For in those days might only shall be admired,
And valor and heroic virtue called. 690

To overcome in battle, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils, with infinite
Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch.
Of human glory, and, for glory done,
Of triumph to be styled great Conquerors,
Patrons of mankind, Gods, and sons of Gods;
Destroyers rightlier called, and plagues of men.
Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth,
And what most merits fame in silence hid.

But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheldest
The only righteous in a world perverse, 701
And therefore hated, therefore so beset
With foes, for daring single to be just,
And utter odious truth, that God would come
To judge them with his Saints. . . him the Most
High,

Wrapped in a balmy cloud, with winged steeds,
Did, as thou sawest, receive, to walk with God,
High in salvation and the climes of bliss,
Exempt from death: to shew thee what reward
Awaits the good, the rest what punishment; 710
Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold."

He looked, and saw the face of things quite
changed.

The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar;
All now was turned to jollity and game,

To luxury and riot, feast and dance,
Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
Rape or adultery, where passing fair
Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils.
At length a reverend sire among them came,
And of their doings great dislike declared, 720
And testified against their ways: he oft
Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
Triumphs or festivals, and to them preached
Conversion and repentance, as to souls
In prison, under judgements imminent;
But all in vain. Which when he saw, he ceased
Contending, and removed his tents far off.
Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk, 729
Measured by cubic, length, and breadth, and highth,
Smeared round with pitch, and in the side a door
Contrived, and of provisions laid in large
For man and beast: when lo, a wonder strange!
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small
Came sevens and pairs, and entered 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 arose, and, with black
wings
Wide-hovering, all the clouds together drove
From under heaven; the hills, to their supply, 740
Vapor and exhalation, dusk and moist,

Went up again; and now the thickened sky
Like a dark ceiling stood: down rushed the rain
Impetuous, and continued till the earth
No more was seen. The floating vessel swum
Uplifted, and secure, with beaked prow,
Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else
Flood overwhelmed, and them, with all their pomp,
Deep under water rolled; sea covered sea,
Sea without shore; and in their palaces, 750
Where luxury late reigned, sea-monsters whelped
And stabled: of mankind, so numerous late,
All left in one small bottom swum embarked.
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 drowned,
And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently reared
By the Angel, on thy feet thou stoodest at last,
Though comfortless; as when a father mourns 760
His children, all in view destroyed at once;
And scarce to the Angel utterdst thus thy plaint:
 'O visions ill foreseen! better had I
Lived ignorant of future, so had borne
My part of evil only, each day's lot
Enough to bear. Those now, that were dispensed
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 befall 771

Him or his children; evil he may be sure,
Which neither his foreknowing 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; those few escaped

Famine and anguish will at last consume,

Wandering that watery desert. I had hope,

When violence was ceased and war on earth, 780

All would have then gone well, peace would have
crowned

With length of happy days the race of Man.

But I was far deceived; 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
thow sawest

In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they

First seen in acts of prowess eminent

And great exploits, but of true virtue void; 790

Who having spilt much blood, and done much
waste,

Subduing nations, and achieved 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 conquered also and enslaved by war
Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose
And fear of God, from whom their piety feigned
In sharp contest of battle found no aid 800
Against invaders; therefore, cooled in zeal,
Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords
Shall leave them to enjoy; for the earth shall bear
More than enough, that temperance may be tried.
So all shall turn degenerate, all depraved,
Justice and temperance, truth and faith forgot;
One man except, the only sun of light
In a dark age, against example good,
Against allurement, custom, and a world 810
Offended; fearless of reproach and scorn,
Or violence, he of their wicked ways
Shall them admonish, and before them set
The paths of righteousness, how much more safe,
And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come
On their impenitence; and shall return
Of them derided, but of God observed
The one just man alive: by his command
Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheldest,
To save himself and household, from amidst 820

A world devote to universal wrack.
 No sooner he, with them of man and beast
 Select for life, shall in the ark be lodged,
 And sheltered round, but all the cataracts
 Of heaven set open on the earth shall pour
 Rain day and night; all fountains of the deep,
 Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
 Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise
 Above the highest hills. Then shall this mount
 Of Paradise by might of waves be moved 830
 Out of his place, pushed by the horned flood,
 With all his verdure spoiled, and trees adrift,
 Down the Great River to the opening Gulf,
 And there take root an island salt and bare,
 The haunt of seals, and ores, and seamews' 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 looked, and saw the ark hull on the
 flood, 840
 Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,
 Driven by a keen north-wind, that blowing dry
 Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decayed;
 And the clear sun on his wide watery glass
 Gazed 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 toward the deep, who now had
stoped

His sluices, as the heaven his windows shut.
The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground,
Fast on the top of some high mountain fixed 851
And now the tops of hills as rocks appear;
With clamor thence the rapid currents drive,
Toward 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. 860

Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
The ancient sire descends, with all his train.
Then, with uplifted hands and eyes devout,
Grateful to Heaven, over his head beholds
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow,
Conspicuous with three listed colors gay,
Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.
Whereat the heart of Adam erst so sad
Greatly rejoiced, and thus his joy broke forth:

“O thou, who future things canst represent 870
As present, heavenly Instructor! I revive
At this last sight, assured that Man shall live,
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
Far less I now lament for one whole world

Of wicked sons destroyed, 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 colored streaks in
 heaven

Distended? as the brow of God appeased? 880
 Or serve they as a flowery verge to bind
 The fluid skirts of that same watery cloud,
 Lest it again dissolve and shower the earth?"

To whom the Archangel:—"Dexterously thou
 aimest.

So willingly doth God remit his ire,
 Though late repenting him of Man depraved;
 Grieved at his heart, when looking down he saw
 The whole earth filled with violence, and all flesh
 Corrupting each their way; yet, those removed,
 Such grace shall one just man find in his
 sight, 890

That he relents not to blot out mankind,
 And makes a covenant never to destroy
 The earth again by flood, nor let the sea
 Surpass his bounds, nor rain to drown the world,
 With man therein or beast; but, when he brings
 Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
 His triple-colored bow, whereon to look,
 And call to mind his covenant. Day and night,

Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost 899
Shall hold their course, till fire purge all things
 new,
Both heaven and earth, wherein the just shall
 dwell.”

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE Angel Michael continues, from the Flood, to relate what shall succeed; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain who that Seed of the Woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the Fall; his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension; the state of the Church till his second coming. Adam, greatly satisfied and comforted 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 moon,
Though bent on speed, so here the Archangel
paused,

Betwixt the world destroyed and world restored,
If Adam aught 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. 10
 Henceforth what is to come I will relate;
 Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.

“This second source of men, while yet but few,
 And while the dread of judgement 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,
 Laboring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
 Corn, wine, and oil; and, from the herd or flock,
 Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid, 20
 With large wine-offerings poured, and sacred feast,
 Shall spend their days in joy unblamed, 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 state,
 Will arrogate dominion undeserved
 Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
 Concord and law of Nature from the earth;
 Hurting—and men not beasts shall be his game—
 With war and hostile snare such as refuse 31
 Subjection to his empire tyrannous.
 A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled
 Before the Lord, as in despite of Heaven,
 Or from Heaven claiming second sovranity;
 And from rebellion shall derive his name,

Though of rebellion others be accuse.
 He, with a crew, whom like ambition joins
 With him, or under him to tyrannize,
 Marching from Eden toward the west, shall
 find 40

The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge
 Boils out from underground, the mouth of Hell.
 Of brick and of that stuff they cast to build
 A city and tower, whose top may reach to Heaven:
 And get themselves a name; lest, far dispersed
 In foreign lands, their memory be lost;
 Regardless whether good or evil fame.
 But God, who oft descends to visit men,
 Unseen, and through their habitations walks,
 To mark their doings, them beholding soon, 50
 Comes down to see their city, ere the tower
 Obstruct Heaven-towers, and in derision sets
 Upon their tongues a various spirit, to rase
 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 other calls,
 Not understood, all hoarse, and all in rage,
 As mocked they storm. Great laughter was in
 Heaven

And looking down, to see the hubbub strange 60
 And hear the din: thus was the building left
 Ridiculous, and the work *Confusion* named."

Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeas'd :
 "O execrable son! so to aspire
 Above his brethren, to himself assuming
 Authority usurped, from God not given.
 He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
 Dominion absolute; that right we hold
 By his donation; but man over men
 He made not lord; such title to himself 70
 Reserving, human left from human free.
 But this usurper his encroachment proud
 Stays not on Man; to God his tower intends
 Seige and defiance. Wretched man! what food
 Will he convey up thither, to sustain
 Himself and his rash army? where thin air
 Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,
 And famish him of breath, if not of bread."
 To whom thus Michael:—"Justly thou abhorrest
 That son, who on the quiet state of men 80
 Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
 Rational liberty; yet know withal,
 Since thy original lapse, true liberty
 Is lost, which always with right reason dwells,
 Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being.
 Reason in man obscured, or not obeyed,
 Immediately inordinate desires
 And upstart passions catch the government
 From reason, and to servitude reduce
 Man, till then free. Therefore. since he permits 90

Within himself unworthy powers to reign
 Over free reason, God, in judgement just,
 Subjects him from without to violent lords,
 Who, oft as undeservedly, enthrall
 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 annexed,
 Deprives them of their outward liberty, 100
 Their inward lost: witness the 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, 110
 And one peculiar nation to select
 From all the rest, of whom to be invoked;
 A nation from one faithful man to spring.
 Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
 Bred up in idol-worship; Oh, that men
 —Canst thou believe?—should be so stupid grown,
 While yet the patriarch lived who scaped the
 Flood,

As to forsake the living God, and fall
 To worship their own work, in wood and stone,
 For gods! Yet him God the Most High vouchsafes
 To call by vision, from his father's house, 121
 His kindred and false gods, into a land
 Which he will shew him, and from him will raise
 A mighty nation, and upon him shower
 His benediction so, that in his seed
 All nations shall be blest. He straight obeys,
 Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes.
 I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
 He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil,
 Ur of Chaldæa, passing now the ford 130
 To Haran; after him a cumbrous train
 Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude;
 Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth
 With God, who called him, in a land unknown.
 Canaan he now attains; I see his tents
 Pitched about Sechem, and the neighboring plain
 Of Moreh; there by promise he receives
 Gift to his progeny of all that land,
 From Hamath northward to the desert south
 —Things by their names I call, though yet
 unnamed—
 From Hermon east to the great western Sea; 141
 Mount Hermon, yonder sea, each place behold
 In prospect, as I point them on the shore
 Mount Carmel: here the double-founted stream,

Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons
 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 150
 Plainlier shall be revealed. This patriarch blest,
 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 increased, departs
 From Canaan, to a land hereafter called
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile.
 See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths
 Into the sea. To sojourn in that land
 He comes, invited by a younger son 160
 In time of dearth, a son whose worthy deeds
 Raise him to be the second in that realm
 Of Pharaoh. There he dies, and leaves his race
 Growing into a nation, and now grown
 Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks
 To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
 Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them
 slaves,
 Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:
 Till by two brethren—those two brethren call
 Moses and Aaron—sent from God to claim 170
 His people from enthralment, they return,

With glory and spoil, back to their promised land.
But first the lawless tyrant, who denies
To know their God, or message to regard,
Must be compelled by signs and judgements dire.
To blood unshed the rivers must be turned;
Frogs, lice, and flies must all his palace fill
With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;
His cattle must of rot and murrian die;
Blotches and blains must all his flesh emboss, 180
And all his people; thunder mixed with hail,
Hail mixed with fire, must rend the Egyptian sky,
And wheel on the 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 190
The river-dragon tamed at length submits
To let his sojourners depart, and oft
Humbles his stubborn heart, but still, as ice,
More hardened after thaw; till, in his rage,
Pursuing whom he late dismissed, the sea
Swallows him with his host; but them lets past,
As on dry land, between two crystal walls,
Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided, till his rescued gained their shore:

Such wondrous power God to his Saint will
lend, 200

Though present in his Angel, who shall go
Before them in a cloud and pillar of fire
—By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire—
To guide them in their journey, and remove
Behind them, while the 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 211
Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;
On their embattled ranks the waves return,
And overwhelm their war. The race elect
Safe toward Canaan from the shore advance,
Through the wild Desert, not the readiest way;
Lest, entering on the Canaanite alarmed,
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for life 220
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untrained in arms, where rashness leads not on.
This also shall they gain by their delay
In the wide wilderness, there they shall find
Their government, and their great Senate choose,

Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws
ordained.

God, from the Mount of Sinai, whose grey top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets' sound,
Ordain them laws; part, such as appertain 230
To civil justice; part, religious rights
Of sacrifice, informing them, by types
And shadows, of that destined Seed to bruise
The Serpent, by what means he shall achieve
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 240
Moses in figure bears, to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretell,
And all the Prophets, in their age, the times
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites
Established, 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 framed
Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein 250
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
The records of his covenant; over these

A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings
 Of two bright Cherubim; before him burn
 Seven lamps, as in a Zodiac representing
 The heavenly fires. Over the tent a cloud
 Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,
 Save when they journey; and at length they
 come,

Conducted by his Angel, to the land
 Promised to Abraham and his seed. 'The rest 260
 Were long to tell; how many battles fought,
 How many kings destroyed, and kingdoms won,
 Or how the sun shall in mid-heaven stand still,
 A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
 Man's voice commanding, 'Sun in Gibeon stand,
 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 interposed:— "O sent from Heaven,
 Enlightener of my darkness! gracious things 271
 Thou hast revealed, those chiefly which concern
 Just Abraham and his seed. Now first I find
 Mine eyes true opening, and my heart much
 eased,

Erewhile perplexed with thoughts what would
 become

Of me and all mankind; but now I see
 His day, in whom all nations shall be blest,

Favor unmerited by me, who sought
 Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
 This yet I apprehend not, why to those 280
 Among whom God will deign to dwell on Earth
 So many and so various laws are given;
 So many laws argue so many sins
 Among them; how can God with such reside?"

To whom thus Michael:—"Doubt not but that
 sin

Will reign among them, as thee begot;
 And therefore was law given them, to evince
 Their natural pravity, by stirring up
 Sin against law to fight; that, when they see
 Law can discover sin, but not remove, 290
 Save by those shadowy expiations weak
 The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
 Some blood more precious must be paid for Man,
 Just for unjust, that in such righteousness,
 To them by faith imputed, they may find
 Justification toward God, and peace
 Of conscience, which the law by ceremonies
 Cannot appease, nor man the moral part
 Perform, and not performing cannot live.
 So law appears imperfect, and but given 300
 With purpose to resign them in full time
 Up to a better covenant, disciplined
 From shadowy types to truth, from flesh to spirit,
 From imposition of strict laws to free

Acceptance of large grace, from servile fear
 To filial, works of law to works of faith.
 And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
 Highly beloved, being but the minister
 Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
 But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call, 310
 His name and office bearing, who shall quell
 The adversary Serpent, and bring back,
 Through the world's wilderness long wandered
 Man

Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
 Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan placed,
 Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins
 National interrupt their public peace,
 Provoking God to raise them enemies;
 From whom as oft he saves them penitent
 By Judges first, then under Kings; of whom 320
 The second, both for piety renowned
 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, as in whom shall trust
 All nations, and to kings foretold of kings
 The last, for of his reign shall be no end. 330
 But first a long succession must ensue,

And his next son, for wealth and wisdom famed,
 The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
 Wandering, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.
 Such follow him as shall be registered
 Part good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll,
 Whose foul idolatries and other faults,
 Heaped to the popular sum, will so incense
 God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
 Their city, his temple, and his holy ark, 340
 With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
 To that proud city, whose high walls thou sawest
 Left in confusion, Babylon thence called.
 There in captivity he lets them dwell,
 The space of seventy years, then brings them
 back,
 Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn
 To David, stablished as the days of Heaven.
 Returned from Babylon, by leave of kings,
 Their lords, whom God disposed, the house of
 God
 They first re-edify, and for a while 350
 In mean estate live moderate, till, grown
 In wealth and multitude, factious they grow.
 But first among the priests dissension springs,
 Men who attend the altar, and should most
 Endeavor peace! Their strife pollution brings
 Upon the temple itself: at last they seize
 The sceptre, and regard not David's sons,

Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
Anointed King, Messiah, might be born
Barred of his right; yet at his birth a star, 360
Unseen before in heaven, proclaims him come,
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire
His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold.
His place of birth a solemn Angel tells
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;
They gladly thither haste, and, by a quire
Of squadroned Angels, hear his carol sung.
A Virgin is his mother, but his sire
The Power of the Most High. He shall ascend
The throne hereditary, and bound his reign 370
With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the
heavens."

He ceased, discerning Adam with such joy
Surcharged, as had, like grief, been dewed in
tears,

Without the vent of words, which these he
breathed:

"O prophet of glad tidings, finisher
Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
What oft my steadiest thoughts have searched
in vain;

Why our great Expectation should be called
The Seed of Woman. Virgin Mother, hail!
High in the love of Heaven, yet from my loins 380
Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son

Of God Most High: so God with Man unites.
Needs must the Serpent now his capital bruise
Expect with mortal pain. Say where and when
Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's
heel."

To whom thus Michael:—"Dream not of their
fight,

As of a duel, or the local wounds
Of head or heel. Not therefore joins the Son
Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil
Thy enemy; nor so is overcome 390
Satan, whose fall from Heaven, a deadlier bruise,
Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound;
Which he, who comes thy Savior, 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, imposed
On penalty of death; and suffering death,
The penalty to thy transgression due,
And due to theirs which out of thine will
grow; 400

So only can high justice rest appaid.
The law of God exact he shall fulfil,
Both by obedience and by love, though love
Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment
He shall endure, by coming in the flesh
To a reproachful life and cursed death;

Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
 In his redemption, and that his obedience
 Imputed becomes theirs by faith, his merits
 To save them, not their own, though legal,
 works. 410

For this he shall live hated, be blasphemed,
 Seized on by force, judged, and to death con-
 demned,

A shameful and accursed, nailed 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 crucified,
 Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
 In this his satisfaction : so he dies,

But soon revives; Death over him no power 420
 Shall long usurp. Ere the third dawning light
 Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
 Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
 Thy ransom paid, which Man from death redeems;
 His death for Man, as many as offered life
 Neglect not, and the benefit embrace,
 By faith not void of works. This godlike act
 Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldest have
 died,

In sin forever lost from life; this act
 Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his
 strength, 430

Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms,
And fix far deeper in his head their stings
Than temporal 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 to appear
To his disciples, men who in his life
Still followed him; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learned 440
And his salvation, them who shall believe
Baptizing in the profluent stream; the sign
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
Pure, and in mind prepared, if so befall,
For death, like that which the Redeemer died.
All nations they shall teach; for from that day
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
Salvation shall be preached, but to the sons
Of Abraham's faith, wherever through the world;
So in his seed all nations shall be blest. 450
Then to the Heaven-of-heavens 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 Heaven; and thence shall come,

When this World's dissolution shall be ripe,
 With glory and power to judge both quick and
 dead;

To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward 461
 His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
 Whether in Heaven or Earth; for then the Earth
 Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
 Than this of Eden, and far happier days."

So spake the Archangel Michaël; then paused,
 As at the World's great period; and our sire,
 Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied:

"O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense!
 That all this good of evil shall produce, 470
 And evil turn to good; more wonderful
 Than that which by creation first brought forth
 Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,
 Whether I should repent me now of sin,
 By me done and occasioned, 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 Deliverer up to Heaven
 Must reascend, what will betide the few, 480
 His faithful, left among the 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 the Angel; "but from
Heaven

He to his own a Comforter will send,
The promise of the Father, who shall dwell,
His Spirit, within them, and the law of faith
Working through love upon their hearts shall
write,

To guide them in all truth; and also arm 490

With spiritual armor, able to resist
Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts;

What man can do against them not afraid,
Though to the death; against such cruelties
With inward consolations recompensed,

And oft supported so as shall amaze
Their proudest persecutors. For the Spirit
Poured first on his Apostles, whom he sends
To evangelize the nations, then on all

Baptized, shall them with wondrous gifts
endue 500

To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each nation to receive
With joy the tidings brought from Heaven: at
length,

Their ministry performed, 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 Heaven
 To their own vile advantage shall turn 510
 Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
 With superstitions and traditions taint,
 Left only in those written records pure,
 Though not but by the Spirit understood.

Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,
 Places, and titles, and with these to join
 Secular power; though feigning still to act
 By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
 The Spirit of God, promised alike and given
 To all believers; and from that pretence 520

Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force
 On every conscience; laws which none shall find
 Left them inrolled, or what the Spirit within
 Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
 But force the Spirit of Grace itself, and bind
 His consort, Liberty? what, but unbuild
 His living temples, built by faith to stand,
 Their own faith, not another's? for, on Earth,
 Who against faith and conscience can be heard
 Infallible? yet many will presume. 530

Whence heavy persecution shall arise
 On all who in the worship persevere
 Of spirit and truth; the rest, far greater part

Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
 Religion satisfied; Truth shall retire
 Bestuck with slanderous 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, 540
 And vengeance to the wicked, at return
 Of Him so lately promised to thy aid,
 The Woman's Seed, obscurely then foretold,
 Now amplier known thy Savior and thy Lord;
 Last, in the clouds, from Heaven to be revealed
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve
 Satan with his perverted world; then raise
 From the conflagrant mass, purged and refined,
 New heavens, new earth, ages of endless date,
 Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love, 550
 To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss."

He ended; and thus Adam last replied:

"How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,
 Measured this transient World, the race of Time,
 Till Time stand fixed! 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. 560
 Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,

And love with fear the only God, to walk
 As in his presence, ever to observe
 His providence, and on him sole depend,
 Merciful over all his works, with good
 Still overcoming evil, and by small
 Accomplishing great things, by things deemed
 weak

Subverting worldly-strong, and worldly-wise
 By simply-meeke; that suffering for truth's sake
 Is fortitude to highest victory, 570
 And, to the faithful, death the gate of life;
 Taught this by his example, whom I now
 Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest."

To whom thus also the Angel last replied:
 "This having learned, thou hast attained the sum
 Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
 Thou knewest by name, and all the ethereal
 powers,

All secrets of the Deep, all Nature's works,
 Or works of God in heaven, air, earth, or sea,
 And all the riches of this world enjoyedst, 580
 And all the rule, one empire. Only add
 Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,
 Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,
 By name to come called charity, the soul
 Of all the rest; then wilt thou not be loth
 To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
 A Paradise within thee, happier far.—

Let us descend now therefore from this top
 Of speculation; for the hour precise
 Exacts our parting hence. And see! the
 guards, 590

By me encamped on yonder hill, except
 Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round.
 We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve.
 Her also I with gentle dreams have calmed,
 Portending good, and all her spirits composed
 To meek submission thou, at season fit,
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard;
 Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,
 The great deliverance by her seed to come— 600
 For by the Woman's Seed—on all mankind;
 That ye may live, which will be many days,
 Both in one faith unanimous, though sad
 With cause for evils past, yet much more cheered
 With meditation on the happy end."

He ended, and they both descend the hill.
 Descended, Adam to the bower where Eve
 Lay sleeping ran before her, but found her waked,
 And thus with words not sad she him received:

"Whence thou returnest, and whither wentest,
 I know; 610

For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise,
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
 Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress

Wearied I fell asleep. But now lead on;
 In me is no delay; with thee to go,
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
 Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me
 Art all things under heaven, all places thou,
 Who for my wilful crime art banished hence.
 This further consolation yet secure 620
 I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
 Such favor I unworthy am vouchsafed,
 By me the Promised Seed shall all restore."

So spake our mother Eve, and Adam heard
 Well pleased, but answered not; for now too nigh
 The Archangel stood, and from the other hill
 To their fixed station, all in bright array,
 The Cherubim descended; on the ground
 Gliding meteorous, as evening mist,
 Risen from a river, o'er the marish glides, 630
 And gathers round fast at the laborer's heel,
 Homeward returning. High in front advanced,
 The banished sword of God before them blazed,
 Fierce as a comet, which with torrid heat,
 And vapor as the Libyan air adust,
 Began to parch that temperate clime; whereat
 In either hand the hastening Angel caught
 Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate
 Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
 To the subjected plain; then disappeared. 640
 They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld

Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms.
Some natural tears they dropped, but wiped them
soon;

The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Province their guide.

They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and
slow,

Through Eden took their solitary way.

THE END.







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